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Teacher-Student Writing Conferences as an Intervention in the Revision Practices of College Freshmen

Lynn Riley Neil
Utah State University

TEACHER-STUDENT WRITING CONFERENCES AS AN INTERVENTION IN THE REVISION PRACTICES OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN

by

Lynn Riley Neil

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Lynn Riley Neil

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ABSTRACT

Teacher-Student Writing Conferences as an Intervention in the Revision Practices of College Freshmen

by

Lynn Riley Neil, Doctor of Education

Utah State University, 1988

Major Professor: Dr. Charles R. Duke
Department: Secondary Education

In case studies of six college freshmen of average English ability, as determined by ACT scores, the researcher explored the connections between teacher-student writing conferences and students' subsequent revisions. The following question guided this study: How does the teacher-student conference conversation relate to students' subsequent revisions? Three principles drawn from the review of literature also guided the study: 1) writing conferences can be used as a mid-composing intervention, 2) the purpose of such intervention is to guide student revision of a specific draft as well as instruct in general revision strategies, and 3) a study of student changes on drafts can provide information about the effectiveness of a previous conference.

The data were gathered from holistic scoring of the students' drafts, videotapes of each student's four conferences, two-level coding of the students' drafts and the students' conference transcriptions, interviews with the students,

questionnaires about attitudes toward revision and conferences, the teacher-researcher's observations, writing self-analyses by the students, and the students' autobiographies as writers.

Holistic scoring of first and last drafts written during the study rated drafts after conferences at a higher level, but no meaningful long-term improvement was established.

The results of the study indicate that, although students continued to revise in the patterns to which they were accustomed, the topics covered in the conference strongly influenced their revision strategies: the students made more frequent content-level changes after conferences. The topics covered in the conference also influenced their future composing strategies on first drafts. Following the conferences, the students in this study made fewer changes at the word and phrase level and more changes at the sentence, theme, and correctness levels. The results also indicate that the non-directive conference provides for individual writing needs.

(301 pages)

CHAPTER I:

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Introduction

During these past twenty years, perhaps encouraged by Newsweek's announcement that Johnny could not write (December 8, 1975), the focus of composition instruction has shifted from producing "products" to teaching a "process." However, many students still consider writing as a two-step, get-it-down-on-paper act, thinking of the first draft as needing only spell-checking and comma-fixing before recopying. Many students are unaware of the need to find focus, to organize for power, to include specific details for effectiveness, and to add cohesive elements for clarity. Other students may see the need but not know how to improve the paper.

To help students gain writing fluency and revision skills, composition teachers have found ways to intervene during the revision process, guiding students to re-see the paper--to add, to reorder, and to cut. One mid-composing intervention (entering students' revision processes in order to modify them) is the teacher-student conference: a one-to-one meeting between the teacher and the student that focuses on the student's text.

Interest in individual writing conferences grows from the assumption that they are a more effective method of teaching composition than the traditional whole-class setting. Specifically, this assumption implies that during conferences, students are aided in more effectively revising the draft under discussion and in acquiring general revision skills that will equip them to revise future writing.

Definition of the Topic

In a sense, Socrates conducted individual conferences with his students as he walked about Athens, questioning and probing for meaning. But one of the first references in the literature to writing conferences was Emig's announcement that the English Department in her Wyoming, Ohio, high school had been teaching composition through individual writing conferences for three years (Emig, 1960). Since then, many composition teachers have used and recommended teacher-student conferences for elementary students (Graves, 1975, 1983; Turbill, 1983), secondary students (Emig, 1971), and college students (Duke, 1975; Freedman, 1983, 1984; Harris, 1986; Murray, 1968, 1985). Teachers, particularly those at the college level, report that they use teacher-student writing conferences to guide student revision because they individualize instruction and provide immediate feedback on writing (Carnicelli, 1980; Garrison, 1974; Graves, 1983; Harris, 1986). Fisher and Murray (1971) contrast the writing conference to the writing classroom, which, they say, "always trades individuality for efficiency" (p. 13). Freedman (1982) calls the conference "one of the key settings in which adults are taught to write" (p. 2). The implication is that through conferences students not only discover what changes to make on their current papers, but also learn procedures for future revisions.

A writing conference, in a general sense, can be any brief interchange between a teacher and a student in a composition class. Garrison (1974) calls the teacher's over-the-shoulder comments to students in class a conference.

Carnicelli (1980) defines a writing conference more specifically: a teacher's 20-minute appointment with one student outside the regular class period. Several sources in this review point out the individual nature of the conference by using the term "one-to-one" (Carnicelli, 1980; Garrison, 1974; Harris, 1986; Maddox, 1981; Shook, 1981; Simmons, 1984). The writing conference can be in the context of a student's specific draft, as Carnicelli and Murray use it, or it can be a discussion about writing in general between a student and his or her teacher, as Freedman has used it. Some teachers are now conducting computer dialogues with students about their writing (Nickell, 1985), although that approach lacks the face-to-face quality of a conversation.

The first research on the writing conference was reported in the mid-1970s: Smith and Bretcko in 1974, Budz and Grabar in 1976, and Jacobs and Karliner in 1977. In the earliest studies, researchers tested the effectiveness of using several writing conferences during a term over the traditional whole-class approach to teaching composition; the most recent reports are of research into the different conference styles of teachers or the range of student responses.

Presently, interest in the teacher-student writing conference has grown to the extent that a new gerund has entered English teachers' vocabularies: conferencing. Lest the writing conference pass the way of other educational fads, a body of knowledge about what happens during a conference and what happens as a result of a conference needs to be gathered and studied.

The Problem

In light of the general acceptance of the teacher-student writing conference as an effective method of teaching composition, there is a need to study how writing conferences relate to students' subsequent revision processes. Researchers have shown that conferences are generally effective in improving the quality of final drafts and in lessening writing apprehension (Armstrong, 1980; Maddox, 1981; Smith & Bretcko, 1974), but researchers have not uncovered specifically why conferences are effective and in what ways, according to Harris (1986).

Knowing what happens in a mid-composing teacher-student conference that facilitates students' revisions has implications for conference procedures and composition instruction. We do not yet know what happens during the teacher-student conference that leads to content revision (idea level), nor do we know the types of teacher-questions that lead to the student taking ownership of the paper, shown by student-initiated revision.

The problem is, then, that although research results indicate that writing conferences are effective and although researchers have described the interactions between teacher and student during conferences, research reports are lacking that explain the relationship between students' responses in conference and the types and frequency of their subsequent revisions.

Research Question

Based on the research available on teacher-student conferences and on revision, this research study explored the following question: How does the teacher-student conference conversation relate to students' subsequent revisions?

CHAPTER II:

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

At any point in the composing process a teacher may intervene in order to clarify or guide. After at least one draft has been written, intervention can impact revision. The mid-composing intervention investigated in this study will be the teacher-student writing conference. This literature review is divided into the following sections: (1) Writing Conferences: Theory and Practice Literature, (2) Writing Conferences: Research Literature, (3) Writing Conferences: Negative and Affirmative; (4) Revision: Theory and Practice Literature, (5) Revision: Research Literature.

Writing Conferences: Theory and Practice Literature

Scardamalia and Bereiter's (1986) analysis of revision practices reveals students' lack of strategies and their need for intervention. They list conferencing, an approach that helps students "adopt more sophisticated composing strategies by providing external supports" (p. 795), as one of four new approaches to writing instruction. The other three are freewriting, invention, and sentence combining. Hillocks (1986), in his recently published review of approximately 2,000 studies on teaching writing, pointed out the need for a "conversational partner" until the writer learns how to recall and process information. Unfortunately, Hillocks did not include the teacher-student writing conference specifically, but he reported that students do not undertake large

scale revisions without feedback from an audience.

Theorists and practitioners suggest a number of principles for conducting writing conferences. The teacher's role in conferencing is clarified by definitions. Graves (1982, 1983) defines the teacher in the writing conference as the student's advocate, not adversary; Murray (1968) calls the teacher in conference a listener, coach, diagnostician, and healer. In one sense, the teacher is a "dumb reader" (Gibson, 1979, p. 192), knowing only what the student writes in the paper, questioning the writer to discover the rest.

Carnicelli (1980) stresses that the writing conference must not become a one-to-one lecture or produce one-way information, either written or spoken. It works best as a conversation between the teacher and the student, with the teacher responding as a reader, according to Harris (1986), and the students doing most of the talking (Collins, 1979). Jacobs and Karliner (1977) find that if students see the conference roles as "two conversants" (p. 489), rather than as teacher-to-student, their revision will take place at a higher cognitive level. In this conversation the teacher profits, as well as the student, by gaining new insights into composing and into methods of helping students write (Leeson, 1982).

Murray (1968) and Garrison (1974) agree that a good procedure for a conference is for the participants to identify and solve one writing problem in each conference, the major one. They suggest the teacher make a quick diagnosis after reading through the paper at the beginning of the conference, taking care not to make evaluative statements, probing instead with questions to

clarify the student's thinking, to discover the student's purpose, and to facilitate the student's discovery of writing problems. The professional teacher-writers in Reigstad's case studies (1980/1981, 1982) followed this pattern, focusing on one or two central problems, occasionally suggesting strategies to help students, but primarily asking questions.

In the first conferences with a student, teachers focus on the content of students' writing, responding by acknowledging the message of the piece. Canuteson (1977) recommends that the teacher point out strengths as well as weaknesses. After teachers have made specific positive comments, they draw the student out with skillful questioning, probing for the student's ideas, leaving the ownership of the piece with the student (Graves, 1982; Turbill, 1983). Arbur (1976) says that before a student leaves a conference, the teacher and student should identify the most serious writing problem, agree to work on it together, and articulate the task clearly. If possible, she adds, the teacher should send the student home with a specific assignment and a confidence-building remark.

Although Freedman (1984) concluded that students determine the differences in conferences, other theorists state that the nature of the teacher's questions determine the direction of the conference. Shaughnessy (1977) recommends revising content first, not focusing too early on surface errors lest the writing be perceived as a test of spelling, punctuation, and usage. She explains that beginning writers need to get their confidence built through successful writing experiences before their work is criticized for form. Murray (1980) suggests that teachers give students room to find their own meaning. He

says that during a conference, a teacher should look at the student who looks at the text.

If teachers are to take a facilitating rather than a directing role, then, they will frame most of their responses as questions. Teachers must question, according to Meeks (1985/1986), so that students will learn to ask their own questions, consequently taking over the responsibility for their own revisions. Teachers who withhold their own comments while asking questions about the paper, thus encourage students to ask questions about their topics and guide students into evaluating their own papers (Carnicelli, 1980). Murray (1968) advises beginning with the most effective question: "What's your problem in this paper?" (p. 150). Lauer (1980) proposes that the teacher's questions should involve students in a dilemma, a problem, an urgency, because writing begins with questions. In her dissertation study of the amount of growth in writing performance, Kelley (1973/1974) found no difference in student response to clarifying or directive questions, but hypothesized that clarifying comments were more effective in producing growth in expository writing. Harris (1986) suggests open-ended inquiries such as "Tell me about this," and "What else comes to mind here?" (p. 8)

A teacher's questions prompt students to search for answers, cognitively involving students in the revision tasks. Ziv (1984) conducted a case study of four college freshmen who exhibited difficulty with organization, focus, and logic in writing. Her purpose was to develop a model of teacher intervention by studying these students' recorded verbal responses to the teacher's written

comments about their drafts. Although this study did not address the writing conference, Ziv's findings transfer to that setting, particularly because her emphasis was on the teacher's written comments to the student prior to the final evaluation. The outcomes reveal that these inexperienced writers responded favorably to explicit cues but did not understand when the teacher just made corrections, supporting the theory that teachers in conference should take a questioning posture.

Writing Conferences: Research Literature

Some researchers have classified conferences by purpose. White (1982) identified four purposes for writing conferences: diagnosing students' experiences and strengths, brainstorming (exchanging ideas), critiquing, and discovering options for revision. Langer (1981) differentiates conferences according to "how much a student knows about a topic, how well it is organized, and how accessible that knowledge is for the student to use" (p. 6). The conferences in the Kates' study (1977) were for the purpose of communicating summative, evaluative comments to the students. The conference purpose in Overton's study (1980) was to teach grammar and usage conventions. Of the three conferences Freedman studied (1984), only the middle one was in the context of a specific piece of writing, what the writer of this current study would call a "writing conference." Freedman's first conference was introductory; the teacher and student got acquainted and discussed the student's writing history and test scores. The third one was a general discussion of writing to conclude

the term.

Another way to classify conferences is by the teacher's attitude or posture toward the learner. Reigstad (1980/1981, 1982), in case studies of ten subjects who were both writing teachers and professional writers, classified the conferences his subjects conducted as teacher-centered, collaborative, and student-centered. Duke (1975) distinguishes the conference teacher's approach as directive or nondirective. Jacob (1982) described conferences as prescriptive, unarticulated, and open-ended. Though these classification systems suggest that the nondirective approach is best, successful conferences, according to the findings of Walker and Elias (1987), are those which focus on the student and the student's draft, no matter what the teacher's approach.

The teacher-student writing conference has been the subject of a number of research studies since 1974. While some researchers have tested the effectiveness of conferences as a method of teaching composition, treating the writing conference as a constant and using it as the independent variable, other research studies have explored what happens in the conference.

The Conference as Product: Testing Effectiveness

Studies testing the general effectiveness of teacher-student conferences tend to use an experimental design, half the classes receiving individual conferences as treatment and half the classes being taught in the traditional manner. Armstrong (1979/1980) used four college freshman composition classes in a Solomon Four Group Design to compare the Garrison method (tutoring

writing through teacher-student conferences with few all-class sessions) with the traditional whole-class method of teaching composition. Standard writing tests and timed writing samples, taken pre- and post-treatment, were compared. Tested at the .05 level, significant changes did occur through the Garrison treatment. This study used a more rigorous experimental design than many others but did not control for other variables in the traditional classes. Because the two control teachers, although randomly assigned, were given no restraints in their teaching methods, teacher differences could have confounded the results.

Four other studies use a similar design: Smith and Bretcko (1974), Budz and Grabar (1976), Shook (1981), and Simmons (1984). Smith and Bretcko concluded, without data to support their conclusions, that conferences resulted in improved interpersonal relationships, but more than two conferences accomplished no writing improvement. The subjects who participated in the conferences demonstrated significant progress as shown by the writing sample and the McGraw Hill Basic Skills test for writing, but there was no significant difference between treatment and control groups on the number of errors in their writing. The validity of Smith and Bretcko's outcome measurements may have been threatened because they neglected to explain the significantly lower scores one of their raters gave to the writing samples.

Shook's (1981) design seems more rigorous; he set up the research design to keep all four classes the same except for the Garrison-type conferences. His method of measuring growth was holistic scoring of each student's first two and last two essays of the term. Each essay was collected and typed (the surface

errors were corrected during typing), and then evaluated blind. The experimental group wrote mature sentences significantly more frequently. No significant differences were found on the holistic evaluation of writing samples or in students' writing anxiety. Shook found that students who began the term with low skills made good improvement in both groups, although better in the Garrison-type classroom; however, students who began above average gained some in the Garrison classroom but lost ground in the traditional classroom. One problem in this study is that the correction of surface errors by the typists might have contaminated the findings; the elimination of surface errors affects the perception of writing quality.

Although the significant gains in classes taught by conferences and reported in Simmons' study (1984) produced a large grant to establish tutorial instruction in the Los Angeles Community College District, the fact that each one-to-one class had three tutors as well as the teacher working with students could have been a factor confounding the results. Budz and Grabar (1976) and five other teachers also conducted an experiment-control group: pre- and post-test design comparison of a tutorial approach and a conventional approach to teaching composition. Their results show the control groups' gains as significantly higher than the tutorial groups, although Freedman and Nold (1976) say this study was "so flawed as to make the conclusion invalid" (p. 428), based on inequivalencies of time and treatments.

One study that did not use a control group yet tested effectiveness was Maddox's (1981). She contrasted quality of writing before and after a teacher-

student conference with remedial college writers and also tested for writing anxiety. The researcher conducted a writing conference with every student on every assignment before it was turned in. To control for revision being teacher-directed, the paper discussed in conference was different from the paper turned in for evaluation. The weakness of this study is that both classes were treatment classes; one was a day class with an average age of twenty-one, and one was a night class with an average age of thirty-two. With the absence of a control class, the change can be attributed to factors other than the treatment: history or maturation, for example. Maddox taped the conferences for the purpose of validating the amount of time spent and the conference structure. She found significant writing improvement between pre- and post-writing samples for each conference and between writing samples taken at the beginning and end of the term. She found no change in writing apprehension. Markman (1983/1984) also experimented to find effectiveness of teacher-student dialogue (although it was a written dialogue) by looking for improvement in writing. She discovered no improvement in the treatment over the control group, but student attitudes toward journal writing were positive.

Overton (1980) used teacher-student conferences to teach grammar and usage conventions. She experimented with four remedial college composition classes, two treatment and two control, to see if students would make fewer grammar and usage errors in their writing if they received grammar instruction in individualized conferences. The control classes were taught by lecture and demonstration. The researcher taught all four classes, which allowed her to

control the variables as she wished; however, this presents the potential of her contaminating the study through her suppositions. At the end of the term, a comparison of achievement test scores and grades on a writing sample showed no significant differences between the treatment and control classes. Because the researcher did not establish competence levels at the beginning of the term, either through a writing sample or test scores, there may have been differences in gains that did not show. One interesting result was that on a post-experiment survey, students expressed preference for the traditional lecture method. An explanation might be that remedial students prefer the safety of larger numbers or that they are not motivated to learn. Whatever the reason, individual conferences for the purpose of teaching grammar were not proved effective.

Kates (1977) tested the effectiveness of conferences as part of evaluation. In parallel studies at two different colleges, he compared the returning of students' essays with written comments against returning them with a brief conference communicating strengths and weaknesses. In the second study he found achievement gains in the students' writing after the conference. He did not describe the content of the actual conferences, and he used them after the writing was complete, not as a mid-composing strategy. His conferences lasted two minutes or less, hardly a powerful treatment or a meaningful dialogue.

Of the ten experimental design studies on writing conferences, four showed them to be significantly more effective than the traditional methods of instruction, either in improving student writing quality, in lessening student writing apprehension, or in reducing student errors in drafts. Three other

studies produced inconclusive results; two had mixed results from two types of outcome measures, and one study's conclusion was that one-to-one instruction was less effective than the traditional classroom (Budz & Grabar, 1976). To establish the effectiveness of writing conferences, six of these studies used holistic scoring of writing samples; four of these added a standardized test or syntactic analysis as well. Three other of these research studies measured attitudes or counted errors. Holistic scoring, then, was the most common method used for measuring writing improvement following teacher-student writing conferences. One of the problems is that the nature of the writing conference is not clearly specified nor consistent across these studies.

The Conference as Process:
Exploring What Happens

Other research studies have investigated the nature of the writing conference, all of them using a case study design. Newkirk (1984) described how a freshman student developed into a proficient writer through interviews and conferences. Jacob (1982) described students' physical and verbal responses in conference, focusing on the psychological aspects of the teacher-student conference. He audiotaped and observed thirty-two writing conferences of six community college teachers, exploring the extent of student involvement in the conference developments, the nature of the teacher-student relationships in conference, and the meaning of students' body language. He discovered that most conferences he observed were teacher-led. Three distinct models of conferences emerged: the prescriptive model (teacher directing and

recommending), the unarticulated model (teacher failing to define issues), and the open-ended model (teacher involving the student by asking questions, listening, and paraphrasing). To illustrate these models, Jacob analyzed eight representative conferences, patterned after Labov and Fanchell's 1977 Therapeutic Discourse. He added observational cues to the transcript in order to describe students' body language. Jacob gathered data and developed hypotheses, but his analysis would have been strengthened had he gone back to the data, coding and analyzing the discourse to test his theory.

Freedman's work in San Francisco also explored what happens in conferences; it has led her to develop an instrument for coding conference discourse. In her larger study (1984), Freedman examined the teaching/learning process by looking at conferences across ability and ethnic groups, classifying topic shifts and topic control. She selected sixteen college students, all identified by themselves and their teachers as having had successful writing conferences. These students were half Caucasian and half Asian-American, half high-ability writers and half low-ability writers. She selected four college teachers on the basis of their reputation as excellent teachers and their training in teacher-student conferences. Freedman audiotaped four conferences of each student. Three of them were selected for analysis: the introductory conference, a conference on a specific draft, and the concluding conference of the term. Her stated purpose was to "develop a discourse analysis system" and generate hypotheses (p. 3). She found that topics are arranged "linearly and hierarchically" (p. 10) and that students themselves seemed to direct the

differences that occurred: female and nonwhite focused on logistics and micro-level issues; males focused on the macro-level of discourse; ability level did not seem to differentiate the focus of the talks.

This study, "a first step in looking at a rich data source" (p. 13), focused primarily on the excellent teachers' conference models and the students' differences as shown in their responses in conference. An NCTE Research Grant funded her larger study and resulted in several sub-studies. Freedman (1979) concluded, from her case study of writing conferences with a "stronger verbal ability" and a "weaker verbal ability" college writer, that a progression in the learning process occurs from linguistic conventions to strategies and then to the finer points of style. She interprets this as a cyclical need for knowledge, strategy, then more knowledge. A logical next step is to replicate her methods of analysis and connect the results to subsequent student revisions.

Writing Conferences: Negative and Affirmative

A summary of the ten experimentally-designed studies testing the effectiveness of the writing conference shows that one result was negative, three were inconclusive, two were mixed, and four were positive. Of the twenty-seven theory papers and books, twenty-three favored the use of writing conferences, three were cautious (Hiatt, 1975; Schiff, 1978b; Sulkes, 1980) and one was against the teacher's being the audience during revision (Moffett, 1983). Eleven case studies explored the nature of writing conferences, classifying teacher approaches and student responses; five of these were part of the same large

study (Freedman, 1984).

Since Emig's endorsement in 1960 and Fisher and Murray's in 1971, theorists and practitioners in composition have almost universally recommended teaching composition through writing conferences. Notwithstanding, some sources studied in this review objected to writing conferences in principle or in practice. Moffett (1983) believes that the teacher is so significant a person to students that he or she could take over the writing task and, therefore, should respond only as a supplement to the peer audience.

Sulkes (1980) defines two potential sources of tension in writing conferences as the teacher's time pressure and the students' reluctance to be there. Hiatt (1975) says that conferences could be detrimental to students: the good writer does not need much help and the poor writer can be defensive, "at bay" (p. 41). If conferences are to be effective, she says, teachers must explore, question, listen, and explain.

Most practitioners agree that conferences are demanding of a teacher's time. Loken (1985/1986) found from his comparison of teacher-student conferences and peer review with college freshmen that teacher-student conferences required 150 more teacher hours a term. He concluded that both methods were effective, but peer review was a more efficient use of a teacher's time. The realities of secondary schools' English schedules of 150 students per day per teacher make individual conferences almost impossible in high school, this in spite of the fact that Emig began the practice in a high school and that Murray (1985) has offered a schedule for a secondary school English teacher to

conduct 25 five-minute conferences over three school days. Consequently, much of the research on writing conferences is being conducted with college freshmen; college teachers can dismiss class sessions in favor of individual appointments in their offices without more difficulty than the time and energy required.

Schiff (1978a) advocates the use of the conference for a variety of writing activities, but states that good empirical studies are hard to conduct because researchers confound the effect of conferencing with other methods, set up unrealistic conference situations, or flaw their studies with poor design (1978b). Sulkes, Hiatt, Loken, and Schiff all seem to object to writing conferences for practical reasons.

In spite of the practical difficulties, many studies affirm that conferences result in improved writing. One reason may be that a teacher makes a skilled audience. Freedman and Sperling (1985) hypothesized that just as children learn to speak by testing their language with listeners, so students learn to write by "testing hypotheses about the construction of written language" with readers (p. 106). As writers themselves, teachers in the writing conference can guide student-writers with probing questions that help students find direction for revision. In a study of tutors in a writing lab, Kinkead (1985) noted that successful tutors were "effective questioners" who focused the students' attention on content revision rather than on surface errors (p. 4).

Some writers suggest that conferences are effective because talking and writing are related (Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Zoellner, 1969), so that students discover their meaning while talking. Talking and writing are related in that

both are language production (Kinneavy, 1980). Emig (1982) noted the complexity of the talk/write relationship, pointing out that not all theorists accept the assumption that writing is "talk written down" (p. 2027). Pufahl (1983) concluded that the five unskilled college writers in his study were helped both by the instructor's abilities to diagnose and recommend and also by their own opportunity to talk out their ideas "without prematurely forcing considerations of correctness" (p. 413A).

Another reason that conferences help students is that left alone, they do not know how to revise. Composing without specific criticism leading to revision, according to Buxton (1958), will not result in improved writing. Emig (1971) concluded from her study that writers composing in the extensive mode, usually a "detached and reportorial" style written in a school setting, do not freely revise (pp. 91-93). If teacher-student conferences aid students' revision knowledge and skills, there should be a relationship between the student's response in conference and his or her subsequent revisions. The students in Reigstad's case studies (1980/1981, 1982) generally made most of the revisions discussed in the writing conference. Freedman and Greenleaf (1984) found in their single-subject case study that the student was more likely to transfer writing knowledge and skill gained in the writing conference if the teacher made conversational connections with present and past experiences and future possibilities for the student. Meeks (1985/1986) concluded from her dissertation study that third graders, over time, developed an "internal editor"; that is, they learned through peer group discussions a process of revision that they could then

transfer to future writing situations.

If students indeed lack revision strategies, then the conference situation provides the teacher an opportunity to initiate some of the cues needed to prompt revision. Perl (1978) found, in studying the composing practices of unskilled college writers, that students did not solve their writing problems because they did not understand the recursive nature of composing, something that a teacher in conference could demonstrate to the student by continuing to probe for meaning with appropriate questions. According to Calkins (1983), the locus of control changes from the teacher to the writer even though in the beginning the teacher asks the revision questions. This locus of control change is what Meeks (1985/1986) called the development of the internal editor.

Revision: Theory and Practice Literature

A teacher intervenes in students' composing processes for two primary reasons: to facilitate effective revision of a specific paper and to instruct in general revision strategies. Revision, described by Emig (1978) as "the outcome of a dialogue between ourselves as writer and ourselves as audience" (p. 66), can be defined as the changes writers make in their drafts, changes such as adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging. Some changes may occur after a period of contemplation, while others are almost concurrent with the writers' composing. Theory and practice literature discusses (a) revision as it relates to the process model of writing, (b) types of revision, and (c) methods of teaching revision skills.

A foundational principle found in the literature of the last two decades is that a writing teacher's focus should be on the process of writing, rather than on the product. Authors describe the process in different terms. Murray (1968) calls the stages of writing rehearsing, drafting, and revising; Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, and Rosen (1975) name them "conception, incubation, and production" (p. 22); Nold (1979) labels them "planning, transcribing, and reviewing" (p. 2); and Emig (1978) names them prewriting, writing, and revision. Lauer (1980) uses as one of her pedagogical premises that writing is a process involving the writer's urgency, discovery, development of discourse, revision of discourse, and interpretation to the audience. Wiener (1980) gives the steps as getting an idea, deciding how to support it, writing it down and changing it, and preparing it for someone else to read.

These descriptions of writing stages suggest the importance of writing multiple drafts. Murray (1968) states that writing is primarily rewriting. He believes that students are neither learning nor writing if they are not forced to rewrite. He later states that the writer's meaning is discovered in the revision: "Revising becomes rehearsal as the writer listens to the piece of writing" (1980, p. 5). In revising, the writer interacts with this separate thing, the written draft, to find out what it has to say and help it be said more "clearly and gracefully" (p. 5). In a case study of Murray's own composing practices, in fact, Berkenkotter (1983) discovered that Murray's revising and planning were "virtually inseparable" (p. 162). Revision, then, is acknowledged as one of the discrete stages of the composing process; however, these stages are not to be

considered linear steps.

The recursive nature of the writing process allows writers to re-think and make changes at any time during the writing process. Mohr (1984) defines revision as "constant movement between thinking and writing" (p. 103), even calling the thinking that students do before they write, their "earliest revision" (p. 192). This thinking, she believes, influences their subsequent revision. Sommers (1980) defined revision as "a sequence of changes in a composition--changes which are initiated by cues and occur continually throughout the writing of a work" (p. 380). Faigley and Witte (1981) report that "writers move back and forth among the various activities of composing, and that expert writers frequently review what they have written and make changes while in the midst of generating a text" (p. 400). Although Nold (1979) acknowledges that planning, transcribing, and reviewing occur in recurring cycles throughout writing, she narrows her definition of revision to the retranscribing of the text only.

The purpose of revision may change depending upon the stage of a text's development. Mohr (1984) identifies "the achievement of meaning and form" as the primary objective of revision (p. 31), with the early drafts enabling writers to find their own meaning and later drafts focusing on communicating the meaning to the readers. "Revision, the maturation of a writing, causes the writer to act out the switch from preoccupation with self to identification with others" (p. 107), states Mohr.

Theory and practice literature often separates revision into two major types: that dealing with content and that dealing with correctness. Judy (1980)

makes a distinction between revising and copy editing: revising is changing content and language; copy editing is changing syntax, style, mechanics, and usage. Murray's (1978) "internal revision" (the writer discovering what he has to say, what content, form, language, and voice have produced) corresponds to Judy's "revision"; Murray's "external revision" (the writer objectively editing and proofreading) corresponds to Judy's "copy editing." Mohr (1984) takes issue with this distinction: she believes that correcting surface errors is part of the whole process of "clarifying meaning" and that distinguishing it from content revision is "misleading" (p. 236). She identifies "thinking and musing and reading and rereading" (p. 192) as "linked processes" of revision. Many authors agree, though, that the writer should hold off copy editing until the revision has helped the writer find what he or she wants to say (Murray, 1968). Shaughnessy calls this the ability to "suspend closure" (1977, p. 80). Revision, then, can be defined as the important composing activity that occurs during or after initial drafting and involves reading, discovery, re-thinking, and making decisions that lead to written changes.

Because revision is accepted as part of a skill that can be practiced and mastered, the literature addresses methods of teaching revision skills. Murray (1978) believes that revision strategies "can be described, understood, and therefore learned" (p. 86). He urges teachers not to overreward "articulate, verbal, glib students" (p. 100) for their first drafts and to inform slow-starting writers that writers often do not know what they are going to write until they are in the process of writing. He believes that in this way students will learn to

value revision and accept it as a natural part of writing. Mohr (1984) found, as did Murray and others, that students revise more carefully pieces of writing that they care about.

Murray (1968) says that just as the professional writer develops a critical eye, so the student writer must strive for this posture toward a draft: changing, shaping, and developing the draft as an objective reader. Having a critical eye seems to mean seeing the draft from the point of view of a reader. "Early drafts are close to the feelings and thoughts of writers," Mohr (1984) asserts, and "the transformation of this first draft toward meaningful form depends on the writer's desire to communicate" (p. 107). In looking at a paper with a critical eye, Murray suggests four questions: "What have I said? Does what I have said make sense? What additional information do I need to know? Does my form fit my new content?" (p. 73). Della-Piana (1978) says that the poet who revises must develop "an outside eye," reading it "as if coming on it fresh" (p. 117).

Murray (1968) lists specific steps for students to follow in rewriting, moving from whole to parts: check the order of the whole piece; see that the paragraphs have one idea, shape, unity, coherence, and emphasis; check that each sentence is clear and emphatic and moves the idea forward; check the phrases for cliches and jargon, and check the effectiveness of words. He offers some final advice for student writers: cut it down and read your rough draft aloud.

In his procedure for teaching essay writing, Bruffee (1985) asks students for a descriptive outline after the essay is written because he believes it is a tool

for revision. The descriptive outline exposes the organization and logic to the writer and forces an evaluation of both, thus aiding revision decisions. Similar to this descriptive outline, the comment sheet which Mohr has her students complete analyzes their first rough draft. The comment sheet guides students to look for their controlling idea, their use of details, and their own voice and to analyze the organization and the expected reader of their paper. In order to revise well, then, one must learn how to read one's own work objectively, putting oneself in the place of the reader rather than the writer.

Revision: Research Literature

In addition to theory and practice literature, research literature explores how student writers and professional writers revise. Sommers (1980) determined from her study of college freshmen that most students lack strategies for making large changes; they are more concerned with vocabulary and do not see revision as modifying and developing ideas. On the other hand, the adult writers she studied revised to find the form and shape of what they were writing, wrote for their audience, and made changes primarily at the sentence level. Although Maynor (1982) discovered this same distinction between good and poor writers, Ramig (1982) found that even competent college writers revised only surface errors (grammar, punctuation, and spelling). In addition, Faigley and Witte (1981) report that "revisions of inexperienced writers often do not improve their texts" (p. 411).

Basic writers' composing practices are the focus of studies by both Pianko

and Perl. Pianko (1979) found, in her study of the composing practices of twenty-four composition students, that most wrote only one draft and the few who did rewrite produced "no major reformulations" (p. 10). She concluded from her research that the primary distinction of remedial writers is their inability to reread and reflect on their written texts.

Perl (1979) chose for her subjects five unskilled writers who were willing to participate in five ninety-minute sessions. They composed aloud in the first four sessions and were interviewed in the fifth. Perl collected and studied the students' writing, the protocol tapes, and their interview responses. Her findings indicate that even beginning writers had established a method of composing, that the students moved back and forth between the text and their intended meaning, that revision meant primarily "error-hunting" (p. 33), and that it interfered with serious content revision.

Faigley and Witte's research (1981, 1984) also showed that inexperienced writers make primarily surface changes. Faigley and Witte developed a taxonomy of revisions which distinguished surface changes from "text-base changes." They sorted surface changes into "formal changes" (spelling; tense, number, and modality; abbreviation; punctuation; format) and "meaning-preserving changes" (substitutions that do not alter the text). They separated text-based changes into "microstructure" and "macrostructure" changes, further classifying each of these into additions, deletions, substitutions, permutations, distributions, and consolidations. Their subjects were six inexperienced student writers, six advanced student writers, and six expert adult writers who were given a writing

topic on the first day, who wrote their first draft on the second day, and who wrote their second draft on the third day. The researchers, working independently, reached 90% agreement in coding the revisions. Surprisingly, the advanced students generated the most frequent revisions. But the expert adults generated the most text-based changes, 34% as compared to 24% for the advanced students and 12% for the inexperienced students. Faigley and Witte's findings about inexperienced writers making primarily surface changes corroborates what Sommers found.

Building on Faigley and Witte's description of text-based changes, Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985) explored the effects on revision of three types of cues given to the writers. Their subjects were six classes (110 students) of basic writers who were asked to write a persuasive essay during a 50-minute class and to revise it during the next 50-minute class session. Three groups were given different instructions: group one was told to revise to improve the essay, group two was told to add five things to improve the essay, and group three was told to turn the essay over and list five things they would like to add to improve the essay. Group two made their additions while looking at their first drafts. Matsuhashi and Gordon's taxonomy for classifying revisions distinguished between one category of surface revisions (those not affecting meaning), which included addition, deletion, substitution, syntax, and correctness, and five categories of text-based revisions (those affecting meaning). The results of the study showed that beginning writers increased the "mean percentage of text-base revisions when cued to add" (p. 235). Their hypothesis was that inexperienced

writers, contrary to their common practices, might make more frequent content changes if the word "add" were used instead of the word "revise," with its negative connotations for students. The explanation given for the students' ability to add to the unseen text was that the presence of the text with its surface errors "can interfere with attempts to focus on meaning-additions" (p. 237).

Bridwell (1980) also developed an instrument for coding revisions as part of her study of twelfth graders' revising strategies. Her purposes, in addition to the development of the instrument, were to code the subjects' writing changes, to analyze types and frequencies, and to uncover correlations between "type and time of revision and rated quality of the writing" (p. 200). One hundred randomly selected students wrote transactional papers, which were coded and analyzed. Bridwell's findings are consistent with others' (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Maynor, 1982; Perl, 1979; Ramig, 1982; Sommers, 1980): amateur writers most frequently revise at the word or surface level. Bridwell also affirmed the recursive nature of revision; in fact, she found that the students were more likely to make changes during the writing of a draft than after it was completed.

In summary, researchers have studied the composing practices of writers, often using the case study approach and often comparing writers of differing composing skills. These observations of writers writing have revealed the recursive nature of composing; writers regularly look back at the written text in order to discover what they want to say next. Besides studying writers at work, researchers of revision have also studied the written texts, and in order to

describe revision practices, several researchers have developed instruments for coding these changes in the texts.

Conclusion

From the literature review, three principles emerge that guided the current research study: writing conferences can be used as a mid-composing intervention; the purpose of such intervention is to guide student revision of a specific draft as well as instruct in general revision strategies; and a study of student changes on drafts can reveal the effectiveness of a previous conference.

Intervening during Composing

Both the theory and practice literature and the research literature indicate that individual writing conferences are an effective method of teaching composition. Conferences can be used for various purposes. Overton (1980) used conferences to teach grammar and usage; Freedman (1984) conducted conferences with specific drafts as well as about general writing experiences; and Kates (1977) communicated his evaluations of papers through conferences. The most common purpose for writing conferences expressed in the literature, however, is as a mid-composing intervention, intended to guide the students' development of revision skills. That was the purpose for which teacher-student writing conferences were used in this study.

Although the one-to-one interaction with a teacher often lessens a student's writing anxiety and may instruct a student in writing principles, unless

the student makes effective changes on the text-in-process, the practical purposes of this type of writing conference cannot be said to be met. In order to determine what a student has learned about revision from a writing conference, it seems appropriate to conduct writing conferences with specific drafts. Because the literature clearly describes revision as taking place over time and involving a hierarchy of tasks (Mohr, 1984; Murray, 1968; Sommers, 1980), the current research study provided two conferences each on two student papers.

The conference teacher's task is to identify the major problem in the student's text, according to Murray (1968), Duke (1975), Garrison (1974), and Arbur (1976). The conference teacher in the current research study took as her principal task the identification of the major writing problem in the student's text. The solution to this writing problem can be addressed directly or indirectly, depending upon the teacher's style and the student's need. The nondirective, questioning, or open-ended approach is found superior by most teacher-researchers (Duke, 1975; Harris, 1986; Jacob, 1982; Murray, 1968; Reigstad, 1982). The conference teacher in the current study took a questioning, nondirective posture without short-changing the diagnostic task of these conferences. Above all, the conference teacher focused on the student and the student's draft, the measure of a successful conference identified by Walker and Elias (1987).

Analysis of the conferences must be based on an adequate description of the conference dialogue. A common practice in the studies reviewed was to audiotape and then transcribe the writing conferences. Researchers point out

that an audiotape alone does not reveal physical response or what happens during conversational pauses (Freedman, 1984). Jacob (1982) observed the conferences, adding observational notes to the transcripts. Freedman (1984) and Perl (1978) followed up the conferences by interviewing the subjects. The conferences in the current study, however, were videotaped. The advantage of this method over Jacob's is that independent observers will be able to describe what happens during pauses, reviewing the videotape as necessary. The videotape also provided a way to ascertain the nondirective nature of the conference through a description of the physical relationship of the two conversants, their posture and gestures, and the sharing of the student's paper.

Guiding Student Revisions

One of the purposes of mid-composing conferences is to facilitate effective revision of a specific paper. Before revisions can be studied, however, they must be coded. The most important coding of these changes was topic identification because the tracing of topics between conference and revised drafts was the primary focus of this study. The first step in the analysis of student changes, then, was identification of topics, which produced a list similar to Freedman's topic list. These topics were then described, using the categories developed by Sommers (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981, 1984) as part of their studies. Sommers' system of coding revision operations, based on Noam Chomsky's work, proved inadequate because it provided no method for identifying sentence combining, sentence distribution, or rearranging with

substitution. The second level of coding revisions in this current study, then, coded content changes at the word, phrase, sentence, and theme levels (Sommers); surface changes; and type of operation--addition, deletion, substitution, consolidation, permutation, and distribution (Faigley & Witte). The term "content changes" will be used for those changes which affect the writer's message; "surface changes" will be used for mechanical or language changes which do not affect the substance of the text.

As Faigley and Witte (1981) point out, not all student revisions improve the paper, although Armstrong (1979/1980), Shook (1981), and Simmons (1984) found that students taught with regular conferences wrote higher quality essays. Holistic scoring of first and last drafts, as used by Shook and others, was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of these student revisions.

Another purpose of writing conferences is to instruct students in general revision strategies. In order to determine students' development in this area, the teacher-researcher in this research study used conferences as the primary writing instruction during the term. In addition, the researcher looked for an increase in the frequency of student-initiated changes and for an increasing percentage of content revision. Faigley and Witte (1984) and Sommers (1980) identify content revision as a mark of writing maturity; therefore, if students begin to work at deeper levels in the text, one can assume they are developing in revision skills. Finally, the holistic scoring of drafts was a method to uncover a possible increase in quality ratings over the length of the term.

Finding the Connections

The particular connection that the current study attempted to find was between the writing conference conversation and the subsequent student revisions. Shook and others who tested the effectiveness of teacher-student writing conferences by evaluating the resulting essays' quality presuppose this connection: a higher quality revision must be a result of an effective conference. The danger here is in assuming that a text's higher rating by holistic scorers demonstrates effective revision or learning of revision strategies. A more descriptive method of describing a student's changes, as well as a method of describing the writing conference conversation, was needed.

In order to study this relationship between conference and revision, the researcher traced topics between the conference transcriptions and the revisions. A topic list, common to a conference and the subsequent revision, was prepared. Topics discussed in conference and topics of changes in revisions were identified. Within each topic chunk in the conference transcription, the types of utterances were described. With Sommers' (1980) levels of revision categories and Faigley and Witte's (1981) operations, the management of the students' changes was described. As a help in understanding why the students made the changes they did, the researcher asked the students to describe and analyze their revisions. Although a few research studies on students' revisions included interviews, most studied the changes without looking for reasons behind them. The students' self-analysis provided an important perspective on their revisions. This researcher hoped to identify and describe the conference-revision connections.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study was selected in order to identify and describe some of the connections between the teacher-student writing conference and subsequent student revisions that may explain the effectiveness of these conferences in fostering content revision.

The Study Design

When exploring what happens in the writing conference, many researchers have used the case study rather than an experimental design. Graves (1975) concludes, after his five-month study of seven-year-old children in New Hampshire, that the case study effectively makes "visible those variables that contribute to a child's writing" (p. 237). The shift away from experimental studies toward case studies in writing research is a result of the shift of emphasis in teaching the process rather than the product of writing (Bissex and Bullock, 1987; Emig, 1982).

According to Yin (1984), the case study strategy should be used when the researcher is asking "how" or "why" questions about a contemporary occurrence "over which the investigator has little or no control" (p.20). The case study's strength, he states, is "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence -- documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (p. 20). The case study could be criticized for its small sample sizes and its lack of generalizability, yet Yin says that case studies generalize not to a population but to a theory. Because

this study is asking "how" questions about the conference and subsequent revisions, the case study was selected as the appropriate research design.

This study's design for gathering data was case studies of six selected students in a freshman writing class which incorporated regular teacher-student writing conferences (see Design in Outline Form in Appendix A). At the beginning of the term all students in the class were asked to sign a release form (Appendix B). During the first two weeks of the term a baseline was established through two activities. First, the students wrote an expository essay during one 65-minute class period. The instructions specified that opportunity would be given for later revision. Before the next class period, the teacher made copies of this draft. During the next class period the students were given their original drafts and red pens with which to make revisions. The instructions given to students for both the first draft and the revision are recorded in Appendix C. Revised drafts were collected, copied, and kept for future analysis. For the second baseline activity, the students completed a questionnaire on attitudes toward and practices of revision (Appendix D), based on Daly and Miller's Writing Apprehension Test (1975a, 1975b).

During weeks three through eight of the term, the teacher-researcher conducted the intervention, the focus of this study (see Figure 1). All the students in the class wrote three more expository essays (see prompts in Appendix E), each with ten to fourteen days allowed for writing and revision. The middle of these three essays was the persuasive essay. Although it might have been more logical to conclude with the most difficult essay to write, the

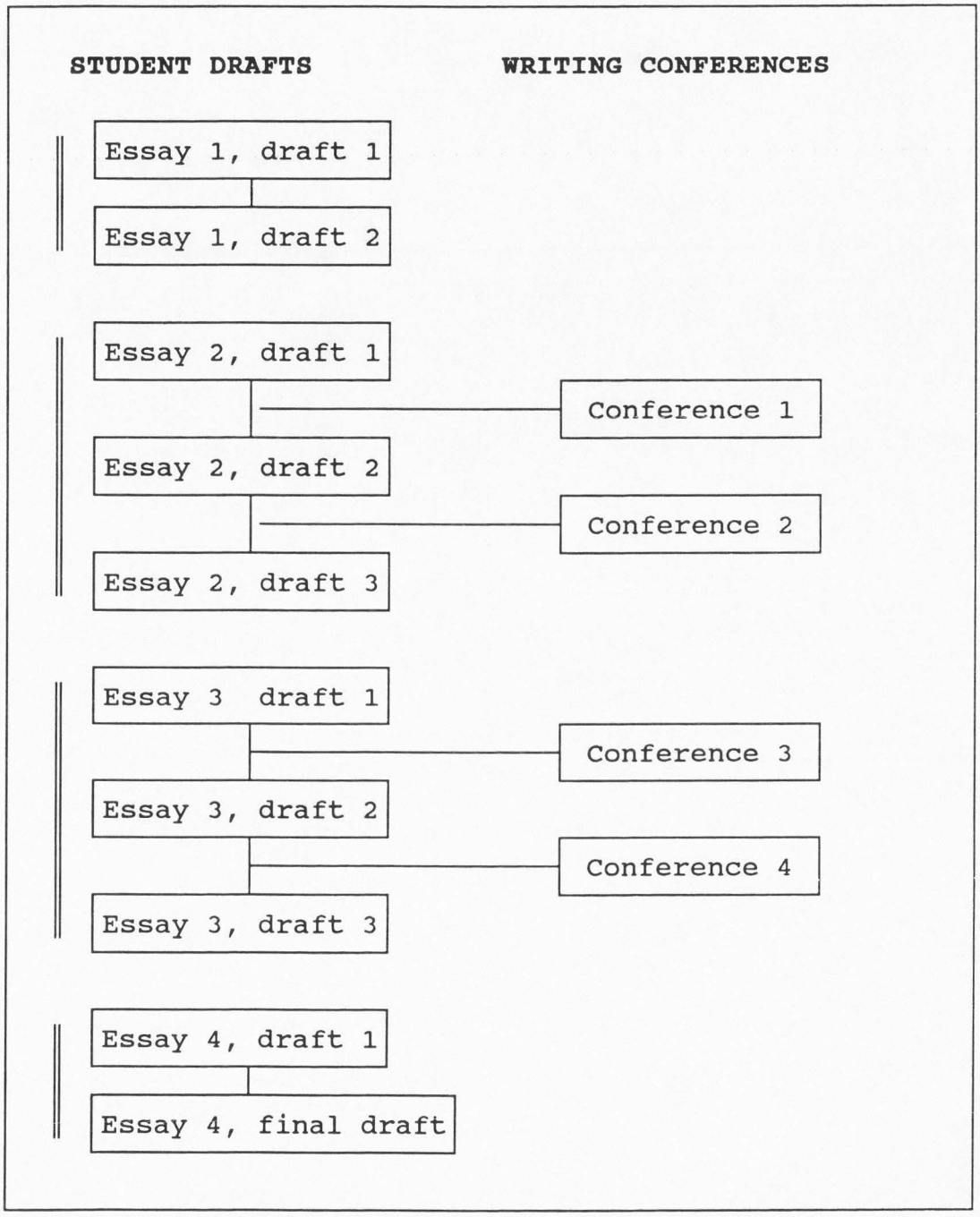

Figure 1. Intervention Activities

persuasive, it was scheduled so that it would have the benefit of writing conferences. Because the first and last essays were going to be contrasted to establish growth, the researcher chose to make both of them expository essays.

