

# Writing, reviewing, and revising

Peer feedback in lower secondary EFL classrooms

Jessica Berggren



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Academic dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English at Stockholm University to be publicly defended on Saturday 15 June 2019 at 10.00 in Hörsal 9, Södra huset, hus D, Universitetsvägen 10 D.

### Abstract

This thesis investigates pupils' learning about writing from giving feedback. Research on peer assessment and L2 writing is plentiful, but little attention has been given to younger learners and to potential benefits for the peer feedback provider. My project was carried out as two intervention studies with Swedish pupils in year 8. During the intervention, the pupils wrote two drafts of various genres (the reply letter, the newspaper article, and the argumentative essay), and the teaching involved a joint formulation of criteria lists, feedback training, and peer review in groups. Learning from giving feedback was operationalised as links between the revision changes made to the first draft and the peer feedback provision.

Results show that the pupils were able to produce relevant feedback on their peers' writing. The inclusion of formative information, i.e. explanations and suggestions, varied between the groups and between the genres. In terms of learning, it was especially the macro-level of writing that benefitted from giving feedback, as the pupils paid attention to paragraphing and the content of their texts, among other things. The intervention was inspired by genre pedagogies, and the pupils in the second study who wrote texts in three different genres presented an emergent genre awareness. As regards micro-level aspects of writing, the pupils self-reported improved ability to proofread their own texts from having read and commented on peers' writing.

The pedagogical discussion of the findings highlights the roles of genre pedagogy, feedback training, criteria, and the pupils in relation to my results and to pupil involvement in assessment-as-learning activities. In