Two writing conferences for each of these twenty-one students were scheduled for the second and third essays. The intervention procedure was as follows: after pre-composing class activities, the students were given a written prompt and assigned the writing; each student came to a writing conference with a copy of his or her draft for the teacher to keep; the conference was videotaped and, as a back-up, audiotaped. The students revised their papers on their own and, when the final draft was completed, wrote a self-analysis of their writing process (see Appendix F). This writing analysis asked the student to identify the changes made and the source of or reason for these changes.

The pattern of the writing conference was for the teacher to diagnose the text's major problem, conducting the conference in a nondirective manner as described by Duke (1975): the teacher providing focus, clarifying, using acceptance words, and asking nondirective questions. In providing focus, the teacher lets the student know the purpose and parameters of the conference. Clarifying comments echo the student's words or re-state them, usually to aid the student's self-understanding. Acceptance words, words that affirm the student's self-worth, may either be a phrase or a full statement of reassurance. Duke defines nondirective questions as primarily open-ended, such as "What seems to be giving you the most difficulty?" (p. 45) Although each conference conversation necessarily adapted to the individual student and text, the conference teacher generally operated with these two principles: to diagnose the major writing problem and to take a nondirective posture.

The fourth expository essay was written and revised without writing

conferences in order to reveal students' revision practices on their own after a series of conferences. The teacher made copies of their first and final drafts for later study. A comparison of student revisions on this fourth essay and student revisions on the first essay was conducted to reveal revision skill development.

Three procedures concluded the term. First, the students re-took the questionnaire on revision and conferences. A study of their responses, as compared to their responses at the beginning of the term, revealed attitude changes and provided information about the effectiveness of the term's revision and conference activities. Second, all students in the class wrote a final in-class essay describing and evaluating their progress as writers during the school term. Students had access to their writing portfolios before and during this writing. In the third concluding activity, a research assistant interviewed the six students chosen for the study. The interviewer was the Director of the Study Skills Center, a former English teacher and skilled interviewer who has had ten years' experience working one-on-one with students. Interview questions were specific for each student, drawn from their responses on the questionnaire and from a quick look at both their writing analyses and their final essays (see Appendix G for a sample list of interview questions). During the interview the students had their writing portfolios open in front of them.

Role of the Researcher

In several of the studies cited in this literature review, the researcher functioned also as the conference teacher (Armstrong, 1979/1980; Kates, 1977;

Maddox, 1981; Overton, 1980; Ziv, 1984). Some precedents stand for studies in which the teacher is researcher. Emig (1971) conducted and analyzed the interviews and wrote the case studies in her major work. In the field of psychology, Piaget developed his cognitive developmental theory from observing his own children. Myers (1985) encourages teachers to conduct research as an on-going component of their instruction. Because the researcher served also as the conference teacher, however, care was taken to validate the analysis with reliable instruments and by using multiple coders and evaluators.

The Study Sample

The subjects selected for study were students at a private four-year liberal-arts college in Idaho: Northwest Nazarene College. The student body of 1,095 came primarily from Idaho (40%), Washington (20%), and Oregon (17%); 28 other states and 18 foreign countries were also represented. Males constituted 47.5 percent of the student body, females 52.5%. The average age of 1987-88's student population at NNC was twenty-two, with 154 students twenty-five and older.

The ACT scores of 1987-88's freshman class were not quite so high as usual, yet were still slightly above the national norms (Figure 2). On the survey accompanying the ACT examination, this year's class members expressed the following needs: 50% for study skills help, 34% for reading help, and 28% for writing help.

Before the end of the freshman year, all students are required to take

	NNC	National
Average ACT Composite score	19.6	19.2
Average High School grades	3.1	2.9

Figure 2. NNC's ACT Scores

English Composition (English 102) unless they have tested out by advanced placement courses in high school (approximately a dozen students did so in 1987-88). Students are randomly assigned to one of 14 sections of English 102 which are offered across three terms each year. Enrollment is limited to 25 students per section. Although teaching methods vary among the instructors, instruction in these 14 sections is normed by the use of a common syllabus, common requirements, and common examinations. One of the standard elements is the writing of expository essays.

This study's subjects were selected from English 102E, a section which met spring term, 1988, from 3:20 to 4:25 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons. The instructor was this researcher-writer. During the term all students in the class were treated identically: all wrote the essays; all completed the release form, the questionnaires, and the writing analyses; and all their conferences were videotaped. The subjects were not selected until the completion of the final conference. At this point, the researcher's personal interaction with the subjects was completed, and yet sufficient time remained to prepare the questions for the final interview.

Use of Ability Grouping

Several researchers cited in this literature review selected subjects with different writing abilities (Arnold, 1962/1963; Faigley and Witte, 1981; Freedman, 1979, 1982, 1984; Freedman and Sperling, 1985; Sommers, 1980). Research has shown that writers with different skill levels operate with different procedures. These researchers determined the writing skill level of their subjects through holistic scoring of writing samples, syntactic maturity scoring of writing samples (measuring words per clauses and clauses per sentences), SAT verbal scores, ACT English scores, or Daly and Miller's Writing Apprehension Test (1975a, 1975b). Choosing subjects of differing ability levels can provide information about writing skill development, but studying students of mid-range English ability, as determined by the ACT scores, can provide information about typical college freshmen.

In this current research, students were numbered (01 to 21) from an alphabetically listed roll sheet and grouped according to the quartile of their ACT English scores. Then, using a table of random numbers, three men and three women were selected from the middle two quartiles, providing average-ability subjects for the study, representative by sex. The subjects' attitudes on the revision and conference questionnaire were analyzed to provide further descriptive data.

Analysis Techniques

Research on revisions and teacher-student writing conferences requires appropriate instruments to analyze both conversation and changes on drafts. Because this study explored connections between the two, a two-level process was used. The first level, identification of topics, was in common and thus provided a link between the two (see Figure 3). The second level differed between conference and revision coding: the second level of conference coding identified the types of utterances; the second level of revision coding identified the level and operation of the changes.

Student Revisions

In order to study student revisions, a researcher needs a method to uncover what changes students make and the reasons for those changes. A coding instrument can classify the changes made. Sommers (1980) reports four revision operations (deleting, substituting, adding, re-ordering) at four levels (word, phrase, sentence, theme).

The student revisions were prepared for coding as follows: the researcher marked all the additions, deletions, substitutions, and reordering on the drafts. Some studies look only at the changes students mark on their own first drafts, but this researcher wanted to look at all changes made, including those between drafts, and to look at these changes as unobtrusively as possible.

A second step in preparing the revisions for coding became necessary. Because of the large number of changes per essay per student, some way of

LEVELS OF CODING

REVISIONS: Changes **CONFERENCE: Transcriptions**

Level 1
Topic Identification

Level 1
Topic Identification

Topic List:

1. FORMAT
1a Engagement
1b Conference Procedures
1c Disengagement

2. COMPOSITION
2a Transitions
2b Specific Details
2c Thesis or Purpose
2d Introduction
2e Development & Support
2f Conclusion
2g General Topic
2h Writing Process

3. LANGUAGE
3a Syntax
3b Diction
3c Shift of Person
3d Inflection

4. MECHANICS
4a Punctuation
4b Spelling
4c Capitalization
4d Abbreviations

Level 2

Description of
Types of Utterances

* Speaker
* Teacher Talk
* Student Talk
* Operation Suggeste

Level 2

Description of
Changes:

* Level (word, phrase, sentence, theme, correctness)
* Operation (add, delete, substitute, consolidate, distribute, permutation)

Figure 3. Two-level Coding

identifying specific changes needed to be provided in order to determine reliability in coding. Therefore, the researcher numbered each change lightly in pencil. To guard against any editorializing that might have crept in as the researcher was thus determining the parameters of each change, the coders were instructed to change these parameters as they saw fit.

The changes thus marked on the students' drafts were then coded at two levels. First, the common topic list was used to identify the section of the essay if the change involved content, or the type of change if the change involved language or mechanics. The second level of coding (see Figure 3) involved entering each change with the identifying topic number into a chart showing the level and operation involved in the change. An example of the whole essay coding process is in Appendix H. Sommers' (1980) categories for coding levels of students' revisions were used: word, phrase, sentence, and theme levels, with the addition of a level for changes involving correctness. A combination of researchers' categories for coding operations was used: addition, deletion, and substitution (Sommers); combination, distribution, and permutation (Faigley and Witte, 1984). Fuller definitions of these categories are in Appendix I.

Writing Conferences

Only one researcher cited in this literature review videotaped her subjects; Pianko (1979) used videotaping in order to determine how much time her subjects spent in the different practices of composing. Most researchers audiotaped conferences in order to transcribe them (Freedman, 1979, 1984;

Jacob, 1982). Freedman and Sperling (1985) added interviews with the students about their at-home composing process. Jacob added observational data to the verbal transcript, the transcription of the audiotape in column one under "Text" and his observational notes in column two under "Cues." He noted the following types of behaviors: "pitch, loudness, hesitations, spurts of rapid speech, pauses, gestures, and facial expressions" (p. 36). Some of his recorded observational cues are evaluative--"Mark looks tense, his chin is taut, arms are folded" and "A tone of disgust in his voice" (p. 36)--although other cues are more truly descriptive--"His hand goes to his forehead; shoulders slump" (p. 44). The fact that Jacob was the only observer and that there was no videotape provides no reliability check on the body language that was such an important part of his study.

Freedman admits not having data on what happened during pauses in the audiotape of the conference conversation. Because videotaping provides fuller information about what is happening in the conference than does audiotaping alone, each conference with the students was videotaped, with the subjects' videotapes later transcribed. The conferences were also discreetly audiotaped to provide a back-up in the event of equipment failure. A third-year college student majoring in English education was trained to record what happened during the pauses and to note the body language throughout. Training consisted of the researcher first distinguishing between observing behavior and interpreting behavior, followed by the student-observer's studying samples and experiencing guided practice. The resulting descriptions were added to the transcriptions in a

third column.

Once a tape was transcribed and the observational cues added, the conversation needed to be coded and analyzed. Freedman's system (1982, 1984) consisted of structural analysis and content analysis; her own "topics of conversation" constituted the content analysis. Her classification system identifies topic shifts, labels topics, and notes the recycling of topics. In a later study Freedman and Sperling (1985) looked also at back channel cues, signals of "conversational cooperation" like "OK" and "uh huh" (p. 111). "Back channel cues" from the conference conversation were entered into the transcript as Freedman did it: within parentheses in the speech of the other person.

One of the problems in transcribing and analyzing conversation, according to Barnes and Todd (1977), is whether one can deduce what a person means from what a person says. In their study of the "social interaction of small groups and the cognitive strategies generated in the course of this interaction" (p. 1), they eventually abandoned a quantitative analysis of the conversation because they had difficulty in distinguishing the children's voices when they spoke simultaneously or softly and because they could not distinguish which child was speaking. However, as this study traced topics of conversation instead of deducing meaning, dealt with two adults instead of a group of children, and videotaped instead of audiotaped, a transcription coded for topics seemed appropriate.

In order to analyze the conference conversation, it was divided into T-units, as defined in 1977 by Hunt (an independent clause including any

embedded modifying units). The conference was then coded at two levels. The topic of each T-unit was first identified by the trained coders, with topic sections marked off by horizontal lines across the page. The conference topic list was the same as the one used for analyzing students' revisions to make possible the tracking of the likely sources of revisions. In the next step, the coders identified the type of utterance, using the taxonomies in Appendix I, based on Duke's (1975) list of nondirective devices (focusing statements, clarification statements, acceptance words, and nondirective leads in the teacher's talk), with the addition of the following: who initiated the topic, whether the topic was text-specific, what characterized the student's utterances (Did they elicit approval? Were they evaluative? Were they in question form? How many markers were present?), and which of Sommers' four operations of revision were suggested (deletion, addition, substitution, reordering).

The coding system used in Walker and Elias' study (1987), which explored ten writing conferences (five rated as successful by both teacher and student and five rated as unsuccessful), was used in classifying topics. After first dividing the discourse into Hunt's T-units, Walker and Elias categorized each unit by function: preliminaries, markers, explanations, digressions, procedures, criteria, evaluations, revision, and test questions. The concern of the present research study was tracing topic development between the conference and subsequent revisions rather than counting types of talk; nevertheless, some of their coding system for describing writing conference talk was used in grouping and analyzing the topics.

Faigley and Witte's (1984) caution bears mentioning here: "the reliability of the taxonomy depends upon the shared expectations of those applying it and the relative difficulty of the texts being analyzed" (p. 102). The texts were relatively simple as well as similar, and care was taken in developing the coders' expectations.

Quality of Changes

Several researchers cited in this literature review, beyond just coding revisions, also measured the quality of students' drafts as a measure of the effectiveness of the writing conference (Maddox, 1981; Overton, 1980; Shook, 1981; Smith and Bretcko, 1974). Holistic scoring, as described by Myers (1980), is a highly reliable method of evaluating over-all writing quality; he calls it the most productive way to evaluate writing. His plan calls for a careful setting of goals, preparation of an adequate prompt, selection of appropriate anchors (a paper which "defines a scoring category and keeps a reading anchored or tied to a normative scale," p. 33), training of raters, and actual scoring. Inter-rater reliability has proved high for trained raters, "almost perfect" according to Charles Cooper (Cooper and Odell, 1977, p. 19).

Therefore, first and last drafts of the first, second, third, and fourth essays were holistically scored by three trained raters. To assure objectivity from the holistic scorers, names and draft numbers on essays were replaced with a code number (see Appendix J). In addition, all drafts were typed exactly as they were, including surface errors. This step assured two things: all drafts being

clean copies did not prejudice holistic scorers in favor of final drafts, which are usually neater than first drafts; and all copies being typed exactly as turned in did not confound the quality of the paper as the student produced it. Holistic scoring enriched the data gathered about the revisions. Specifically, it was pertinent to know if the student revisions resulted in improved drafts.

Training of Research Assistants

One of the important steps in analysis was to select and train coders and evaluators. Two public school teachers, a secondary English teacher and a sixth grade teacher, were trained to code the changes made between drafts and the teacher-student conference. To train the coders, the researcher gave them definitions of terms (Appendix I). After discussion of terms, the coders studied samples of coded revisions. The coders then worked with the researcher coding further sample revisions. Questions were settled as work progressed. They coded another sample, checking for reliability at the conclusion. After the coders felt comfortable with the process, they began to code the revisions independently. Reliability was checked after the first five drafts and at the end of each day thereafter. The coders averaged 74% reliability on their independent coding of topics. Following the independent coding, they met and reached consensus on all discrepancies. The reliability of the independent coding at the second level of revision coding, identifying level and operation of changes, was 87%. Again, all discrepancies were resolved.

This same training process was conducted with the transcription coding. However, because a problem developed, a different method of coding was necessary. One of the coders had never participated in teacher-student writing conferences and was unable to code topic shifts in the conversation. In order to complete the coding, the other coder labeled topic shifts and the first coder coded the second level, the coding of types of utterance. These two levels were independent of each other and therefore able to be coded concurrently. When each had completed these tasks, they exchanged conference transcriptions and cross-checked the other's decisions. Agreement reached on coding the types of utterances was 98.8% and on topic coding, 98%. The researcher was available throughout the coding process only to clarify definitions or conversations.

Three other teachers were trained to holistically score the first and last drafts of essays one, two, three, and four. These raters were public school English teachers, all experienced in holistic scoring. The first step of training was selecting anchor papers for each of four categories, 4 being the highest and 1 the lowest. After these papers were selected, the raters compiled a list of qualities characterizing each of these papers. The raters were told that they might read more than one version of the same paper, but should try to evaluate each paper individually using the anchor papers as models. If the first two readers of a draft did not agree on the ranking, the paper was given to the third to read. Their reliability was 66% on the first reading by two readers, 98% when the third reader read the disputed papers. Although the percentage of holistic scorers is usually higher than 66% (Cooper & Odell, 1977) these papers

required very fine distinctions: all papers were from mid-range students, and multiple drafts of the same papers were evaluated. The papers used for training and for anchor papers were those written for the same assignments by members of English 102E other than the six subjects.

Changes of Attitude and Thinking

Because the research hoped to go beyond analysis of revisions to look for connections between them and the writing conference, a way to get at the students' thinking process was needed. Besides coding revisions by topic and by type, then, two methods for discovering students' reasons for revision were used: writing self-analyses and a follow-up interview. Emig's study (1971) used protocols: students composing out loud, explaining what and why they are writing what they are. Because protocols seem to be an artificial method of composing, students in this study completed a writing self-analysis (see Appendix F) for each essay and a research assistant interviewed the six student subjects about their revisions.

Since this interview could have confounded the results by acting like another teacher-student conference, it was conducted at the end of the term. The interviewer was provided a list of questions specific to the students' revision practices as shown by their drafts, the students' writing analyses, and the students' final essays on their writing development. Appendix G lists one student's interview questions. The interview was conducted in a private room in the administration building. The student and the interviewer sat side by side at

a table with the student's portfolio open between them. Both the writing analyses and the interview uncovered some of the students' reasons for and sources of revision.

Analysis of the Connections

The final analysis of this study was a tracing of topics between the coded revisions and the coded transcriptions of the writing conference. The researcher attempted to determine if students made the teacher-suggested changes from the writing conference, or if they made the changes they themselves suggested. In addition, these data revealed information about the students' developmental skills in revising: increasing frequency of content (text-based) revision, and increasing frequency of sentence and theme level changes. Finally, the writing analyses and the interviews shed some light on the students' thinking processes during revision. As patterns emerged, the researcher went back to the data, quantifying the pertinent material, and, after consulting a research specialist, running appropriate statistical tests. In addition, the descriptions in the second-level coding provided the opportunity to study the conferences according to the types of topics covered; the initiators; the frequency of focusing, clarifying, and acceptance comments; the types of questions; and the frequency of operation discussed (sample in Appendix K). One student's total drafts and total conference transcriptions are included in Appendix L and M. The second-level coding of the revisions also made possible a study of student changes according to the level of change and the type of operation.

This case study of six college freshmen with differing English skills provided a rich fund of data about topics covered in revision and in conference, and about the types of utterance in conference and the levels and operations of revisions. The data gathered also revealed some connections between conferences and subsequent student revisions.

CHAPTER IV:

CASE STUDY NARRATIVES

Introduction

While the work of the coders and the holistic scores provided valuable, quantified data for study, these case studies supplied other rich sources of information. The students analyzed their writing and revising process at the end of each essay. The six subjects were also interviewed by a skilled assistant. In addition, for their final essays all students wrote autobiographies of themselves as writers. Added to these sources of information, the teacher-researcher's personal observations, while subjective, were useful in understanding these students and their revising processes. Information from all these sources, together with another review of the students' transcripts and drafts, provides the basis for the narrative of this chapter which takes on the tone of the students' written and verbal expression.

Background: The Class

The brightest students seldom select a late afternoon English class in the spring because mid-afternoon is a popular sun-tanning time. In addition, the sounds of the baseball game across the street and laughing coeds on the lawn outside rasp on the attention of a student sitting on a hard wooden chair in a hot classroom. The brightest and most highly motivated students usually take all their required classes early in the year and early in the day. English 102E, a freshman English class scheduled for spring term from 3:30 to 4:30 in the

afternoon, promised to be a small class of reluctant, or repeat, learners.

English 102E surprised the teacher. Twenty-one students enrolled, and all but one were present for the first class session. As they entered and found their first-day seats, they grouped together in the front and center section. Many were laughing and getting acquainted before class began. Two of the three married women in the class found seats next to each other and quietly exchanged their fears. During the get-acquainted time one of these women, Susan, told the class that this was her first day of college after being out of school for several years. The young people called out encouragement to her. "Don't be afraid, Susan," Verlin said; "we'll take care of you!"

The first class period concluded with some business matters. The students completed a questionnaire about their writing attitudes (see Appendix D). The teacher assured the students they would not be judged by this but that their honest answers would enable her to meet their writing needs more effectively. After looking at the syllabus together, the teacher asked the students to fill out a release form if they did not object to it (Appendix B). "All college teachers learn from their students," the teacher said, "and I want to be free to use what I learn from you." The teacher promised that they would never be used as bad examples or embarrassed personally, and that they would be notified if anything involving them was ever published. All students voluntarily signed the release form.

From that point on, the teacher attempted to conduct the class normally. Later in the term, three of the women talked to the teacher about the videotape

camera in her office. Interestingly, all three of them later were selected as subjects. For the most part, though, the class members were unaware of the importance of their work in the teacher's research. Test scores revealed that the class was higher than average in ability. Attendance during the term was high; all but two students turned in their work faithfully and promptly.

As part of the course introduction, the teacher said that the class would learn more about writing in two ways: through practice and through reflection. The class was thus prepared to write and to write about writing. This was accomplished primarily through the Writing Analyses (Appendix F) and the final exam essay (see Appendix E for the written prompt). These, plus the conference transcriptions, the copies of all student drafts, and the end-of-term interview provided a rich resource from which the teacher-researcher has explored the conference-revision connection. In this chapter each of the six students will be presented as a separate case study.

Anne

Anne is a quiet, pretty blonde girl from the wheat country of Washington state. During the second class period she wrote her first essay on why she enjoyed singing, a topic that she had thought about for years. Anne began her essay with her thesis statement: "One of my most favorite activities is singing, especially singing Christian songs." She then followed with how she began singing, what her goals were, and why she loved music. In the third class period, the teacher announced:

> In your folders today are the drafts you wrote in our last class session. Please re-read them. You may make any changes in them that you wish. Please make all changes with the colored pens I have given you. You have the rest of the class period--about 40 minutes. At the end of the class period, place your essay in your folder and return it and the colored pen to me. Thank you.

During the time allowed for changes, Anne adjusted her thesis statement to read: "My most favorite activities are singing and playing the piano." She also rewrote the introduction. The remainder of her changes on this first revision were at the Word and Phrase level, adding, deleting, and substituting. She explained that her job during revision was to state her ideas "more clearly by adding or deleting words or phrases." Anne said she felt "pretty good" about the content of her essay, but expressed need for learning "technical points and making the essay read smoother."

A week after completing this essay, Anne brought the first draft of her next essay to her first writing conference. She apologized about the quality of her paper: "I'm going to have to think a little more to make it better ideas. . . . I may have to find better reasons and causes. . . . I think I wrote too broadly." She seemed to be searching for how to please the teacher: "Maybe I've got the wrong idea . . . about what I'm supposed to do." Anne and the teacher discussed her finding focus in this paper; she had written about her father's successful farming and fathering, but also about his success and respect in the community. The teacher said, "I think you need to narrow down what kind of success you are talking about." The teacher also asked for more specific support after the focus was found, complimenting Anne on a specific detail that she had

used in her first draft: "I like the detail about that he didn't buy brand new vehicles for the farm when he could have, probably." The conference closed with the teacher's encouragement to continue working on the draft: "I like it. We aren't going to finish this up this week. I want you to let it sit and then go back to it. Putter along with it."

Anne's work on the second draft was extensive. She rewrote her thesis statement and entire introduction, adding more descriptive details about her father. She kept no more than one idea per paragraph and rewrote the remainder. As she handed her second draft to the teacher in the next conference, she expressed frustration with her paper. She said she had worked very hard with it, but had not included specific details. "I never really write papers with that [specific details] because I have to see things as a whole; I don't, it's hard for me to pick up the details," she explained.

During this conference Anne again stated that she was trying to write what the teacher wanted. "Let me put your mind at ease," the teacher answered. "I really want it to be what you like, and if you like it, I think it will be good."

Anne was still struggling with her purpose during this conference, wavering between two basic directions: that which made her father successful and that which resulted from his success. She also discussed whether she should focus on her father as a farmer or as a father, or both. Several times during the conference, the teacher and Anne searched for her meaning; Anne seemed unable to articulate it, and the teacher seemed unable to clarify Anne's thoughts.

As the conference continued, Anne read her entire paper aloud. The teacher commended the ending but suggested Anne add the phrase, "for his family," to pull in the twin emphases evident in the paper: the farm and the family. The teacher also suggested that Anne write connecting sentences (transitions) that would clarify the connection between her main point and the supporting points. Toward the end of the conference, Anne was still working out her focus in this essay. In the student's indecisiveness, the teacher took over the conversation and the direction of the paper. Between the teacher's long suggestions, Anne's comments were fragments hanging in the air: "And this covers--" "Well, could I go--?" "But you didn't like, um--" "Yeah, okay, see, I didn't know if I--" During the Disengagement period the teacher said: "Now, I'm not talking about a total re-write; this is good. I'm talking about those sentences that begin the second and third section. Okay?"

Anne's work preparing her third draft shows the addition and reordering of thesis and transition sentences which seems to clarify the direction of the paper. Her thesis ("In his quiet and humble way, he has established a successful farm operation and has abundantly supported and raised a family of seven") leads to the next paragraph, which begins: "Much of my father's farming success is do [sic] to those characteristics. His emotional and financial wisdom have played a major role in making his farm what it is today." The transition beginning the second point of the paper reads, "The care and deliberation he has taken to provide for our family is representive [sic] of the same quality in his character that has made him a successful farmer."

In reflecting on the writing of this essay, Anne wrote:

> I was able to organize this essay with the suggestions from the conference. I feel pretty good about the paper. I wasn't able to be very extensive concerning detailed examples though. I am anxious to see if the essay was written correctly concerning stating causes. As you can see I made many changes in the organization and wording of the drafts.

In Anne's third writing conference, she and the teacher discussed the first draft of her persuasive essay about maintaining a positive attitude in college. After an opening discussion about Anne's part-time job and her brother's upcoming wedding, the teacher said, "Okay, let's look at what you've got done here."

"I don't like it at all," was Anne's reply.

"Well," the teacher answered, "tell me what point you're trying to make."

In the discussion of the topic which followed, Anne participated equally with the teacher. Part of the discussion was Anne's search for her writing purpose; part was a discussion of requirements when writing in the persuasive mode. Toward the end of the conference, Anne asked, "Should I add more details?" She initiated this topic and, during this conference, expressed no inability in writing with specific details.

Anne's second draft was a total rewrite with the exception of two sentences which were themselves changed significantly and moved into the introduction. Anne opened the talk about her essay in the fourth conference by telling the teacher she took a completely different approach in this draft. After stating her paper's focus and the content of her introduction, she added that she did not give specific examples in the introduction. During this conference Anne

participated in the discussion more than she did in the earlier conferences. She also asked specific questions about her draft, "Do I need to make that more clear?" for example.

Anne's concern in pleasing the teacher resurfaced in this conference:

S: Right. So, is it being effective here?

T: I think it's okay. If you start to feel uncomfortable--

S: I feel okay. But what do <u>you</u> want? 'Cause you assigned the paper.

T: That's true.

S: Right. So what do you want?

T: I wish I weren't the only audience for this. It's more fun to write for, like the class. (uh huh)

Anne further expressed her insecurity as a writer: "Well, I'm not a good writer. . . . I'm not very imaginative."

One of the topics of this conference was the audience Anne was addressing: the complainers or the drifters. Anne determined that her introduction was addressed to both complainers and drifters. She also discovered that she had not given reasons why her audience should change to positive attitudes. Most of the rest of the conference was spent in brainstorming persuasive reasons for having a positive attitude.

When Anne revised this draft after the conference, she kept the first three paragraphs as the introduction with few changes other than consolidation of paragraphs. She deleted the fourth paragraph and added four more

paragraphs, using her dorm assistant as an example of why college students should maintain a positive attitude. Each of the paragraphs developed a different reason, the final paragraph summarizing her ideas and restating her thesis. After reading some of the other students' final drafts, Anne wrote, "I am encouraged to do better next time."

Anne wrote her fourth essay about the generation gap between her and her mother. Between her first and final drafts she changed almost everything except part of the third paragraph and an example in the fifth paragraph. She rewrote her thesis statement from "Morals, life-style, family life and the pace of this generation are distinctly different from the generation of our parents" to "Despite the high technological advances, this generation has plunged into a moral system that is quite contrary to the generation my mother grew up in." This shift shows a narrowing of focus from the four areas mentioned in the first thesis to just one area.

Anne's final draft contained several specific examples about her mother's experiences as a teenager. In order to write this essay, Anne had telephoned her mother for specific examples to include. She later told the interviewer that she used to write in generalities, but now she tries to include concrete details. Anne also expressed a concern with transitions as she wrote this essay: "I remembered what I learned. . . . I started and concluded each paragraph by referring to the main point of the essay." Her transitions were evident and helpful in this final draft. For example, her middle three paragraphs began as follows: "One prominent area that has--," "Another moral difference--," and "A

similar characteristic that--" Each of these sentences has words that connect the ideas of the essay.

Anne focused this revision, not on grammar, but "on rewording, reorganizing, and adding and deleting different phrases and sentences." In analyzing her composing of this essay, Anne wrote: "This time all of the revision was on my own. But I often referred back to previous conferences and class instructions. . . . I feel this is my best paper, yet it still had a few rough spots." At the end of the term, Anne discussed her writing history:

> I had a bad writing experience in one of my high school English classes because my writing was very confusing and choppy. The teacher expected much better papers from me but I was only getting more discouraged and confused because she wasn't teaching me how to write better.

Anne credits the writing conferences with helping her overcome what she perceived as her problem, organizing her thoughts. She told the interviewer that the conferences helped her because the teacher "was able to deal with me and my paper" instead of talking to the whole class. She evaluated her third essay as the one in which she learned how to use specific details, and from the teacher's comments on that third essay, she learned how to use transition sentences.

Her sense of writing inadequacy, so present in the early conferences, seemed to lessen through the term. "By in our last essay," she wrote, "I felt more confident about how to organize my thoughts, give specific examples and put the essay into a logical perspective." She evidenced some insights into the purpose of including specific details: "My tendency is to try and generalize the

whole paper with big and lofty words, rather than explaining my point through examples."

Interestingly, these changes of attitude toward writing and revision do not surface in the questionnaires Anne completed at the beginning and end of the term. Seventy-five percent of her answers are identical. Two of her answers show an increased struggle with revision. She does express a higher level of satisfaction in working on rereading and working on rough drafts and a weaker disagreement with the statement, "I don't like to talk about my compositions with a teacher."

Brenda

Brenda began college after being a homemaker for several years, taking just one or two classes a term until her two children begin school. Before this year, she said, she had not written much other than letters although she had read extensively. "I do enjoy creating word pictures," she reported. Brenda wrote her first essay about her family's love for impromptu picnics. Brenda said that her ideas in this essay became clear "after I had already written several lines, even more so after I'd turned the [first draft] in last Friday." During the time given for revision, Brenda added a sentence which seemed to focus the whole essay: "Picnics are an important part of our lifestyle." She also corrected spelling and added several phrases of clarifying information, some nouns instead of pronouns, and a few subordinating words. The largest change was the deletion of her original conclusion about a specific picnic, their "75th

monthiversary" with lace and crystal on a picnic table. In place of this conclusion she wrote:

> Impromptu picnics give me a break, a time to reflect and rest. My kids have fun playing, as well as, eating. We all enjoy being together in the beautiful out-of-doors and we always go home refreshed and a bit more rested.

Brenda omitted the example of the special picnic because she felt that it "changed the subject somewhat." She would have liked more time to organize this essay and time to rewrite it because, she said, "I do not like messy papers."

Brenda wrote the second essay to explain how a little girl she knew had won the national Little Miss contest. During the initial writing conference with the first draft of this essay, she seemed self-conscious about discussing her writing, laughing nervously throughout the conference. Brenda's first analysis of this essay was that it needed "all the little errors" corrected. The teacher commended the interesting introduction, but then pointed out a discordance between what seemed to be the main point and what was developed in the paper. The teacher asked several questions probing for Brenda's main idea, then suggested Brenda "tighten up" the long introductory section in order to better develop the reasons why the girl won the contest. She asked about including the information about the second contest that was running concurrently with Little Miss; the teacher thought the second contest should be deleted because its inclusion was confusing. The teacher suggested moving a sentence in the introduction. Throughout this conference, the teacher repeatedly asked Brenda what her main focus was and how she was going to analyze the causal

connections. Brenda talked freely about the contest and the family involved, but was hesitant to evaluate or make suggestions about her paper. Toward the end of the conference when the teacher had been suggesting further analysis in the paper, Brenda answered: "I didn't know how much longer it should be. That's part of my worry too."

"Don't worry about the length," the teacher answered. "I'd rather you developed it well. . . . You can tighten up some things that say the same thing." Brenda smiled but did not answer the questions about her main idea. As the teacher talked, though, she wrote notes on her copy of the paper.

The draft Brenda brought to the next writing conference exhibited substantive changes. In the introduction, Brenda had deleted reference to the second contest and moved the sentence as the teacher had suggested. Brenda had rearranged two paragraphs and added and deleted phrases. The most substantive changes were the addition of three new developmental paragraphs and the substitution of a new conclusion.

At the beginning of this conference, during an interruption from someone at the door, Brenda expressed an awareness of the video camera. The teacher attempted to put her at ease with it and then turned their attention to the draft at hand. The teacher restated what had been decided in the first conference about tightening up the introduction and defining and developing the main points. When the teacher asked, "What are you going to do next?" Brenda answered, "I don't know. Work on the punctuation and stuff, I guess."

"Okay," the teacher answered. "If you've got the content down, that's the

next stage. Which sentence is your purpose statement, the thing that kind of gives the main idea of the whole essay?"

When Brenda did not answer, the teacher read the first page, commenting on some interesting details. The teacher asked again: "Which, would you say, is your main idea sentence?"

Brenda answered, "Well, um just a, probably 'gave her the winning edge.'"

During the remainder of this conference the teacher and Brenda talked about what details to include, how to strengthen the purpose statement, and how to write the connecting sentences so that they would explain the causal relationship between the reasons and the result. Brenda asked about the sentence structure and punctuation in one of her longer sentences. The teacher read and commended the sentence, but suggested the addition of one word to make the structure parallel. As they concluded the talk about the essay, the teacher again recommended the addition of clear transition sentences that would keep the essay from becoming a story.

The final draft of this essay shows the addition of a sentence at the beginning and ending of three paragraphs, the movement of two paragraphs, and several small correctness-level changes. In her analysis of this writing assignment, Brenda clearly expressed her purpose: "The main idea of my essay is that family support is the crucial factor in building the self-confidence one needs to gain the winning edge." She began the essay at an exciting moment in the story in order to catch the reader's attention. Brenda describes her revision process:

> Most of the changes I have made involved placement of phrases or sentences, even at one point an entire paragraph, so the ideas would flow clearly. I also needed to connect my paragraphs back to the original idea of family support building self-confidence in a child. [The teacher] made a few suggestions during the private writing conferences, but I was left with the problem of how to rewrite these areas in the way I wanted to achieve the desire effect.

Brenda expressed pleasure in this essay, and she added, "I feel like a late-bloomer in many areas of my life. . . . I've felt some what out of place as an older student but I'm finding an inner feeling of success as I complete each of my classes."

Brenda came to her third conference with the first draft of a persuasive essay on being organized in college. She thought it had been fun to write, and she liked it. The teacher also expressed pleasure in the introduction, a scenario from the life of Ms. NeVer Raedee. In contrast to the first two conferences, when the teacher asked for the main idea, Brenda responded quickly, "That college students need to get organized." Brenda's analysis of what she needed to do next in this paper was that she needed to discover the correct form for a reference. She also was uncertain about including herself in this essay.

After the teacher had read the essay, she complimented Brenda on her strong and interesting introduction. The teacher made three major points in this writing conference. The first was to simplify the thesis statement. Secondly, the teacher asked Brenda to identify the audience she was addressing. Finally, the teacher encouraged Brenda to focus on telling her audience <u>why</u> they should get organized, and not just <u>how</u>. One of the suggestions the teacher made was for Brenda to move some of the "how" material to the introduction or conclusion.

Brenda brought a substantially rewritten draft to her final conference. Her thesis statement had been changed from "I have seen a few and I want them to get organized if not for themselves than they should do it for the sake of their fellow class mates" to "A college student should develop good organizational skills which are invaluable to successful adult life." After the introduction, only two sentences remained from the original draft. The next three paragraphs each began with a reason to get organized:

> Organizational skills help the student avoid embarrassment, bad grades and stress, as well as, peer, instructor, and self chiding.
>
> Good organization skills help the student be in the right place at the right time.
>
> Most importantly, good organizational skills develop reliability which is important to the student while in school but even more so after graduation.

The next to the last paragraph directly addressed the reader with suggestions for how to get organized. In her conclusion, Brenda wrote a contrast of the introduction, describing the new and organized Ms. Verie RaeDee.

As the teacher looked through the revision, she noted that Brenda had written herself out of the introduction and conclusion. Brenda asked about two personal pronouns still present: "my notebook" and "she turned hastily to me." "Well, that one's all right," was the teacher's response. "That the thing is not focused on you doesn't mean that you're not there. As a writer. And part of it. It just means the reader is not being shown this other person [you]."

The teacher commended Brenda's transitions and organization before asking, "What do you think it needs now?" Brenda was concerned about her

next to the last paragraph being direct address, using the second person, "you." The teacher and Brenda decided it worked in that setting.

One of the phrases discussed in this conference was the thesis statement which had been restated at the end. Brenda had changed from success for the college student to success in the "adult life." The teacher suggested, as she had in the third conference, that Brenda think about the identity of her audience. Brenda answered: "I'm kind of confused right here. They consider themselves adults when they come [to college]." After trying out several options, the teacher advised Brenda to continue thinking about audience.

In the final draft, Brenda left her thesis as it was: "A college student should develop good organizational skills which are invaluable to successful adult life." After the restatement of her thesis in her conclusion, she added two more sentences which explained that the development of organization in college would reap benefits in the future. The only other substantive change in this revision was the addition of a specific example in the middle paragraph. Both of these changes had been discussed in the conference.

Brenda reflected that her ideas in this essay became clear "sometime after the first draft," and that her ideas came from the teacher and herself. Brenda expressed satisfaction with the essay: "It has been interesting to me to see how the original jumbled up ideas can be sorted out, rearranged, etc. to come up with the same view but written in a much clearer way."

Brenda wrote the fourth essay, a comparison-contrast assignment, without writing conferences. She began with three drafts about how toys have changed

from her generation to her son's. Then she switched topics and wrote two drafts contrasting two cars that her parents own: a Buick Le Sabre and an MG Midget. The reason she switched topics, she said, was that she felt her comparison of toys was "garbled" and the teacher had told the class members they could narrow their focus.

Brenda's first draft of the essay was constructed in fifteen short paragraphs, alternating descriptions of the two cars. In her revision she consolidated paragraphs, rearranged and substituted sentences, and deleted some details. She made a number of surface changes that formalized the paper, such as writing out numbers and abbreviations, using more formal diction, and correcting punctuation and spelling. She also added a conclusion which addressed the mystique of owning each car. Brenda organized this essay "in a listing manner, grouping similar items in a way to show the actual differences." She did not feel this was her best work because she had to hurry after changing topics.

In reflecting on her term's work, Brenda reported: "I found myself feeling quite confused and filled with indecision as each assignment was received. Then as I began to understand the assignment, I felt a challenge to convey the desired message." Before writing an essay, Brenda usually made lists of the thoughts and ideas that she wanted to include. She felt that her strength was in "using words," and her weakness was comma usage. Brenda summarized:

> I believe I also fall short in developing ideas to their fullest extent. [The teacher] frequently indicated during my writing interviews that certain ideas needed further development. I found that my meanings were clearer when I added more detail as she had suggested.

Brenda told the interviewer that this term she had learned "to be thinking of specific examples" as she was writing. Her attitudes toward revision and writing conferences, as shown on the questionnaires at the beginning and ending of the term, showed a consistent improvement. The positive statements, such as "I look forward to working on my drafts and making changes" and "Discussing my writing with my teacher helps me understand what I want to say," changed from "Agree" to "Strongly agree." The negative statements, such as "I avoid revision" and "I am afraid of writing drafts when I know the teacher will be looking at them," changed from a "Disagree" to "Strongly disagree." Two further statements with similar content which she had answered "Are uncertain" on the first questionnaire, she changed to "Disagree": "I don't like to talk about my compositions in writing conferences with a teacher." These responses indicate a growing confidence and a more positive attitude toward revision.

Daman

Daman enrolled a week late, but worked diligently to catch up. He commuted every day from Boise after working at an early-morning bakery job. Daman wrote only one draft of his first essay which was developed from these two key sentences: "The most favorite sport is basketball. I enjoy the sweating, the hard work, and all the skill you must have to be a serious competitor."

Daman wrote his second essay about the causes of his cousin's death. He opened his first writing conference with two questions about format: double-spacing and length. He added: "I'm not sure of what you're looking for. It's kind of like in a story of sequential form, you know." As Daman described how he had written the piece, the teacher tried to clarify what he was doing.

S: I don't think it's really sequential, I mean too sequential. It's just the fact that, um, I just said basically, um, I just did my first paragraph, I just told what the actual effect is. I went through, started from the beginning of the evening and went all the way to the actual event, [T nods] and then I didn't go into anything that happened after the event, just the event itself and nothing descriptive as far as details; like the actual thing was kind of gross, but and then, a, I just kind of had a closing statement.

T: So are you, you're telling what made a certain thing happen. (yes) And the thing that happened you say was gross.

S: Well, my cousin died in a car wreck. (okay, okay) That's what I'm writing about, and, um--

T: So when you say details, there are certain things you wouldn't want to say? (right) Were you there?

S: No, huh uh. He was in Oregon. But I have two cousins, and he was one of them, so--

T: You were really close to him. Do you think you need to add more details in this?

S: If it needs to be longer, I mean I can add more details and details on top of details, but--

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The teacher then talked about how details supply the potential for the reader to experience what the writer has experienced. While Daman wanted an emotional ending, the teacher encouraged him to analyze in the conclusion the causes of

this accident. She added, "See if that works, and then don't, don't give up altogether that power punch at the end."

The draft Daman brought to his next conference showed some work on a conclusion. Two new paragraphs were added. In addition, Daman had made several syntax changes that did not affect content; "The car passed up a sign that warned of a curve and cautioned slippery when wet" was changed to "The car passed by a sign warning of a curve, cautioning slippery when wet." He also added more vivid language; "Jeff's surprise mounted as he saw two bright lights in his eyes" was changed to "Jeff's surprise mounted as the blaring headlights attacked his already tired eyes." Daman reported that he had added description and specific details "in a few parts," some of it information about the event. When the teacher asked what he needed to do next, he replied: "I need to go through it, right? The next thing I would do is to go through it and make sure that the words that I want are the right words." He went on to explain how choosing the perfect word can make the meaning clear. During this conference Daman initiated discussion on dividing sentences for more punch, on consistent verb tense, on word choice, on the use of punctuation, and on spelling. The teacher brought up the reference of a vague pronoun and the need for more analysis in the conclusion.

Daman's final revision on this paper included ten more sentences of analysis and explanation in the conclusion. The other changes were minor spelling and punctuation changes, with a few diction changes. He added quotation marks around "Slippery when wet," as the teacher had suggested in the

third conference. He also substituted "drivers" for "they" to clarify the reference the teacher had asked about. Daman's analysis of this essay revealed his appreciation for word choice and powerful conclusions:

> I . . . tried to end in a open sounding way leaving a dramatic and emotional effect. The essay was revised to include more specific detail and better phrase certain points. Finally the last copy of draft was simply to be sure that the words I chose were strategic and fulfilled their purpose.

Daman said he felt good about the organization, "emotion, feeling, and description" of this essay.

In the first conference with his third essay, Daman again expressed his desire to choose the right words. When the teacher asked Daman what he was going to do next with this essay, he answered:

> I'll have to go over it again and a, and a, first of all figure out if my ideas are okay. I have my thesis statement; I have my opening paragraph statement at the beginning of each paragraph for my supporting ideas. I got to make sure that whatever I say after that goes along with what I just said first of all in that paragraph. It does go along with it, but I've got to make sure it says it in a good way that's more appropriate. Um, words, I'm not wasting my words because when you're trying to persuade someone, you can't, if you use too many words or else you're going to lose them in one thought or it's going to get boring.

Daman identified his audience as freshmen who are entering college expecting just to have a good time. When the teacher asked about specific examples, Daman asked if he could read his essay aloud. After hearing a paragraph about college students' needing to study more outside of class than do high school students, the teacher asked Daman if he could explain more about college requirements. After reading each paragraph, Daman commented about word choice and the teacher asked for additional examples. The teacher closed with

two questions: "Do you have a clearly stated purpose statement?" and "Are you thinking about an introduction leading up to that?" Daman was confident about his thesis, but he wanted to discuss some possibilities for an introduction. His concern in adding the details that the teacher asked for was that he might be "really long and tedious."

The revision Daman brought to his final conference included the two additions he had discussed with the teacher. Before his thesis statement he had inserted the following introduction:

> "After twelve long years you expect me to study hard my freshman year? You're nuts." This is not an uncommon attitude among incoming college freshmen students. Your freshman year of college is a very transitional phase in life, a phase requiring mature thinking.

He had also inserted the underlined portion of the following sentence: "You must study and work outside of class, <u>the general rule of thumb being two hours outside for every one hour inside class</u>." His other changes were word and phrase substitutions. Daman's fascination with words shows in one of his substitutions: "can have some sort of pleasure" was changed to "can metabolate excitement."

In this conference both Daman and the teacher expressed satisfaction with the reasons supporting the thesis. Daman's analysis of his next revision task was that he needed to get rid of "you and your" and to "go into more detail." He again talked about the length of the piece. After the teacher had read his introduction, Daman asked if the transition into his thesis was smooth enough. The teacher suggested adding a transitional word at that point, and

also working on the transitions later in the essay. The teacher pointed out one paragraph (Daman's second point) that did not clearly relate to the thesis. At the conclusion of the conference, the teacher pointed out a sentence that illustrated a punctuation problem discussed in an earlier class session.

Daman's final revision did not change the essay in any substantive way except the addition of one transition sentence and the removal of the paragraph the teacher had questioned. Daman substituted "the student" for "you" in one place and made a few punctuation and capitalization changes, nothing more. He felt this essay was the toughest one to write because it was persuasive. In analyzing his revision process, Daman wrote:

> I was weak with supporting statements, this was corrected by simple changes in wording. I originally used four support ideas, but my third idea lacked an identity with the other three. Consequently after my third draft I dropped it.

He expressed pride in this essay because "it contains very helpful information to incoming college freshmen."

Daman's fourth essay began as an 1,150-word contrast of life and basketball. He wrote his thesis as follows: "The actual lessons and similarities to life this game of basketball exhibits is very startling and usually obvious but for some reason overlooked." He chose this topic because his basketball coaches had often told him how much he could learn about life from playing basketball. However, he determined that the draft was "very vague and incredibly broad." In the final draft he narrowed his topic to contrasting basketball with a court of law, and completely rewrote the essay, making it half

the length and more concrete and specific. He pointed out four similarities: the layout of the basketball floor and the courtroom, the actors who compete, the officials who legislate, and the object of the competition. This draft exhibited hurried copy editing, with some misspellings and misused words, but its conclusion presented vivid images:

> Naturally when one walks into an awe inspiring mahogany court room, one does not usually reminisce of a shiny oak or hickory floor. When one sees the magnificence of the judge appear into the court room, while on foot it is most peculiar to think of him as the striped clad official who blows a whistle instead of clodding a gavel. It is doubtful that when a basketball player is at the free throw line that the spectator looks at him and thinks of an attorney issuing an opening, or closing remark. . . . The faces are the difference but they still thrive for first blood coming from that all important notion of competition.

Daman entered and completed this course with confidence in his ability as a writer. He told the interviewer, "They were good essays, all of them. I'm not ashamed of any of them." However, he said that he had improved as a writer. He judged his writing weaknesses as having a perfectionist attitude toward revision and an inordinate formality. He mentioned his "enticing" and "sometimes eye-catching" introductions and his "emotional or fade out" endings as his writing strengths. He wanted to continue to improve in his writing and, in fact, planned to use it in his career as an attorney. Daman's showed his growing appreciation for revision when he wrote, "I really wish I could have spent one hour longer on each work." He told the interviewer that most of his high school writing had been done on a computer; he had changed sentences as he composed them, but not until the present term had he made "bigger changes." He told the interviewer that the conferences helped him because he knew the

teacher was on his side wanting to make his paper good. He said the primary thing he would remember was "Describe, don't tell."

Daman's attitude changes, as shown on the two questionnaires, revealed a subtle acknowledgement of the difficulties in revising. Most of his answers at the beginning of the term were strong agreement with the positive statements and strong disagreement with the negative statements. Three of his first questionnaire answers, though, were "Uncertain," all having to do with the work of revision. He changed from "Uncertain" to "Agree" or "Strongly agree" on the following:

3. I look forward to working on my drafts and making changes.
5. Having to rewrite an essay is a very frustrating experience.
9. I like having a chance to make changes on my papers.

This seeming contradiction of attitude may be explained by two other answers he gives: he has neither a "terrible time" nor an "easy" time organizing and revising. In other words, Daman expressed that he has learned how to revise and in some ways it is harder than he thought.

Jason

Tall and quiet Jason was slow to make friends. He smiled, but he sat off to one side of the room. Eventually he got acquainted with two other students who were in many of his science classes. Jason wrote his first essay about his love for camping in the Sawtooth Mountains. He expressed himself succinctly but correctly. When given an opportunity to make changes in this essay, Jason worked primarily at the word level, substituting more formal language. For

example, he substituted "Father" for "dad," and "become engrossed in" for "stick your nose in." He also added a few phrases to his description of the mountain nights. Jason wrote this essay and made these changes in order to "paint a visual image in the reader's mind." Just after writing this essay at the beginning of the term, Jason admitted that writing was hard for him and took him a long time "to produce something that I am happy with."

Jason came to his first writing conference with a draft of an essay on the reasons his radio-controlled airplane crashed. When the teacher asked what the essay needed, he answered that he was concerned with the logical order and with the focus. He felt he was looking two directions instead of one. He asked if each cause needed to be separated into its own paragraph and developed more. The teacher, after reading the essay, encouraged him to do this. Jason's language was interesting and fresh, but details were missing, according to the teacher. In their discussion together, Jason wanted to distinguish between causes of the accident: contributory (assist a result to happen, but not sufficient by itself), necessary (must be present for a certain result), and sufficient (alone can lead to a result). He also mentioned the class exercise on "showing, not telling" which he had missed because of an absence. The teacher affirmed that this was the use of specific details they were discussing, especially asking that Jason further define what he meant by "intoxicating room."

In the draft he brought to the second conference, Jason had changed "an intoxicating room" to "a room filled with intoxicating aromas that ranged anywhere from the smell of a road killed skunk to the uplifting fragrance of

rubber cement." He had also divided the reasons into separate paragraphs and developed each one with explanation and descriptive details. He kept the ending, which the teacher had commended, as it was. When the teacher asked if Jason was happy with the new draft, he replied: "Well, it's getting better. There's still a couple of rough spots that don't sound great." He was concerned that he could not write a long enough essay: "I'm not wordy." The teacher assured him that focus and development were the goals, not five hundred words.

The teacher again commended Jason's vocabulary skills and several of his vivid details. She said she appreciated his clear thesis statement, but asked if it could be a little less obvious. She pointed out one clear transition that showed causal relationship, but asked him to keep thinking about connecting words and phrases. Jason asked if "loomed" and "approaching" were redundant and if "to finally get" should be changed to "finally to get." They closed with a discussion about adding some concluding thoughts without spoiling the light-hearted touch at the end.

Jason's final draft did change the split infinitive, the redundancy, and several other small matters of correctness. In addition, he changed his thesis from "The focus of this essay is on the reasons behind the fall of this second airplane" to "Flash backs of the first crash, inexperience as a pilot, and fatigue, all were factors that caused this, the second airplane, to fall." Jason made these changes to paint "a better, more vivid mental image of the events taking place."

In the next conference Jason said that the first draft of his persuasive essay needed "a lot." He told the teacher that he had "three little reasons . . .

but they need to be in greater detail." His essay seemed to have two theses: "The major factor that makes a good social life is having an abundance of friends. Another helpful component, although not necessary, is to live in on campus housing." As he and the teacher talked, his real purpose seemed to emerge:

S: Making friends. That's what I thought last night when I got to the conclusion of the paper.

T: That's what you really come back to, isn't it?

S: That's what I come back to. This whole thing is on friends.

. . . . . .

T: You, up here you kind of dance around what you're trying to say. But you don't really come out and call for any action. (uh huh) What do you want, what do you want people to do? Now we just kind of said, but put it into a statement.

S: It has to have something. I think I should just focus on friends. I think that's the right-- (um hum, um hum) but--

T: And yet what you've done here to set it up is not out of the question.

S: Yeah, but beating around the bush.

The teacher and Jason discussed some reasons why students should make friends and the need for specific examples. Jason joked about what an unlikely person he was to write about having a social life when he studied so much.

The draft Jason brought to his final writing conference was a complete re-write except for the thesis statement: "The most important factor in a good

social life is to have an abundance of friends." In describing how he had revised, Jason said:

> Well, I went through, this is another re-write, threw out the old one, and rewrote it. And I went through and talked about friends basically. And I talked and gave more specific examples on what you can do with them. I need a few more examples.

Because the essay was to be persuasive, the teacher probed to see if Jason could articulate his purpose. He answered, "I'm trying to get the freshmen to be more assertive--I need to put that word in there, assertive--and make an effort to make friends." When the teacher asked if the essay gave reasons why freshmen should, Jason replied: "It's not persuasive. I'm the worst persuasive essay writer in the world. . . . I can't force myself on anybody." The teacher tried to help Jason picture an audience he could address persuasively:

> Can you try to visualize a group of people like yourself coming into school . . . who are really slow about making friends? Try to picture a group of people you know and like who have a problem like this. And you're addressing them, and you're doing it for their own good. You're really trying to encourage them.

Jason then brainstormed some reasons why these people should be assertive in making friends.

In the final revision on this essay, Jason did build his development around reasons. For example, he kept the first sentence of his second paragraph, but substituted for the rest of the paragraph reasons such as friends "fight off homesickness, help with homework, and ease the heartache of the freshmen blues." He also restated his thesis to read, "To make these friends, however, it is imperative to be assertive and outgoing; make an effort to make friends."

Jason was not proud of this essay. He reflected: "I have a hard time pressing my feelings on a person and trying to persuade them. This unwillingness to persuade people is, I feel, reflected in this essay."

Jason's fourth essay was written without writing conferences. He did not find the narrow focus he wanted until he had completed several revisions. His first draft covered several of the new technologies that distinguish the present generation from the past: television, the automobile, and computers. Jason struggled to find a narrower topic, finally settling on the innovation of automated construction. He developed this idea by explaining three examples of automated construction, concluding with the notion of future innovations.

Jason talked to the interviewer about his writing history. Like Daman, before this term he had never revised an entire essay because he had composed on a word processor in high school. Another change after taking this writing course was that he learned to write his ideas down as he thought of them. He previously would compose the entire essay in his head before writing it down.

Jason said he found writing English essays a pleasant break from his science classes. He identified one of his weaknesses as being "too concise": "all of my ideas were in their raw stages and lacked a lot of interesting details." But his strength as a writer built on this weakness. "In my first drafts," Jason said, "the ideas were cut down to the bear [sic] facts, but my strength is in taking these trimmed down facts and elaborating on them." Jason concluded that the writing conferences helped him because, he said, "they made me verbalize what my essay needed and where it was going." He said he liked to be present when

the teacher read his essays so he could see "when she would smile as she was reading."

Jason's changes of attitude toward revision and writing conferences, as shown on the questionnaires, seemed a bit contradictory. On the one hand, he expressed more fear about sharing his essays with the teacher; on the other, his only "Strongly agree" statement on the final questionnaire was "Discussing my writing with my teacher helps me understand what I want to say." His answers more strongly agreed that he both knew more about how to revise and realized that revision was difficult.

Susan

Money to finance a college education became unexpectedly available one week before third term for Susan, a young mother in the community. She was still a bit surprised by it all when she walked into her first college English class six days later. When the teacher assigned an in-class essay in the second class period, Susan wrote about her enjoyment of eating lunch with a friend. During the opportunity to revise this essay, Susan crossed out and rewrote her second and her final paragraph and several other sentences. One of her changes substituted details for generalities:

Draft 1 -- Also to get caught up on who is doing what from high school.

Draft 2 -- Like to find out about their children what they have been doing with their lives. And sometimes it is fun to reminisc [sic] of days gone by.

Describing her process of writing and changing this essay, Susan said she knew what she wanted to say "from the very beginning." She made changes in order to achieve "flow." She wished she had been able to think of more ideas because she said, "What I did repeats too much and that a lot of it can be totally eliminated, or put into one paragraph."

When she walked into her first writing conference, Susan looked at the camera and asked, "What is that you're doing?" The teacher attempted to put Susan at ease with it. Susan opened the conversation about her second essay, a causal study about her young marriage, with an apology. She had written several beginnings but was dissatisfied with all of them. "I guess you need to explain to me what it needs to be like in the first paragraph," she said. The teacher suggested that people compose differently, then asked what Susan's purpose was. Susan was clear: "I was going to write about when I got married . . . what happened as a result." She had prepared a list of results including her and her husband's children, companionship, and future goals. Susan was full of details about the topic. The teacher suggested Susan had enough material for a book: "What we've got to find here is something to focus on because I'd rather you <u>choose</u> what you want to talk about so you can tell it well, rather than trying to say a little bit about everything." Susan brought the subject back to the introduction; she was also concerned about using vivid words. The teacher's conversation focused on delineating the supporting points and adding specific examples. Their conversation about the paper closed with ideas for the introduction; the teacher suggested Susan describe the wedding day.

Susan's first short draft had included a clear thesis statement: "Since then so much has happened." In revising this essay, she deleted everything, including the thesis, except one idea toward the end: "In Tim I have a best friend." The second draft separated the results into paragraphs and included specific examples. The introduction told the story of her wedding day. The first paragraph did not contain a thesis statement, but closed with a clever reference to her small stature and young age: "One of the people that attended our wedding even said that I looked as though I should have been on the cake."

Susan brought this revision to her second conference. She was relaxed and talkative. The teacher let the talk about family and school get away for several minutes before saying, "Oh well, let's talk about the paper."

Susan answered, "Well, this paper is one of my disasters." She had continued to write introductions but remained dissatisfied. After reading the first paragraph, the teacher responded positively, surprising Susan. The teacher mentioned the need for a purpose or thesis statement in the introduction to let the reader know where the essay was heading. After further commendations about the specific examples Susan had used, the teacher also indicated the need for transition sentences and for some concluding thoughts.

On the final draft Susan made the changes talked about in conference, and more. She added a thesis statement to the end of the first paragraph: "Even though we were young, the commitment that we made that day has been the start of so much more." She also wrote a concluding paragraph discussing how she felt about the commitment she had made to her husband. The middle

paragraphs contain twenty-five other changes; some were correctness level, others were word, phrase, and sentence level. To accommodate the need for transitions, Susan added "First of all" and "Secondly" to her middle two paragraphs. As she reflected on the process of writing this essay, Susan said she had learned to write in a new way. She explained later that she could not remember doing expository writing, and she had never revised.

Susan entered her third conference, handed the teacher the first draft of her persuasive essay, and answered, "Good," when the teacher asked her how the paper was progressing. She showed her supporting reasons and then, pointing to her final reason, said, "I felt like this is kind of, a, it wasn't really upbeat enough to make it go." Susan wanted her paper to persuade her readers, housewives, to make the decision to attend college. She felt that the paper needed a statement or a paragraph at the end "to kind of tie it all up." The teacher agreed and also mentioned the order of the introduction and specific examples for the supporting points. Susan left full of ideas about what she wanted to include.

The revision Susan brought to her next conference revealed substantive changes. She had deleted the second focus in her introduction, added a new first sentence, and moved her thesis to the end of the introduction. Each paragraph began with a reason: "A housewife can never be sure what her future holds," "Anyone can receive an education, no matter what age they are, if they are willing to work for it," and "No matter what age you are it is always exciting to learn something new." In the middle of each of her supporting

paragraphs, Susan had added a specific example as well as deleted other sentences. At the end of her final paragraph, she had restated her thesis as her conclusion: "Therefore I feel that housewives who can go to college should! Not only for themselves, but for their entire family."

Susan brought questions to her final conference. She wondered if she could use herself as an example and if her conclusion was powerful enough. She said, "I didn't think [the ending statement] was really va-voom. . . . It pulls it together, but it just doesn't make 'em go, 'I'm signing up!'" She was also concerned that her examples be positive and not negative. The teacher brought up the spot in the introduction that needed a bridge between the background information and the thesis.

On her final draft Susan added three sentences at the beginning of her introduction; the remainder of her changes were word, phrase, and sentence substitutions. Some of these substitutions involved changing her examples to first person and changing the second person, you, into third person. She left her transitional sentences and her conclusion as it was.

Before Susan wrote this essay, she made an outline of her primary and secondary points; she felt that this had helped organize her thoughts. She credited her husband, her mother, and her conference teacher for some of the revision ideas. Susan believed that this essay turned out well and was easier to write: "I guess when I can put personal things in such as how I feel now, it is easier for me."

Susan's fourth essay contrasting the way children play now with the way

they played in 1944 was written and revised without teacher-help. Her first draft had the typical parts of an expository essay: an introduction with a thesis, two paragraphs of reasons, and a concluding sentence. Her thesis did not change between drafts, nor did her first two paragraphs change substantially. However, she added a third reason and developed the conclusion into several sentences. Susan mentioned that again an outline had helped her "get going" because it told her what to put in the paragraphs. She said that she did not revise very much because she "tried in the beginning to use specific examples." Susan's confidence in knowing how to write this essay was higher than her pleasure in her own effort. She said: "I really didn't put out the right amount of time and energy to make it super good. I was burned out on writing."

Susan reflected that she felt "extremely dumb" when she began this class, partly because she had struggled with English in high school and partly because she had been out of school for seven years. She acknowledged much progress in her writing during this class and the encouragement of the teacher to build on her strengths instead of on her weaknesses. At the end of the term Susan believed that she "really could write a good essay if I only tried." One of the points of her progress was the following:

> I also feel like I tried to write too vague, that way people wouldn't be able to see or know how I really felt. Once I wrote down examples so that a reader could relate to it, it seemed to flow easier for me. . . . When I first write an essay I tend to leave my feelings out and write "facts" only. So every time it came to rewriting, [putting down clearer examples] is what would have to be done.

Susan judged her weaknesses to be using proper grammar, using proper words, and having confidence. She believed that her confidence was better through the teacher's encouragement, and now she could write if she had "a little shove" and "a deadline." A comparison of Susan's two questionnaires shows that her attitudes toward revision and writing conferences both improved across the term. Of the ten negative statements, Susan disagreed with nine of them more strongly. She agreed more strongly with six of the ten positive statements, and felt the same about four.

Verlin

When Verlin entered class through the back door, it was obvious that he walked and spoke with difficulty; however, he knew almost every student in class and was warmly greeted by the students in the last row. Verlin was unselfconscious and unfailingly cheerful.

Verlin's first essay began with his thesis statement: "The ocean and its beaches are important to me for several reasons." He developed this idea in one long paragraph although there were transitions within it. When given an opportunity to revise, Verlin made twenty-nine changes, all but one of them at the word and phrase level. The one sentence that he added was a transition between his last two supporting ideas. Verlin said that he had a plan ahead of time (the size, beauty, and enjoyment of the ocean), and that as he finished with one idea, the next one took shape in his mind. He described the changes he needed to make as grammar and word changes so that, as he said, "the essay

would flow better and smoothen out." If he had had more time for revising this essay, Verlin said he would have broken it into paragraphs and written better "connecting or bridging sentences."

Verlin chose to write his next essay, a cause or effect paper, about his fall in the sixth grade that left him physically impaired. In his first conference he clearly stated what his topic and his purpose were. He described his usual revision practice as writing one draft, checking for spelling and other errors, and then making any changes that made the paper sound smoother to him. He trusted his ear for language.

After the teacher read the first draft, she commended Verlin for his clear thesis statement: "The fall I took in the sixth grade in school has had many consequences." Verlin was able to articulate what three results he wanted to show, but when the teacher asked what the paper covered so far, he admitted that he had just told the story about the accident, in other words, just written the introduction.

T: And what have you done so far, from here down?

S: Just explain what happened.

T: The accident. Which is really the introduction, right? What is the <u>rest</u> of the paper going to look like here?

S: How long is it?

T: Well, not a book. And I want you to do justice to what you do. (yeah) I want you to tell well the part that you tell. I'm wondering if you are going to need to think about saving part. . . .

S: There are some things that could be cut out there?

T: I think you could tighten it up.

The teacher also suggested reordering the introductory paragraphs to begin more dramatically. Verlin left the conference with the intention of shortening the introduction and developing the rest of the essay about the results of the accident.

When Verlin came to his second conference, he was full of excitement about his campaign for class senator. Although he had spent most of the day making posters, he had also completed his essay. Verlin's second draft showed 85 words cut from the three introductory paragraphs and four paragraphs of development added on. He felt good about his draft; it seemed finished to him. The teacher commended his use of specific details, but challenged him to think about a final analysis. Specifically, the teacher asked Verlin to think about the three results: were they similar? She was trying to guide Verlin into understanding that the first two appeared negative and were concrete, and the third one appeared positive and was abstract. Verlin did come to this idea, and they discussed whether this should be addressed in the concluding analysis. The teacher suggested that the third point needed more development and was too general.

In his final revision, Verlin reordered the introduction as suggested in the first conference, and completely rewrote his third point and the conclusion. He removed some general comments about how the accident has worked for good,

and he added the following:

> A lot of people might see the effects of the fall as negative. I don't see them as good and I prefer that I wouldn't have them but I do, and I know it is all a part of God's will for my life. . . . Ever since the fall I've seen others from a new point of view. I know what it is like to be handicapped, and usually when one is like this many normal people stare or make fun of the handicap. These stares can really hurt one emotionally if they're not above them. Therefore, I try not to put others down because of their physical characteristics, but I try to encourage them when they need it. . . This is another way in which the effects of the accident can be seen as positive.

As he reflected on writing this essay, Verlin said that most of his changes were with spelling, punctuation, and word usage, but that he had also changed one of the effects from abstract to concrete.

Verlin arrived at the third conference with news of his election victory. He also brought the first draft of his persuasive essay. When the teacher asked what the essay next needed done to it, Verlin expressed unsureness about the ideas in it. His purpose was to persuade college students to find a balance between work and play. After the teacher read the essay, easily following Verlin's argument, she commended his three clear reasons. Verlin was struggling, though, with audience identification, which manifested itself in a confusion of pronouns in the essay. After discussing the pronouns, the teacher directed Verlin's attention to the introduction: "In the very beginning I would like to have a little more help getting into the subject. It seems to me that you start right out with your thesis, bang-o. Um, could you lay some background for that?" Verlin suggested that he could describe the two extremes of college students, those who study too little and get poor grades and those who study too

much and "stress themselves out." In addressing Verlin's original evaluation that his ideas were not clear enough, the teacher recommended Verlin look at his transition sentences to clarify the whole. She suggested he think about making connections not only at the beginnings of the paragraphs but also at the ends.

Verlin's next revision showed summary sentences at the ends of each of the middle paragraphs, as suggested in his third conference. He also added a sentence to the introduction, wrote a more specific thesis, and reorganized eight other sentences. His concerns about this draft, which he brought up in his final conference, were surface errors: diction and spelling. The teacher moved the focus of the discussion, though, to the introduction. They brainstormed some ideas that would give more background before Verlin's purpose statement. The teacher suggested beginning with a story or an example. Verlin began thinking out loud:

S: Like "Johnny spends all his time studying, and therefore he has poor grades, and um, he's not enjoying his college life very much. But, on the other hand, Fred, uh, he doesn't, he plays too much, so he has bad grades." (um hum) Kind of liven it up?

T: Um, kind of like that. . . .

S: So you're saying to add a story to this paragraph?

T: Maybe, maybe, yeah.

Before finishing his final draft, Verlin narrowed his audience to only those students who over-study. He began his essay with the story of a hypothetical

student, Arturo, who was tense and irritable as he studied alone in his room while his friends all went to the movies. In his only other changes, Verlin substituted a few words and added a few phrases. Verlin organized this essay by putting the most important reason last, in order to help the reader remember what matters most. He said that adding the story of Arturo was to catch the reader's attention. One of his main concerns in revising was to make the essay more interesting by eliminating "be" verbs and "it," both of which are empty words.

Verlin's fourth essay contrasted the extended family of the past with the nuclear family of today. His development focused primarily on the reasons for the change. As he revised this essay, he made 75 changes, working at all levels (word, phrase, sentence, theme, and correctness) and using all operations except consolidation. He kept his basic thesis and supporting points, but shifted the focus of his thesis slightly and rewrote the entire third point about divorce. Verlin's concerns in revision were to keep the reader's attention, to explain his points well, and to bridge the ideas between paragraphs. "I like this paper," he said, "because it reminds me of my family and ancestors. I wrote what I felt." In spite of liking this paper, Verlin found its format most difficult of the term because he combined comparison and contrast with cause and effect techniques.

In reflecting on his writing history, Verlin felt most confident in his pre-writing strategies. He learned how to do "power writing" from a high school teacher: a thesis, three supporting points with three subordinate points each, and a conclusion. Verlin reported success and therefore enjoyment in writing

with this method. Because he enjoyed writing before entering the class, his feelings did not change. His answers on the two questionnaires bore this out. The only not-positive answer on his questionnaire at the beginning of the term was an "uncertain" response to "I like to have my teacher read what I have written," and an "agree" response to "I have a terrible time organizing my ideas once I have written them down." All other answers, in both first and last questionnaires, were positive, some became slightly stronger, some slightly less strong.

By the end of the term the students were well-acquainted with the teacher and with each other. A generally positive regard for their own writing expressed itself in their production of a class book, organized and constructed by the students themselves. The cartoon one of the students drew for the cover joked about using specific details, a lesson well-learned perhaps.

CHAPTER V:

RESULTS

Following the work of the coders and the holistic scorers, the researcher entered the data they generated into a statistics computer program, SPSSX. The results are presented here in three sections: Conferences, Revisions, and Relationships. The Conferences and Revisions sections present the results by students in alphabetical order: Anne, Brenda, Daman, Jason, Susan, and Verlin.

Conferences

The dialogue of the twenty-four conferences was analyzed at two levels (see Figure 2). First, the transcript was divided into topics upon which the two participants were focusing. The topic labels and descriptions were taken from the Topic List used in common with the revision coding (see Appendix I). These topic chunks provided a way to trace connections between the conferences and the revisions.

The second level of analysis described the type of each utterance, using the T-unit as a basic utterance. First, teacher utterances were described. Focus, clarifying, and approval utterances by the teacher indicated a non-directive conference, as did open-ended and yes/no questions. On the other hand, a large number of prescriptive utterances by the teacher would indicate a directive conference. One T-unit could be labeled with more than one descriptor or could be labeled with no descriptors. For example, "That's part of

your development, isn't it?" was coded with G (clarifying), M (text-specific), and J (yes-no question). Second, a tally of the student's utterances that were approval-seeking, evaluative, or interrogative was kept as an indicator of the student's demeanor or attitude in the writing conference. The teacher's and the student's markers (brief responses like "uh huh" which indicate the involvement of the listener in the conversation) were tallied as an indicator of active listening. The coding of text-specific T-units provided a way to distinguish talk about the student's specific draft from general talk (at the beginning and end of the conference, about the student's topic, and about writing in general). Finally, a tally of the topic initiator provided additional information on who was controlling the topic shifts and whether this pattern changed over the four conferences. Appendix K shows a sample of a coded conference transcript.

Anne

The topics covered most extensively in Anne's conferences were Thesis or Purpose (19% of the total T-units) and Development and Support (17%). Equal amounts of time were also spent on Writing Process and Disengagement (see Figure 4). Topics covered and time spent on them varied widely among the conferences (Table 1).

The first conference focused equally on Specific Details and on Development and Support, with a lesser amount of conversation on Thesis and Writing Process. The second conference focused primarily on Anne's writing purpose and her thesis statement; one-third of the second conference T-units or

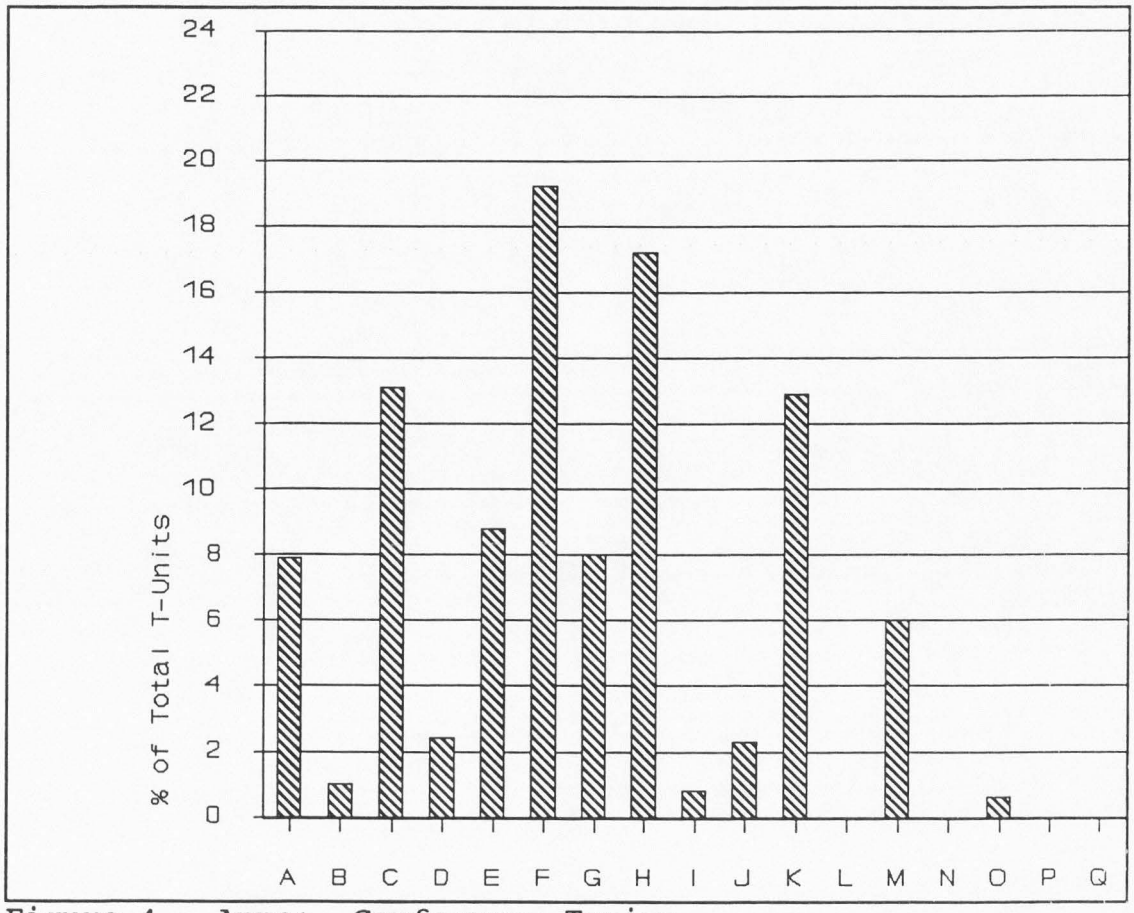

Figure 4. Anne: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

more than half of the 19% total were spent on that topic. Another major topic covered in the second conference was Writing Process. The third conference spent most of its time on Introduction, but another 26 T-units dealt with Thesis or Purpose. Thesis or Purpose was also a major topic in her fourth conference; however, most of this conference, one-third of the time, focused on Development and Support. A table of the topic categories identified in her conferences shows that 72% of all talk dealt with Composition, 22% with

Table 1

Anne: Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	6	6	39	20	71	8
Conference Process	2	3	3	1	9	1
Disengagement	19	31	60	8	118	13
Transitions	0	13	0	9	22	2
Specifics	30	17	12	20	79	9
Thesis/Purpose	20	87	26	40	173	19
Introduction	0	16	41	15	72	8
Development/Support	28	26	11	90	155	17
Conclusion	0	6	0	1	7	1
General Topic	17	4	0	0	21	2
Writing Process	20	59	5	32	116	13
Syntax	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diction	0	0	27	27	54	6
Shift of Person	0	0	0	0	0	0
Punctuation	0	0	0	5	5	1
Spelling	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abbreviation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total T-units	142	268	224	268	902	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

Conference Format such as Engagement and Disengagement, 6% with Language, and only 1% with Mechanics. The latter two occurred only in the third and fourth conferences.

A look at the Topic by Conference by Speaker shows a ratio of teacher talk and student talk consistent across conferences and topics with the exception of the following: Anne spoke more than the teacher in the third conference's Disengagement (T-27, S-33), and the teacher contributed most of the speech about Specific Details (26-4) in the first conference, Writing Process (45-13) and Thesis or Purpose (62-25) in the second conference, and Development and

Support (73-17) in the fourth.

The second level of analysis of the conference transcript described the type of utterances. Of the 902 total T-units spoken during Anne's four conferences, 614 (68%) were by the teacher and 287 (32%) by Anne. This ratio is fairly constant in the first and second conferences, although Anne's T-units comprise 40% of the third and only 25% of the fourth conferences.

Sixty-four percent of the total conference talk was text-specific. The coders identified a higher percent of text-specific talk by the teacher (68%), as well as a larger amount (420 T-units) of text-specific talk. The third conference contained the lowest percentage of text-specific talk (see Table 2). Anne averaged 54% text-specific utterances of 287 total T-units. The lower

Table 2

Anne: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	72	61
2	78	67
3	57	37
4	66	54
Mean percent	68	54

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

percentage of Anne's text-specific conversation as compared to the teacher's may be explained by the Engagement/ Disengagement conversation in the third

conference. Whereas the first, second, and fourth conferences averaged 32 T-units of Engagement and Disengagement, Conference Three has 102 T-units of Engagement and Disengagement. Anne's highest number of utterances was in conference three, but Engagement/Disengagement talk is seldom text-specific.

Half of all the teacher's utterances in Anne's conferences were identified as clarifying (51%). Eleven percent were approval statements and fifteen percent were questions (6% open-ended, 9% yes-no). These types of utterances are indicators of a non-directive conference according to Duke (1975). On the other hand, coders identified 47 prescriptive utterances in the 614 T-units of the teacher, less than 8%. The highest number (20) were found in Conference Four, the lowest number (4) in Conference Three.

One of the most frequent types of Anne's utterances identified by the coders was the evaluative utterance (57 of 287 or 20%). Twenty-one percent of her utterances were interrogative in form. Her speech patterns show frequent markers of acceptance during the teacher's talk, 118 in four conferences.

Both the teacher and student suggested operations for revision, although the teacher offered ninety percent of them. Over half of the total suggestions recommended Addition; least suggested was Substitution.

Over the course of four writing conferences, Anne and the teacher spoke in 98 topic chunks, as identified by coders on the transcripts. Anne initiated approximately 30% of these topics, but after a low in conference two (24%), Anne initiated more topics in each succeeding conference (25% and 39%).

In summary, Anne's data show that she was involved in the work of the

writing conferences. She spoke an average of 32% of the T-units, with a high of 40% in the third conference. Fifty-four percent of her talk was text-specific, focusing primarily on the topics of Thesis, and Development and Support. Her least frequent topic category was Mechanics (1%). Many of her utterances were evaluative and in the questioning mode (20% each). She also initiated 30% of the topics, a higher percentage in each conference. Of these student-initiated topics, 86% were in the Composition topic category, which involves content level conversation. Therefore, Anne was an active participant in the conferences, and her focus was on content.

Brenda

Development and Support was the most frequently discussed topic in Brenda's conferences (see Figure 5). The next most recurrent topic was Writing Process, followed by equal numbers in discussing Specific Details and in concluding talk, Disengagement. Each conference shows different points of focus (see Table 3). The first conference concentrated on Specifics in writing, with time also given equally to Introduction and to Development and Support. Conference Two spread its focus across four areas of composition: Transitions, Thesis and Purpose, Development and Support of the thesis, and General Topic talk. Conference Three centered on Development and Support. No major topic emerged from the fourth conference although the most time was spent on a discussion of Shift of Person in writing, a topic which was also discussed in the third conference. A study of the Topic by Conference by Speaker data revealed

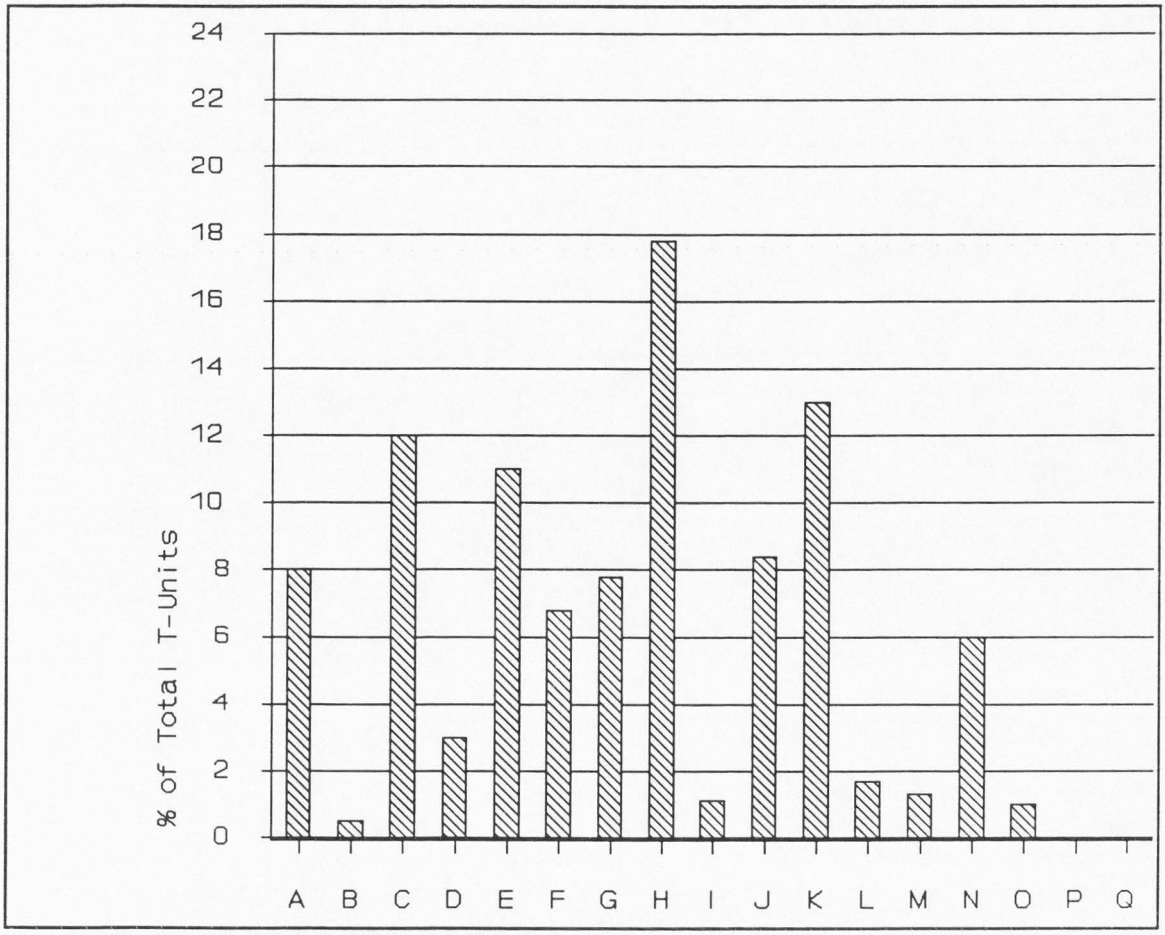

Figure 5. Brenda: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

that Brenda contributed few utterances in most of the topics. Her four largest contributions are as follows: Disengagement (15 T-units), Specific Details (24), and General Topic (18) in the first conference, and Writing Process (12) in the second conference.

A graph of the topic categories identified in Brenda's conferences showed that 69% of all talk dealt with Composition, 10% with Language, and less than 1% with Mechanics. Twenty percent of the total conference time was spent in Engagement and Disengagement conversation.

Table 3

Brenda: Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	16	4	21	24	64	8
Conference Process	3	0	1	0	4	1
Disengagement	30	27	9	22	88	12
Transitions	0	22	0	5	27	3
Specifics	58	8	0	17	83	11
Thesis/Purpose	10	22	19	0	51	7
Introduction	43	5	9	2	59	8
Development/Support	43	24	67	0	134	18
Conclusion	0	0	4	4	8	1
General Topic	22	22	0	19	63	8
Writing Process	38	11	36	13	198	13
Syntax	0	13	0	0	13	2
Diction	0	0	0	10	10	1
Shift of Person	0	0	20	29	49	6
Punctuation	0	3	0	0	3	1
Spelling	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abbreviation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total T-units	263	161	186	144	754	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

Brenda spoke proportionately less during each conference until the fourth one, when she increased slightly. Her conversation ranged from 34% in the first conference to 14% in the third, averaging 25% of the total conference talk. Of Brenda's 190 T-units uttered across the four conferences, 27% were coded as text-specific (see Table 4). Her third conference contained the lowest percentage of student-talk (14%) but the highest percentage of student text-specific talk. The teacher's text-specific talk was spread fairly evenly across the first three conferences but dipped in the fourth conference.

An analysis of the teacher's utterances as identified by the coders shows

Table 4

Brenda: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	72	18
2	73	29
3	73	58
4	54	26
Mean percent	69	27

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

46% of the teacher's T-units are clarifying, 16% are approval statements, 13% are yes-no questions, and 9% are open-ended questions. Seven percent of the teacher's T-units were labeled as prescriptive and six percent as focus statements. The first conference included half of the prescriptive T-units (19); thereafter the prescriptive number dropped to 7, 7, then 5. Only one of Brenda's T-units was considered as eliciting approval. Eight percent of her total conversation was coded as evaluative, four percent in a question format.

The teacher made sixty-five suggestions for revision, thirty-three of them suggesting addition of material. The other suggestions were reordering, 16; deletion, 12, and substitution, 4. Brenda made one suggestion, a deletion.

The coders identified 87 topic shifts across the four writing conferences. Of these, 71 were initiated by the teacher, 16 by Brenda. No increase in number of topics initiated by the student occurred over the four conferences.

A summary of Brenda's writing conferences indicates that she was not actively involved in the work of the conferences. She spoke 25% of the T-units, and only 27% were text-specific. She made few evaluative or questioning utterances (8% and 4% respectively) or suggestions for revision. No increase in student-initiated topics occurred across the conferences. The teacher's prescriptive utterances were higher than average in the first conference. The most frequent topics of the four conferences were Development and Support (18%) and Writing Process (13%); the least frequent topic was Mechanics (1%). Although the student's participation seems passive, the focus of the conversation was in the Composition category, dealing with content matters.

Daman

A wide spread of topics was covered in Daman's conferences, including 11 percent each in the Language and Mechanics levels. Most numerous in the T-units across the conferences were Conclusion and Writing Process (see Figure 6). The first and second conferences focused on talk about Conclusion. A lengthy Disengagement discussion concluded the first conference. The second conference also included 33 T-units of talk about Punctuation. The third conference presented no major focus, with the most talk being about the use of specific details. In the final conference a relatively large amount of time was spent on several writing topics, primarily Writing Process. Daman's topic category graph reveals 55% of all talk about Composition, spread fairly evenly across the first, second, and fourth conferences with slightly less in the third

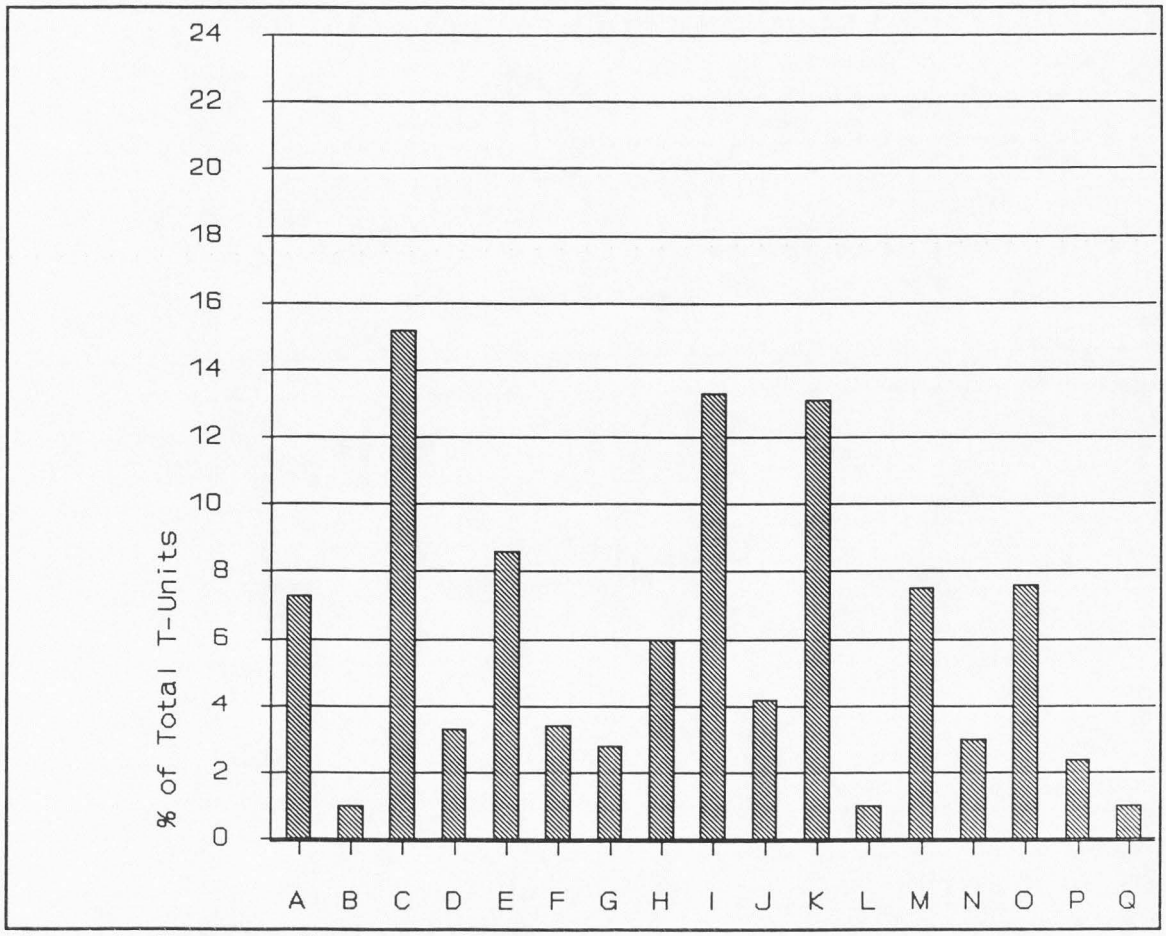

Figure 6. Daman: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

(Table 5). Matters of Language and Mechanics were part of the second and fourth conferences.

A study of the teacher-talk and student-talk according to topic reveals that during Engagement and Disengagement, the teacher and Daman contributed amounts more nearly equal (106 to 81) than they did in the talk in the areas of composition, language, and mechanics (402 to 232). The teacher presented most of the discussion about the use of specific details in the first and third conferences, the Conclusion in the first and second conferences, the Thesis

Table 5

Daman: Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	7	23	3	28	61	7
Conference Process	0	8	0	0	8	1
Disengagement	58	10	17	41	126	15
Transitions	0	0	0	27	27	3
Specifics	29	8	24	10	71	9
Thesis/Purpose	1	23	4	0	28	3
Introduction	0	0	4	19	23	3
Development/Support	17	0	7	26	50	6
Conclusion	50	47	11	2	110	13
General Topic	16	9	10	0	35	4
Writing Process	21	26	19	43	109	13
Syntax	0	3	0	0	3	1
Diction	0	29	9	24	62	8
Shift of Person	0	0	0	25	25	3
Punctuation	0	33	0	30	63	8
Spelling	2	18	0	0	20	2
Abbreviation	0	0	0	8	8	1
Total T-units	201	237	108	283	829	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

in the second conference, and Transitions in the fourth conference. The student, Daman, spoke more about Introduction in the fourth conference than did the teacher (12 to 7), more about General Topic in the first and third conferences (9 to 7, 6 to 4), and more about Writing Process in the third conference (14-5). Daman's largest contribution of talk, other than Engagement and Disengagement, was in the third and fourth conferences about the Writing Process (14 and 19 T-units respectively). Daman averaged 38% of the total 830 T-units across the four conferences, increasing from 32% in the first conference to 49% and 42% in the final two conferences.

Over half of all the conference talk was text-specific (see Table 6). The teacher averaged 62% text-specific talk, the student 54%. Conference Three contains the highest percent for both the teacher and the student, and Conference Four contains the lowest. Interestingly, the third conference was the shortest conference (108 T-units), while the fourth was the longest (283). The explanation may be in the amount of Engagement and Disengagement: Conference Three contained only 20 total T-units of format talk; Conference

Table 6

Daman: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	63	50
2	69	61
3	75	74
4	51	43
Mean percent	62	54

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

Four contained 69.

The types of the teacher's talk revealed a pattern similar to the other students'. In Daman's conferences, 41% of the teacher's T-units were labeled clarifying, 19% approval, 15% yes-no questions, 8% open-ended questions. Again, focus and prescriptive utterances were close to equal, 5%. The teacher's prescriptive comments were highest in the first two conferences, eight and

eleven, and down to six in the fourth. In the third, the briefest conference, when the student contributed half of the conversation, the teacher made no prescriptive comments, according to the coders.

Daman asked twice as many questions during the second and fourth conferences as he did during the first and third. His T-units in the form of a question averaged 9%. He also made the most evaluative comments during the second and fourth conferences. Evaluative comments comprised 18% of his total T-units. The coders identified 4% of his comments as eliciting approval, half of them in the second conference.

Over half of the suggestions for revision were for addition of material, 36 out of 57. Daman made fifteen of the total suggestions, five each for addition and substitution, three for deletion and two for reordering. Seventy-four percent of the teacher's suggestions were for adding material.

Coders identified 89 topic shifts across Daman's four conferences. Daman initiated 39% of these topics in the first conference, 32% in the second, 36% in the third, and 27% in the fourth, for an average of 33%. Interestingly, his trend was to initiate fewer each conference, with the exception of Conference Three.

A review of Daman's data indicates that he was an active participant over a broad range of topics. He uttered 38% of all T-units, reaching almost half in the final two conferences. Over half of his utterances were text-specific. Coders identified 18% of his utterances as evaluative and 9% as questions. Daman made 25% of the suggestions for revision and initiated 33% of the topics. The

topics covered in his conferences were spread across Conclusion and Writing Process (13% each), and Diction and Punctuation (8% each). More frequent conversation about Mechanics occurred in Daman's conferences than in any other student's (11%).

Jason

The greatest amount of time in Jason's conferences was spent discussing Development and Support (see Figure 7) with equal time on the Writing Process

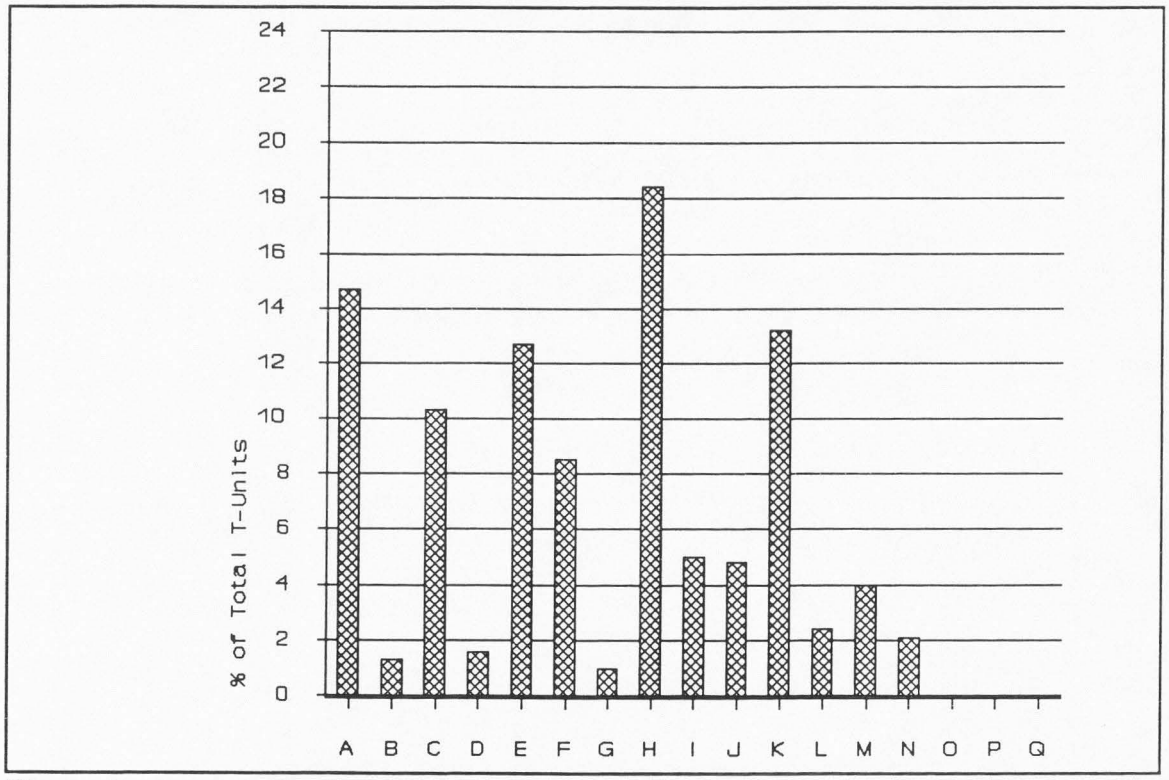

Figure 7. Jason: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

and on Specific Details in writing. The emphases varied across the conferences (see Table 7). The longest talk in the first conference was about Specifics,

Table 7

Jason: Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	28	27	23	13	91	15
Conference Process	2	5	1	0	8	1
Disengagement	17	25	6	16	64	10
Transitions	0	10	0	0	10	2
Specifics	54	17	4	4	79	13
Thesis/Purpose	6	14	26	7	53	9
Introduction	0	0	0	6	6	1
Development/Support	30	26	9	49	114	18
Conclusion	0	28	0	3	31	5
General Topic	7	0	23	0	30	5
Writing Process	15	31	22	14	82	13
Syntax	0	15	0	0	15	2
Diction	3	22	0	0	25	4
Shift of Person	0	0	0	13	13	2
Punctuation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spelling	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abbreviation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total T-units	162	220	114	125	621	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

followed by Development and Support. The second conference spent time across several topics: Writing Process, Conclusion, Development and Support, and Diction.

The third conference spent similar time on Thesis or Purpose, General Topic, and Writing Process. The fourth conference centered on Development and Support, with some time also spent on Writing Process and Shift of Person. A graph of Jason's topic categories identifies 65% of all conference time spent on Composition, 26% spent on Format (primarily Engagement and Disengagement), and 8.5% spent on Language. No time was spent discussing

Mechanics.

The ratio of teacher to student talk did not notably vary by topic except for the following: after the teacher's discussion about using significant details in the first conference, they both discussed it equally in the second conference, and Jason discussed it alone in the fourth. In addition, in all four conferences Jason contributed as much or more about the writing process as did the teacher. He also contributed more about Diction in the second conference.

Of the total 621 T-units uttered during Jason's conferences, the teacher was responsible for 413 of them, 67%, and the student responsible for 208 or 33%. This percentage remains about the same across the conferences although Jason's low was in Conference One (27%) and his high was in Conference Three (39%).

The teacher's text-specific talk accounted for 61% of all her T-units. The student averaged 50% text-specific utterances out of all his T-units. Interestingly, the percentage increased steadily across the conferences (see Table 8).

The graph describing the teacher talk in Jason's conferences reveals that the teacher's types of utterances remained fairly constant across students. Clarifying utterances were labeled on 38% of the teacher's total T-units; approval utterances, 19%; yes-no questions, 14%; and open-ended questions and focus statements, 6% each. Prescriptive utterances accounted for only 5% of total teacher utterances. The highest number of prescriptive comments were in Conference Two (11 T-units), falling to two T-units in Conference Four. The

Table 8

Jason: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	60	34
2	55	52
3	66	48
4	69	66
Mean percent	61	50

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

student talk graph shows that 24% of Jason's total talk was evaluative (49 T-units out of 208). Thirteen percent were in a question mode, and only 2% were coded as eliciting approval. The student interjected 85 markers into the conversation, the highest number, 34, in the first conference.

The most common revision operation suggested during Jason's conferences was the addition of material (71% of 52 total suggestions). The student made 15 suggestions for revision throughout the conferences. Ten of these were for addition of material, eight of those in the last two conferences. The teacher made 71% of the total suggestions, 73% of them for addition.

Over the course of the four writing conferences, Jason and the teacher spoke in 64 topic chunks, as identified by the coders. Jason initiated 14 of these topics, 22%. He initiated slightly more topics in the second and fourth conferences than he did in the first and third.

In summary, the primary focus of Jason's writing conferences were in the Composition category, or at the content level: Development and Support, 18%; Writing Process and Specifics, 13% each. No talk about Mechanics was identified by the coders. Although the student initiated only 22% of the topics, he uttered one-third of the T-units, half of them text-specific, and made one third of the suggestions for revision. His talk appeared highly evaluative (24%) and questioning (13%).

Susan

Susan's conferences (Figure 8) were focused fairly equally across talk

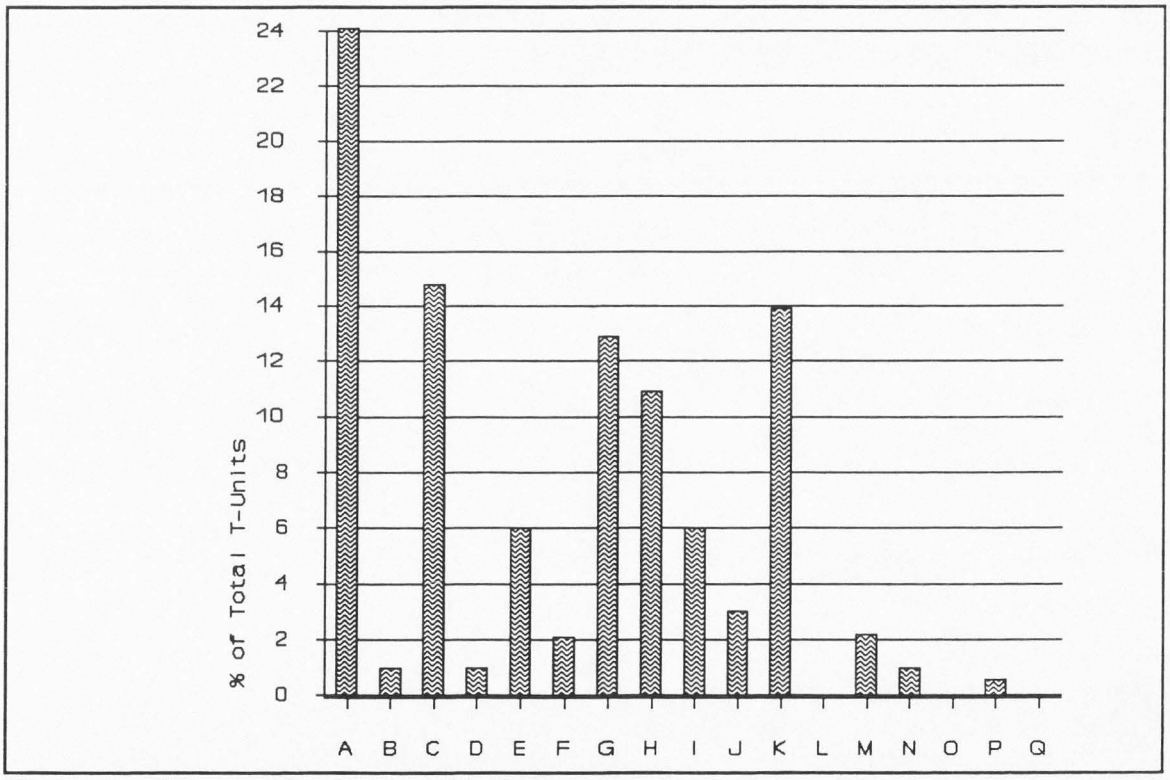

Figure 8. Susan: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

about Writing Process, Introduction, and Development and Support of the thesis. Some talk also occurred about Specifics. The emphasis changed from conference to conference (see Table 9). Talk about the Introduction and Development and Support of the thesis constituted most of the first conference's talk. The second conference emphasized Writing Process and again Development and Support. Twenty-eight percent of the third conference was spent discussing Writing Process, with some time also spent on Introduction, Conclusion, Specifics, and General Topic talk. The fourth conference was brief with equal amounts about Development and Support and about Conclusion.

Table 9

Susan: Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	11	171	6	31	219	24
Conference Process	4	0	0	0	4	1
Disengagement	36	46	34	18	134	15
Transitions	2	1	0	0	3	1
Specifics	21	5	35	0	61	6
Thesis/Purpose	12	2	5	0	19	2
Introduction	59	8	36	14	117	13
Development/Support	43	24	10	22	99	11
Conclusion	0	0	37	23	60	6
General Topic	1	0	31	0	32	3
Writing Process	11	35	74	6	126	14
Syntax	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diction	9	11	0	0	20	2
Shift of Person	0	0	0	9	9	1
Punctuation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spelling	0	5	0	0	5	1
Abbreviation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total T-units	209	308	268	123	908	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

The most notable feature of Susan's conferences is the amount of time spent in Engagement and Disengagement. Particularly in the second conference, Susan controlled the opening conversation (134 student T-units out of 171 total in that section). Although the teacher failed to move the conversation to the student's writing, she did not remark about the lengthy engagement conversation. The Engagement time in the next conference was quite brief, only six T-units. The lengthy Engagement in the second conference skewed the percentages of the topic categories to more Format (39%).

A graph of Topic by Conference by Speaker shows that the student spoke as much as or more than did the teacher in 11 of the 12 Format categories. The Format categories primarily cover general conversation at the beginning and end of a conference. The student also spoke as much as or more than did the teacher in the third and fourth conferences on the topics of Development and Support, General Topic, Writing Process, and Shift of Person. In the remaining topics the teacher uttered more T-units than the student did.

Susan's is the only case study in which the student uttered more than half of the T-units, 53% for Susan and 47% for the teacher. Although the lengthy Engagement talk by the student in Conference Two inflated this percentage somewhat, even in the third and fourth conferences student-talk comprised 56% and 53% respectively. In only the first conference was the student's percentage of T-units similar to the other five students in the study (38%). The percentages of text-specific talk also reveal the lengthy Engagement discussion in the second conference (see Table 10). In conferences One, Three, and Four,

Table 10

Susan: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	72	53
2	49	7
3	76	41
4	62	49
Mean percent	65	31

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

the student's text-specific talk was fairly constant, but in conference two it dipped to 7%, fourteen text-specific T-units out of 191. The teacher's text-specific talk averaged 65%; it was similar across the conferences, again with the exception of the second conference.

The types of the teacher's utterances with Susan follow the same pattern as with the other students, with the exception of prescriptive, which was slightly higher. Ten percent of the teacher's total T-units were prescriptive. The first conference contained 17 T-units labeled Prescriptive by the coders. The second contained 12, and the third and fourth were lower still (six and seven). Fifty percent of all teacher utterances were labeled as clarifying, 13% as approval utterances, 12% as yes-no questions, 7% as open-ended questions, and 5% as focus utterances. The coders identified 10% of Susan's talk as evaluative, 7% in the questioning mode, and less than 1% as eliciting approval.

The teacher offered 52 suggestions for revisions, 45 of them recommending addition of material, two each for deletion and substitution, and three for reordering material. The student offered ten suggestions for revision, seven of them in the third conference. Of the ten suggestions, five suggested adding material.

Coders identified 71 different topic chunks in Susan's four conferences. Of these 71 topics, Susan initiated 26 of them, thirty-seven percent. In her first two conferences Susan initiated 25% and 24% respectively; in her third conference she initiated over half of the topics (57%), and in her fourth, 44%.

A review of Susan's data indicates that the student was highly involved in the conversation, but that she was not highly focused on the writing task. Almost 40% of the total conference talk was in the Format category (Engagement and Disengagement). She made 16% of the suggestions for revision and initiated 37% of the topics. She uttered over half of the T-units, but only one-third of them were text-specific. Her involvement in the writing task appears to have developed during the term, however: 74% of the topics she initiated were in the Composition category, with higher percentages across the conferences. While only 7% of her talk was text-specific in the second conference, almost half of her talk was text-specific in the first, third, and fourth conference.

Verlin

Topic coding of Verlin's four conferences revealed an equal amount of

attention on two topics: Introduction, and Development and Support (see Figure 9). The next highest number of T-units was on Writing Process. Table 11 shows that talk on these topics was fairly constant across the conferences.

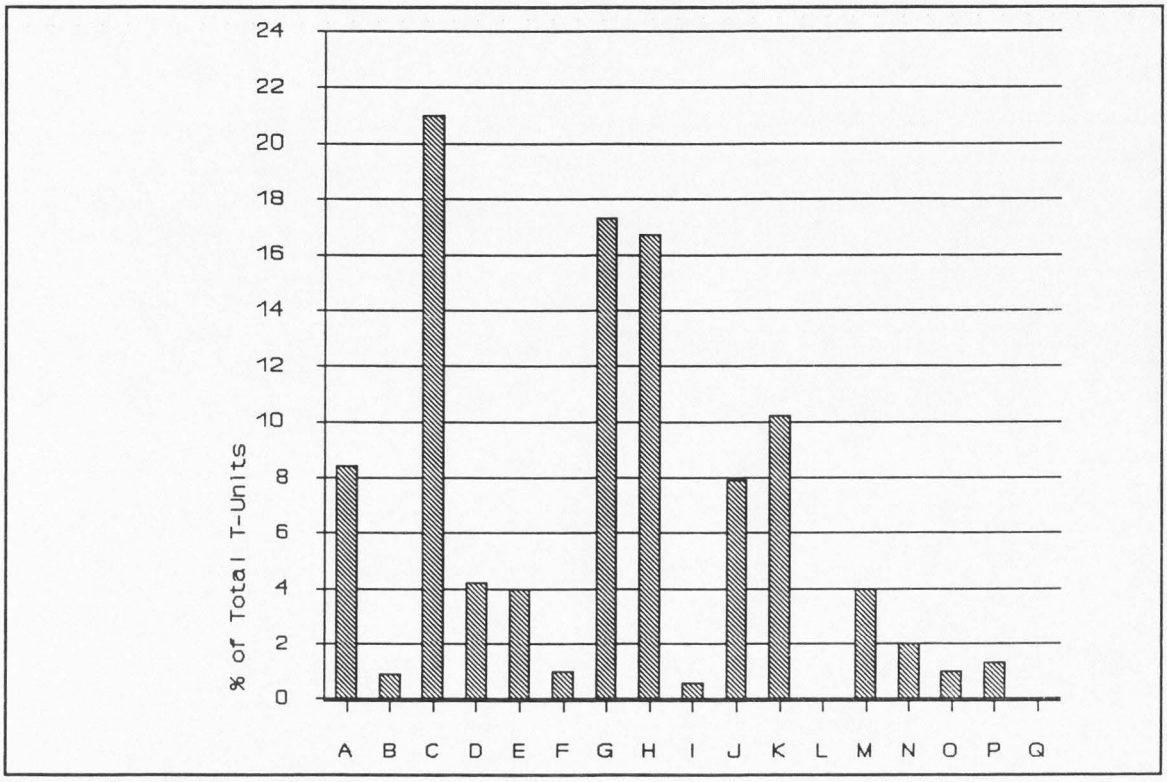

Figure 9. Verlin: Conference Topics

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

With the exception of Disengagement, talk about Introductions received the highest number of T-units in the first, third, and fourth conferences. Conference Two centered on talk about Development and Support of the thesis. Along with talk about Introduction in the first conference, the teacher and student conversed equally about Writing Process and General Topic. In the third conference the talk also covered Transitions, Writing Process, and Diction.

Table 11

Verlin Topic by Conferences (Frequency of T-units)

Topic	Conference 1	2	3	4	Total T-units	*Percent
Engagement	9	10	37	2	58	8
Conference Process	3	0	3	0	6	1
Disengagement	37	29	52	28	146	21
Transitions	0	4	21	4	29	4
Specifics	0	15	7	10	32	4
Thesis/Purpose	3	0	0	0	3	1
Introduction	30	9	38	43	120	17
Development/Support	13	61	15	27	116	17
Conclusion	0	4	0	0	4	1
General Topic	28	0	0	27	55	8
Writing Process	30	11	20	10	71	10
Syntax	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diction	0	0	19	9	28	4
Shift of Person	0	0	14	0	14	2
Punctuation	0	0	3	0	3	1
Spelling	0	0	0	9	9	1
Abbreviation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total T-units	153	143	229	169	694	100%

* Percent of student's total T-units

In the fourth conference the transcript reveals equal talk on Development and Support of the thesis and on the General Topic.

The T-units in these conferences cluster more closely around four or five topics. Disengagement talk in the third conference was out of proportion with the other conferences, as the numbers in the topic categories show: a third of all talk was in the Format category, and 43% of Format talk occurred in the third conference. Talk in the Composition category was consistent across the four conferences, and only in the final two conferences were the categories of Language and Mechanics used.

The teacher-talk, student-talk ratio across topics shows that the teacher talked two to three times more than did the student except in General Topic, Engagement, and Disengagement, in which the talk was more equal. The teacher contributed almost all the T-units in the first three conferences' talk about Introduction (27-3, 6-3, and 30-8), in the second conference's talk about the use of Specific Details (15-0) and Development of the thesis (43-18), and in the third conference's talk about Transitions (19-2).

The second level of analysis shows a fairly steady pattern of the student contributing 33% of the total T-units across the conferences. The conferences were approximately the same length, although the third conference was slightly longer. Of the teacher's total 467 T-units, 279 or 60% were text-specific (see Table 12). The percentage of text-specific talk by the teacher varied widely across the conferences. Thirty-seven percent of all student talk was text-specific, with the low in the first conference and the high in the second conference.

Table 12

Verlin: Percentage of Text-specific Talk by Conference by Speaker

	Text-Specific Talk	
Conference	Teacher	Student
1	44	29
2	77	58
3	61	31
4	57	37
Mean percent	60	37

Note. The percent is the proportion of text-specific talk in each speaker's total T-units.

The second level of coding conference talk also described the teacher talk. The highest percentage (30%) was again identified as clarifying utterances. Twenty percent were identified as approval utterances. Eighteen percent of the teacher's T-units were in the form of yes-no questions, 8% in the form of open-ended questions, and 4% were focus utterances. Against these figures were the prescriptive utterances, 37 in all four conferences, the highest being in the first conference (12) and the lowest being in the second (5). These prescriptive utterances comprise 8% of the teacher's total talk. The tally of the types of student talk shows 12% of Verlin's T-units coded as evaluative, 7% as eliciting approval, and 6% in the questioning mode.

The teacher made 86% of the suggestions for revision, 57 out of 66. Of these, twenty-nine recommended adding material, thirteen suggested substituting, nine suggested deleting, and six reordering material. Of the student's nine suggestions, seven were for additions.

Sixty-five different topic chunks were identified by the coders in Verlin's four conferences. Verlin initiated twelve of these topics, six in the first and four in the last conference. This averages 18% student-initiated topics across the conferences. Half of the student-initiated topics were at the content level (Composition category), with most of these in the first two conferences.

In summary, Verlin demonstrated an average involvement in the conference conversation, but a below average focus on the writing task. He uttered 33% of the T-units; 37% of these were text-specific. He made 14% of

the suggestions for revisions and initiated 18% of the topics. One-third of the writing conference T-units were in the Format category. The predominant writing topics discussed were Introduction and Development and Support (17% each).

Revisions

In this research report the terms "revision" and "change" will be differentiated as follows: "change" will be used to refer to a discrete alteration within a draft, whether at the correctness, word, phrase, sentence, or theme level; "revision" will be used to refer to a new draft of an essay, including all the changes within it.

Like the conference coding, the students' six revisions were coded at two levels. After the researcher had marked and numbered all changes, as described in Chapter III, the coders identified the topics of each change, using the common Topic List. Five topics were specific to the conferences and did not appear on the Revision coding: Engagement, Conference Procedures, Disengagement, Writing Process, and General Topic. After the coders reached consensus on the topic labeling, the second level of coding was completed: each change with its topic code was entered on a chart describing the level and the operation of the change made (sample in Appendix H). Because connections were explored between the writing conferences and subsequent revisions, a look at the frequency of topics across the individual revisions is necessary.

Three logical outcomes, common to all the students, occurred. First, all

of the changes and only the changes in the topic category of Mechanics were classified in the Correctness level. Second, almost all of the changes labeled "Diction" occurred at the Word level with the Substitution operation. Finally, changes at the Theme level (more than a sentence, but not more than a paragraph) appeared in the topics that defined major parts of the essay: Transitions, Introduction, Development and Support, Conclusion, and occasionally, Specific Details and Thesis.

Anne

Thirty-seven percent of Anne's 156 total changes were identified in Development and Support. This classification means that 58 of her changes occurred after the introduction and involved substantive content changes. Anne's second most frequent type of change was labeled Diction (18% or 28 changes). In addition, changes in Transitions and in Introduction made up 10% each of her total changes (15 changes each). When all changes were sorted into categories, 64% occurred in the Composition category, 26% in Language, and 10% in Mechanics.

The two revisions containing the highest number of changes were the first (22% of her total) and the sixth (23%). Those two revisions follow the pattern of the whole: the highest number of changes occurred in Development and Support with the second highest in Diction. In the middle four revisions the changes occurred more equally across topics (see Table 13). In the second revision, Anne made 7% of all changes in Development and Support and 3% in

Transitions. In the third revision, the major topics of change were Diction, Introduction, Punctuation, and Development. The fourth revision contained fewer changes spread fairly evenly across Development, Introduction, and Transition, with two each in Diction and Inflection and one each in Thesis and Syntax. The fifth revision centered more on Development changes with one or

Table 13

Anne: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

	Revision							
Topic	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions	4	4	1	3	1	2	15	10
Specifics			1			1	2	1
Thesis/Purpose	1	1	1	1		1	5	3
Introduction		1	6	4	2	2	15	10
Development	12	11	5	5	7	18	58	37
Conclusion	2		1		1	1	5	3
Syntax	3		2	1	1		7	5
Diction	9	2	7	2	2	6	28	18
Inflection	2		1	2		1	6	4
Punctuation			5			3	8	5
Spelling	1	1	2		2		6	4
Abbreviations						1	1	1
Totals	34	20	32	18	16	36	156	100

two each in five other topics.

The percentages within each revision's topic categories fluctuated across the six categories. Although the first and sixth revisions appeared similar in their twin focuses on Development and Support and on Diction, the percentages showed Revision One different from all the following. Fifty-six percent of the first revision's changes occurred within Composition and 41% within Language. In each subsequent revision, though, Composition comprised up to 85%

(Revision Two) and a low of 69% (Revisions Five and Six). Language, which began with 41% of the first revision's changes, dropped to 10% in Revision Two and concluded with only 19% of the final revision's changes.

The coders' description of the nature of Anne's changes showed that 35% of the total 156 were at the Word level, 27% the Phrase level, 19% at the Theme level, and 10% each at the Sentence and Correctness levels. The percentage of word level changes was not constant across revisions, however. The highest number occurred in Revision One (eighteen), almost half of the changes made in that revision. Revisions Two, Four, and Five contained few Word level changes; Revision Three contained thirteen and Revision Six ten Word level changes. The same was true for Phrase level changes: twelve occurred in Revision One, three was the low in Revision Four, and Revision Six contained eight Phrase level changes. Sentence, Theme, and Correctness level changes all increased across the revisions.

Particularly notable are the Sentence and Theme level changes. Sentence level changes began with the low of two (1% of all Anne's changes) in the first revision and reached a high in the sixth revision with six changes (4% of all changes). Theme level changes began with one in Revision One, increased to ten (6% of all her changes) in Revision Four, and concluded with eight in Revision Six. Each Theme change encompassed numerous word and phrase changes which were not separately identified.

Thirty-nine percent of all Anne's changes were substitutions in the text (61 out of 156), 30% were additions (47), and 23% were deletions (36).

Previous discussion has pointed out that the numerous word changes (Diction) operated as Substitutions. Distribution and Consolidation were the least common operations Anne used. Permutation was used in 5% of the changes. No clear pattern emerged in the operation of these changes across the conferences, except that Addition peaked in the third conference and Substitution in the first, third, and sixth, each higher than the last. Most of Anne's deletions occurred in Revision One (13 of 36), and most of her deletions were in Development and Support.

Tallying the number of changes may indicate how hard a student worked at revising, but it does not establish the effectiveness of that revising. To interpret the quality of these revisions, holistic scorers evaluated the first and last drafts of each of the student's four essays, as delineated in Chapter III (Figure 10). Six of Anne's eight drafts received a "3" rating, "Good." The first draft of essays two and four received a "2" or "Fair" rating. These scores indicate that the quality of Anne's final drafts were above average but showed no

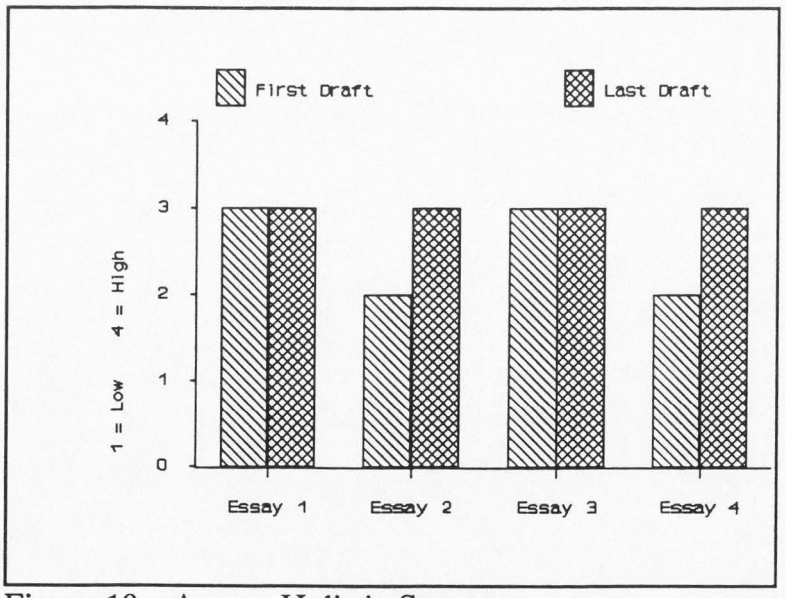

Figure 10. Anne: Holistic Scores

development across the term. The second essay improved following conferences, as did the fourth essay, revised without a conference.

A review of the changes Anne made in her six Revisions reveals a focus on the topics of Development and Support, then Diction. When her topics of change were clustered, two-thirds of her changes were in content (Composition topic category). The highest number of changes were made on the revision of her fourth essay (Revision Six). Her first revision contained almost as many changes, but more Language and fewer Composition changes occurred. Across the term, she generally decreased the frequency of Word and Phrase level changes and increased the frequency of Sentence and Theme level changes. Substitution was her most common operation, followed by Addition. Although writing quality, as established by the holistic scorers, did not develop, Anne revised more in content areas and at deeper levels.

Brenda

Like Anne, Brenda made the largest number of her changes in the Development and Support topic. Twenty-four percent of her 204 total changes were content changes in the bodies of her essays. Her second most frequent topic of change was in Syntax, 13% of her total. The classification of these twenty-seven changes indicated they were sentence structure changes which did not alter the content of the writing substantially. Punctuation changes were almost as frequent as Syntax changes, 13% of the total. In her last two revisions, Brenda made 19 changes labeled Abbreviations. She also made

between six and eight percent of her changes in the areas of Transitions, Specific Details, Conclusion, and Diction. When Brenda's 204 changes were sorted into categories, 52% occurred in the Composition category, 26% in Mechanics, and 23% in Language.

The focus of Brenda's changes shifted across the revisions (Table 14). Her first four revisions showed five or fewer changes in the Mechanics category. Changes in the Language category were also low in Revision One, Two, Four, and Five. Although over half of all her changes were Composition changes, her emphasis on Composition varied from Revision Five to Revision Six. The ratio within each revision showed a concentration on Composition changes in Revision One, Revision Two, and Revision Four. Revision Three revealed more equal emphasis on Composition and Language, and Revisions Five and Six showed

Table 14

Brenda: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

	Revision							
Topic	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions	2	3	3	4		5	17	8
Specifics		5	4		1	2	12	6
Thesis/Purpose	1	1		1		1	4	2
Introduction	5	2		1		3	11	4
Development	5	10	10	4	5	14	48	24
Conclusion	2	1	3	3	3	1	13	6
Syntax	1	1	9	4	3	9	27	13
Diction	2	2	5		1	4	14	7
Inflection			1	1	1	2	5	3
Punctuation		2	5	1	1	17	26	13
Spelling	3				1	1	5	3
Capitalization						2	2	1
Abbreviations	1				8	11	20	10
Totals	22	27	40	19	24	72	204	100

slightly more changes in Mechanics than on Composition. The sixth revision, contrasted with the other five revisions, exhibited the broadest and deepest of changes by topic: the most changes in Transitions, Development and Support, Syntax, Inflections, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Abbreviations; equal to the most changes in Thesis and Diction; and average in changes in Specifics and in Introduction. No clear trends were visible in the level of Brenda's changes. Twenty percent of all her changes were at the Word and Phrase levels, Revision Three having the most with 6% of the Word level changes and 5% of the Phrase level. Changes at the Sentence level comprise 18% of all changes. The lowest number is in Revision One (1%) and the highest in Revision Six (7%). Across the middle revisions, the third and fourth had the most changes at the Sentence level (4% and 3%). Theme level changes occurred most often in the even numbered revisions: Revisions One, Three, and Five had three or fewer Theme level changes (less than 1%); Revisions Two, Four, and Six had seven or eight Theme level changes (3-4% of all changes). Correctness changes, twenty-seven percent of all Brenda's changes, occurred in increasing numbers across the revisions. The first revision had four changes at the Correctness level (2%); the final revision had 32 changes (16%) at that level.

In forty-two percent of her changes, Brenda added material. Her next most common operation was Substitution (31% of all her changes), then Deletion at 11%. Although the frequency of Addition showed no trend across the revisions, Brenda's use of Deletion and Substitution generally increased. She least often used Consolidation and Distribution as operations, although her use

increased across the drafts. Eight percent of her changes were Permutations (reordering or reordering with substitution), also increasing across the drafts from one in Revision One (.49%) to six in Revision Six (3%).

The quality of Brenda's revising, as shown by the holistic evaluations, improved after the writing conferences and across the term (see Figure 11).

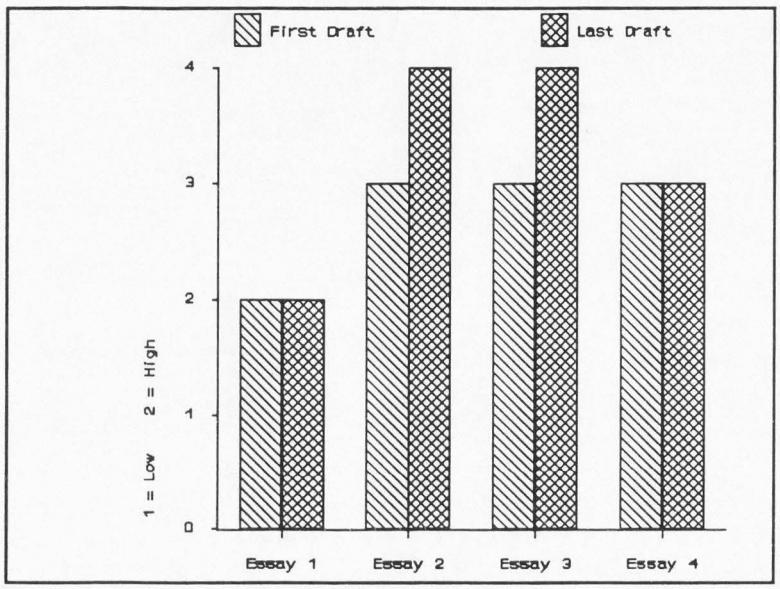

Figure 11. Brenda: Holistic Scores

Each essay received a higher rating after conferences. Neither the first nor the fourth essay, essays the student revised independently, was rated as improved following revision; however, both drafts of the fourth essay received a higher score than the first essay. The figure indicates specific learning after conferences on the middle essays, and transferred learning on the fourth essay.

In summary, Brenda made a high number of total changes, indicating diligent work at revision. The holistic scores establish this work as effective. Half of Brenda's changes were in content (Composition category), and half were in surface changes (26% in Mechanics and 23% in Language). The primary

topics covered by her changes were Development and Support (24%), then Syntax and Punctuation (13% each). The level and operation of her changes fluctuated across the revisions, but exhibit no clear trends with the exception of Correctness level changes, which increased. Sixteen percent of her total changes were Correctness changes on her final revision. Her most common operation was Addition, then Substitution. Patterns of development do not appear in the data on Brenda's revision changes.

Daman

One-fourth of Daman's total changes were classified by topic in Development and Support. Another 18% were classified in Diction, 7% in Specific Details, and 6% each in Transitions and Syntax. Table 15, which

Table 15

Daman: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

	Revision							
Topic	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions		4	1	5			10	6
Specifics		8	3	1			12	7
Thesis/Purpose		1				1	2	1
Introduction		4		1		1	6	3
Development		4	6	17	3	15	45	25
Conclusion		3	1	2	1	1	8	4
Syntax		8	1	2			11	6
Diction		8	7	15	2		32	18
Shift of Person				2	1		3	2
Inflection		4					4	2
Punctuation		4	12	6	3		25	14
Spelling		3	6	6			15	8
Capitalization			1		6		7	4
Abbreviations				2	1		3	2
Totals		50	39	59	17	18	183	100

looks across revisions, shows that most changes occurred in the fourth one. Revisions Three and Four followed the pattern of the totals: the highest numbers in Development and Diction. Changes in Revision Two were focused equally on Specific Details, Syntax, and Diction. Revision Five showed the fewest changes of the drafts: 2% in Development and 1% each in Conclusion, Diction, and Shift of Person. Virtually all of the changes in Revision Six were in Development and Support. Spelling and Punctuation changes showed on all the revisions except the sixth. In this Revision there were substantially more Theme changes. When this occurs, all the changes within a paragraph are classified as one theme changes; Mechanics changes are not individually tallied in that paragraph. Fourteen percent of Daman's changes were Punctuation; eight percent were Spelling.

Classified by topic categories, Daman's changes totaled as follows: 45% Composition, 27% Language, and 27% Mechanics. Composition and Language changes occurred most frequently in the even numbered Revisions (although no Language changes showed in Revision Six because of the Theme change). Changes in Mechanics were most frequent in the third and fourth revisions.

The level and operation of Daman's changes followed a pattern similar to the other students' changes. Twenty-nine percent of his changes were identified at the Word level, 27% at the Correctness level. Phrase level changes occurred 20% of the time, Theme level changes 16%. The least frequent level of change was the Sentence level. These ratios were not consistent across the revisions for Daman. The frequency of Word level changes generally decreased, with 2%

recorded in the fifth revision and none in the sixth. Phrase level changes received their highest tallies in the second and fourth revisions. Sentence level changes were most frequent in Revision Two (5%), dropping to .5% each in the later revisions. Theme level changes decreased from four in Revision Two to one in Revision Five; however, in Revision Six, 17 Theme level changes were identified (9%).

Daman's most common operation of change was Substitution (42%), followed by Addition (35%) and then Deletion (16). Both Addition and Substitution decreased across the drafts, but Deletion tended to increase. No instances of Consolidation were identified. Like Addition and Substitution, Distribution and Permutation tended to decrease from Revisions Two through Four; no changes of this nature were classified in Revisions Five (polishing for a final draft) or Six (a complete re-write).

The quality of Daman's drafts, as evaluated by the holistic scorers, improved following the writing conferences. Each of the two middle essays received a higher score following conferences. Revision did not seem to have improved his fourth essay, but it received a higher rating than did his first essay (see Figure 12).

A review of Daman's revision changes shows 45% of them in content or text-based changes, and over half in surface changes (Language and Mechanics). The topics of these changes were most commonly Development and Support, Diction, and Punctuation. Across the revisions, Daman decreased the frequency of Word level changes. Theme level changes generally decreased, but increased

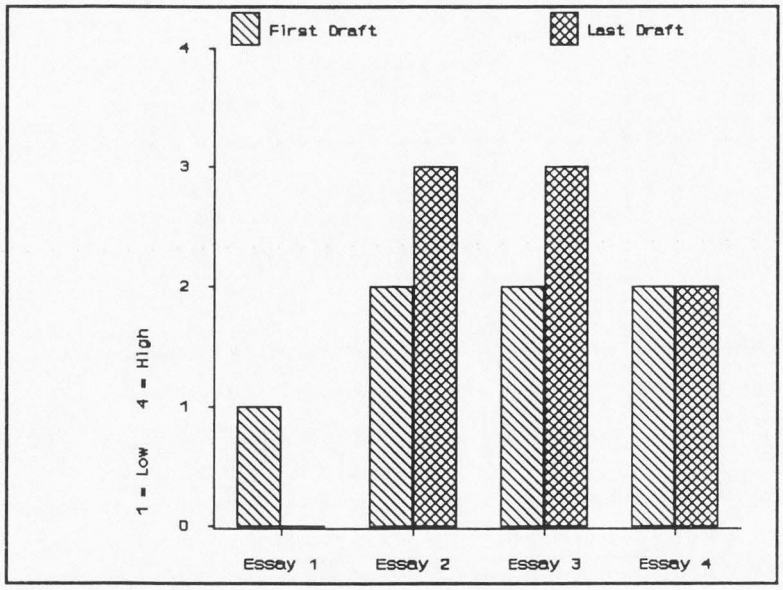

Figure 12. Daman: Holistic Scores

dramatically on the final revision, which was a complete re-write. His most common operations, Substitution and Addition, decreased across the term while his instances of Deletion increased. Daman's revision development, then, is evident primarily in the level and operation of his changes.

Jason

The topic categories of Jason's changes among drafts were as follows: 60% Composition changes, 27% Language changes, and 13% changes in Mechanics. Twenty-nine percent of all these changes, or half of the Composition changes, were classified in the Development and Support topic. Ten percent of the total changes were in the use of Specific Details; 7% were changes in Transitions. The most common Language change was coded as Diction (19% of the total changes). Table 16 shows the most changes in Revision Five, 31% of the total; of these, most were in Development, Diction, and Punctuation. Revision Two was notable for the changes in Specifics, one-

Table 16

Jason: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

Topic	Revision 1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions		3		3	1		7	7
Specifics	1	7	1		1		10	10
Thesis/Purpose	1		1		1	1	4	4
Introduction			1	1	1	1	4	4
Development	4	4	2	3	9	6	28	29
Conclusion				1	2	2	5	5
Syntax	1				3		4	4
Diction	2	5	3	2	6		18	17
Inflection	3			1			4	4
Punctuation		2	2		4		8	8
Spelling			2		1		3	3
Capitalization	1						1	1
Abbreviations					1		1	1
Totals	13	21	12	11	30	10	97	100

-third of all changes made in that revision.

Jason revised fairly evenly across the Word, Phrase, and Theme levels (28%, 25%, and 22% respectively). Thirteen percent of his changes were classified at the Correctness level, 12% at the Sentence level. Frequencies of changes at all of these levels increased across the drafts, with the exception of the Word level, which fluctuated unevenly between 2% and 8% per draft. Revision Six showed only changes at the Theme level because Jason changed his topic and completely rewrote his paper between the first and last draft. Like Daman's sixth revision, many other levels of changes may have been present between Jason's first and last draft, but they do not appear because of the all-encompassing Theme level classification.

Half of all Jason's changes were Substitutions, most of these in Revision

Five (18% of the total changes). Twenty-nine percent of his changes were Additions, 9% of them in Revision Two. The least frequent operations Jason used were Consolidation and Distribution (one change each). Permutation, seldom used by the others, was used in 5% of Jason's changes.

The effectiveness of Jason's revising was evaluated by the holistic scorers. His second essay showed marked improvement after the writing conference although his third one did not (see Figure 13). The effectiveness of his revision, as shown by a contrast of Essay One's and Essay Six's first and last drafts, seemed to have increased; his first revision was rated lower than its first draft while the final revision was rated higher.

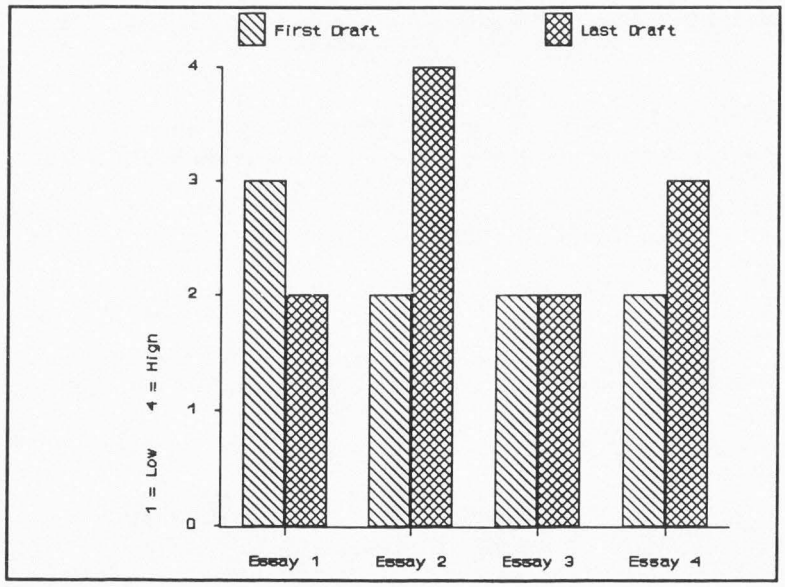

Figure 13. Jason: Holistic Scores

In summary, Jason's revisions involved content changes two-thirds of the time. Half of these content changes were identified in the Development and Support topic. The addition of Specific Details was next most frequent topic of change. Across the revisions, Jason made an increasing number of content

changes, and an increasing number of Theme level changes, explained by his complete rewrite of the final essay. Like several other students, Jason's most common operations were Substitution and Addition.

Susan

Susan's topic categories, as classified by the coders, paralleled the pattern of the other students' changes: most changes in Composition (63%), followed by Language (21%) and Mechanics (16%). This pattern was consistent across Susan's six revisions with two exceptions; in Revision Two all of the changes were in the Composition category, and in Revision Six more changes were in Mechanics than in Language.

Within each category, other patterns emerged (Table 17). The predominant topic within Composition was again Development and Support, but it constituted only 35% of the total changes. Transition was the topic coded on 8% of the changes, and Specific Details and Introduction received 6% each. In the Language changes, Syntax and Diction were equal, at 8% of all changes. Susan made broader changes in the Mechanics category than did the other students: 7% of all changes were Punctuation, 5% each were Inflections and Capitalization, and 3% were Spelling.

Susan made changes across the levels and across the revisions, with the exception of Revision Two with five Sentence and four Theme changes only. Attention to the correctness level appeared to have increased across the drafts, from less than 1% in Revision One to 6% in Revision Six. Theme level changes

Table 17

Susan: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

Topic	Revision 1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions		3	3	1		4	11	8
Specifics	1			5	2		8	6
Thesis/Purpose		1	1	2			4	3
Introduction		1		2	2	3	8	6
Development	8	2	11	6	15	6	48	35
Conclusion	1	2	1	1		2	7	5
Syntax	1		3	1	5	1	11	8
Diction	2		4	1	4		11	8
Inflection	2		1	1	1	2	7	5
Punctuation	1		3	1	3	2	10	7
Spelling			3		1		4	3
Capitalization			1			6	7	5
Abbreviations					1		1	1
Totals	16	9	31	21	34	26	137	100

occurred with most frequency in the even numbered revisions. The highest number of Phrase and Sentence level changes were made in Revision Five, the highest number of Word level changes in Revision Three.

Substitution was categorized as the most common operation of Susan's changes, with forty-five percent of all changes, followed by 24% Addition and 18% Deletion. Both Addition and Substitution showed slight increases across the six revisions; Deletion was most frequent in the third and fifth revisions. The operations of Consolidation and Distribution were classified as 3% each of Susan's total changes. Permutation was used more often, 7% of the time. The highest number of changes occurred in Revision Five, followed by Revision Three. The lowest number of changes occurred in Revision Two.

Figure 14 shows that the quality of Susan's drafts, as evaluated by the

holistic scorers, stayed about the same through the term, but her revision skills improved with the writing conferences. Each of her last three essays received higher scores on the final drafts, Essay Two's final draft receiving two scores higher than its first draft.

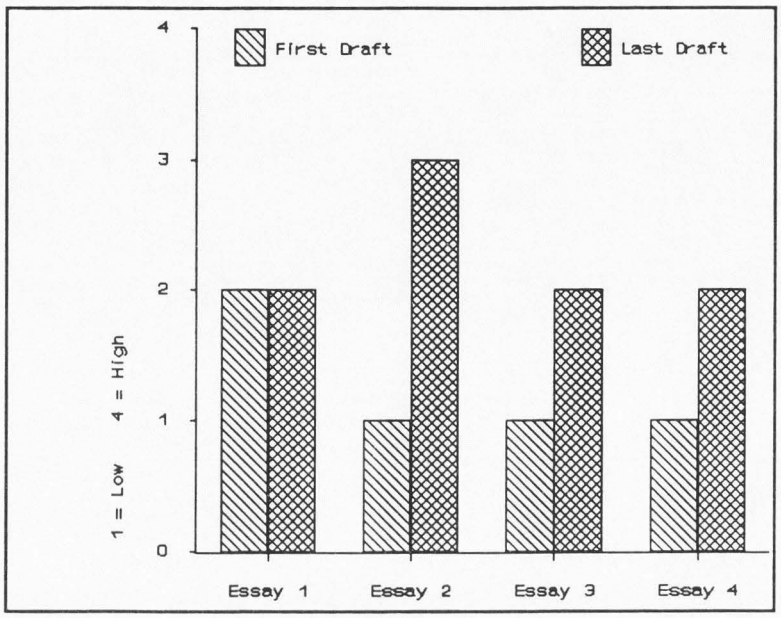

Figure 14. Susan: Holistic Scores

A review of Susan's revisions shows that two-thirds of her changes were in Composition, or at the content level. The most common topic of change Development and Support (35% of all changes). Across the revisions, Susan made increasing numbers of changes in Composition, Language, and Mechanics. No clear pattern of development in level of change is evident, except that changes at the Correctness level increased. Substitution and Addition operations increased slightly across the revisions. Susan used Permutation proportionately more than did the other students (7% of all her changes). All other levels and operations of her changes fluctuated across the term, indicating the experimental

nature of Susan's revision practices.

Verlin

Half of Verlin's 210 changes were classified in the Composition category, 33% in Language, and 18% in Mechanics. Of the 104 changes in the Composition category, thirty-seven (18% of the whole) were found in the sixth revision, twenty-three (11%) in the fourth revision, and eighteen (9%) in the first revision. Table 18 reveals two things which were notable in the topic categories of Verlin's changes: a higher number of changes than would be proportionally consistent appeared in the Mechanics category of Revision Three, and no changes in the Language and Mechanics categories were found in Revision Two.

Table 18

Verlin: Topic by Revision (Frequency of Changes)

	Revision							
Topic	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Changes	% of Changes
Transitions	2		2	2	1	7	14	7
Specifics	1	2				1	4	2
Thesis/Purpose				2		1	3	1
Introduction			1	1	2	5	9	4
Development	15	6	2	17	4	20	64	31
Conclusion		1	4	1	1	3	10	5
Syntax	3		3	3	1	4	14	7
Diction	7		4	11	8	14	44	21
Inflection	1			4		6	11	5
Punctuation	1		12	3	2	12	30	14
Spelling					2		2	1
Abbreviations			2	1		2	5	2
Totals	30	9	30	45	21	75	210	100

An examination of the changes across topics showed the greatest number of changes under Development and Support, particularly in the first, fourth, and sixth revisions. The next most frequent topic of change was Diction. The number of Diction changes fluctuated between the revisions. In fact, the sixth revision had the greatest number of changes in seven topics: Transitions, Introduction, Development, Syntax, Diction, Inflections, and Punctuation. Looking at the highest topic of each revision is also interesting. The first, second, and fourth revisions focused on Development and Support, the third on Punctuation, and the fifth on Diction. Revision Six also focused on Development, with many changes in Diction and Punctuation.

Word level changes accounted for one-third of Verlin's 210 changes. The highest number occurred in the fourth and sixth revisions, but his first revision had almost as many. Twenty-nine percent of his changes were at the Phrase level; again, the sixth revision had the highest number followed by the first revision. Sentence level changes peaked in the fourth revision and comprised 15% of all his changes. Revision Two contained five Theme level changes, 2% of the whole. Theme level changes decreased across Verlin's revisions to one change in Revision Six.

Substitution, 39% of the whole, was the most frequent operation of Verlin's changes. The next highest operation was Addition (33%). Eighteen percent of the changes were Deletions, and eight percent were Permutations. Consolidations and Distributions were used infrequently (one and two percent respectively). No clear patterns emerged from these operations across the

revisions, except that no permutations appeared until the third revision.

Figure 15 shows that the quality of Verlin's revising, as established by the holistic scorers, did not essentially change. His first essay showed as effective revision as his third did: one score higher on the final draft. The second essay showed the most change between first and last drafts. His fourth essay showed a lower score after revision. The quality of the final drafts, however, were rated higher after the writing conferences. Both middle essays' final drafts were given the highest rating, 4.

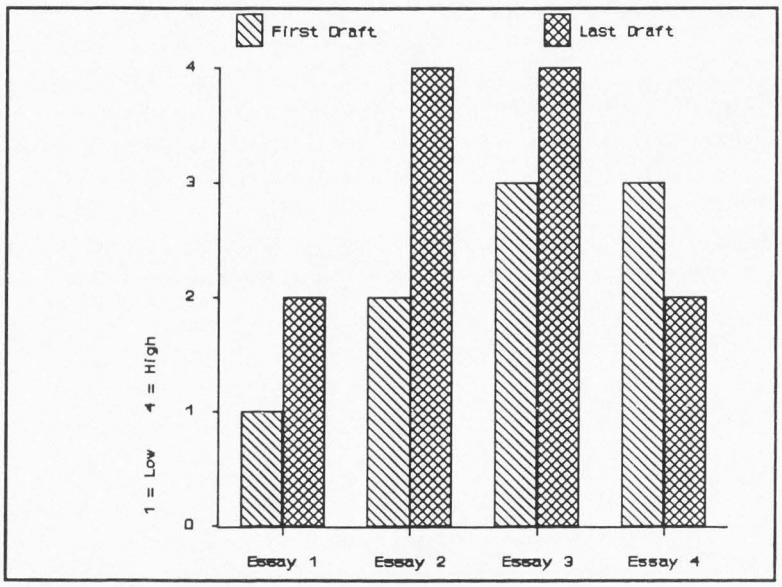

Figure 15. Verlin: Holistic Scores

In summary, Verlin made a large number of changes in his revisions. Half of these were content level (Composition category); half were surface level (Language and Mechanics). One-third of his changes were in the topic of Development and Support, and 21% were in Diction. Verlin's second revision contained few changes of any kind (9), but his final revision, completed independently contained 75 changes. The pattern of Verlin's levels of change

differs from the other students. He made almost two-thirds of his changes in the Word and Phrase level, and these increased in the sixth revision. In the second revision, Verlin worked the most at the Theme level, decreasing across the revisions. Like the other students, Verlin's most common operations of change were Substitution and Addition. He also made 8% of his changes as Permutations. Like Brenda, Verlin made many changes at smaller levels (Word and Phrase).

Relationships

The following section will present the results across the students, focusing on similarities and differences among students and between men and women where appropriate. The four areas in which relationships will be discussed are conferences, revisions, the contrast between the first and sixth revision, and the comparison between conferences and revisions.

Conferences

A number of similarities in the description of conferences existed across students. Figure 16 shows how similar the students were in the percentage of the total conference T-units spent in the four topic categories. The two slight exceptions to the pattern were Susan's higher percent in format, a result of her lengthy second conference Engagement time, and Daman's higher percentage of Mechanics talk, a result of his second and fourth conference discussion about punctuation.

The teacher spoke approximately twice as much as the students in the

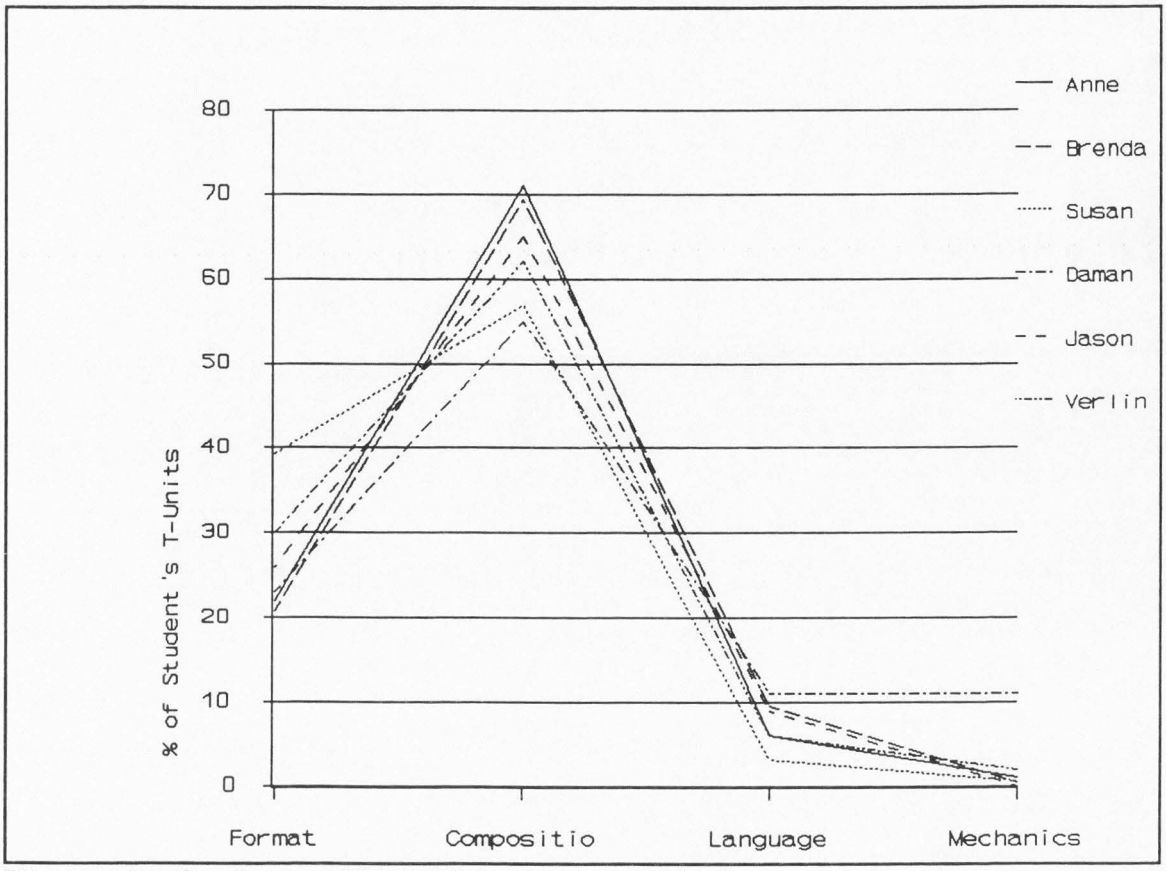

Figure 16. Conference Topic Categories by Students

conferences. The mean percentage across all students' conferences was 64% teacher T-units and 36% student T-units. No meaningful difference was evident by sex. The men's mean percentage was 65% teacher T-units, 35% student T-units. The women's mean percentage was close to the men's, 63% and 37%; however, their individual percentages differed widely: Brenda uttered 25% of the T-units, Susan 53%.

Another similarity in the conferences was that the percentage of text-specific talk was always higher for the teacher than for the student (see Figure 17). Brenda's and Susan's talk had the lowest percentage, Daman's, Anne's, and Jason's the highest. No pattern of text-specific talk by sex appeared evident.

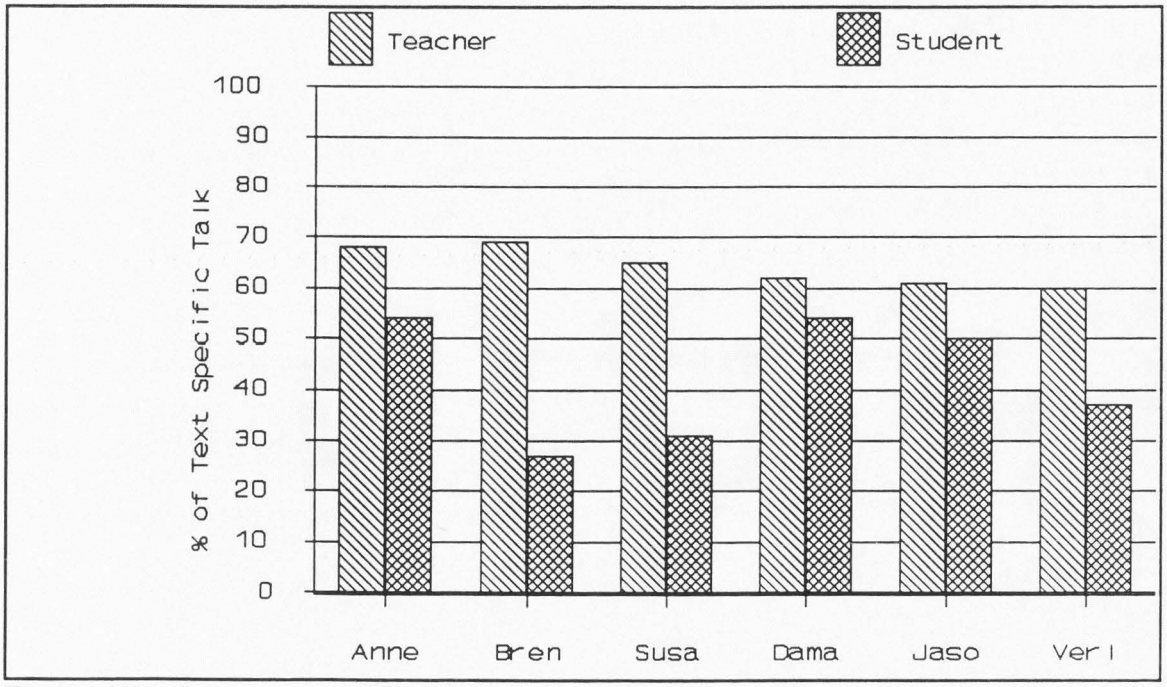

Figure 17: Percentage of Total Text Specific Talk by Speaker

The teacher's types of utterances were very similar with all six students. Figure 18 shows a line graph of the percentage of the teacher's total T-units per student that were coded as focus utterances, clarifying utterances, approval utterances, open-ended questions, and yes-no questions. Prescriptive utterances are also on this graph, although their type is contrary in nature to the other five. The most common type of teacher utterance in all students' conferences was the clarifying utterance, from almost a third (in Verlin's conferences) to over half (in Anne's conferences) of all her talk. The next most common type was the yes-no question. Least common were the focus and prescriptive utterances, under 10%.

A pattern as clear as the conference topic categories (Figure 16) does not emerge in the line graph of conference Topics (see Figure 19). A few similarities are evident. Less than 3% of the talk concerned Conference Procedure, Syntax, Spelling, and Abbreviations; and less than 4% concerned Transitions. In addition, the mean conferences' percentages for all students

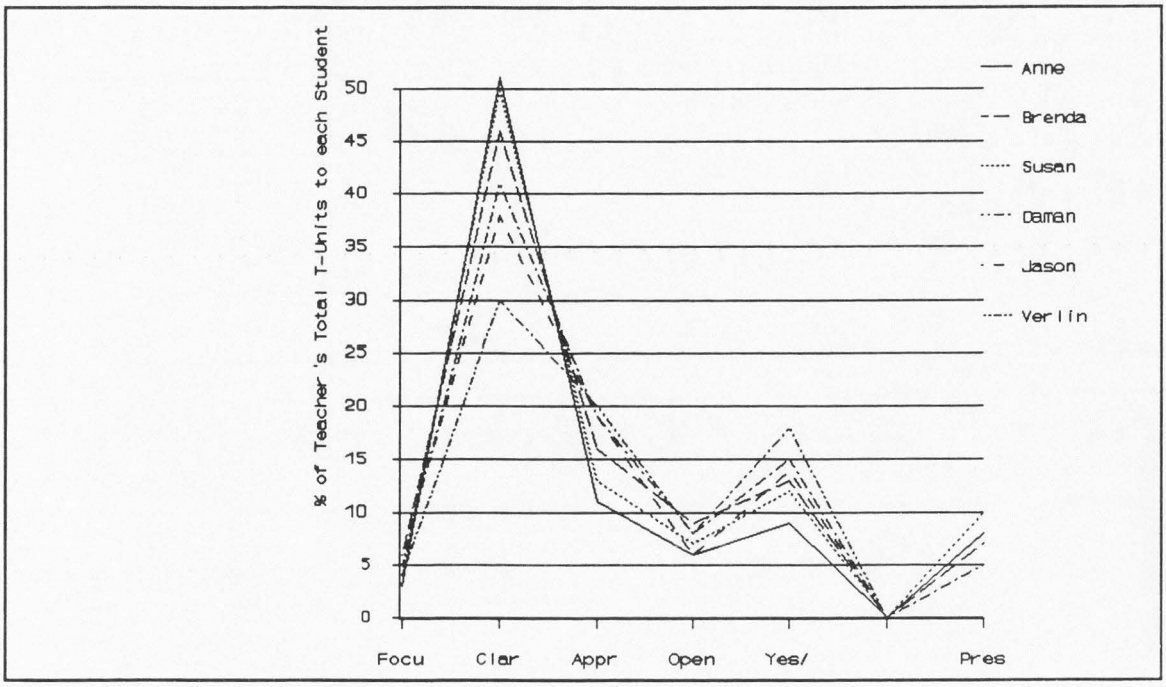

Figure 18. Teacher: Types of Utterances Across Students

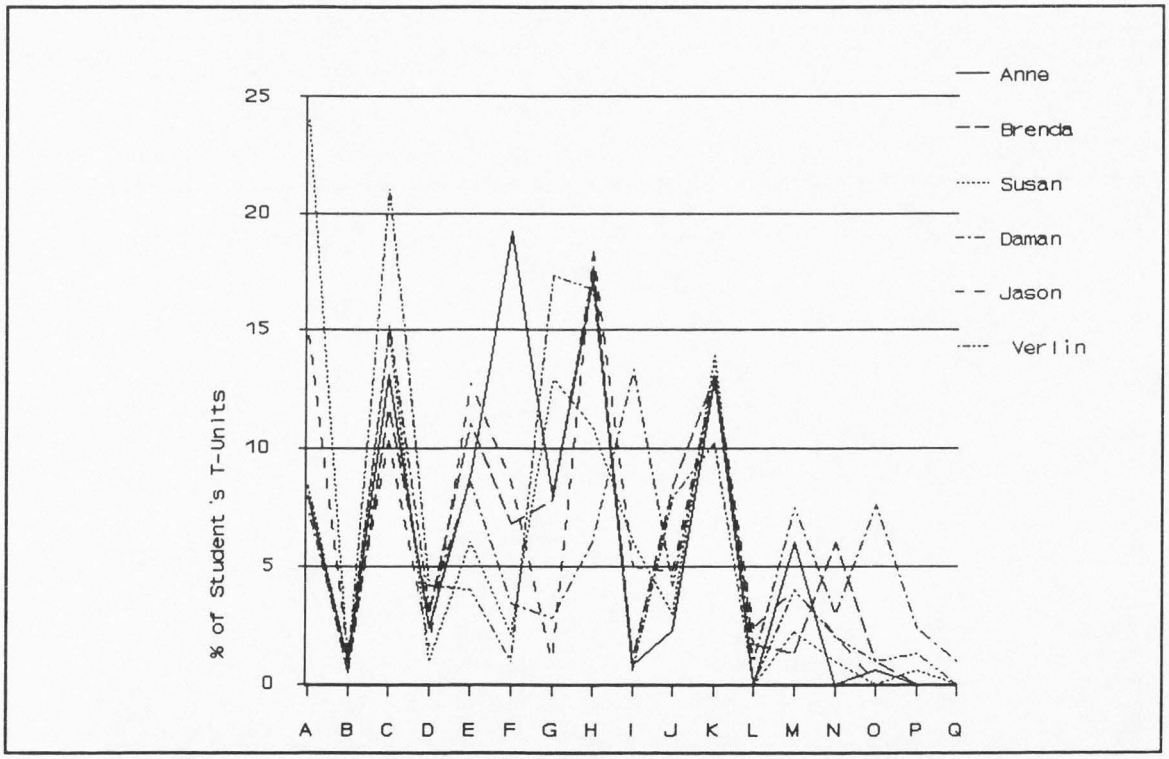

Figure 19. Conference Topics by Students

Note: A (engagement), B (conference procedure), C (disengagement), D (transitions), E (specifics), F (thesis or purpose), G (introduction), H (development and support), I (conclusion), J (general topic), K (writing process), L (syntax), M (diction), N (shift of person), O (punctuation), P (spelling), Q (abbreviation)

were higher than 10% in Disengagement and Writing Process talk. No patterns emerge, either by sex or by total group, in the ten other topics.

A closer look at Figure 18 showing the types of teacher utterances reveals an interesting contrast between the men and the women. The women's conferences contained the highest percentages of clarifying utterances (46%, 50%, 51%), the men's the lowest (30%, 38%, 41%). Conversely, the women's conferences contained the lowest percentages of approval utterances (11%, 13%,and 16%), the men's the highest (19%, 19%, 20%). The women's conferences also contained the lowest percentages of yes-no questions (9%, 12%, 13%) and the men's the highest (14%, 15%, 18%). The mean percentage of prescriptive utterances also differed: 8.3% in the women's conferences with 6% in the men's. These differences are not great, but they are consistent.

The types of student utterance also differed among students. Figure 20 shows a line graph of the percentage of each student's total T-units which were classified as eliciting approval, as evaluative, and as in question form. Anne asked twice the percentage of questions that Brenda, Susan, Daman, and Verlin did. Jason, Anne, and Daman uttered a noticeably higher percentage of evaluative T-units. Students were most similar in that they made fewer than 8% utterances which elicited approval, according to the coders.

A final difference across conferences and students was in the percentage of topics initiated by the students. Figure 21 reveals no pattern by student, by conference, or by sex. The only constant, with Susan's third conference the exception, is that the teacher initiated more than half the topics.

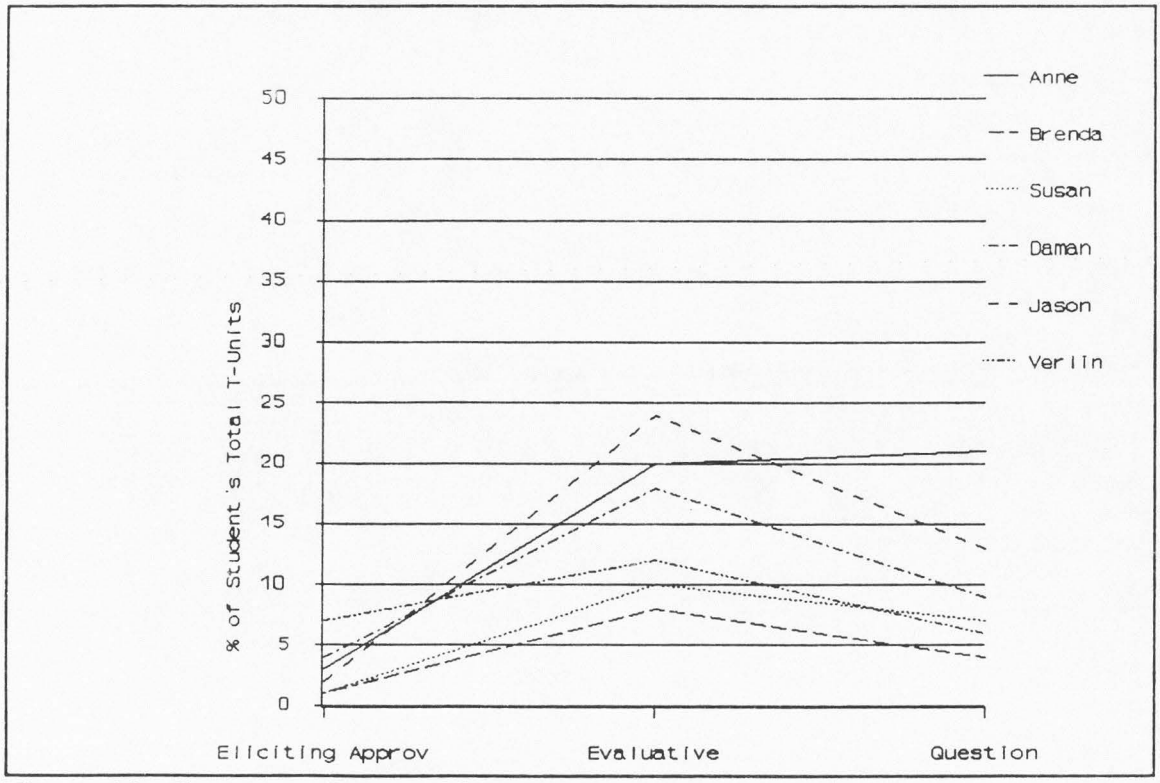

Figure 20. Students: Types of Utterances

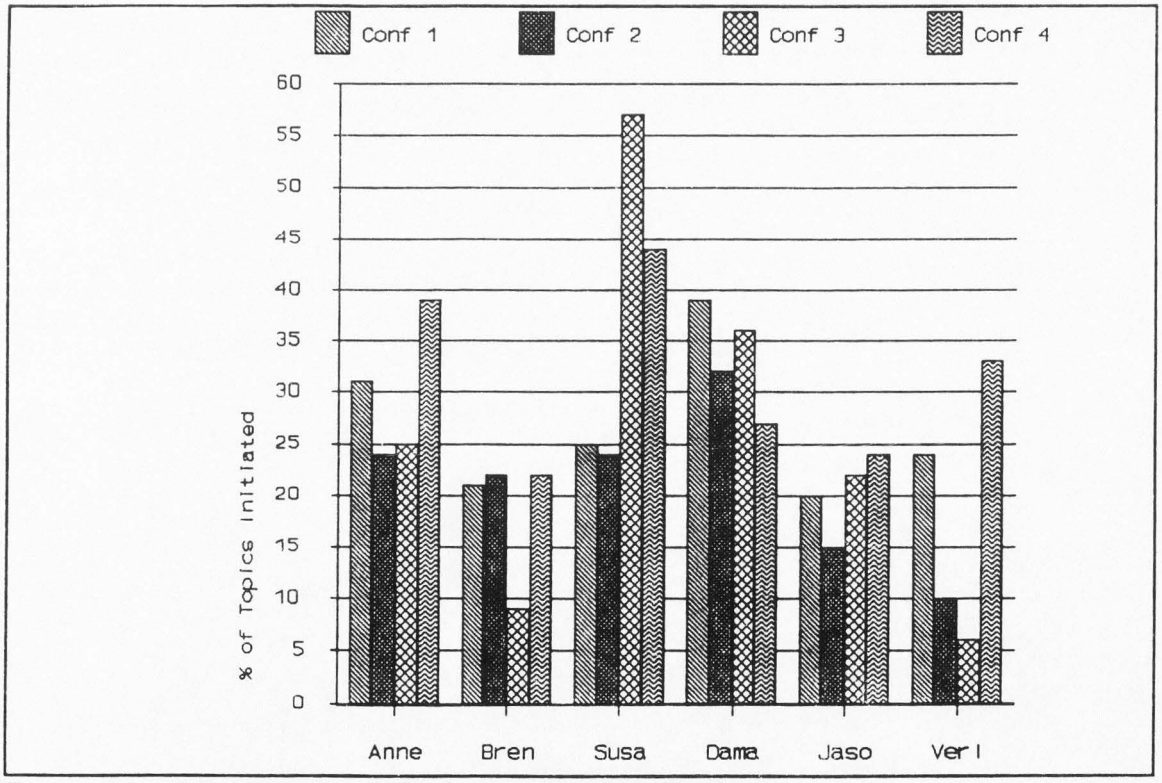

Figure 21. Percentages of Topics Initiated by Students

Revisions

Several similarities among the students' revisions appear in the data. Figure 22 graphs the percentage of the students' total changes in the three topic categories (the fourth category, Focus, does not appear in revision coding). All students made the largest percent of their changes in the Composition category. Language changes account for between 20% and 35% of all changes. A variance in surface changes (Mechanics) occurs. Brenda and Daman made the most changes in this category, Anne and Jason the fewest.

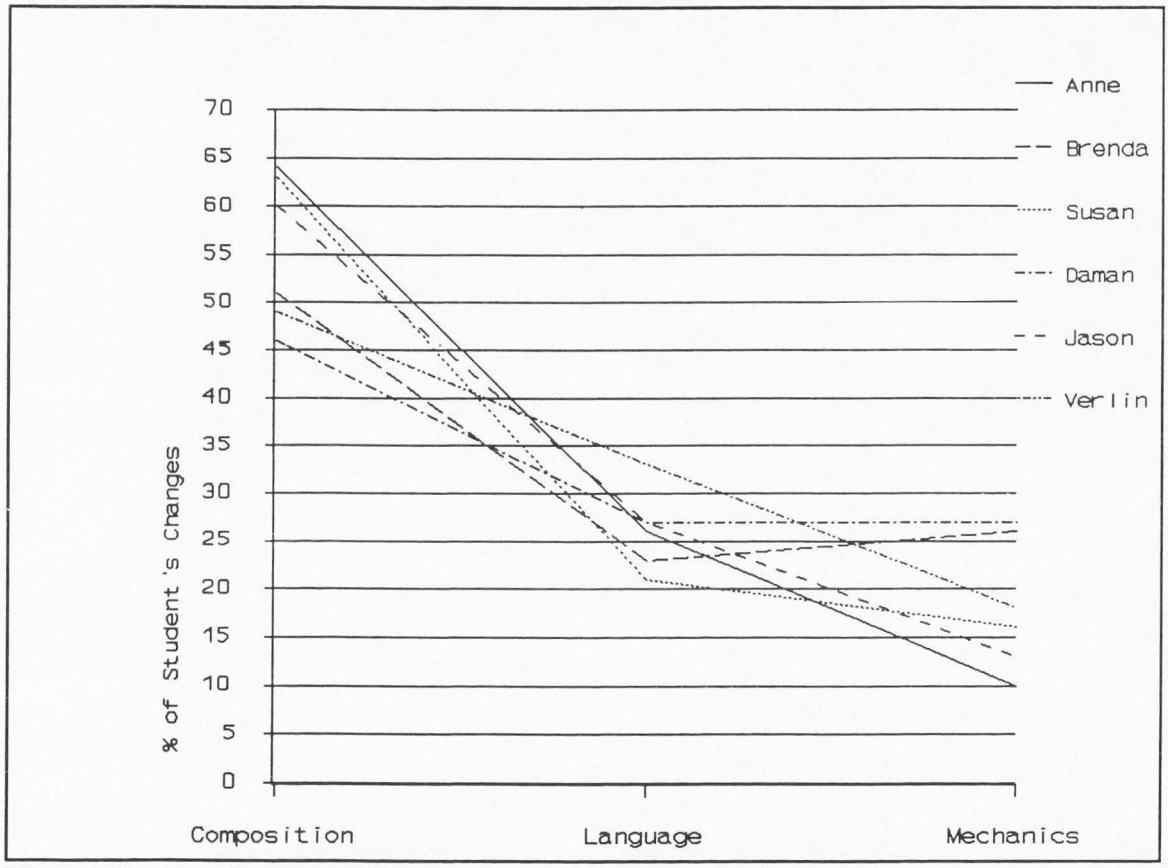

Figure 22. Topic Categories of Changes -- Between Students

Students were also parallel in the operation of changes that they used: Substitution and Addition were most common, Consolidation and Distribution least common (see Figure 23). Differences between men and women were

negligible. A look at the Topic Categories by Operation by Student reveals that students were quite similar in the operation used in specific categories (Figures 24-26).

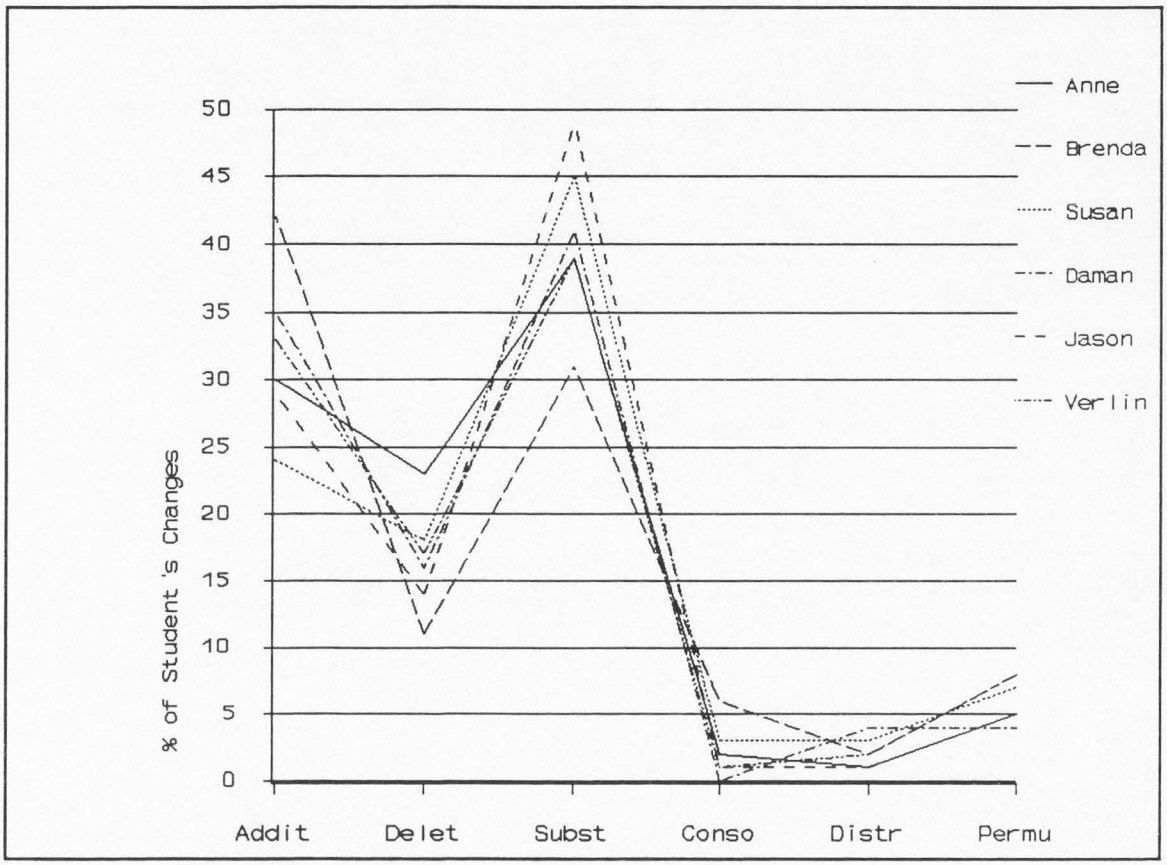

Figure 23. Operation of Changes -- Between Students

In the Composition changes, students were most likely to add material and least likely to consolidate or distribute material. Language changes were most likely Substitutions; Mechanics changes were Substitutions or Additions, in that order.

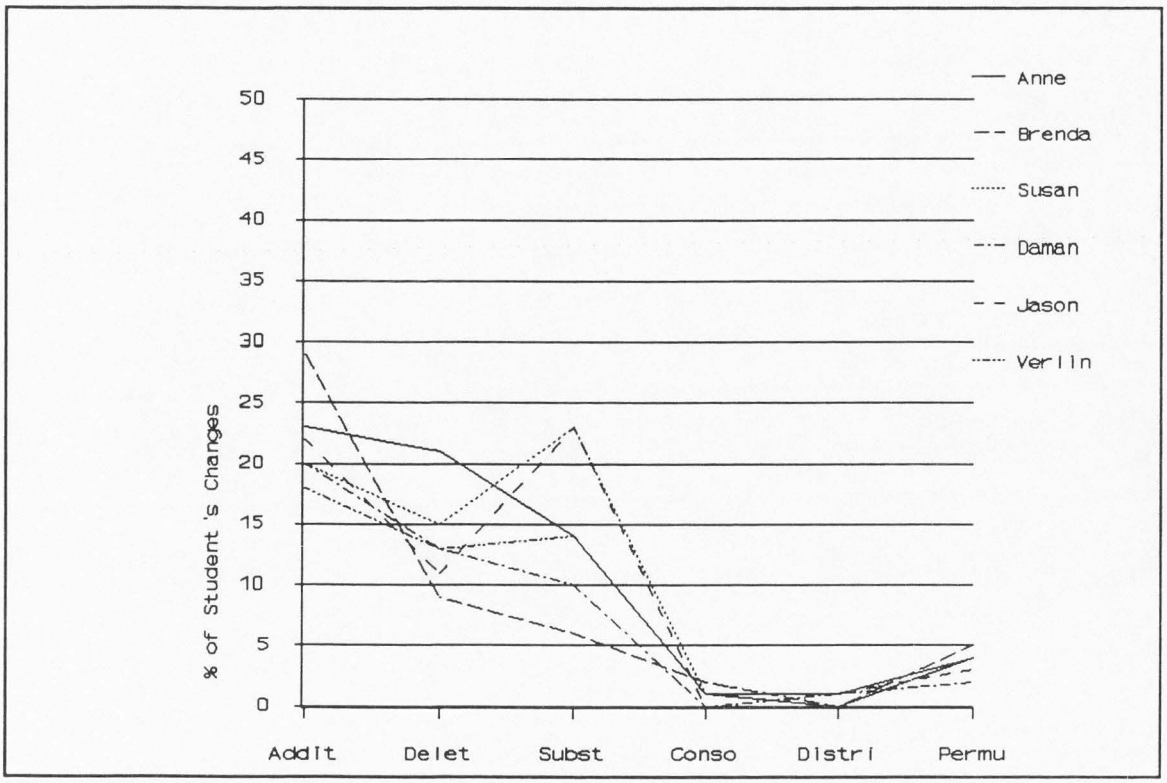

Figure 24. Composition: Topic Category by Operation by Student

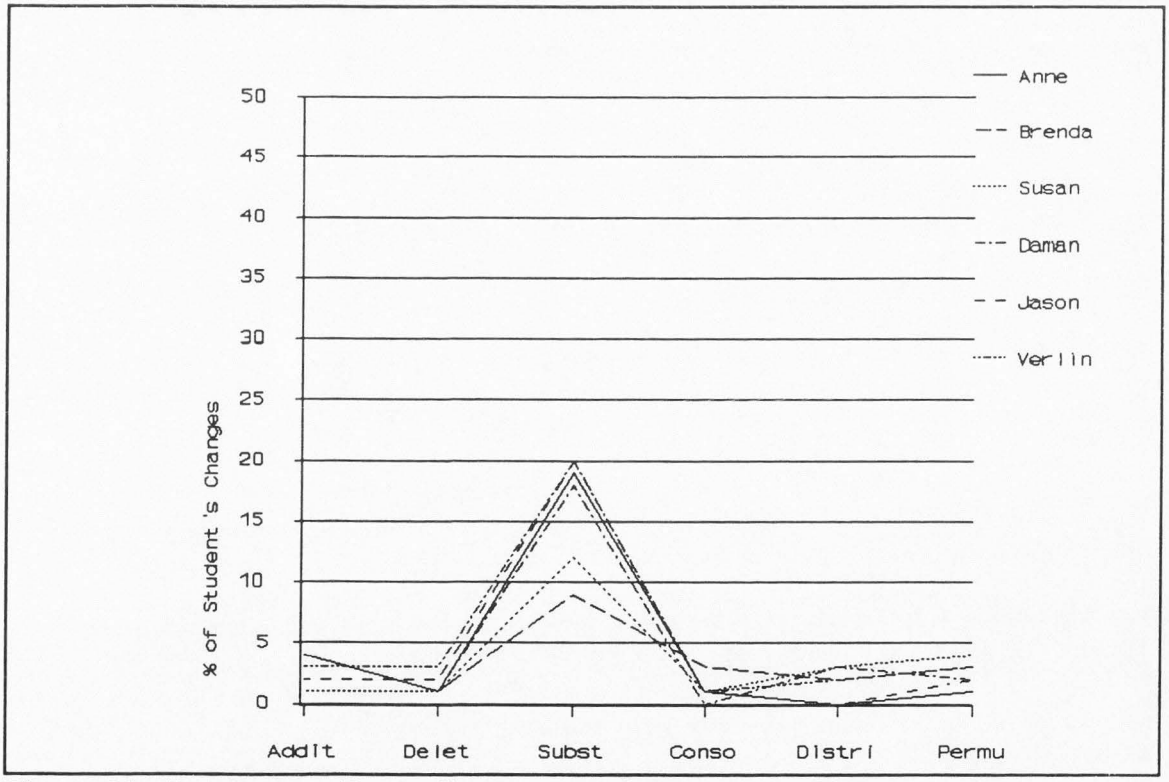

Figure 25. Language: Topic Category by Operation by Student

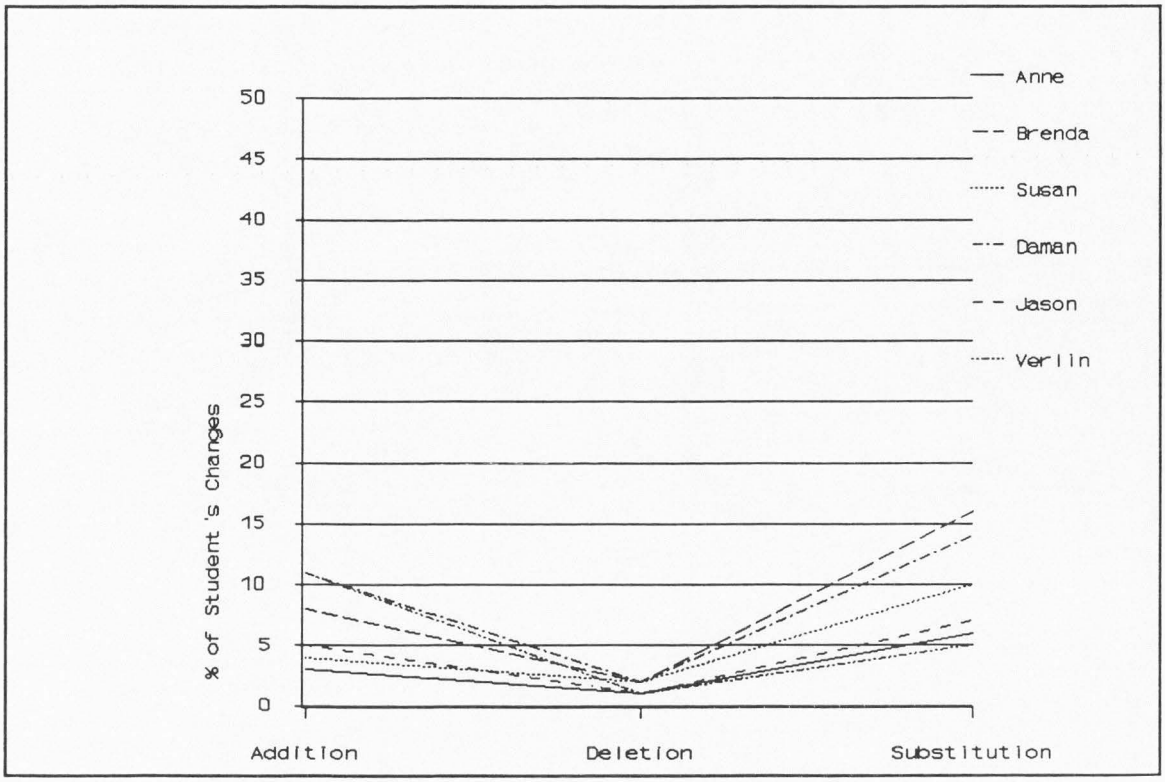

Figure 26. Mechanics: Topic Category by Operation by Student

In the topic category of Language, students were also similar in the level of changes (see Table 19). The most common was Word level. A cross check of common Language topics shows Diction the predominant topic for everyone but Brenda; a cross check between Language level and Language operation shows that Substitution is the predominant operation. The least common level for the Language topic category was at the Theme level.

Figure 27 shows that the topics of the changes which the six students made have some points of similarity. All students made more than 22% of their changes in the area of Development and Support. Four of the six students

Table 19

Language by Level by Student
Percentage of student's total changes

Level	Anne	Brenda	Susan	Daman	Jason	Verlin
Word	21	11	11	19	20	21
Phrase	4	3	2	5	5	6
Sentence	1	7	8	4	2	6
Theme	0	1	0	0	0	0

made the second highest percentage of changes in Diction (Susan and Brenda made fewer). The fewest changes were made with Shifts of Person, according to the coders; very few changes were made in the Thesis, as well. Punctuation

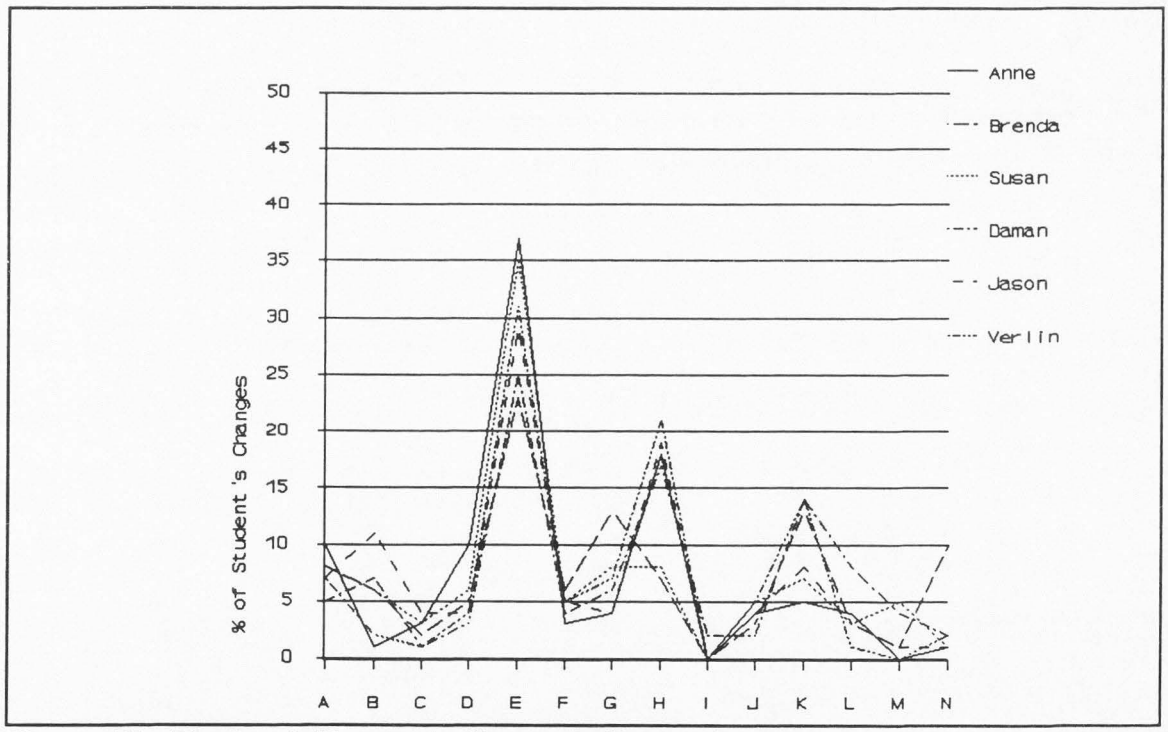

Figure 27. Topic of Changes -- Between Students

Note: A (transitions), B (specifics), C (thesis or purpose), D (introduction), E (development and support), F (conclusion), G (syntax), H (diction), I (shift of person), J (inflection), K (punctuation), L (spelling), M (capitalization), N (abbreviation)

changes were also fairly common, although Anne made the fewest, not only in Punctuation, but in Capitalization and Abbreviation changes.

In the Composition topic category, students made similar percentages of changes at the Word and Phrase level, but differed widely from each other in the Sentence and Theme level percentages. Figure 28 shows the range at the Sentence level, from 3% for Daman to 21% for Susan. The Theme level ranged from 5% for Verlin to 22% for Jason.

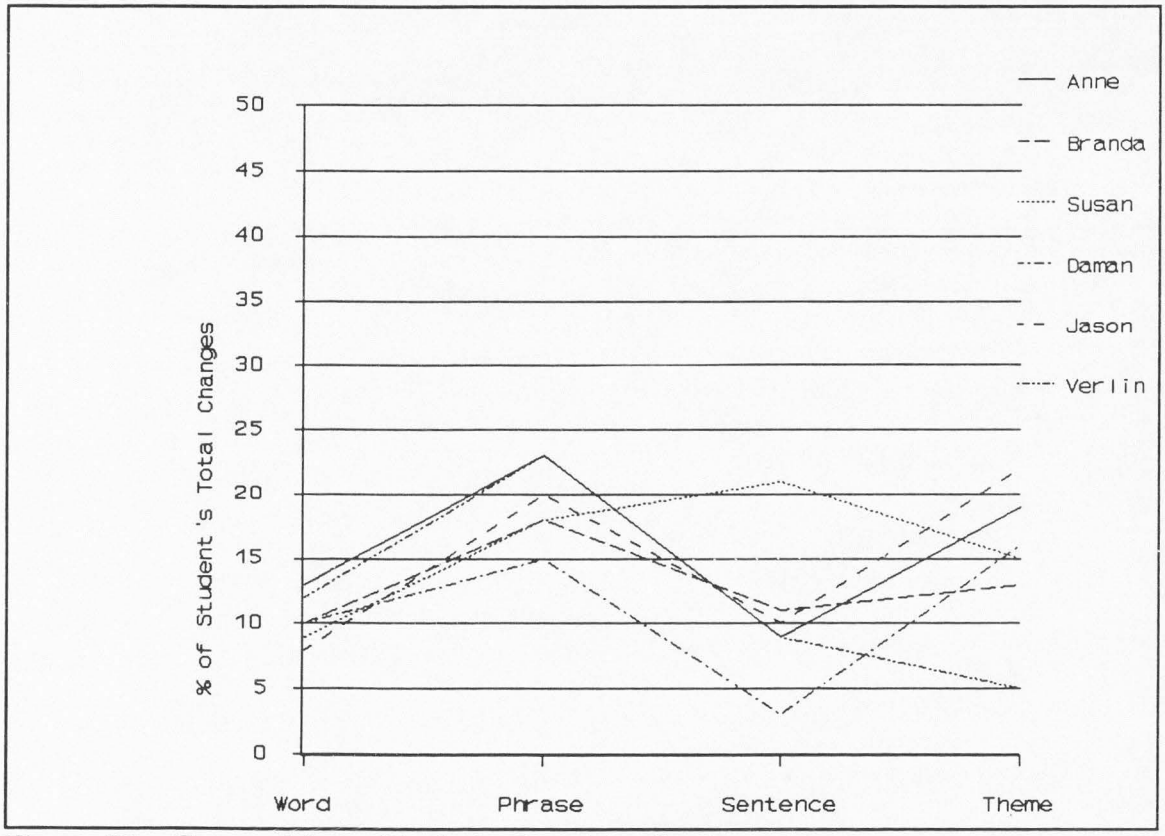

Figure 28. Composition: Topic by Level by Student

A final area that shows differences among students is the percentage of each student's total changes that was found in each revision. The only pattern that seems sure is that a higher percentage of revision occurred in the sixth revision than in the first (eliminating Daman from consideration because he did not revise his first essay). Grouping the data by sex seems to show an

interesting see-saw pattern, the women higher on the first, third, and sixth revisions and the men higher on the second, fourth, and fifth.

Contrast: Revision One and Six

The students accomplished the first revision without any intervention by the teacher. The sixth revision was also completed independently but after the series of four writing conferences. These two revisions were studied for evidence of revision skill development. Because one of the male subjects, Daman, enrolled too late to complete a revision of his first essay, only the other five students will be considered in the contrast of the first and sixth revisions. Differences in three areas will be examined: topic categories, level of change, and operation of change.

All five students made an increased percentage of changes in the topic category of Composition in their sixth revision as compared to their first. Table 20 shows the three topic categories together. Language changes were mixed: Brenda's and Verlin's increased while Anne's, Susan's, and Jason's decreased. All students' percentage of changes in Mechanics increased except Jason's. Because his sixth revision was all at the Theme level, his changes in Mechanics did not show.

In order to compare students' scores, the frequencies were changed to percentages of the students' total changes on the two revisions. For example, Anne made 70 changes on Revision One and Six combined. On the first revision she made 19 composition changes. The percentage entered on Table 20 was calculated by dividing 19 by 70.

Table 20

Topic Categories of Revisions One and Six
Percent of student's total changes in Revisions One and Six

		Topic Category		
		Composition	Language	Mechanics
Anne	1	27	20	1
	6	36	10	6
Brenda	1	16	3	4
	6	28	16	33
Susan	1	24	12	2
	6	36	7	19
Jason	1	26	26	4
	6	43	--	--
Verlin	1	17	10	1
	6	35	23	13

(x^2 = 62.1, v=2, P <.0001)

Individual Chi Square tests were conducted to test for the significance of these changes; however, because too many cells had small numbers, the results were unreliable. A Chi Square test of the combined frequencies (significant at the .0001 level) indicates that the actual number of changes in Revision Six did not meet the expected values based on Revision One's values.

Table 21 shows the contrast in levels of changes between the first and sixth revisions. The majority of subjects increased between the first and last revisions the percentage of changes in Correctness, Phrase, and Sentence levels. Most students decreased the percentage of Word level changes. All students increased the percentage of Theme level changes. Again, the Chi Square

Table 21

Level of Changes in Revisions One and Six
Percent of student's total changes in Revisions One and Six

		Level of Change				
		Correctness	Word	Phrase	Sentence	Theme
Anne	1	1	26	17	3	1
	6	6	14	11	9	11
Brenda	1	4	9	7	2	1
	6	34	10	10	16	7
Susan	1	2	12	7	10	7
	6	19	10	10	14	10
Jason	1	4	26	22	4	--
	6	--	--	--	--	43
Verlin	1	1	12	12	3	--
	6	13	21	28	9	1

($x^2 = 82.4$, $v = 4$, $P < .0001$)

statistic was unreliable because of small numbers in some cells, but when the students' levels of changes were combined, the results (significant at the .0001 level) indicate that the actual level of changes in Revision Six did not meet the expected values based on Revision One's values.

A look at the operations of the changes in the first and sixth revision (Table 22) shows that all students made the same percentage of additions, or more, in the sixth revision. Four out of the six made a higher percentage of substitutions in the sixth revision. A Chi Square test of the combined frequencies (significant at the .0001 level) indicates that the actual operations in Revision Six do not meet the expected values based on Revision One's values.

Table 22

Operation of Changes in Revisions One and Six
Percent of student's total changes in Revisions One and Six

		Operation of Change		
		Addition	Deletion	Substitution
Anne	1	11	19	19
	6	11	10	30
Brenda	1	16	--	7
	6	24	10	43
Susan	1	12	7	19
	6	17	5	40
Jason	1	17	9	30
	6	17	17	9
Verlin	1	10	5	13
	6	22	11	38

(x^2=42.5, v=2, P <.0001)

Connections: The Conferences and Revisions

Several research studies cited in this literature review have analyzed student revisions; other research studies have analyzed writing conference dialogues. This study attempted to analyze both in such a way as to explore the connections that could be found between them. The link in this analysis was the Topic List (Appendix I), nineteen topics clustered into four categories. The Topic List provided a way for the coders to classify each T-unit in the conferences and each change in the revisions. It also provided a way to link the topics of conversation with the students' subsequent revisions.

With the information generated by the coders, line graphs were prepared

showing a student's percentage of total revision changes in each topic on one line and the student's percentage of total conference T-units in each topic on another line (Appendix N). Format talk was eliminated from this graph as irrelevant, except as setting an atmosphere for talk. Figure 29 is a composite line graph of the mean percentages of all students' data. Three types of relationships are revealed in this figure.

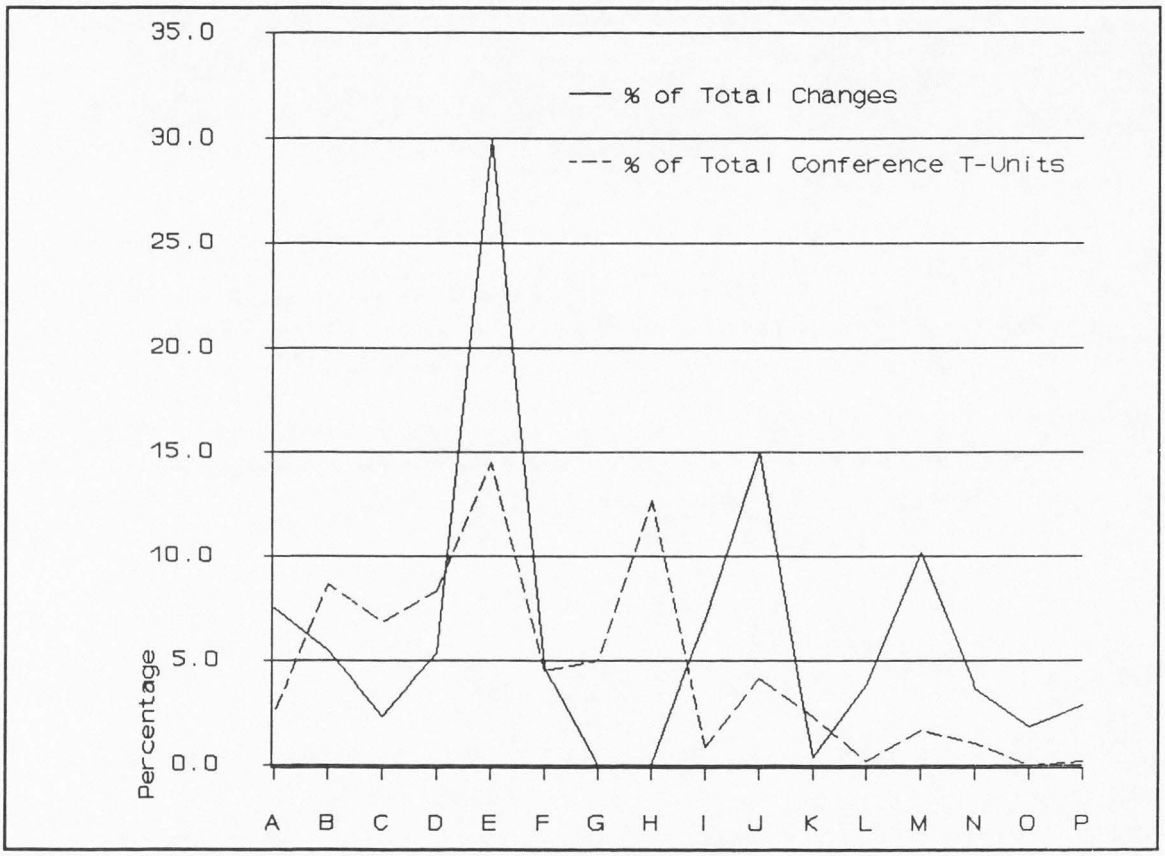

Figure 29. Mean Percentiles: Revisions and Conference Topics

Note: A (transitions), B (specifics), C (thesis or purpose), D (introduction), E (development and support), F (conclusion), G (general topic), H (writing process), I (syntax), J (diction), K (shift of person), L (inflection), M (punctuation), N (spelling), O (capitalization), P (abbreviation)

The first relationship is of student changes which were supported by talk from the conference. Six topics show this relationship, Transitions (column A), Development and Support (E), and Diction (J) among them. Although the

points on the graph do not relate directly to each other, the lines demonstrate a pattern. Changes in the three topics just named all appear higher than the conference talk in that topic, but the conference line is not very far below. The conference talk in General Topic (G) and Writing Process (H), unrepresented in revision changes because of their nature, would logically support Development and Support, and perhaps Introduction and Conclusion as well.

Specific Details (column B), Thesis (C), and Introduction (D) also show this relationship. In all three the conference talk line is above the revision line. However, the connection is still evident. The Introduction is usually a paragraph and the Thesis is one sentence, but only one of each appears in a text; therefore, a limited number of changes could be credited to these topics. Both are important to discuss because they guide the text, but neither would encompass many changes. In addition, Specific Details was a new idea to the students, according to their conference conversations. Without the discussion in conference, students may not have included them in revision changes at all. Therefore, this revision topic is also connected strongly to the conference topic.

A second relationship exhibited in this figure is of topics of conference talk which did not lead to revisions. Shift of Person (column K) was discussed in five of the six students' conferences, but only one student's changes were coded as containing the Shift of Person topic. The percentage of talk was not high (less than 3%), but the same amount of talk about Transitions led to 7% changes. The logical assumption is that Shift of Person was not a concept the students accepted as important or understood, or that the coders missed some of

these changes.

The third relationship of topics on Figure 29 is that of changes that the students made in spite of no talk, or less than 2% of all talk, in the conferences. Six topics, two Language and all four Mechanics topics, exhibit this relationship: Syntax (column I), Inflection (L), Punctuation (M), Spelling (N), Capitalization (O), and Abbreviation (P). Most notable is Punctuation. It was the third highest topic of change, with ten percent of all student changes. These topics appear to represent changes that students would make without a conference.

A more specific look at the individual students' topic connections between conference and revision is in Appendix N. Anne's, Brenda's, Susan's, Jason's and Verlin's line graphs are quite similar to the means in Figure 29. Daman's is similar as well, but he made some shifts of person in his revisions; this topic shows a close relationship with the amount of conference discussion for him. Each student's conferences, except Anne's, covered the topic of Shift of Person; Daman was the only one whose revisions included that topic. Verlin's conferences covered less talk about Thesis and more talk about Introduction than the composite scores did; his revisions, though, were quite similar.

Summary

Both the teacher and the students maintained a similar approach to the conferences. The teacher's approach appeared quite consistent across conferences and across students, as shown by the types of teacher utterances (Figure 18). The most frequent type of utterance was the clarifying, followed by

approval utterances and yes-no questions. The students also appeared similar in making few comments eliciting approval and more evaluative utterances and questions.

The general topic categories were also similar. Conferences focused primarily on matters of Composition. Format varied some, depending upon a particularly long Engagement or Disengagement conversation in one conference. Mechanics was consistently the least frequent topic category in the conferences.

The topics, though, varied across students and across conferences. Although Development and Support received the primary attention, the secondary topics showed no pattern. The students made most of their changes in the topic of Development and Support, followed by Diction and Punctuation. Their most common operations were Addition and Substitution; least used operations were Consolidation and Distribution. The levels on which students operated changed over the term: Word and Phrase level changes decreased and Sentence, Theme, and Correctness level changes increased. Finally, a higher frequency of changes occurred in Revision Six than in Revision One.

The focus of this research is to analyze the connections between the writing conference conversation and subsequent student revisions. The Topic List link provided a way to analyze this relationship. The data, as shown in Figure 29 suggests that the major focus of students revisions is connected to the major focus of the writing conferences.

The data reported in this chapter were drawn from the work of the coders and the holistic scorers, based upon their analyses of the students' drafts

and conference transcripts. These data provided the opportunity to quantify the topics covered and the types of both the T-units and the changes, and they build upon the information obtained in the case studies from the students' interviews, writing analyses, and final reflective essay.

CHAPTER VI:

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research study explored connections between the teacher-student writing conference and the student's subsequent revisions. Six mid-range ability college freshmen (determined by ACT English scores), half men and half women, were randomly selected to be subjects for the case studies. The students wrote four major essays, and, during the two middle essays, participated in four teacher-student writing conferences. Data was collected from both the conferences and the revisions.

In order to gather information on the conferences, the researcher videotaped and transcribed them. The videotapes provided a permanent record of conversation and behaviors and helped establish the non-directive nature of the conferences. A trained observer recorded physical behaviors onto the transcriptions. Subsequently, two trained teachers coded the transcriptions at two levels: topics of conversation (see Topic List in Appendix I) and types of utterances.

In order to gather information on the changes students made in their revision work, the researcher collected xeroxed copies of all drafts and later typed them exactly as they were. Changes between drafts were identified and coded at two levels: topics of revision (Topic List) and types of revision (level and operation). The results from these data, the conference and revision coding, have been reported in Chapter V.

Other information was gathered and reported from these case studies. At the beginning and ending of the term, the students completed questionnaires on their attitudes toward revision and writing conferences. After each essay the students wrote analyses of their writing procedures. They also wrote a final autobiography of themselves as writers. A research assistant interviewed them at the end of the term to secure further reflections from the students. The teacher-researcher synthesized the above information, reviewed the students' drafts and conference transcriptions, and included appropriate personal observations in preparing the case study narratives in Chapter IV.

Chapter VI summarizes and discusses the study and the students. The section on the study focuses on the connections between the conferences and the revisions. The section on the students discusses some specific findings of the conferences, the revisions, and the students' attitude changes. The chapter closes with implications for research and teaching.

Connections: Conferences and Revisions

This study addressed how the writing conference conversations related to the students' subsequent revisions. Results showed that the subjects significantly changed their revision practices. These changes, connected to the conferences through the Topic List, establish the impact of the conferences on subsequent student revisions. The primary topic category of the conferences was classified as Composition, which is content-based talk. This conference focus was connected with the primary focus of student revisions: Composition or content

changes. Statistics from the first and sixth revisions, both completed independently by the students, were analyzed to determine development. The pattern of students' revision focus changes significantly: changes in the Composition and Correctness levels increased; changes in Language decreased. In addition to the focus on content, the conferences led to significantly changed revision practices (level and operation). The frequency of changes on the Word and Phrase level decreased while the frequency on the Sentence, Theme, and Correctness level increased. The writing conferences were authenticated as non-directive, with the teacher clarifying for the student, questioning the student, and facilitating the student's search for his or her own meaning.

The emphases in the Composition category, particularly writing strong introductions and using specific details, were emphases that the teacher generally brought to each student's conferences. These case studies show that the students' revisions were strongly influenced by the topics discussed in conference. Changes resulting from the teacher's content level focus (strong introductions, effective transitions, and use of specific details) appeared in the revisions after the conferences, including the independent revisions at the end of the term. The focus of the conference talk, which was primarily on content, clarified and perhaps stimulated the students' ideas for writing, thus leading to content level revision.

The opposite may be true with Inflection, Punctuation, Spelling, Capitalization, and Abbreviation. These mechanical changes were revision responsibilities the students owned at the beginning of the term, as shown by

several answers in early conferences. Topics in the Correctness level were seldom mentioned in conference, but the frequency of changes at that level increased throughout the term. This puzzling but interesting increase may have resulted from more than one factor. An outside-of-conference influence during the term seems to have been the classroom work on mechanics. All English Composition students at NNC must pass a uniform final exam on grammar and usage, and they are so informed on the syllabus given the first day of class. A total of five class days during this term was given to mechanics, most of it in the form of student-led presentations. If the subjects in this study were influenced to make changes on their revisions through the class work on mechanics, they made these connections on their own. At least it can be assumed that writing conferences do not diminish students' revision practices in spelling and punctuation. It also seems logical that Correctness level changes may have increased partly because students were spending more time working on their drafts. The case studies, then, indicate that students' revision is also based on their own perceptions about what is important in revision.

The principal tool in tracing connections was the common Topic List. Figure 29 shows the relationships of the coded topics. This Topic List created a means for connecting the analysis of the conferences with an analysis of the revision changes. The coding procedures as developed for this study, though, proved inadequate in weighing relative importance of the different topics of change. For example, while the thesis statement is generally one sentence long, its influence far exceeds its length. Even though much was said about it in

conference, the changes which resulted from that discussion probably appeared on a revision tally as only one change. In fact, though, a thesis sentence which was clarified or simplified would really affect the whole essay. The figures for Thesis, then, (6.8% conference talk to 2.3% revision changes) need to be understood in that context. In spite of this weakness, however, the two-level coding system provided not only a thorough description of each data base but also a way to link the influence of one upon the other.

The coded data from the conferences show that the teacher used basically the same approach with each student. Her utterances were highly clarifying and questioning, with few prescriptive comments, according to the coders (Figure 18). These data establish that the conferences were non-directive. Another similarity in the conferences is that between sixty and seventy percent of the teacher's talk with all students was text-specific (Figure 17). In addition, the topic categories were similar (Figure 16): between 20 and 30% of the time on Format, over 50% on Composition, and less than 5% on Mechanics, with the exception of Daman's 8% on Punctuation.

The interesting difference shown by the conference coding (Figure 19) is that the conference topics vary widely. The topics appear to have been adapted to the needs of the student and the needs of the draft. These data indicate that the non-directive conference provides for individual needs.

One of the principles from the literature upon which this study was based is that conferences as mid-composing interventions guide student revision of a specific draft as well as instruct in general revision strategies. Beyond just

assisting students in learning effective revision strategies, conference teachers also want students to take responsibility and ownership for their own writing. Ownership may be ascertained by an increase of student text-specific talk and topic initiation in conferences, and an increase in student-initiated changes in revision.

The students' ownership of the paper and incidence of student-initiated change can be studied through a comparison between Revisions One and Six. The Chi Square tests reported in Chapter III indicated that the different pattern of changes in Revision Six compared to the pattern in Revision One was unlikely due to chance. The pattern showed that more changes were made in the Composition category, a category previously defined as those changes involving meaningful content. Fewer Language changes occurred. Interestingly, more changes in Mechanics were made (the Mechanics topic category is virtually synonymous with the Correctness level). The pattern for the level of changes in Revision Six also shifted significantly: changes at the Word and Phrase level decreased; changes at the Sentence, Theme, and Correctness levels increased. Content level changes, then, increased throughout the term; in fact, three of the six students effected major Theme changes on their final, independent revision.

Many of the conclusions in this study are based on the work of the coders and the holistic scorers. The reliability of their work was reported in Chapter III. The agreement in transcription coding was unusually high because each coder cross-checked the other coder's decisions. Reliability would doubtless have been lower if the coders had worked independently on the transcripts.

However, one coder, in cross-checking the topic shifts, reported that her disagreement was not with the topic labels, but rather at what point in the dialogue the topic shifted.

Reliability was 74% for coding the changes on the revisions. This percentage is remarkably high considering the fine distinctions coders had to make, such as between "Development" or "Specific Details," for example. Some editorializing crept in as the researcher was determining the parameters of each change and numbering them, although the coders were instructed to change these parameters as they saw fit. The fact that they agreed on the parameters of all except four of the 1,003 total changes in the six students' essays indicates the numbering was reliable.

The third area checked for reliability was the evaluation of the students' drafts by trained holistic raters. In this study the raters were required to make very fine distinctions between the work of middle-range English students. The papers in the upper and lower extremes, usually present in holistic scoring, were not represented in those being judged. In addition, the raters were working with multiple drafts by the same students. These conditions may have led to the .67 reliability, which is slightly lower than the .70 considered by Cooper and Odell (1977) to be satisfactory in holistic scoring. Nevertheless, agreement was reached on 98% of the papers with the third reader, and differences in quality across papers and across the term were identified.

The Students

The students in this study were selected from those in the EN 102E class whose ACT English scores fell between the twenty-fifth and seventy-fifth national percentiles. They were to represent average-ability students; however, scoring in the mid-range on a standardized examination does not describe these students fully. Any generalization that the writer or reader makes from this study should be made in that context. Creativity, motivation, writing experiences, and instruction influence the writing ability of students. A better method of choosing subjects might have been, if time had permitted, to establish writing ability through several holistically-evaluated writing samples.

Conferences

The students in the current study participated in two conferences for each of two essays. No studies cited in this literature review conducted more than one conference per paper. The extra time required for the two conferences seemed well spent to this teacher-researcher, especially early in the term. Her observations were that the double conferences permitted focusing on fewer problems per conference, established the open-ended nature of writing, and, prior to evaluation, generated feedback on the revision options the students were choosing.

While the data revealed that the teacher's approach with all students was similar, it showed that some students were more actively involved in the conferences than were others. Anne's text-specific percentage (54%) and her

question format percentage (21%) show high involvement in the conference task. The coders identified Thesis as Anne's primary focus in conferences. A study of her transcriptions shows that most of this talk was a result of Anne's search for a writing purpose.

On the other hand, Brenda appeared to have low involvement in the conferences. She contributed the lowest ratio of teacher-student T-units in the conferences (25%) and made the lowest text-specific comments (27%) of all the students. She initiated 16% of the topics and made only one suggestion for revision. A further look at the relationship between the conference and revision topics shows that, even though Mechanics' topics were discussed only 1% of the time, Brenda made 26% of her changes in this category, increasing the frequency across the term. Her drafts did improve following the conferences, according to the holistic scorers (no improvement on the first and last revisions, but one score higher on each of the middle essays). These data seem to indicate that Brenda worked hard on her essays, but did not regard her participation in the conferences as part of that process. Her note-taking indicated that she used the conferences to determine what the teacher wanted. The differences between these two women's responses cannot be explained by the teacher's approach in conference. The teacher's percentage of text-specific talk and types of utterances in both women's conferences was very similar (see Figures 17 and 18).

Susan, Jason, and Verlin also were involved in the conferences. Jason's interest in learning to write with specific details showed in his first mention of

this topic. He asked the teacher to explain about "showing not telling." He came back to this topic in two subsequent conferences, and his revisions showed his use of this new concept. Susan began the term with low self-confidence but a high percentage of talk. Throughout the term her confidence level increased, as did the percentage of text-specific talk. Her motivation showed in the increasing number of topics she initiated. The mean of Susan-initiated topics was 37%, but in the last two conferences she initiated 57% and 44%. This increase seems to indicate a growing involvement or a growing sense of confidence. Verlin began this course with confidence in a set of writing strategies he had been taught in high school called "power writing." He had practiced them successfully and planned to continue. He told the interviewer that he valued the conferences, though, because they gave him another point of view. Verlin incorporated the teacher's perspective into his own well-established perspective on writing.

The research plan for conferences intervening in the writing process was followed with one minor deviation. The fourth essay was to have been written without teacher intervention. However, one conference subject raised his hand in class and requested a conference on the fourth essay. The teacher said that that would not be possible, encouraged students that they had the skills they needed, and then permitted a five-minute, whole-class discussion on finding focus in writing. Nothing text-specific was discussed with the students. Nevertheless, three of the subjects totally rewrote their fourth essays: Brenda and Jason changed topics; Daman narrowed his.

Revisions

The purpose of the intervention in this research study was to guide student revision of a specific draft as well as to instruct in general revision strategies. The evaluations of the holistic scorers indicate that the students' drafts after conferences on the two middle essays did improve. Six of the twelve essays were rated one score higher, three were rated two scores higher, and three showed no change. Improved drafts, then, did follow writing conferences. These differences in holistic rating contrast with the first revision at the beginning of the term: four of the six show no change, one is rated higher, and one lower. Faigley and Witte (1981) state that inexperienced writers do not know how to improve their texts. From the tracing of topics, from the students' reflections on their revision processes, and from the holistic scoring, the conclusion can be drawn that the conferences supported content changes, changes other than correctness and language changes, and that these changes improved the essays.

The question of whether the conferences led to students' learning long-term revision strategies can partly be answered by studying their sixth revisions (fourth essays), which they composed and revised without conferences. One student's final draft was rated lower than his first draft; two students received the same rating; and three students received a rating one level higher on their final drafts. This rate of revision improvement is lower than it was on the two middle essays, but the students were working independently for the first time after a pattern of conferences. A ten-week term is too short to draw

conclusions about long-term learning. A better procedure would be to look for changes in level, operation, and topic in the sixth revision.

The students' patterns in the early revisions are consistent with the findings of Maynor (1982), Perl (1979), and Sommers (1980): most changes are at the Word and Phrase level. Like the students in Perl's study, the students' revisions of the first essay in the current study are concerned primarily with error-hunting. As the term passed, however, changes at the Word and Phrase level decreased, and changes at the Sentence, Theme, and Correctness level increased. Sentence and Theme level changes can be attributed to the influence of the writing conference because the conferences focused on the Composition topic category. Composition changes were substantive, involving content changes. Any changes in the bodies of the essays that consisted only of surface changes were labeled with a Language or Mechanics topic. Some individual differences occurred. For example, Jason completely rewrote one of his essays, thus contributing to his high Theme level changes; Verlin spent the most time of the six students in planning before he wrote, thus contributing perhaps to his low Theme level changes. But, unlike the students described in the studies of Sommers and Perl, the composite numbers show a meaningful increase in Sentence and Theme level changes across the study.

Not all learning of revision strategies appeared on the revision coding; a student's strengths would not appear. For example, Anne and Jason show few mechanical changes. They were both skilled in English usage. In the same way, a writing skill that a student learned during the term would not appear in the

later revisions because they would remember those skills in the first draft. Daman, Jason, Brenda, Anne, and Susan all mentioned that on their last essay they thought to include detailed examples as they were composing. Other students seemed to write stronger transitions into their first drafts toward the end of the term. These composing behaviors indicate the students were transferring what they learned in revising their earlier drafts to their general writing strategies.

Daman and Jason had a low percentage of changes on their sixth revisions as a result of total rewrites. Theme changes make a large impact on content but not on the numbers; conversely, many small changes such as Brenda and Verlin made on their sixth revisions appear as many revisions. The percentage of total changes across the six revisions, then, revealed no meaningful patterns. Each of Anne's, Daman's, and Jason's theme changes encompassed many word and phrase changes which were not separately identified. Perhaps the increase of these changes explains the decrease of the others. Nevertheless, even one Theme level change tends to affect the revision more substantially than several Word or Phrase level changes.

What was true of the sixth revision may have been true of the earlier revisions as well: some students wrote drafts between the ones turned in to the teacher. This is another situation in which smaller changes might not appear. For example, Daman gave the teacher a copy of the first draft of his fourth essay. Then he narrowed his topic and wrote an entirely new draft which the teacher never saw. After editing this draft, he recopied it; that was the draft he

turned in that was coded as his Revision Six. Therefore, although the researcher and coders were careful to identify all changes made between the drafts they had in hand, other unseen drafts, in at least one case, could have provided further information.

Attitude Changes

The questionnaires showed unusually favorable responses at the beginning of the term, considering the students had never experienced writing conferences. A researcher error may have skewed the responses toward a favorable conference response on the first questionnaire: the page heading from the appendix, "Writing Conferences, 77," was inadvertently printed on the top of the questionnaire. The responses at the end of the term were also favorable. During the interviews all students talked specifically about how conferences had helped them. Anne, Verlin, and Jason said that what the teacher said about their specific drafts meant more than what was said in general to the entire class. Susan said she always left the conference feeling that she could write well. Daman said he appreciated knowing the teacher "was behind me, wanting to make my papers good."

By their own evaluations, Jason and the three women had little confidence in their own writing when they began this course. Jason explained: "I'm never happy with my writing. There's some little goal in my mind that I never reach." Jason was the student who imagined the entire essay in his mind, often during sleepless nights, before he wrote it down. Because the writing

conferences pushed students to prepare multiple drafts, Jason began writing as his ideas developed. His growing skills in revision, along with his new practice of writing early drafts, should develop his successes and his confidence. All three women exhibited increased confidence as the term progressed, both in their conference conversation and to the interviewer.

A review of the conference conversations, the interview, and the student changes clearly demonstrates a growing sense of ownership in most of these students. For example, Susan shifted her focus of conversation from her family to her writing task at hand, shown by both a shift from Format to Composition talk and a shift from general to text-specific talk. In addition, she initiated increased topics across the conferences. Anne also developed ownership as she developed confidence. Later conferences reveal more student suggestions for change. Jason took ownership in the very first conference as he asked the teacher to explain something and suggested organizational changes. Also at the beginning of the term, Verlin owned not only his papers but also his own strategies for revision. Across the conferences his development shows in his letting go of his sense of security and experimenting a bit by re-thinking his purpose. His fourth essay, revised independently, was his bravest effort. The conference transcriptions show that, before the students took active ownership of their papers, they, in a sense, had to let the teacher in conference have a little ownership of their writing. Susan, Brenda, Anne, Daman, and Jason were all a little tentative when they first let the teacher read their rough drafts. As they grew comfortable with her inclusion in the process, they became more aggressive

in talking out writing problems and trying new solutions. This shift is evident in the increasingly shorter Engagement time in the conferences.

Effective revision strategies cannot be learned in a short time, but all of these students made remarkable progress in at least three tangible areas: the increasing frequency of content changes (Composition topic category), the increasing frequency of changes at a deeper level (Sentence and Theme, rather than Word and Phrase), and an increasing frequency of editing surface errors (Correctness). Solid connections between these changes and the writing conference exist.

Implications for Further Research

While this study of college students provided a way to identify and describe the connections between teacher-student writing conferences and subsequent revisions, it disclosed or created some problems that yet need to be explored. For example, the Topic List that was formulated for the current research study should be developed and refined. As part of that process, the list should be tested in other settings with other teachers. Although some weaknesses have been previously identified, the Topic List and the second-level analysis may add to the body of knowledge about coding systems. The need for a standard coding system of student revisions exists. It is difficult to establish operational definitions of revision changes, or parameters of changes, or the influence of one change upon others (thesis, for example). The coding system developed in this study was inadequate to account for the influence of one

Thesis change contrasted with one Punctuation change, or to uncover the fine details buried in one Theme change. Therefore, while the two-level coding system is a meaningful contribution to the body of literature, particularly in the area of conference/revision relationships, there is a continuing need to pursue development of a standard coding system of revisions.

In the current study a pattern of development was discovered that indicated the students began incorporating into their first drafts concepts they were learning through conferences and revision practice. It would be interesting to identify and trace writing strategies that begin as revision topics but later show up in first drafts, the use of specific details and transitions, for example. In addition, future research should establish the effectiveness of two conferences per paper, using a one-conference pattern as a control.

Short-range writing improvement by the six students in this study was identified by the holistic scorers. Students' drafts after conferences consistently received higher rating than the before-conference drafts. However, little change is seen between the holistic scoring of the first and the fourth essays in this study. Because a ten-week term is too short a time to evaluate long-range improvement, a follow-up study should be conducted of these students' revision practices (topic, level, and operation) and writing quality.

The conference coding in this study showed no meaningful differences between men and women. However, a slight difference in the teacher's types of utterances to men and women appeared, showing higher clarifying and lower approval and questioning to the women. Kinkead (1985) discovered gender

differences in college tutors. It would be helpful to know if the change of approach in the current study was teacher-based or student-based, or if some other factor was influential, student confidence level, for example.

Implications for Teaching

Three implications for college composition instruction have emerged from this study: teachers should incorporate non-directive writing conferences into their curriculum, teachers should provide practice in all revision operations, and teachers should encourage reflection into students' writing processes.

Writing conferences have been accepted by many college teachers as an effective means for teaching students to write, and they should be used more widely. Such conferences are probably effective for two reasons. First, an adult in a position of authority is seriously reading and responding to a student's prose. No doubt this act alone would prompt a student to consider his or her own writing as important, as worth working on and improving. Secondly, the writing conference deals with the draft as an in-process work, prompting the student to keep the writing options open. Both of the conferences with each paper, as used in the current study, were effective and may have prevented students from relying upon a simple two-step process (write, recopy). With open options, such as the multiple conferences provide, the writer's imagination keeps working and creating, changing and improving. As this study's results demonstrate, after conferences, students evidence new revision strategies, not

only on the immediate draft but also in future composing and revising. Writing conferences, then, are an effective teaching strategy for helping inexperienced writers learn how to improve their texts. They should be incorporated into the college writing class, even two per paper.

Teachers who use writing conferences should adopt a non-directive approach. Students are individuals with individual writing needs. Writing problems differ between people, even those with approximately the same ability, and from draft to draft. The non-directive conference appears to provide the flexibility to adapt to the person and the draft at hand. Students approach the task of revision in a variety of ways, from the manicurist who worries about punctuation and spelling to the orthopedic surgeon who rearranges and deletes whole sections. The teacher who listens to the students, restates what they are saying, and asks questions can find where each student is and prompt progress from that point. In this study, for example, Anne's and Jason's priorities were organization, Brenda's priority was surface correctness, Daman's was diction, Susan's was introductions, and Verlin's was transitions, or bridges as he called them. Writing conferences, then, should follow the non-directive model to provide for individual differences.

Although Murray and others encourage active student involvement in the writing conference conversation, there may not be an optimum ratio of teacher-student talk, even in a student-focused conference. In the conferences of the current study, teacher-talk averaged 67%, twice the talk of students. Yet the students made remarkable changes in their revision practices and the quality of

their work increased, according to holistic scoring. These improvements and changes occurred not only in their post-conference drafts, but also in their later, independent drafts. The nature of the teacher-talk is a better measure of conference effectiveness than the amount of the talk.

This study's description of the revision operations used by students uncovered a weakness that could be addressed in the classroom. Coders found few instances of two revision operations: Consolidation and Distribution. These average college writers did not practice what many professional writers do, even though the need for this type of revision was doubtless greater for these non-professional writers. Current classroom practice in sentence combining develops the knowledge of and skills for consolidation and distribution that college students need. Research could further facilitate instruction by the development of a standard coding system which could be used to identify and address such student writing problems.

A final implication for teaching is that teachers should encourage student writers to reflect upon the process in which they are engaged. One method to incorporate into the classroom would be to have the students analyze how they composed and why they made the particular writing decisions they did. The Writing Analysis, which was only produced to give this researcher insight into the students' writing decisions, appeared to prompt the students' reflection into their own writing strategies. What was told to the students at the beginning of the term developed into truth: one can learn to write by writing and by thinking about writing. The Writing Analysis would be an effective addition to the

English composition curriculum.

A Final Reflection

This study contributes to composition research in two areas. First, the results establish the specific ways college students' revision practices change as a result of the teacher-student writing conference. With a non-directive conference focusing on content, college students revise meaning, more frequently and at a deeper level. This study also provides a coding instrument that can be used to link conferences with subsequent student revisions for research purposes.

Children delight in concluding everything they write with "The End." The big, black-penciled letters are really a triumphant shout of completion: "I'm done, teacher!" As students mature, they quickly become too sophisticated to pen this, but the mind-set remains.

The "It's done!" mentality is a result of students' thinking of writing as a chore to be completed for the teacher. At home they wash dishes for their mothers; at school they write papers for their teachers. The "It's done!" mentality also asks for approval from the teacher, both for a task's completion and for its quality. No wonder revision seems like punishment to students; the teacher wants the chore redone because it was not done correctly the first time.

The mid-composing writing conference intervenes during the student's process, connecting the teacher with the student as one who is giving help, not a grade. The timing alone of the conference establishes the teacher in a more positive role. If the teacher can participate in the conference in a non-directive

manner, can stimulate the students to think clearly, can encourage the students' confidence, and can present new options as they are needed, then perhaps the students can learn to write with confidence that they have something to say, with practice in effective composing and revision principles, and with flexibility to keep open to developing ideas.

The writing conference can accomplish two things: it can transfer ownership of the paper to the student, and it can help the student suspend closure, staying the hand that would write "The End."

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Design: In Outline Form

Purpose: to describe some of the connections between the teacher-student writing conference and subsequent student revisions.

I. The subjects sign a release form (Appendix B).

II. The baseline is established (first and second weeks).

A. The students write Essay #1, an expository essay (first week of term).

1. The teacher provides pre-writing activities, gives a written prompt (Appendix E), and assigns draft #1 to be written during one class period (65 minutes).
2. The teacher collects the first draft and makes copies.
3. The students are given essays back to revise in the next class period. See Appendix C for revision instructions.
4. The students write a revision self-analysis (Appendix F), explaining the process they went through in revision.
5. The revised essays are collected and kept.

B. The students complete a questionnaire on attitudes toward and practices of revision, including questions on teacher-student conferences (Appendix D).

III. The teacher-researcher conducts the intervention (weeks three through eight).

A. The students write Essay #2 (weeks three and four of term).

1. The teacher provides in-class prewriting activities and a written prompt (Appendix E).
2. The students write the first draft outside of class.
3. The teacher copies draft #1.
4. The teacher and students meet for a writing conference, which is videotaped and later transcribed for study.
   a. The teacher puts student at ease.
   b. The teacher quickly reads through the paper.
   c. The teacher asks the student what the paper needs.
   d. The teacher questions the student's purpose, development with use of specifics, order, and need for cutting.
   e. The teacher diagnoses the major writing problem of the student's text.
5. The students revise their papers on their own.
6. A copy is made of draft #2.
7. The teacher and student meet for their second ten-minute

teacher student conference (see A.4. for procedure).

8. The student revises and turns in Essay #3, draft #3.
9. The teacher makes a copy of draft #3.
10. The student studies his or her drafts and completes a writing self-analysis.

B. The students write Essay #3 following the same procedure as Essay #2 (week five and six of the term).

C. The students write Essay #4 (week seven and eight of the term) without writing conferences.

1. The teacher makes copies of all drafts of each student's essay.
2. The students complete a writing analysis to turn in with the final draft.

IV. The teacher-researcher conducts the concluding activities (last two weeks of spring term, May 1988).

A. The questionnaire on revision and conferencing is repeated (Appendix D).

B. After a day of reviewing their portfolios of essays and drafts, the students write an in-class essay on their own development as writers during this term.

C. The six subjects are selected.

D. The researcher prepares specific questions for the interviewer by studying the students' portfolios.

E. A research assistant interviews the six subjects about their revision strategies, their reasons for revision, and their attitudes toward revision and writing conferences.

V. The teacher-researcher analyzes the data (June-August 1988).

A. The topics of revisions are classified and tallied on all essays by trained coders (summer 1988).

1. The writers' revisions are compared and contrasted.
2. The differences between Essay #1 revisions and Essay #4 revisions are documented.

B. The conferences are described by trained coders using the

taxonomy in Appendix I (summer 1988).

C. The first and last drafts of essays one, two, three, and four are evaluated--blind, holistic scoring by trained raters (June 1988). See Appendix J for the key to student codes.
   1. Can the revisions be labeled as improvements over the first drafts?
   2. Do differences exist among the students?
   3. Are the revisions of Essay 4 completed at the end of the term scored as having higher quality than the revisions of Essay 1 at the beginning of the term?

D. During the summer of 1988, the questionnaires are compared and the interview is studied for changes in attitude.
   1. Do differences exist among the students?
   2. Did the conferences change students' attitudes toward revision?

E. The revisions are compared with what happened in conference.
   1. Do students make changes suggested by the teacher in conference?
   2. Do students make changes which they suggested in the conference?
   3. Do the Writing Analyses reveal the students' reasons for the changes they made?
   4. Do students demonstrate through continued use of effective writing strategies in subsequent essays the learning of general writing principles which were mentioned or reinforced in conference?
   5. Are there student-initiated revisions?
      a. Does the frequency of this type of revision increase over time?
      b. Do students in the different ability groups develop dissimilarly?

Appendix B

Student Release Form

I am willing for Professor Lynn Neil to reproduce all or parts of my written work in English 102 for professional research unless I indicate otherwise at the time I submit the work. I give her permission to look at my records as she has need. I also have no objection to her taping, audio or video, my conferences with her for research purposes.

NAME _____

DATE _____

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

_____

_____

Appendix C

Prodecures and Instructions for Writing Essay One

Day One: Pre-writing activities

1. The students on paper and the teacher on the board generate a list of "favorites."

2. In groups of three or four, the students share their lists with each other, feeling free to add new ideas to their lists as they hear other people's lists.

3. Each group sends a scribe to the board to add to the ideas on the blackboard.

4. Teacher says, "Feel free to add to your lists any other ideas you think of or get from someone else."

5. The teacher and students discuss some of the ideas listed, particularly focusing on the general nature of some as opposed to the specific nature of others.

6. The teacher concludes with announcing: "Later this week we will be writing about one of these ideas. Each of you should be thinking about a topic you would enjoy writing about. Remember that some of these are so general, so broad that they would be difficult to cover well. Put your idea list in your writing folders before you leave today."

Day Two: Writing the First Draft

1. The teacher says: "Today in class we will write our first essay. You have the rest of the class period -- almost an hour -- to write. You will have an opportunity in our next class period to make revisions. To make that easier you will probably want to write on every other line."

2. The teacher passes out the writing prompt (Appendix E).

3. The teacher adds: "When you finish writing, please staple your pages together and put them in your writing folder. Please include any note pages that you used in getting ready to write."

Day Three: Revising

1. The teacher distributes colored pens and the writing folders to each student.

2. The teacher says: "In your folders today are the drafts you wrote in our last class session. Please re-read them. You may make any changes in them that you wish. Please make all changes with the colored pens I have given you. You have the rest of the class period--about 40 minutes. At the end of the class period, place your essay in your folder and return it and the colored pen to me. Thank you."

Appendix D

Revision Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: Below are a series of statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by circling whether you (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) are uncertain, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree with the statement. While some of these statements may seem repetitious, take your time and try to be as honest as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

1	2	3	4	5	1.	I avoid revision
1	2	3	4	5	2.	I have no fear of talking about my papers with a teacher
1	2	3	4	5	3.	I look forward to working on my drafts and making changes
1	2	3	4	5	4.	I am afraid of writing drafts when I know the teacher will be looking at them
1	2	3	4	5	5.	Having to rewrite an essay is a very frustrating experience
1	2	3	4	5	6.	Completing a final draft makes me feel good
1	2	3	4	5	7.	I don't know where to begin when I am supposed to revise
1	2	3	4	5	8.	Rewriting several drafts seems to be a waste of time
1	2	3	4	5	9.	I like having a chance to make changes on my papers
1	2	3	4	5	10.	I feel confident in my ability to make good changes in my drafts
1	2	3	4	5	11.	I like to have my teacher read what I have written
1	2	3	4	5	12.	I never seem to know what kinds of changes I should make on my writing
1	2	3	4	5	13.	Rereading and working on rough drafts is really satisfying
1	2	3	4	5	14.	I expect to do poorly when I revise even before I begin
1	2	3	4	5	15.	I like seeing how I can improve my writing
1	2	3	4	5	16.	Discussing my writing with my teacher helps me understand what I want to say
1	2	3	4	5	17.	I have a terrible time organizing my ideas once I have written them down
1	2	3	4	5	18.	Even after I finish talking about my composition with a teacher, I still feel confused about how to make it better.
1	2	3	4	5	19.	It's easy for me to revise compositions and make them better
1	2	3	4	5	20.	I don't like to talk about my compositions in writing conferences with a teacher

Appendix E

Essay Prompts

EN 102

FIRST ESSAY

One of the ways this class is going to get acquainted with each other is through our first piece of writing. All of us have favorite objects or activities: out of all the **food** on earth, we have a favorite meal . . . out of all the **activities**, we have a favorite sport . . . out of all the **places** on earth, we have a favorite spot. When we explain to other people what is important to us, we help them understand us better.

Choose a favorite thing (place or activity) and write an essay explaining WHY this thing is so important to you. Please avoid the major values in your life (God, your mother, your country); these topics are too big to cover well in a paper of this length.

Remember that this essay will be shared with the class as a way for them to get better acquainted with you.

EN 102

SECOND ESSAY

Most three-year-olds pass through a stage of asking, "Why?" What begins as a childish whine usually develops into a life-long search for answers: Why did that happen?

When one is writing analysis of this sort, one may either look backward from an event to find causes (reasons), or look forward from an event to determine effects (consequences). Causal analysis is an important exercise in thinking: searching for reasons, evaluating importance, and determining the connections between events. Often this process of analysis is personally profitable. Understanding what caused a failure can help us prevent a like failure in the future; understanding the causes of a success can help us recreate it. On the other hand, analyzing potential effects can aid in decision making.

Think of a major success or failure in the life of someone you know well. Determine whether you would like to look back at the causes of this situation or look ahead from the situation to the effects. Then write an essay analyzing either the causes or effects. Remember that causes occur in three categories: contributory, necessary, and sufficient.

EN 102

THIRD ESSAY

You have completed at least one term of college work. From both your successes and failures you have learned something about how to do well in college.

Write an essay to next year's freshmen at our college. Persuade them to follow a certain course of action for success in college. Because the writing is so brief, confine yourself to one area: success in course work, success in dormitory living, success in financing college, or success in college social life.

Your purpose, then, is to persuade these new college students to follow a particular course of action.

EN 102

FOURTH ESSAY

This is an era of rapid change. When people compare the life their parents lived to theirs, they see change: many new inventions, many new social practices, many different values marketed today. On the other hand, some things never seem to change (human nature, for example). A person could make a case for the old saying, "There's nothing new under the sun."

Consider your life (or your society) as compared with life or the society of your parents' generation. Come to a conclusion about whether life is the same or whether life is different; this is your thesis. Write an essay supporting your thesis. This essay should be suitable for publication in a magazine whose readers are both college-age and older.

Please remember the elements of a good essay as studied and practiced this term: an introduction that presents an adequate and interesting background, a clearly-stated thesis, well-developed supporting paragraphs tied together with effective transitions, and a satisfactory conclusion or concluding sentence. Write with your own "voice," but keep in mind that your audience will be adults unknown to you.

EN 102

FIFTH ESSAY

*GUIDELINES FOR EN 102 FINAL ESSAY

The final essay for En 102 provides you with a way to reflect upon your work for the quarter in an analysis of where you started and where you have ended as a writer. The content for the essay exam will be the work which appears in your writing folder for this quarter; this folder will be given to you one class period prior to the final examination essay so that you can review it carefully and use it as evidence in your written response.

The actual exam will be written during our next class period. However, you are encouraged to prepare for the exam by studying the contents of your writing folder, organizing your thoughts, and outlining how you will present your discussion in essay form. If you wish to do some preliminary notes of what you will write, that is a good idea; no complete drafts, however, may be brought to the exam. Annotations on your own papers, though, are permissible and you should have your writing folder with you at the exam.

The following provides a list of items which you should attempt to address in the essay. Some of these items can be combined, of course, and undoubtedly you will have more to say about some than others. Your task, however, is to organize your thoughts and evidence in such a way that you can write an informative, interesting, and effective essay that provides a clear and honest appraisal of your development this quarter as a writer.

Items to Consider for your Essay:

1. **Attitude toward writing (pre/post)**

2. **Reflections about writing done during the quarter**

   For example: easiest assignments (why); hardest (why); assignments least liked, most liked, etc.; indications of how you went about selecting topics; prewriting strategies used and their success.

* adopted from Professors Charles Duke and William Strong, Utah State University

3. **Picture of yourself as a reviser/re-writer**

Examine your various drafts; document a picture of yourself as a reviser; what consistent patterns, if any, do you see in your revisions from draft to draft? What kinds of revision did you do on your own? Which were prompted by peer group suggestions, which by your instructor? What pattern, if any, appeared in the annotations on your drafts? How successful were you in addressing your problems from assignment to assignment? If you used conferences with the instructor, to what extent did they assist you with revision?

4. **Apparent weaknesses as a writer**

As you review your overall performance for the quarter, what do you perceive as your major weaknesses as a writer? Discuss those in terms of why you believe you have those weaknesses and what you might have done to address them more during the course.

5. **Apparent strengths as a writer**

As you review your overall performance for the quarter, what do you perceive as your major strengths as a writer? Discuss those in terms of how you have developed those strengths this quarter.

6. **Overall Summary**

Where are you now; where would you like to be in the future?

Appendix F

Writing Self-Analysis

Name _____

Title of Paper _____

Essay No. ____ **Draft No.** ____

Date _____

Study your previous rough drafts and the draft you just completed, paying close attention to the changes you made. Then tell the story of writing this essay. Use both the front and back of this sheet if appropriate. Some of the questions you might address:

What is the main idea of your essay?

When did the idea begin to become clear to you?

How did you organize it? Why did you organize it the way you did?

What changes did you make during the writing process, and why?

Where did you get the idea to make the changes that you did (your own idea, a friend, a tutor, the teacher in a conference, or the teacher in class)?

How do you feel about this essay?

Appendix G

Sample of Student Interview Questions: Verlin

VERLIN

1. Would you describe your experience in revising your papers in the past, before this English Comp class?

Essay #1

2. You chose to write about the ocean and its beaches on your **first essay**. How did you choose that subject?

3. In your **writing analysis** on the **first essay** you say, "I tried to order the essay in three parts: size, beauty, enjoyment." Did you know what those three parts would be before you started writing?

Essay #2 - "The Fall"

4. Look at **Draft 2** about your fall. Can you remember why you decided to skip the first paragraph?

5. **Draft 2**: Can you tell me why you deleted these lines?

6. **Draft 2**: (page 2) You decided to move the first paragraph down to this spot. Why?

7. **Draft 3:** I notice that the sentence at the end of one paragraph gives us a hint about the topic of the next paragraph. Could you explain why you do this?

8. The three effects in your second essay were walking defect, speech impediment, and new outlook. In your second **Writing Analysis** you say that you changed "one of the effects from abstract to concrete." Could you explain what you meant?

Essay #3 - "The Balance of College"

9. I don't see many changes between your **first and second drafts**. Can you explain why?

10. On **draft 3** you add the example of Arturo at the beginning. Why?

11. On **draft 3** in paragraphs 2 and 3 you use yourself as an example. Why did you do that?

Essay #4 - "Unity and the Nuclear Family"

12. **Draft 2** shows a lot of changes. At the very end of page 3 you rewrite your thesis statement. Why?

13. On your **Writing Analysis** for Essay #4 you say your idea became clear after talking with Mrs. Neil. Can you explain how this happened.

General Questions:

14. On **Essays 2 & 3** you had two writing conferences each with your teacher. Could you talk about the way those conferences affected what you were doing with your paper revisions? Try to be specific.

15. Did anything you learned on those two papers affect the way you revised your last essay on your own?

16. As you are given writing assignments in your future college classes, how do you expect to go about writing and revising them? Be specific.

17. You say in your **Final Exam Essay** that your writing has improved this quarter. In what ways, specifically.

Appendix H

Sample of a Coded Essay and Coding Sheets: Verlin

Verlin
03MM31

Every college student should establish a balance between studying and social activities, that suits them. A fine balance between the two ~~This is important because it~~ will result in good grades, cause less stress and help ~~the~~ student~~s~~ to enjoy their college life.

Since each individual is unique ~~different~~, a person ~~one~~ must be sure to form a system that is effective for him/her ~~them.~~ Used wisely, the balance ~~studying will~~ result~~s~~ in good grades. ~~Instead~~ one benefits more than by ~~of~~ trying to learn all the material the night before a test. ~~an exam~~, ~~it is more beneficial to review each subject~~ By studying periodically over a period of several days or even ~~one to two~~ weeks if necessary. ~~It is~~ also provides an avenue of benefit ~~important to~~ take~~-~~ing study breaks. For example, I like to read for approximately an hour, then take a fifteen to thirty minute break. During this time one should do something which one likes to do. This might include going ~~Such as go~~ for a walk, or visit~~-~~ing friends. ~~This kind of study pattern is helpful in that it will increase your memory construction of what you need to know. Repetitious study can help you to remember what you learn. Thus, if you remember the material you will do better on tests and your grades will improve.~~

When one avoids ~~If~~ overstudying ~~is avoided~~ and allows a reasonable amount of time ~~is used~~ for recreation, a ~~one will have~~ less stress~~-~~ful life comes about. Overstudying may ~~can~~ cause a person to become tense and ~~&~~ irratable. ~~He/she will probably also feel more tired than usual. This~~ is due to the unnecessary stress put on the individual from too much study and too little recreational time, these reactions appear. To avoid this, my favorite activity is to spend time working out at the gym three days a week. ~~It~~ seems like hard work at the time ~~while~~ doing this ~~it~~ but the ~~after~~ effects prove rewarding ~~are worth it.~~ I usually feel ~~more~~ relaxed and clear

after this activity, and
minded~~/~~. I personally believe regular exercise ~~it~~ helps me ~~to~~ study better. Also, I like to take every Saturday afternoon off, if I can, to ~~and~~ do something away from school. This gives me ~~is~~ something to look forward to Through ~~during~~ the week.

These kinds of social activities and many others will introduce one to new friends~~/~~ and an enjoyable college life. Activities such as an open house, a concert, or even a twix will give the student a chance to meet different people and also oppurtunity to forget about ~~get away from~~ school work, temporarily. Having fun or not at school depends ~~is~~ entirely on ~~up to~~ the student. Either one can make it fun by getting involved with social events or he/she ~~one~~ can make it monotonous and tormenting by associating with text books behind ~~a~~ closed door-s. Since College requires a tremendous amount of money ~~we have to pay money to come here in the first place~~, ~~I feel it is foolish to~~ let-ting school ~~college~~ life become ~~be~~ dull and dry appears terribly foolish.

Therefore seems ~~it is~~ wise choosing to form ~~to establish~~ a balance between social time and studying. Doing this tends to ~~will~~ help students earn better grades. If used effectively this method of study also ~~will help~~ reduce-s stress which ~~will~~, in turn, aid-s in loosening up a ~~the~~ person so he/she ~~they~~ can open up to others and have a good time at school as well as grow intellectually.

Verlin
03MM32

Every college student should establish a balance between studying and social activities, that suits them. Insert A They should not spend too much or too little time studing or playing. A fine balance between the two will result in good grades, cause less stress, and help students to enjoy their college life.

Since each individual is unique, a person must be sure to form a system that is effective for him/her. Used wisely, the balance results in good grades. By studying periodically over a period of several days or even weeks, if necessary, one benefits more than by trying to learn all the material the night before a test. Taking study breaks also provides an avenue of benefit. For example, I like to read for approximately an hour, then take a fifteen to thirty minute break. During this time one should do something which one likes to do. This might include going for a walk, or visiting friends. Insert B Studying in this method tends to increase a person's memory construction of what that person needs to know for class. Repetitious study helps people remember what they learn. Thus, when important material is retained in memory, test grades tend to improve. Insert C Once attained, better grades might give the student more of an incentive to study effectively all the time, which includes recreation.

When one avoids overstudying and allows a reasonable amount of time for recreation, a less stressful life comes about. Overstudying may cause a person to become tense and irratable. Due to the unnecessary stress put on the individual from too much study and too little recreational time, these reactions

appear. To avoid this, my favorite activity is to spend time working out at the gym three days a week. Doing this seems like hard work at the time but the effects prove rewarding. Insert D I also tend to like working out more and more as I continue to exercise. I usually feel relaxed and clear minded after this activity, and I personally believe regular exercise helps me study better. Also, I like to take every Saturday off, if I can, to do something away from school. Through the week this gives me something to look forward to.

These kinds of social activities and many others will introduce one to new friends and an enjoyable college career. Activities such as an open house, a concert, or even a twix will give the student a chance to meet different people and also an oppurtunity to forget about school work, temporarily. Having fun or not at school depends entirely on the student. Either one can make it fun by getting involved with social events or he/she can make life monotonous and tormenting by associating with text books behind closed doors. Since college requires a tremendous amount of money, letting school life become dull and dry appears terribly foolish.

Therefore, choosing to form a balance between social time and studying seems wise. Doing this tends to help students earn better grades. If used effectively this method of study also reduces stress which will, in turn, aids in loosening up a person so he/she can open up to others and have a good time at school as well as grow intellectually.

REVISION TOPICS
Tally Sheet
Student/Draft Number 03MM31

1.	2d	21.	3a	41.	3b
2.	2c	22.	2e	42.	2f
3.	4a	23.	2e	43.	3d
4.	3d	24.	2e	44.	3d
5.	2c	25.	3a	45.	3b
6.	3b	26.	3b	46.	3b
7.	3b	27.	2e		
8.	3b	28.	4a		
9.	2e	29.	2e		
10.	3d	30.	2e		
11.	2e	31.	3a		
12.	2e	32.	4a		
13.	2e	33.	3b		
14.	2e	34.	2e		
15.	2e	35.	3b		
16.	2a	36.	3b		
17.	3b	37.	3b		
18.	4d	38.	3d		
19.	2e	39.	2e		
20.	2e	40.	2a		

REVISION TALLY SHEET

Student/draft Key 03MM31

CHANGES IN CONTENT:

Operation:	Addition	Deletion	Substitution	Consol.	Distrib.	Permutation
LEVEL Word	5. 2c 34. 2e 7. 3b 37. 3b 8. 3b 41. 3b 26. 3b 46. 3b	23. 2e 27. 2e 36. 3b 42. 2f	45. 3b 44. 3d 4. 3d 43. 3d 6. 3b 17. 3b 10. 3d 30. 2e 35. 3b 38. 3d			
Phrase	24. 2e 29. 2e		2. 2c 13. 2e 33. 2e 9. 2e			
Sentence	15. 2e 22. 2e 1. 2d	19. 2e		25. 3a		11. 2e 31. 3a 12. 2e 39. 2e 16. 2a 40. 2a 21. 3a 20. 2e
Theme			14. 2e			

CHANGES FOR CORRECTNESS:

3. 4a 28. 4a	32. 4a	18. 4d

Appendix I

Coding Procedures and Definitions

for Revisions and Conferences

PROCEDURES FOR CODING

Revisions

1. The Researcher identified the changes between the drafts by marking on the original draft:

    a. Red-lining the deletions.
    b. Writing insertions and substitutions (words, phrases, or sentences) in green pen.
    c. Using orange arrows to show rearrangements.
    d. Using a green pen on the second draft, boxing insertions of a sentence or more.

        1) Identifying them with a green letter (insertion A, insertion B, for example).
        2) Placing a green, boxed letter at the point of insertion or substitution on the original draft.

2. After training, Coders independently completed the taxonomy for coding revisions:

    a. Identifying topics of the revisions (see Topic List) and writing the topic number and letter (i.e., "2a" indicates a revision involving a transition) in the margin next to the revision.
    b. Reconciling differences in interpretation after the differences were flagged by the Researcher.

3. Coders independently completed the Tally Sheet:

    a. Entering on the Revision Tally Sheet the topics of revisions they identified, writing the topic number of each revision in the appropriate place on the chart (level and operation).
    b. Reconciling differences in interpretation after the differences were flagged by the Researcher.

4. The Researcher entered the data from the Revision Tally Sheet onto the Report Form for Revisions (statistical summary).

Conference Transcriptions

1. The Researcher arranged the transcript by T-units, beginning each T-unit on the left margin of column 2.

2. Observational Analysis:

   A trained observer viewed the videotape of the conference and recorded behavioral cues in the third column.

3. Topic Analysis:

   a. The Coders read through the transcript.
   b. Using the Topic List and referring to the student's drafts, the Coders identified the major topics discussed in the conference, working independently. They drew lines across the transcript where the topics shifted, and identified the topic of each section.
   c. The Researcher compared the two Coders' topic identification and flagged differences of interpretation, which the Coders then reconciled through discussion.

4. Procedural Analysis:

   Working within one topic section at a time, the Coders then described the conversation by marking each T-unit with the appropriate letters from the Description of Types of Utterances.

   a. The Coders wrote the following identifying letters next to each T-unit: (There were some T-units with no identifying letters; there were some T-units with several identifying letters.)

      F Teacher's focus utterances
      G Teacher's clarifying utterances
      H Teacher's approval utterances
      I Teacher's open-ended questions
      J Teacher's yes/no questions
      K Teacher's markers of acceptance
      L Teacher's markers of questioning
      M Teacher's text-specific utterances
      N Teacher's prescriptive utterances

R	Student's utterances which elicit approval
S	Student's evaluative utterances
T	Student's text-specific utterances
U	Student's utterances in the form of a question
V	Student's markers of acceptance
W	Student's markers of questioning
X	Teacher or student suggests the operation of addition
Y	Teacher or student suggests the operation of deletion
Z	Teacher or student suggests the operation of substitution
AA	Teacher or student suggests the operation of reordering

b. The Researcher totaled within each topic section the number of teacher T-units.

c. The Researcher totaled within each topic section the number of student T-units.

5. The Researcher entered the data onto the Conference Report Form (statistical summary).

TOPIC LIST: Coding the Conference and Revisions

1. Format:

    a. Engagement
    b. Conference Procedure
    c. Disengagement

2. Composing:

    a. Transitions
    b. Specifics
    c. Thesis
    d. Introduction
    e. Development and Support of Thesis
    f. Conclusion
    g. Topic
    h. Writing Process

3. Language:

    a. Syntax
    b. Diction
    c. Shift of person
    d. Inflection

4. Mechanics:

    a. Punctuation
    b. Spelling
    c. Capitalization
    d. Abbreviations

DEFINITIONS: Topic List

1. Format:

   *a. **Engagement** is the early conversation which a teacher uses to set the student at ease. This conversation leads up to talk about the student's draft but does not include any references to it.

   *b. **Conference Procedure** is talk about what will happen or what happened during the writing conference.

   *c. **Disengagement** is the talk at the close of a conference which brings the conversation to a close, usually affirms the student, and may reiterate the decisions made during the conference.

2. Composing: (in selection priority)

   a. **Transitions** refer to the words, phrases, or sentences which connect the ideas of the essay. They are often the sentences joining paragraphs (the first or last sentences of a paragraph which introduce or summarize the whole paragraph) but may also occur within paragraphs (words or phrases like "on the other hand," "then," "however," or "Secondly"). Most paragraphing changes are **Transitions.**

   b. **Specifics** refers to the particular details and examples which illustrate and explain the ideas in the essay. The "Show Don't Tell" concept is another way to define "specifics." **Specifics** differ from **Development** (2e) in that they are concrete, vivid, and/or more specific than what is already in the text. Example: The addition of the underlined word does add specifics (the square green plate), and does not add specifics (the very red sunburn).

   c. **Thesis** refers to the student's statement of purpose or the student's main idea and purpose in writing.

   d. **Introduction** refers to the introductory material in the student's text, usually the first paragraph or two.

   e. **Development/Support** is the category that includes the student's development and support of his or her thesis. Usually this will encompass the middle paragraphs of the student's text.

f. **Conclusion** refers to the part of the text which summarizes, interprets, or wraps up the essay. Most often the final sentence or paragraph constitutes the conclusion.

*g. **Topic** refers to the specific subject of this student's draft. It may include both a general discussion of the topic and text specific discussion. Although any reference to the text is probably also reference to the topic, sections 2a through 2f take precedence over 2g in this classification.

*h. **Writing Process** includes talk about composing in general as well as talk about composing this particular draft. Excluded from this category are Transitions and Specifics, both of which have their own specific category, and principles and procedures in the context of a particular section of the student's draft (the sections of the student's paper also take precedence in classification).

3. Language: This category takes place within a sentence

a. **Syntax** refers to sentence boundaries, sentence construction, or word order within a sentence. This category will be used for structural changes which do not affect content significantly.

b. **Diction** refers to choice of words, vocabulary, which do not alter content. Example: "the sad truth" changes to "the unfortunate truth." **Diction** changes will almost always involve substituting one phrase or word for another phrase or word.

c. **Shift of person** appears to be a subcategory of Diction; however, it refers particularly to a student's shift among first, second, or third person (from "you" to "a student" or "I" to "all freshmen," for example). An inflected verb change which happens as a result of the person-shift will be considered part of the **Shift of person**.

d. **Inflection** refers to minor changes within a word which do not change the part of speech. Examples are verb tense changes (work = worked, has come = came, is = was or has been), changes in number (singular or plural) of nouns or verbs (man = men, new students = a new student), and changes among positive, comparative, and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs (red = redder, slow = slowest).

4. Mechanics:

a. **Punctuation** includes the use of periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks, exclamation marks, and quotation marks. If periods are a result of changing sentence boundaries, the classification would be under that category (3a) and not under 4a.

b. **Spelling** includes changes in the letters of the words (without changing the meaning), breaking or joining compound words, and changes in the use of apostrophes, both for contractions and possessives.

c. **Capitalization** includes changes from upper to lower case and vice versa.

d. **Abbreviation** includes changes involving logos (NNC = Northwest Nazarene College, or vice versa), abbreviations (gov't. = government, & = and), and contractions (can't = can not, I'm = I am, or vice versa).

* these categories are specific to the conferences and will not appear in the revision coding.

REVISION: Level and Operation

Student/draft Key _____

CHANGES IN CONTENT:

Operation: / Level:	Add	Delete	Substitute	Consolid.	Distrib.	Permuta.
Word						
Phrase						
Sentence						
Theme						

CHANGES FOR CORRECTNESS:

DEFINITIONS: Revision Tally Sheet

DIRECTIONS FOR USE:

Stage 1 - Coders will independently identify revision topics.
Stage 2 - Researcher will tag differences between the two Coders' revision topics.
Stage 3 - Coders will discuss these specific differences and reach consensus.
Stage 4 - Coders will enter the revision topics in the appropriate square on the Tally Sheet for Coding Revisions.

Level:

Word -- A single word or a part of a word.

Phrase -- Two or more words, but less than a sentence.

Sentence -- One independent clause including embedded dependent structures, or two or more independent clauses joined into one sentence, or a structure which the writer composed beginning with a capital letter and ending with a period.

Theme -- More than one sentence, but not more than a paragraph. Note: A one-sentence paragraph, undeveloped, may be considered a "theme."

Changes for Correctness -- Mechanical changes (punctuation, spelling, capitalization).

Operation:

Addition -- Material inserted into the text. This operation also describes two other situations:

* when a structure with content meaning is inserted in place of a structure with empty content. For example: "the little red hen" in place of "it."
* when an abbreviation is expanded into the full word.

Deletion -- Material taken out of the text.

Substitution -- Material used in place of material of the same level (word, phrase, sentence, or theme). If structures of slightly different levels are substituted, the operation is identified by the level put in the text.

Consolidation -- "Material in two or more units is collected into one unit" (Faigley and Witte, 1984, p. 99). For example, two sentences are combined into one.

Distribution -- Material in one unit dispersed into more than one unit. This happens most often at the sentence level, but can also occur at the word level when a contraction is expanded into two words.

Permutation -- Material rearranged or rearranged with substitution (Faigley and Witte).

DESCRIPTION OF TYPES OF UTTERANCES

Directions for Use:

After Coders have independently identified the topics of the conference transcript and resolved the differences that the Researcher has found, Coders will record next to each T-unit on the transcript the identifying letters of the categories defined below, describing the type of utterance of that T-unit.

B. Topic Recycled

If the conference moves from one topic to another and then returns to the original topic, it will be said to be recycled. The number of times a topic is recycled will be recorded in column B.

C-D. Initiator

A "1" will be placed in column C or D under the person who introduces a topic: teacher (C) or student (D).

E. TEACHER DIALOGUE: Total T-units

The transcription coded for topics is divided into T-units, each T-unit beginning on the left margin of the middle column. A T-unit is an independent clause with all its embedded modifying units (dependent clauses, prepositional phrases, verbal phrases). The total number of T-units uttered by the Teacher will be recorded in column E. Answers to direct questions, even though not independent clauses, will be considered as T-units.

F. Focus statements

Focusing is a device of a non-directive conference as described by Duke (1975): "statements . . . provided to help the student understand what is going to happen in the conference, what is expected of each person, how long the conference will last, and, possibly, what the results will be" (p. 45). The number of the teacher's T-units which provide focus will be tallied in column F.

G. Clarifying comments

Clarification is another device of the non-directive conference. The number of this type of T-units, in which the teacher may clarify what the student has written or may suggest other options, will be tallied in column G. A clarifying comment restates what a student has said or presents options for the student.

H. Approval Statements

The teacher's comments about the student's general capabilities or the specific paper which build the student's self esteem will be recorded in column H by number of T-units.

I-J. Questions

Two types of teacher-questions will be tallied in the next two columns: open-ended questions in column I and yes/no questions in column J. Open-ended questions are a mark of non-directive counseling and conferencing (Duke, 1975). The total number of T-units expressed in these formats will be recorded, by topic.

K-L. Markers

Brief responses which indicate the involvement of the listener in the conversation will be termed "markers." A marker is generally smaller than a T-unit; the number of the teacher's markers will be recorded in these columns across from the topics during which they occur. Markers that indicate acceptance and agreement (uh huh, right, okay) will be tallied in column K; markers that ask for further response or clarification (huh? Do you think?) will be tallied in column L.

M. Text specific

The teacher's comments which are specific to the student's paper will be recorded in column M, tallied by number of T-units.

N. Prescriptive comments

The number of the teacher's T-units which are directive or prescriptive will be tallied in column N across from the topic covered in the prescriptive comment. These comments do not indicate a non-directive approach.

Q. STUDENT DIALOGUE: Total T-units

The total T-units uttered by the student will be recorded in column Q. Answers to direct questions, even though not independent clauses, will be considered as T-units.

R. Statements which elicit approval

Student comments or questions which elicit approval will be tallied in column R by number of T-units.

S. Evaluative comments

Student statements or questions which evaluate the student's text or ask for evaluation will be tallied in column S by number of T-units.

T. Text specific

The student's comments which are specific to the student's paper will be recorded in column T, tallied by number of T-units.

U. Question format

The number of T-units uttered by the student in the format of a question will be recorded in column U. These T-units will likely be duplicates of columns Q through T.

V-W. Markers

See number 8. Columns V (acceptance markers) and W (query markers) will record the number of student markers.

X-AA. Operation suggested

If the handling of any topics is suggested, a tally will be kept in Sommers' categories: "add" in column X, "delete" in Y, "substitute" in Z, or "reorder" in AA.

Appendix J

Key to Student Codes

All student identification will be removed from the conference transcriptions and student revisions and the following code used for identification:

First and Second digit	Students will be numbered as they appear on the class roll, from 01-25	
Third digit	H =	high English ability, as shown by an ACT English score above the seventy-fifth percentile
	M =	medium English ability, as shown by an ACT English score between the twenty-fifth and seventy-fifth percentile
	L =	low English ability, as shown by an ACT English score below the twenty-fifth percentile
Fourth digit	M =	male
	F =	female
Fifth digit	1 =	the first essay of the term
	2 =	the second essay of the term
	3 =	the third essay of the term
	4 =	the fourth essay of the term
Sixth digit	1 =	the first draft
	2 =	the second draft
	3 =	the third and/or final draft

For example, a code of 01HM31 indicates the first draft of essay of the third essay of student number one, a high-ability male. The holistic scorers will not have access to this key.

Appendix K

Sample of Coded Conference Transcript: Verlin

Verlin
Conference 1

Speaker	Dialogue	Observations		
T:	Why don't you close that door because it's so noisy out there?	I	T sits S sits	1a
	Well, did you get a chance to write it?	J		2h
S:	Um, I think I've got about half of it done.	S		
T:	Good.	H		
	Well, how's the day going aside from that?	I		1a
S:	Real good. Busy.			
T:	Do you have classes on Thursdays?	J	S gets out papers	
S:	Just one. Social Problems.			
T:	Who's the teacher of that?	I		
S:	Jerry Hull.			
T:	Good. (Okay)	H V		
	Well, you got a good start.	H		2h
	What are you writing about?	I		2g
S:	About an accident I had.	T		
T:	In high school?	J		
S:	Grade school. Sixth grade.	T		
T:	Okay. What do you think the paper needs? I mean, you're getting the first draft done. You think, first of all, it needs to be finished. As you're writing it, what do you think you need to do to this now?	I F M G G I G M	Both laugh	2h
S:	Explain what happened.	S T	T & S look at each other	
	And everything resulted from one freak accident I had where I slipped in the locker room and hit my head right here and it caused a lot of problems, my physical walking--			2g
T:	I see, you're writing about the results of a physical accident. (yeah)	G M V		
	Well, when I asked you what you thought the paper needed, what I meant was, how do you revise? How do you go back and, or do you write it once and turn it in or--	I M | |		2h

S: Oh no! I usually write in once
and then I go back and re-read it and try to get the spelling errors and stuff.
Then I also try to, if something doesn't sound right to me, I make changes and make it the way I want it to sound, try to just smoothen it out.

T: Um hum. Okay, you want me to read this and just kind of respond to it? JF 1b

S: Sure, that would be fine.

T: The truth is, it's so hot, just being written, it's a little hard for you to look at it yet. (yeah) GV 2h
We need to let it sit. G

Let me read it. m 1b
T reads
S looks around

A freak accident, huh? JM 2g

S: That's what I call it. T

T: Yeah. Yeah. Okay. K

T reads

"Regular day." M T & S look at
McMinnville, is that where you, are you from McMinnville? JM each other

S: I'm from Sheridan.

T: I know where that is.

S: It's right, right (south) southwest. On the Oregon Coast. K
They didn't have a neurosurgeon in McMinnville;
they had to take me to the Salem Hospital.

T: Um hum. That's a good hospital. H

T reads
S looks down

I'll tell you Verlin, you've got a big story to tell here, don't you? JM
I mean (yeah) you could write a book. (I know) HVV

You really write well. (Oh, thank you) HV S smiles
I mean, you write just as if you were talking. (Thanks) GV 2h

---

That first sentence is such a clear statement of your purpose: "The fall I took in the sixth grade in school has had many consequences." (yeah) MHV 2c
That's a really clear statement. HM S nods
Isn't that what you're going to show? JM

S:	Yeah. And then I try to list the main ones that I'm going to talk about.	RT		2e
T:	Which is? (um) Slight walking defect.	IVGM		
S:	Yeah. Speech impediment.	T		
	Basically just the physical problems.	T		
	And then also the new outlook on life I've got.	T	T nods	
	Like I used to take things like tying my shoes and walking and talking all for granted,			2g
	and now that I've, I went through a time when I couldn't do those things for myself.			
	I don't take them for granted as much as I used to.		T nods	
T:	You appreciate things you didn't used to. (yeah, yeah)	GV	S nods	
	Here you are in college living independently. (yeah)	GV	S laughs	
	Did you ever think you would do that?	J		
S:	Nnn, I don't know.			
	God, He helped me.			
	I'm also going to write about this.	T		2e
	He helped me to have a positive attitude through it.	T	T nods	
	I mean, there were times when I wanted to give up,	T	T nods	
	but He always has helped me keep going and to be positive and help hope for the best.	T		
T:	Um hum. As I see it the, the results you want to write about are, aah, physical, which is the slight walking and speech impediment, and the outlook on life?	GJM	T gestures	
	Um, you've got a lot to tell us here. (yeah)	HVM	S laughs	
	And what have you done so far, from here down?	IM		
S:	Just explain what happened.	ST		
T:	The accident. Which is really the introduction, right?	JM	S nods S laughs	2d
	What is the <u>rest</u> of the paper going to look like here?	IM		2h
S:	How long is it?	UT		

T:	Well, not a book.	G	
	And I want you to do justice to what you do. (yeah)	N V M	
	I want you to tell well the part that you tell.	N m	S nods
	I'm wondering if you are going to need to think about saving part.	y m	2d
	You've got to tell the story.	m	
	I mean, this has got to be there, but I think you should--	N m	
S:	There are some things that could be cut out there?	U y T	
T:	I think you could tighten it up.	y M	
	And I want you to go back someday and write some more about this, maybe in your next paper.	H	2g
	But tighten this up a little bit.	y N m	S nods
	You've got to tell it.	N m	2d
	You've told it well,	H m	
	but it's not your main idea.	G m	
	It's just kind of giving background to this.	G m	T points to paper
	I want you to get into what you're really after here,	N x m	
	and then we'll see what we need in the introduction to help us know. (okay)	m V x	
	Okay? Because this, this is an important thing you want to cover.	J G X m	
S:	I learned in high school that when you write a paper you're supposed to tell the reader what you're going to tell them, then you tell them, and then you tell them what you told them.	R	2h S smiles
T:	Exactly! The Golden Book says the same thing, doesn't it? (yeah)	H J	
	Okay, when you've done that here, you know I have one suggestion, (okay)	V	
	and I just don't want to tell you a thing about that.		S laughs
	That's such good stuff.	H	
	You know how to write, except maybe you're going to need to tighten it up,	H y	
	but would this work all right at the end of the introduction?	J. AA M	2d
	Would this first part?	J m	T points to paper
	For example, could you start out with, "November 17, 1980 started out as a perfectly normal school day. Nothing was out of the ordinary. When I went to P.E. that morning the smooth concrete locker--"	AA m	
	Could you just start telling that story?	J m	
	And then you tell the accident,	m AA	
	and then you could say, "The fall I took has had many consequences." (um hum)	AA m V	S laughs
	Now we're going to get into what you're after.	G m	
	Would that work?	J m	

S: Uh huh.

T: It would. (yeah) VM
Okay, you're in good shape here. HM
Keep going N
and then come back N
and maybe that's the one suggestion I think on the introduction. M
Tighten up, and move that down. Okay? N J Y AA M

S: Okay.

In Personality and Adjustment yesterday, I wrote this paper. IC T nods
It turned out to be about four and a half pages long.
It's my rough draft with all the mistakes. (um hum) K

It's my autobiography. (um hum) K T nods
Most of the significant things in my life that have influenced the way I am now.
And this is one. (um hum) K
This is just one of the categories. T nods
I divided it off into four categories,
and this is just one of them.

T: Um hum. You're doing a lot of thinking about yourself these days. (yeah) G V Both laugh
That's good.
That's fine. H
Well, keep working on it. H
We're going to look at this again next week. N
We want to keep working on this awhile, F S nods
but I would like you to get this first draft completely finished and then work on it again, F
and I would like to look at it, look at your next draft next week? (Okay) N
This is going to be interesting. N V S gathers papers
It is. H
I'm glad you like to write, Verlin. H
H

S: Yeah. I do.
It's hard to find the time to do it.

T: Yeah. It is.
You need a gun at your head. G
But you're busy. G
Well, do we have class on Friday? J
No, this is Friday class. G
I will see you Monday. F
Have a good week-end.

S: Okay. Thank you. S stands
You too.

T: I will.
Enjoy the sunshine.

S: I hope.
Hopefully I won't be in my room too long.

T: Bring the first draft finished to class Monday: F
we might look at it. F S leaves

S: Okay.

Appendix L

One Student's Drafts: Jason

Jason
07MM11

The Sawtooth Mountains

One small aspect of our world that is important to me are the Sawtooth mountains. This small, secluded mountain range, located in the southern section of central Idaho, holds many of my fond, childhood memories. The reason for which I enjoy these mountains is that they offer many activities. Going to the mountains offers me a chance to be alone with my family, to sleep under the open sky, and to fish in the crystal blue lakes.

The mountains draw me and the other members of my family closer together. There is no telephone to call my dad back to work, no kitchen in which meals must be prepaired, and there are no books to stick your nose in. We, as a family, must rely on each other for entertainment.

The mountains also provide a place to sleep under the open sky. There are no lights in the mountains to dilute the light of distant stars or galaxies; everything is visible. I also like to let the wind in the trees and the chirping of the animals lull me to sleep.

The last thing that I like about the mountains is going fishing in the lakes. The fishing is almost always good because the lakes are so remote that most people don't carry their fishing equipment along with them. Another reason why the fishing is fun is because the water is so clear. You can watch the fish swim through the water and dart after your hook.

Those are the main reason why I enjoy the sawtooth mountains; however, there are many others.

Jason
07MM12

The Sawtooth Mountains

One small aspect of our world that is important to me is the Sawtooth mountain Range. This small, secluded mountain range which is located in the southern section of central Idaho, holds many of my fond, childhood memories. The reason for which I enjoy these mountains is that they offer many activities. Going to the mountains offers me a chance to be alone with my family, to sleep under the open sky, and to fish in the crystal clear blue lakes.

The mountains draw me and the other members of my family closer together. There are no telephones to call my Father back to work, no kitchen in which meals must be prepaired, and no Books to become engrossed in. We, as a family, must rely on each other for entertainment.

The mountains also provide a place to sleep under the open sky. There are no lights to dilute the light of distant stars or galaxies; everything is visible in the night sky. I also like to listen to the wind in the trees and the chirping of the animals, letting them lull me to sleep.

The last thing that I like about the mountains is going fishing in the lakes. The fishing is almost always good because the lakes are so remote that most people don't carry their fishing equipment along with them. Another reason why the fishing is fun is because the water is so clear. You can watch the fish swim through the water and dart after your hook.

Those are the main reason why I enjoy the Sawtooth mountains; however, there are many others.

Jason
07MM21

The Terrible, But Spectacular Crash of R.C.P. II

During the summer vacation between my eighth and ninth grade years in school I attempted to learn how to fly radio controlled airplanes. However, in order to learn how to fly R.C. airplanes I first had to build one. Finally, after endless hours of construction in an intoxicating room I completed my first radio controlled airplane. On the first day of piloting lessons the instructor annihilated my airplane before I could get my anxious hands on the controls. Not to be defeated, I set to work at building another plane. The focus of this essay is on the reasons for the fall of this second airplane.

This second airplane enabled me to finally get my hands on the controls. However, as I guided my plane through the sky I was haunted by visions of my last airplane plummeting toward the ground. Because of these visions I felt compelled to let my plane fly higher and higher until eventually it was almost out of sight; it was impossible to tell which side was up and which way the plane was actually flying. In an effort to bring the airplane back down closer to earth to where I could see it better I steered the plane into a dive. As the plane approached me and the ground, faster than I had anticipated, I thought it best to put my plane back into orbit. It was then when I realized that I didn't know how to bring my plane out of a high speed dive. After frantically fiddling with the control sticks I got the plane to level out again; unfortunately the plane was only a few feet from the ground and a twelve foot high, heavy gauge, chain link fence loomed ahead. So far to my knowledge I am the only person in history to have flown an airplane with a six foot wingspan through a three inch hole.

Jason
07MM22

The Terrible, But Spectacular Crash of R.C.P. II

During the summer vacation between my eighth and ninth grade years of secondary education I attempted to learn how to fly radio control airplanes. However, in order to learn how to fly R.C. airplanes I first had to build one. Finally, after endless hours of construction in a room filled with intoxicating aromas that ranged anywhere from the smell of a road killed skunk to the uplifting fragrance of rubber cement, I completed my first radio controlled airplane. On the first day of piloting lessons the instructor annihilated my airplane before I could get my anxious little hands on the seemingly unattainable controls. Not to be defeated, I set to work at building another plane. The focus of this essay is on the reasons behind the fall of this second airplane.

This second plane enabled me to finally get my hands on the controls. However, as I guided my plane through the sky I was haunted by visions of my last airplane plummeting toward the ground. These visions were all to clear. I could hear the whine of the engine mixing in with the roar of the wind as it struggled to get around the plane. I could hear the instructor's voice, who is now dutifully standing at my side, whispering words of distress and desolation. Finally ending these horrible visions was an image of the plane laid to rest in a large mud puddle.

Because of these visions I felt compelled to let my plane fly higher and higher until eventually it was impossible to tell which side of the plane was up and which way it was actually flying. On several occasions I actually lost sight of the plane. Both the high stress of not being able to see the plane and the fatigue of standing still, looking straight up for an eternity started wearing on my nerves. In an effort to bring the airplane back down closer to earth where I could see it and possibly get a chance to land it, I piloted the plane into a dive.

As the plane approached both me and the ground, faster than I had anticipated, I thought it best to guide my plane back into orbit. However, being the inexperienced pilot that I was, I didn't know how to bring my plane out of its high speed dive. After frantically fiddling with the control sticks I got the plane to level out again; unfortunately the plane was only a few feet from the ground and a twelve foot high, heavy gauge, chain link fence loomed ahead on the approaching horizon. So far, to my knowledge, I am the only person in history to have flown an airplane with a six foot wingspan through a three inch hole.

Jason
07MM23

The Terrible, but Spectacular Crash
of Radio Controlled Plane #2

During the summer vacation between my eighth and ninth grade years of secondary education, I attempted to learn how to fly radio controlled airplanes. However, in order to learn how to fly R.C. airplanes I first had to build one. Finally, after endless hours of construction in a room filled with intoxicating aromas that ranged anywhere from the smell of a road killed skunk to the uplifting fragrance of rubber cement I, completed my first radio controlled airplane. On the first day of piloting lessons the instructor annihilated my airplane before I could get my anxious little hands on the seemingly unattainable controls. Not to be defeated, I set to work at building another plane. Unfortunately, this second airplane also crashed. Flash backs of the first crash, inexperience as a pilot, and fatigue, all were factors that caused this, the second airplane, to fall.

This second airplane finally enabled me to get my hands on the controls. However, as I guided my plane through the sky I was haunted by visions of my last airplane plummeting toward the ground. These visions were all too clear. I could hear the whine of the engine merging with the roar of the wind as it struggled to get around the airplane. I could hear the instructor's voice, who is now dutifully standing at my side, whispering words of distress and desolation. Finally ending these horrible visions was an image of the plane laid to rest in a large mud puddle.

Because of these visions I felt compelled to let my plane fly higher and higher until eventually it was impossible to tell which side of the plane was up and which way it was really flying. On several occasions I actually lost sight of the plane. Both the high stress of not being able to see the plane and the fatigue of standing still, looking straight up for an eternity started wearing on my nerves. In an effort to bring the airplane back down closer to earth where I could see it better and possibly get a chance to land it, I piloted the plane into a dive.

As the plane approached both me and the ground, faster than I had anticipated, I thought it best to guide my plane back into orbit. However, being the inexperienced pilot that I was, I didn't know how to bring my plane out of its high speed dive. After frantically fiddling with the control sticks I got the plane to level out again; unfortunately the plane was only a few feet from the ground and a twelve foot high, heavy gauge, chain link fence loomed ahead. So far, to my knowledge, I am the only person in history to have flown an airplane with a six foot wingspan through a three inch hole.

Jason
07MM31

What a Life!

The transition to college life is not an easy one. First there is the rigorous academic schedule. Then there is also the experience of living away from home and having to do your own laundry. However, I feel that the hardest transition to make is the change in the social life. This new social life, especially at NNC, is completely different from the social life you would experience anywhere else. The major factor that makes a good social life is having an abundance of friends. Another helpful component, although not necessary, is to live in on campus housing.

The key to having a good social life in college is making and having a lot of friends. In order to make friends you have to be assertive and go out and meet people; you can't hold up in some secluded room and wait for people to come to you. After you have made acquaintances with people talk to them when you meet them on the sidewalk, sit with them at dinner, or go out together for a snack. Friendship is a two way thing, you have to be a friend to have a friend.

Another activity that helps improve your social life is getting involved in school functions. These functions are designed to help you have a good time and to make friends in the process. If, when at these functions, you are lively and fun people will notice you and want to be with you.

And lastly, a very helpful aid to your social life is living on campus. When you live in campus you are forced to live with a large group of people that are your own age. Whether you like it or not, you are going to get to know several of these people.

There are several factors that determine whether or not you have a good social live in college. The most important factor, however, is to make lots of friends. Some of these friendships will last a lifetime.

Jason
07MM32

What a Life!

There are many ways in which to have a successful college social life. However, I feel that the most important factor in a good social life is to have an abundance of friends. The college life, especially at N.N.C., is very accommodating to making a large number of friends. The campus of N.N.C. is small enough so that you always bump into people on the sidewalk, there are a large number of school sponsored activities, and the dorms are small so that it is possible to get to know everyone that you live with.

The relatively small campus of N.N.C. is perfect for making friends. Everywhere you go it is impossible not to meet someone you know on the sidewalk or to make friends with someone you frequently pass. When you pass people on the sidewalk, be open and assertive; speak up and say hello, or strike up a conversation. After a short while you will be comfortable with many of these people; this makes you and those people feel good.

After you are comfortable with being around these people, do things with them. Go to the basketball games and sit with them. Afterwards go across to the local restaurant, Fireside and get a snack, share a cyclone or some nachos. When you go to Saga to eat, find someone you would like to get to know better and sit with them. Comment on the wonderful food and applaud when someone drops a dish. If you're not into basket ball or eating Saga food there is always Chapel. This short time between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. on weekday mornings is reserved for fellowship with God and other students; going to Chapel is required so you might just as well have a good time making friends with God and your fellow peers.

Although sitting and talking with people is a good way to make friends, living with those people is a better way to get to know them. I feel that the best way to make friends is to live in on campus housing. By living with people, most of whom are your own age, you get to know every detail about them. Standing in line waiting for your turn in the shower, talking when your three-fourths asleep is a wonderful experience and a great opportunity to ask stupid questions about a person. Dorm wing dates are also a great way to make new friends. Even if you don't particularly care for the person you are going with, which is rare, go anyway. There is bound to be somebody else, who you like, to keep the time moving.

The key to a good social life in college is to have many friends. However, to have friends you must also be a friend. You will make lots of good friends in college and some of them will be friends for a lifetime.

Jason
07MM33

What a Life!

There are many ways in which to have a successful college social life. However, I feel that the most important factor in a good social life is to have an abundance of friends. The college life, especially at Northwest Nazarene College, is very accommodating to making a large number of friends, the campus of N.N.C. is small, making it impossible not to bump into people on the sidewalk, there are a large number of school sponsored activities and, the dorms are small so that it is possible to get to know everyone that you live with. To make these friends, however, it is imperitive to be assertive and outgoing; make an effort to make friends.

The relatively small campus of N.N.C. is perfect for making friends. All over the campus there are people that are willing to talk when they are passed on the sidewalk. Strike up a conversation with these people and try to become friends with them. These friends that are made can fight off homesickness, help with homework, and ease the heartache of the freshmen blues. Having a group of friends to do things with also makes the time go by faster.

After becoming comfortable with these people, do things with them. Go to the basketball games and sit with them. Afterwards go across to the local restaurant and get a snack, share a cyclone or some nachos. When attempting to eat at Saga, find an acquaintance, sit with them, and get to know them better. If the conversation comes with some difficulty talk about classes, the weather, or even the food. If you're not into basketball or eating Saga food, there is always Chapel. Chapel is a short time between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. on most weekday mornings. This time is reserved for fellowship with God and other students. Chapel attendance is required so the best of it might as well be made by getting to know God and your fellow peers a little better.

Although sitting and talking with people is a good way to make friends, living with those people is a better way to get to know them. I feel that the best way to make friends is to live in on campus housing. By living with people, most of whom are your own age, people get to know every detail about each other. Standing in line waiting for a turn in the shower; talking when your half asleep is a wonderful experience and a great opportunity to ask stupid questions about a person. Dorm wing dates are also a great way to make new friends. A person should try to go on these dates even if they are not real excited about the person they are going with; there will always be other people to help keep the date fun.

The main factor involved with a good college social life is to have many friends. The new student in the college atmosphere must go out and make an effort to make friends. Numerous good friends will be made in college and some of these friends will be friends for a lifetime.

Jason
07MM41

This Changing World

Because our world is ever changing, each generation is forced to confront new aspects of society that have never before been dealt with. In just the short period of time that separates our generation from our parents', new technologies have made many unheard of atrocities more available.

A "new technology" that has had a tremendous impact on my generation is the television. When my parents were growing up, the television was only a rarety and was found only in an occasional household. Nowadays, it seems that every household has at least one television set; some houses have a television in every room! With T.V.s more available to my generation, many of us are wasting literally hundreds of hours in front of the "boob tube." In my parents' generation, throwing away this much time would have been unheard of.

Another technological inovation that has invaded my generation is the automobile. In this generation, having a car is a part of your social standing; the newer your car, the higher you are in social standing. In the days of yesteryear, most families only had one car. Take for instance my family. When my parents were married they only had one car; now they have two cars and both my sister and I have a car.

Making life easier for my generation is the computer. Everything in our world is computerized. We get up in the morning to digital alarm clocks that first make the coffee then wake us up. We get into our cars and a computer tells us if we need to get gas, inflate our tires, shut the door, or turn off the lights. We also type our term papers and english essays with the use of a computer. In my parents generation, people had to make their own coffee, check their own tires, and type out writing assignments on manual typewriters.

There are many differences between my generation and my parents' generation. Among these are the television, the car, and the computer. Technological advances have made these items more common in the everyday household and more accessible to my generation.

Jason
07MM43

This Modern World

In this day and age, our world is very modern and advanced. Each new generation that comes along is forced to confront new aspects of life that have never before been experienced. Among the multitudes of new innovations being brought into our world is the frontier of automated construction. This type of construction is done all by machines and has come about in this generation.

One example of automated construction that is in use now and was not present 50 years ago, is the production of cars by robots. In this countries newest automobile factories, robots are being used to assemble cars. These robots can complete mundane and repetitive tasks, such as bolting on bumpers and fenders, with a surprising degree of accuracy. Robots are also being used to complete hazardous procedures that are needed to finish the cars. Fifty years ago, blue collar workers were forced to subject themselves to both the boredom and dangers of constructing an automobile.

Machines are also being used to produce computer chips in work areas that need to be sterile. In areas like these, people would be too dirty and would required too much circulation of air. Robots are clean, tireless and do not need fresh air to operate in. The work that is done in the factories that make computer chips is also too precise for human hands. In the last generation, computers were few and far between and they were very large; machines weren't needed to make them.

One example of a company using automated production is the John Deere corporation of North america. In a new, experimental plant, tractors are made entirely by machines. The raw steel is picked up and placed in a huge machine by a robot. The machine mills out the parts which are then assembled by still more robots. Factories utilizing robots such as these require only a handful of well trained workers to operate the plant. Just a few years ago, hundreds of workers were required to build an equal number of tractors.

As our world becomes more and more modern, new inovations will be required to keep up with the ever increasing number of modern technologies. Every generation will have new creations to deal with and contemporary scientists will always figure out newer and better ways to deal with them, each idea will out date the futuristic ideas of the past generation.

APPENDIX M

One Student's Conference Transcripts: Jason

Jason
Conference 1

Speaker	Dialogue	Observations
T:	Hi, Jason. Ready to come in? It's a little warm, but	T sits
S:	[unclear comment]	
T:	Yeah, I have a window like a, a cell that looks up and can see the sunshine. Sit down here and we can talk about your paper. What have you been doing today?	S sits
S:	Running around.	
T:	Fun?	
S:	Kind of. No. I have calculus, physics, and	S gets out paper
T:	Oh my! Are you a science major of some kind?	
S:	Yeah. Physics, premed. (It's tough.) Yeah, it's kind of different. The printer is broken so it cuts up the paper, but	
T:	That's okay. Don't you love word processing?	
S:	I like it great.	
T:	So you don't mind revising, do you?	
S:	Huh uh. Not in the least. Here you go.	
T:	How do you feel about this?	
S:	Well, that was a quick job. I have a biology test today, so that's	
T:	You did? Are you through with it yet?	
S:	No. It's at 2:00.	
T:	Well, we won't fool around. It is ten till.	
S:	That's fine.	

T: Okay. Um, are you ready for the test, so you can even, you can think about this? (yeah)
First draft, just get it down,
and then we'll fix it. (right)
What do you think this needs?

S: Well yours, on the board you had, you said this is a good paragraph, first of all, (um hum) this one didn't have any kind of logical order
so I always found myself, kind of looking forward and looking back and — S gestures

T: Doing both.

S: Yeah. I kind of just looked at myself a lot.

T: What's the event?
Okay. "The Spectacular Crash of RCA,"

S: That's "Radio Controlled Airplane II";
that is for space science.

T: Oh, all right, radio controlled airplane? (yeah)
Listen, I've flown one of those.
They are very hard to fly.

S: You crashed one? — T gestures

T: We crashed it the first flight.
We went in a huge circle and landed and that was it.

S: [unclear comment]

T: So the crash is what you are writing about? (yeah)
Which do you want to do?
Do you want to look at why it crashed
or do you want to look at

S: Yeah, the causes why it crashed.

T: Okay. Interesting. (okay)
Let me just give it a quick read,
and I'll, I'll (okay) respond as a reader. (okay)

Both read

The instructor killed your first flight? (um hum)
I like the ending. S smiles
Uh, you, you're a good writer.
I mean, you just, it's fun and
it's told well and in order. T smiles
Um, if your focus is then why this thing crashed, then you just
tell me the story. (yeah)
You haven't done much mental work on it. (yeah, I know)
Try to, try to separate out the causes, and
you really have.
Okay. First of all

S: Ah. There's one question.
Do I separate each cause by itself? Because it's just all kind of, S gestures

T: But they can be in different paragraphs if you develop them
well. (okay)
Now, if it's just a couple of sentences, no (group them).
You would want it,
but if you can develop it well--and the first, it looked like,
the first cause was that you were, you were anxious (yeah)
because you had visions of this thing crashing. S smiles
Um, the next cause, you don't really say it, but is it your
inexperience?

S: Um hum. Yeah. I had the

T: Why don't you just say it. (okay)
And then, and um, the truth is, you, I don't know if you, if
some of that would be part of the inexperience or not as
far as pulling it down into that,
but you could tell more details. (okay) S nods
I love your language.
You have good word choice. (okay)
That's good.
Um, would you say that the chain link fence was a problem?
You didn't crash into the ground, right?

S: Nope.

T: Right through the fence.

S: Right through the fence. S smiles

T: Uh, that was the immediate cause.

S: That was the, ah, there were three of them,
and that was the last one.

T: That was the sufficient cause.

S: Yeah! That was the sufficient cause. Both smile

T: Uh, that was sufficient cause, a six inch foot wing span and a three inch hole.
Um, as far as developing it, you know the ideas; (yeah)
you got the main ideas down here
but I would love a little more description.
I would love to see it. (okay)
You can do it;
I can tell. (okay)
I'd love to see the plane. S nods
I'd love to see the fence. (okay)
Where were you?
In a beautiful place?
I don't know.

S: I've got that written down in my brainstorm list.

T: Sure, you, but you can add it,
no problem. No problem.

S: So just stretch it out, put more description in it, and T nods

T: Yeah, details, and maybe a little more up front about that these are reasons. (okay)
Um, usually a causal paper, this one has a lot of a, a lot of fun in it.
You know, there's a real spirit of fun here. Both smile
I don't want to mess with that too much cause I like it,
but ah, but if you had transition sentences (yeah) that kind of reminded us of what the point was

S: Yeah. I can see that.

T: But don't, don't pasteurize it so that it isn't fun any more. T laughs
I like it.
Well, keep working on it. (okay)
Bring a draft next week.
We'll look at it again.
You've got a week and a half on this. (okay)
You and I will look at it one more time at least.

S: Okay um, that, what do you call it? Doing but

T: Showing and not telling, (yeah) a little bit of that.

S: Okay. I wasn't, I wasn't there on that day so

T: Oh! Okay. Well, it's like saying, um, um, rather than telling me that the plane crashed because you were inexperienced, you would, rather than saying the plane crashed, you would describe the plane looping up.
You would try to show it with words. (okay) — S nods
The thing that we did was, one of the students came in and I told him how to act.
The class didn't know.
I said, "Act as if you're waiting for a child that is out late, — T gestures
and you're nervous and then you're kind of angry, you're also nervous."
And so I said to the class, "Describe what you saw."
And everyone said, "He was nervous, he was waiting."
And I said, "You didn't see nervous.
What did you see?" (okay)
"He drummed his fingers." (Okay, I see.)
That's showing. (Okay) — S nods largely
But you've got good use of language.

S: Okay, so if I want to make up that little paragraph, I just do that.

T: Show, yes. Try it.
And if you don't like it, just scrap it.
I mean, work with it until it is something you're happy with. (okay)
The main thing is, let's try to understand the connections between the crash and (okay) these things.

S: Okay. I'll do that. — S prepares to leave
Is that it?

T: In the introduction, you could, I mean, what's, what's an intoxicating room?

S: The fumes. Everything.

T: You could show me some more stuff up there.
I mean, those were interesting words,
but it made me curious. (okay)
Good. (Okay)
So have an interesting weekend, Jason, — S stands
and good luck on the test.

S: It shouldn't be too hard, but

T: I hope not.
What could they expect you to know in the first two weeks of school?

S: Everything.
No class tomorrow? — S leaves

T: No class.
This is it. (okay)
Hurray. (great)

S: Okay. Thanks.

T: See you later.

Jason Eddy
Conference 2

Speaker	Dialogue	Observations
T:	Give me just a minute, would you Jason? I have to clear off this stuff before I forget. Okay, Jason. How are you doing?	T works on desk T sits
S:	Great.	S enters
T:	I call you Jamie all the time, don't I? You haven't noticed?	
S:	Nope.	
T:	There was a freshman who sat where you sit in class last term. He was tall and his name was Jamie. I'm afraid I call you Jamie.	 S sits
S:	I had an Economics teacher that called me Jamie.	
T:	Wonder why that is? How're things going?	
S:	We finished our test early.	
T:	Did you?	
S:	Right. Right. You wanted it like, in um, like you had, that first rough draft I gave you? I mean, just crossed out and I do it over later?	
T:	So you had to re-copy?	
S:	Had to re-copy.	S smiles
T:	Okay. Are you happy with what you did?	
S:	Well, it's getting better. (Good) There's still a couple of rough spots that don't sound great.	
T:	What do you think it needs now besides you want to look at those parts that don't sound right?	
S:	How long is it supposed to be?	
T:	If you've got a, if you've got a clear idea, I want you to develop it well. Now if you've got too big of an idea, it will get broad or, or it won't thoroughly discuss it. I suppose five hundred words plus or minus a whole bunch. I don't care.	

S: I've got--

T: You've got that already, haven't you? T & S look at each other

S: No way. S smiles

T: One page is about two hundred and fifty if you write small,
and you don't write very big.
I'll bet you do.
I don't care about length as much as long as you develop it well (okay) and are not wordy.

S: Okay. I'm not wordy.

T: So, basically what did you do when you re-wrote it?

S: Well, you said to go through, and, um develop, like "intoxicating room,"
and I threw in another sentence in there.
I put in another sentence about "intoxicating room."

T: Oh, yes. I'm remembering it. (Right)
I'm looking to see what we talked about.

S: And you said to kind of develop each of the causes a little bit better and in all separate paragraphs,
so I just kind of broke them up in-- S gestures

T: Woven in specific details?

S: Yes. I just said a little more about each one, just stuff like that. T nods

T: We talked, too, about transitions.
Sentences that would show the relationship back--

S: Yeah. That's one thing I need to work on.
One right, right here. I don't know exactly where it is.

T: But it's an easy thing;
especially since you doubled spaced you can, you know, re-do it. (yeah)
Re-copying is simple, S nods
but you can see if it works first.
Want me to just read through quickly?

S: Yeah. I hope you can read it.

T: I can read it.
This is good.
I can show you bad writing.

S: My dad does.

T: Does he?
Is he a doctor?
He's had to work at it then. (Yeah)
You know what it is?
It's taking notes fast in college.
Your writing will get worse too.

S: Mine's <u>getting</u> worse.
It used to be so nice;
now it's really yuck.

T: It gets smaller, tighter and cramped.

T reads
S looks around

I like this: "the aromas that ranged anywhere from the smell of a road killed skunk to the uplifting fragrance of rubber cement."
Uplifting is right!

S: I thought that would be right. Both laugh

T: That's good.
Your purpose statement is very clear: "The reasons behind the fall of the second airplane."

S: Is that all right? (um hum)
It's okay?

T: It's a little obvious. Both laugh

S: Yeah. It sure is.

T: "The focus of this essay is--" Uum, any less obvious way to say that?
A way you wouldn't lose how clear it is?
But better to be clear and obvious.

S: Yeah. But not so blatant.

T: But clear and clever is better!

S: Yeah, I was just kind of just--

T: We'll have to come back to that.

Both read

Here's another great detail, "I hear the whine of the engine mixing in with the roar of the wind as it struggled to get around the plane."
That's a good detail.

S: That "mixing" isn't the word I want.

T: "I hear the whine of the engine." What picture are you trying to make up here?

S: Well, an airplane coming down.

T: The way, it is pushing against, it's almost a battle, struggling against the wind.
You can use a word like "struggle," not "struggle" maybe but--

S: [unclear comment]

T: And just circle that;
I mean you can just kind of think about it.

S: Okay. I'll underline it. S looks around

T: "Whispering words of distress and desolation," good!
Both read

You're getting in some good clues about causal relationship, like "being the inexperienced pilot that I was,"
and earlier you said, "because of these visions, I felt compelled to let it go higher and higher, and then I couldn't see it,"
so you're giving us some good clues. S nods
Um, you might still think about transitions that connect. (yeah)
But basically you've got some good clues in here.
"Both the high stress of not being able to see it fly and the fatigue of standing still," another good cause.
Both read

I love that ending.
I'm glad you kept that sentence.

S: Okay. I didn't know.
I was debating about that sentence. I--

T: I like that sentence.
Yes, I like that sentence.

S: "As it loomed ahead on the approaching horizon."
Aah, "loomed" is kind of "approaching." T & S look
Is that redundant? at each other

T: You know it might be.
I think they say the same thing.

S: They do.

T: Loomed means "gets bigger." (yeah) S gestures
I think you may be right about that.

S: That's okay then?
I, okay, I didn't know.

T: I didn't notice that when I first read through there.

S: I wrote it,
and I didn't notice it was the same.

T: This is fun to read, Jason. (thank you)
I mean, there is just a real light heartedness about it, and ah,
even though you're writing about a plane crash, — T & S look at each other
but, um, if, if this weren't so fun to read and light hearted, I would want you to come back at the end before that last sentence.
I'm not sure if you can do that.
I don't want you to do it if it makes it boring,
but for like cause and effect writing, if you were writing to analyze causes--

S: You mean to go back and say it?

T: Yeah. A, b, and c really directly led to this.
You've given us good enough clues
and it reads well
and I almost wouldn't do it,
but you could try it.
I don't know.
Don't spoil it, — T points to paper
but you could stick something in there.

S: Okay. Just sum up what I've told them?

T: Um hum. Briefly and tightly.
But because you did some analysis as you went through (okay), you don't need to do it all at the end. (uh hum)
I would do that if I were writing about the causes of World War II. (yeah, for sure)
You'd really want to connect it.
I'm not sure you do here.
You might.
It's up to you.

S: I'll try it.

T: Don't spoil it. (okay)
I'd sure keep this to be your last sentence. (okay)
So if you do anything, stick it in there.
I think it is coming along so well.
You're a good writer, good words.
You might look at the transitions,
and (okay) think of some better way to say that: "The focus of this paper--" — Both laugh

S: It was, I've been worrying about that, so--

T: Hum, at least you've got a good title.
I've seen titles that were "Cause and Effect Essay."

S: Oh yeah. Oh, and on your little thing that you handed out, what you want, it said two lines, the title two lines below the paper. (uh huh)
What do you mean, do you mean like--

T: That's under the heading, I meant.

S: The heading, okay.
Is this the heading, your name? T points to paper

T: Yeah. Your name and class and date.

S: Oh, okay. The computer has causal right or causal essay on the top and then it goes down here.
I said, "That doesn't look right."

T: You've got this on the word processor?

S: Yeah, (good) but the printer has been shot for a few weeks.

T: Oh, too bad.

S: The printer -- [unclear comment]

T: Is it compatible with the ones here?

S: No. An Apple.

T: An Apple. Surely there's an Apple somewhere.
Anything is better than hand writing.

S: Oh, but it's a II GS Apple,
so it takes a mega byte of memory.

T: Oh, okay. We have a IIe.
In fact, this (an Apple printer?) printer is from home.
Well, good.

S: Is this "finally" all right? S points to paper
It doesn't seem like it should be there.

T: What page are we on?

S: Second.

T: The second.
"The second plane enabled me to finally get my hands on the control."
Yeah, the second was enough S gestures
but that last, you did sort of have the feeling that the teacher didn't want you to touch the first plane. (uh hum)

S: So this "finally" should be there?
Should it be somewhere else,
or should it?

T: It's in between two,
let's see: "the second plane finally enabled me to get my hands on the control."
Maybe I <u>would</u> move it to the front of "enabled." T nods

S: That's what I was thinking.

T: I like it. (okay)
Our last draft is due Monday.

S: We still need to bring dictionaries?

T: Well, I got the notes out today because as I looked at what we need to do Monday, we really don't have time to, with what we need to do with dictionaries.
So I'm going to tell people, "Never mind bringing a dictionary."

S: Okay. Will I need to get one by Wednesday?
I wonder if I should go out and buy one.

T: No, No, wait.
Do you not have a dictionary?

S: I have a little one.

T: Oh, okay. Well,

S: Any word I use is going to be there.

T: Probably. Or you could choose another word. (Yup) Both laugh
Uh, wait.
Those college dictionaries are wonderful (yeah) to have around.

S: Yeah, We have one at home. My folks--

T: There's a lot in them.
Wait, wait.
It won't be Wednesday.

S: Okay. S stands

T: Have a good week-end.

S: You too. S leaves
See you on Monday then, right?

T: Right.

S: Okay. Bye.

Jason
Conference 3

Speaker	Dialogue	Observations
T:	Well, you just got out of class?	
S:	Yeah, I did.	
T:	Good. You've got a very busy schedule don't you?	
S:	Yes, that's right.	S sits
T:	How many hours?	
S:	Oh, eighteen.	
T:	A freshman, eighteen? I didn't think that was possible. "What a life."	T laughs
S:	[unclear comment]	
T:	You have a great computer, don't you? (yeah) Are you the one who has the Apple?	
S:	Yeah. It jammed up on me last night.	S smiles
T:	Oh, no.	
S:	I jammed it up. I turned, I hit the print command and turned on the print at the same time. I had something else on my mind when I was trying to get the printer to print.	
T:	Oh. When I say that the machine jammed up, my husband says, "How does it do that?"	
S:	Yeah. How does it do that? Well, they have those--	
T:	I like to blame the machines. Well, how is this coming; what does this need?	

S: A lot.
This is the second draft. (okay) — S looks over paper
The first one was better,
but the second one was kind of rushed.
It needs more, like this, I have three little reasons. (um hum)
But they need to be in greater detail. (um hum)
They have, so it's only two or three sentences long. (um hum)
It needs more descriptive or-- — T nods

T: Descriptive? Specific example?

S: Yeah. Persuasive.

T: Um hum. Well, if you've got the ideas kind of in order, then it's not too hard to flesh it out.
Want me to read through it? (yeah) — T reads, S looks around

You're right.
You've got the basics.
You've got, um, good ideas that will be easy to write about.
Explain it more. (yeah)
Think about the fact that you're writing to somebody who isn't here, (uh huh)
and when you say something about eating with them, I mean just describing SAGA, you could write a book on just SAGA, couldn't you? (um hum)
Um, I guess my only, my only concern is if you do this really well, you might have bitten off a lot more than you want to, — S nods
but I mean (yeah) it could be a little bit longer than this too, (yeah) but just talking about making friends-- — S smiles

S: Making friends. That's what I thought last night when I got to the conclusion of the paper.

T: That's what you really come back to, isn't it? — T points to paper

S: That's what I come back to. — S nods
This whole thing is on friends.

T: It is, isn't it? Living in the dorm. (uh huh)
Now I just talked to a girl who lives off campus.
She says, "I don't have any friends here. I'm starting to be able to talk to people."
It takes a full year if you don't live in the dorm. (yeah)
I wonder if that's not what you're really saying,
and maybe this is "be assertive in order to make friends," — T points to paper
and this is "get involved in school functions in order to make friends,"
and this is "living on campus."

S: I think that would work better.

T: You, up here you kind of dance around what you're trying to say.
But you don't really come out and call for any action. (uh huh)
What do want, what do you want people to do?
Now we just kind of said,
but put it into a statement.

S: It has to have something. S looks down
I think I should just focus on friends. at paper
I think that's the right-- (um hum, um hum) but--

T: And yet what you've done here to set it up is not out of the question.

S: Yeah, but beating around the bush.

T: It's okay.
But you need this, you need this statement that says, um, well it's the other, you know you can work it.
You wouldn't want to say it exactly that way but (yeah) um,
After the sentence, "this new social life, especially at NNC, is T points
completely different than the social life you experience anywhere else," um, you're, at this point you can put in something that says what you're after, which is (um hum) you're talking to people who aren't here yet.
"When students come to NNC they should..." (okay) S nods

S: And list off the reasons?

T: Yeah. You don't have to have these in the introduction, if you have a really good clue, if you have a good clue at the beginning of every paragraph, good transition sentence, all S nods
connected back to a good thesis.
Um, you've got living on campus as your last thing. T points to paper
If there's a natural order here, if that's what you want to go with, if it's the best thing that helps you make friends, then you want it last. (um hum) S nods
So you could even say that. (okay)
I don't know.
Think about that, about the order that you're going to use. (um hum)
Looking good, Jason. T & S look at
Good start. (okay) each other
Do put in specific examples. (Okay. Okay.)
That's what is going to make this fun.
Cause you've got them from living in the dorm, don't you? (yeah)
From eating in SAGA, (yeah) and going to school activities?

S: I don't go to very many activities.

T: You don't?

S: My roommate joked.
He asked what I was writing about.
I said, "how to have a good social life."
He said I really don't have a social life. S smiles
I sit in the dorm and study all the time.

T: You study all the time?
If you could think of some activity, (yeah) there's some that S looks down
you haven't been through yet, like Malibu Fest.

S: No! S smiles

T: Sliding around in the water, they flood the campus.
I like this, Jason.
It's good. Good.

S: I need just more specific examples for it.

T: The fact that you're a hypocrite. Both laugh
No, I'm kidding.
We won't mention that.

S: I thought of that last night.
I wonder if I'm qualified to write on this after my roommate
laughed so hard.

T: If you listen to what other people do on this activity thing,
you can.
You've been to some activities, haven't you?

S: Yeah. Yeah. Enough.

T: Enough.
We'll talk about it again next week.

S: Do we have class on Friday? S stands

T: This is it.

S: It is?

T: Happy Friday.

S: Have a nice week-end. S leaves

Jason
Conference 4

Speaker	Dialogue	Observations
T:	Okay, Jason. Dave Miner said that you might have gone to Vail today.	T sits
S:	No, I have a physics test.	
T:	How did the test go?	
S:	It's not happened yet.	
T:	Oh, it hasn't happened <u>yet</u>. (no) Ah, so you're still in an attitude of prayer?	S sits
S:	Oh yes! I've noticed a lot of mistakes in this thing.	S looks over paper
T:	Oh, that's all right.	
S:	A lot of "yous."	
T:	A lot of "yous"?	
S:	I noticed that when I was writing because I know I use a lot of yous but I don't know how--	
T:	Well, I've sort of had to re-say that to some people but there are some papers that it works if you are consistent. Like if you are really addressing directly a group of incoming people, then I guess more, more important than not using you is using it consistently and using it in the right way. I think we misuse it when we stick it in once in a while when we really mean people in general, or freshmen. "You can't be too careful," (yeah) when we mean . . . people.	T & S look at each other
S:	Yeah, I know what you mean.	
T:	You know what I mean?	
S:	I know what you mean.	
T:	Well, anyway, "What a Life"--same good title. Well, what's happening on the paper?	

S: Well, I went through, this is another re-write, threw out the old one, (um hum) and rewrote it. (um hum)
And I went through and talked about friends basically. (um hum)
And I talked and gave more specific examples on what you can do with them.
I need a few more examples. (okay)
That's just what's happening.
There's still, I think, three examples.

T: What, now it's persuasive,
so who are you trying to talk into what?

S: I'm trying to get the freshmen to be more assertive--
I need to put that word in there, assertive--and make an effort to make friends.

T: Okay, that does need to be clearly stated because you've said it well and you've got it in your head.
You need to get it on paper.

S: I wrote this last week because I thought it was due last Monday.

T: You did?
You so worked like a trooper last week?

S: Yeah well I, then I typed it up Friday night.
Then I thought, "Wait a minute. This can't be right."
So I dug through my book and looked at the syllabus.

T: As a last resort, always look at the syllabus. (I know) Both laugh
I think as you get into college more, you'll realize how much they're tied into college classes, (um hum) you know?

S: See, this is my only class that actually sticks to the syllabus.

T: Good, anyway you're getting ready for your physics test which is this afternoon?

S: Yeah.

T: I do think you need to add that clear statement of what you're after, (okay) both probably at the end. (yeah) T reads
Now are the rest of these, reasons why you should be assertive in making friends?

S: Oh, that's another problem, there!

T: This is a good essay
but I'm not sure it's persuasive.

S: It's not persuasive.
I'm the worst persuasive essay writer in the world.

T: That's because you're just too nice a guy.
You just don't want to push anybody.

S: I can't force myself, I can't force myself on anybody.

T: Can you feature, can you try to visualize a group of people like yourself coming into school, or a group of people maybe not like yourself but people you like and you know but maybe are a little reticent about being assertive about friends, who are really slow about making friends? — Both look at each other
Try to picture a group of people you know and like who have a problem like this. (okay)
And you're addressing them
and you're doing it for their own good.
You're really trying to encourage them.
Tell me why you need to be assertive and make friends without even looking at your paper.

S: Well, some people would be lonely.

T: They would be lonely otherwise.

S: I mean, it would be hard if you got homesick (um hum) because when you sit in your room and just kind of dwell and feel sorry for yourself, it doesn't help.
But when you are with your friends, it kind of helps you forget.

T: Um hum, I don't know if that's one reason or two, but loneliness and homesickness, absolutely.
Why else?

S: Oh, there are many reasons.
You need them to be healthy.
Gets rid of being lonely
and they help you in classes.

T: All right, so the negative thing is you don't want to be lonely. — S nods
You don't want to be lonely
and if you have friends, you avoid loneliness and homesickness.
But you would also have gained some positive things.
Okay, friends help you in many ways. (okay)
Under that classes, (uh huh) show you the ropes. (okay) — S nods
What else?

S: Show you the ropes um, I need to think of another one.

T: Think of all the interesting different kind of people.
It's just the rich experience of getting to know lots of different people makes you well rounded. — S nods

S: Makes you well rounded.

T: Now those start dealing with reasons um. (reasons)

Both read

As I look at this paragraph, this has some great stuff in it, that rather than telling people to do it, to show it as a reason why, is that you can do a lot of the wonderful things that friends provide. — T points to paper

They, you can go places with them.
And then, rather than saying, "Go to it," saying, "if one has made friends, there's always someone to do something with.
Plus they can help think up things;
you can use all that good stuff. (all right)
So just apply it, yeah.

S: The whole chapter's like this.

T: Yeah, this paragraph, some of this might be good to move up to the introduction. — T points to paper

On the other hand when you say, "everywhere you go, it's impossible not to meet someone you know on the sidewalk or make friends with someone you frequently pass," but there are people who don't, who say hello but never get to know them.
But you're saying, "Go that extra mile." — S nods

S: I need to pursue that, yeah.

T: Yeah! I don't know where you're going to describe what you mean by being assertive in reaching out.
Maybe part of the introduction? (maybe)
Maybe that's where you'll have to say, you've got to go beyond just smiling. (yeah) — S nods
But there are lonely people who smile
but they don't have friends. (yeah)

T reads

Uh, this last paragraph on this page is sort of a how to, but let's see if we could use that. — T points to paper

"By living with people, most of whom are your own age, you get to know every detail about them." You're right.
On-campus housing forces it, doesn't it? (um hum)
"Standing in line waiting for your turn in the shower." I mean, how can you, I mean, not strike up a conversation.
"Talking when you're three fourths asleep is a wonderful experience." This is great. — T laughs

T reads

This is a good paragraph on "how to."
Maybe you ought to, maybe you ought to wind up with that conclusion, (okay) because that's fun;
that's fun. (okay)
This has got good stuff, Jason.
I guess, what, making it

S: Making it persuasive?

T: Persuasive. At least the body and then try to save the best stuff because you've got some good stuff in here, Jason. You'll have more time after today? S nods

S: Oh yeah, this week!

T: After today, post physics test. (yeah)
I like it; S packs up
it's coming well,
but you've got a direction here right?

S: Yes. Persuasive.

T: Good.
Good luck. S leaves

S: Thanks.

T: Good luck.
I have a class in two minutes
and I think I have one more person.

APPENDIX N

Graphs of Students' Topic Connections between Conference and Revisions

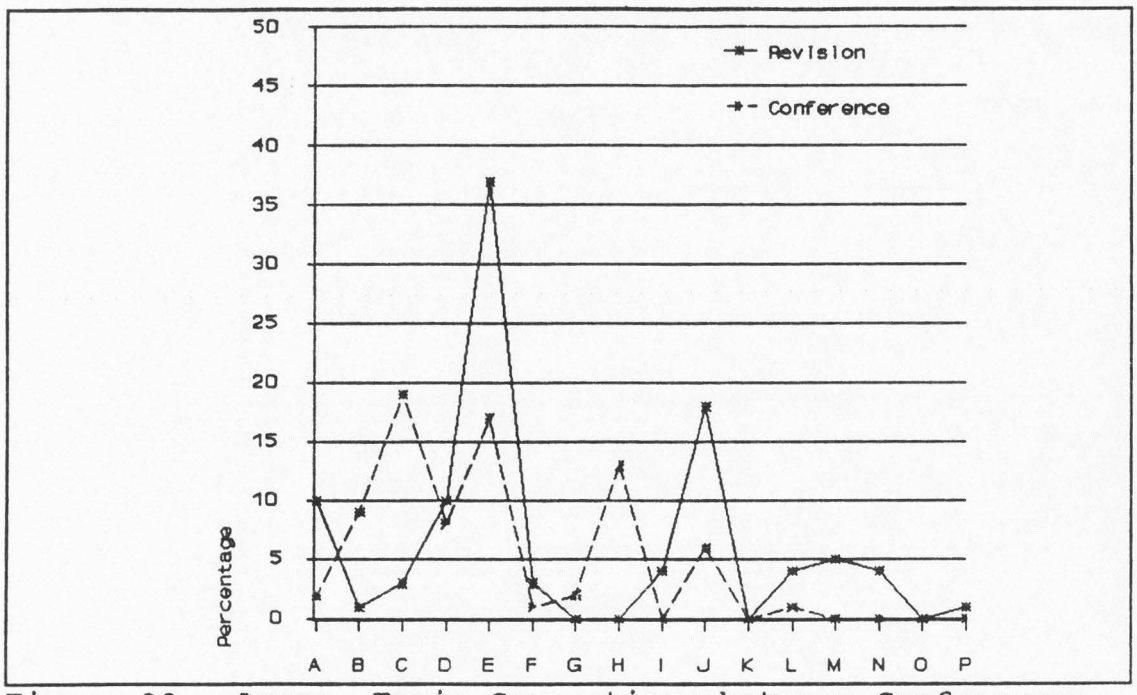

Figure 30. Anne: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

Note: A (transition), B (specifics), C (thesis or purpose), D (introduction), E (development), F (conclusion), G (general topic), H (writing process), I (syntax), J (diction), K (shift of person), L (inflection), M (punctuation), N (spelling), O (capitalization), P (abbreviation)

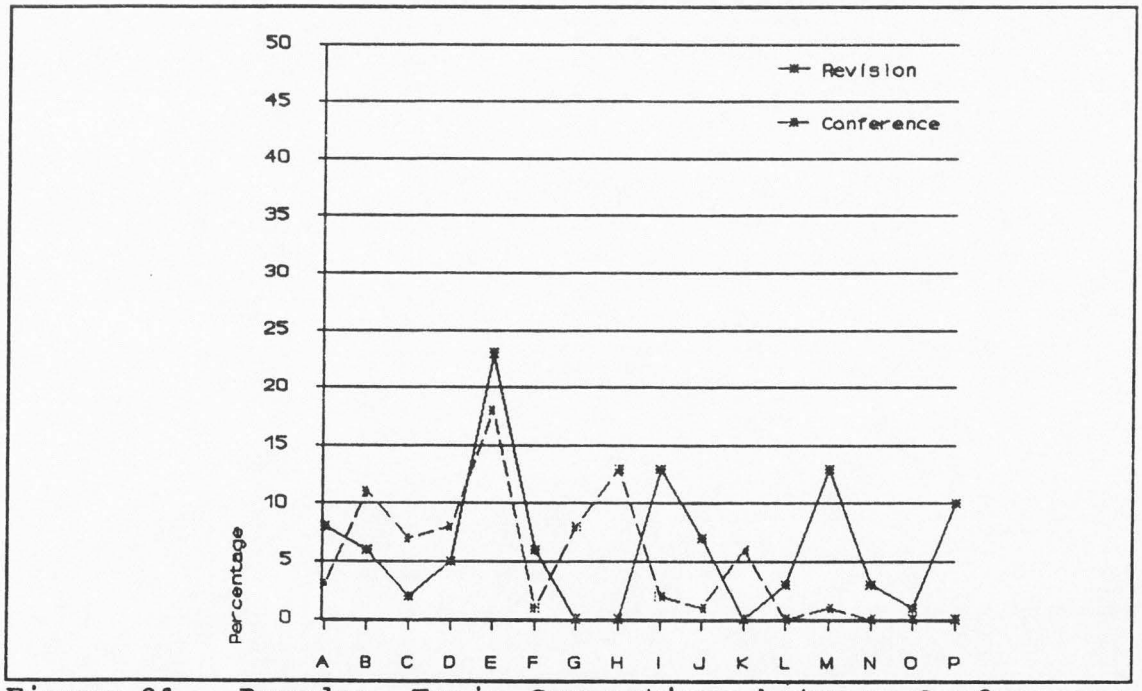

Figure 31. Brenda: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

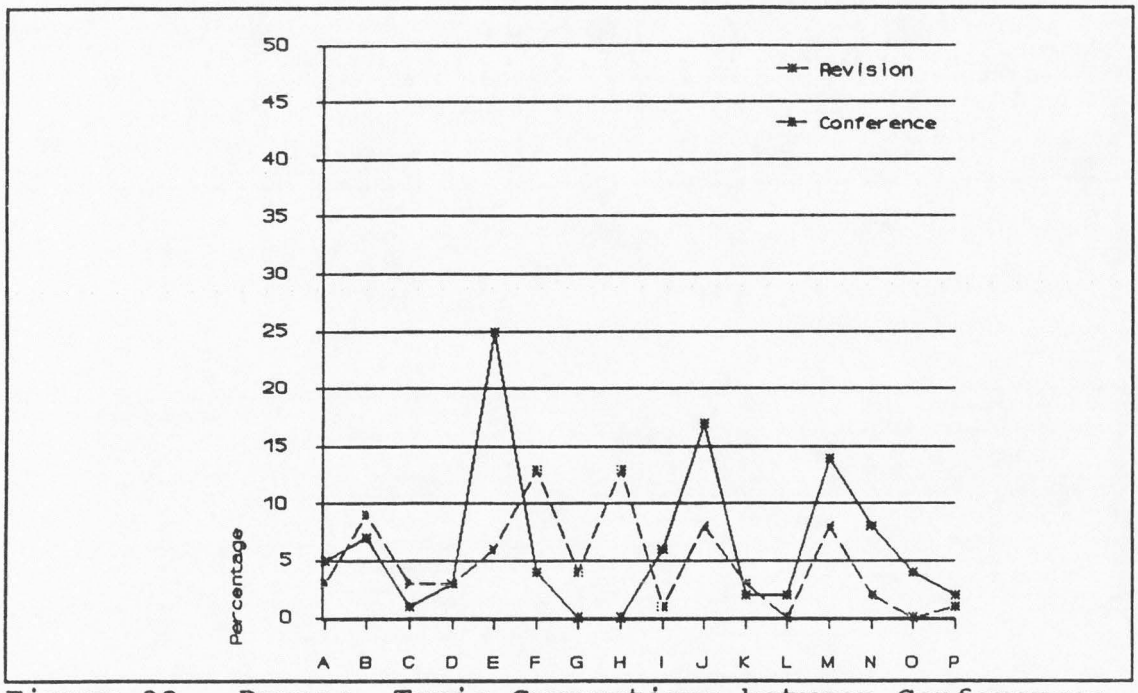

Figure 32. Daman: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

Note: A (transition), B (specifics), C (thesis or purpose), D (introduction), E (development), F (conclusion), G (general topic), H (writing process), I (syntax), J (diction), K (shift of person), L (inflection), M (punctuation), N (spelling), O (capitalization), P (abbreviation)

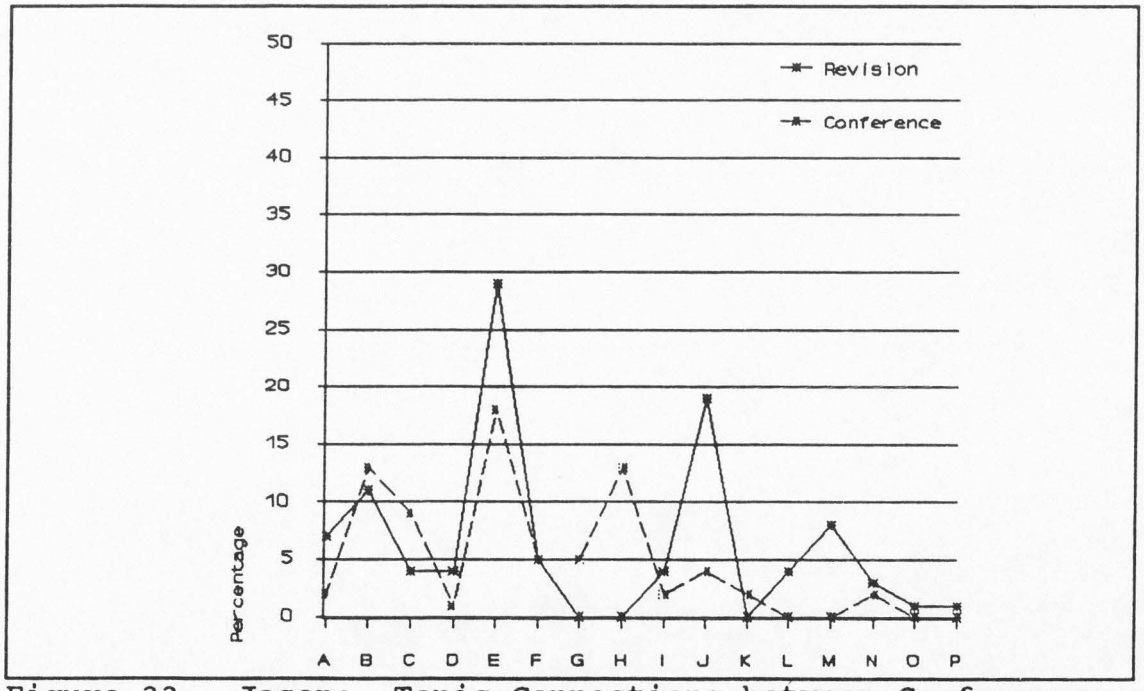

Figure 33. Jason: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

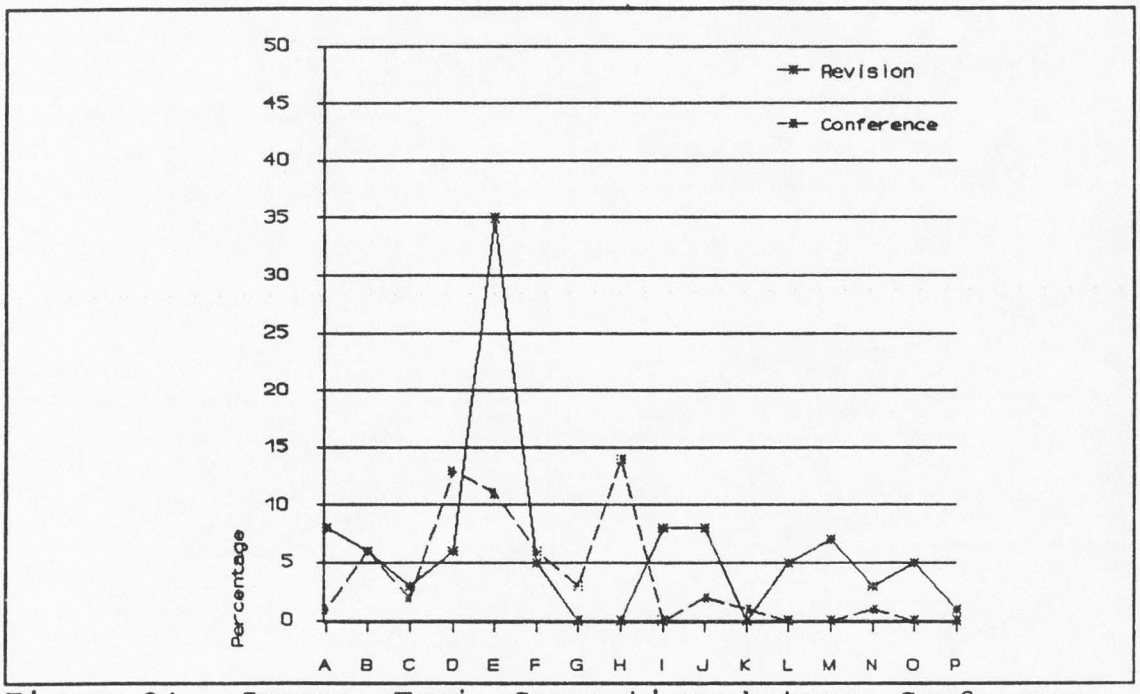

Figure 34. Susan: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

Note: A (transition), B (specifics), C (thesis or purpose), D (introduction), E (development), F (conclusion), G (general topic), H (writing process), I (syntax), J (diction), K (shift of person), L (inflection), M (punctuation), N (spelling), O (capitalization), P (abbreviation)

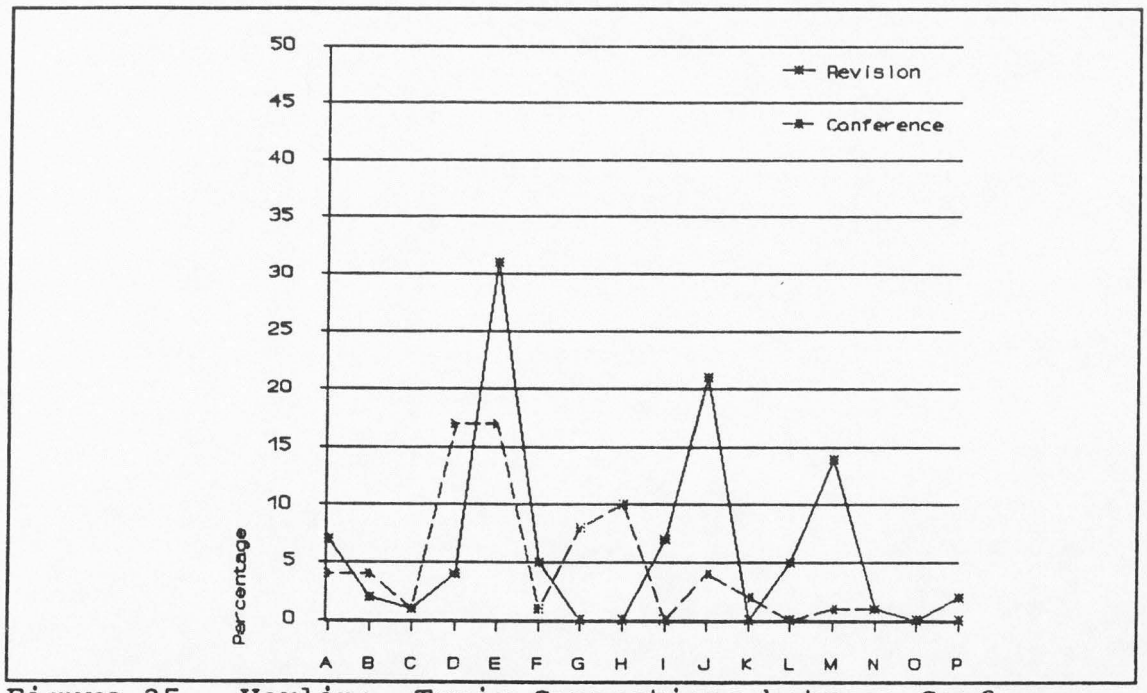

Figure 35. Verlin: Topic Connections between Conferences and Revisions

VITA

Lynn Riley Neil

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: Teacher-Student Writing Conferences as an Intervention in the Revision Practices of College Freshmen

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction (Reading/Writing)

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born in Portland, Maine, August 11, 1939, daughter of John and Dorcas Riley; married Ralph E. Neil June 1, 1961; children--John and Connie Neil, and David Neil.

Education: Received the Bachelor of Arts degree with an English major from Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho, in 1961; received the Master of Arts degree in Education/English from Boise State University in Boise, Idaho, in 1983; in 1988 completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Reading and Writing from Utah State University in Logan, Utah.

Professional Experience: Taught English and French at Rosedale High School, Kansas City, Kansas; worked with her husband in pastoral ministry for twenty years; has taught composition and English language courses at Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho, from 1981 to the present.

Publication: (1987) Imitation: Playing with language. Exercise Exchange, 32(2), 3-5. (1987). Individual student-teacher conferences: Guiding content revision with sixth graders. The Writing Center Journal, 7(2), 37-44.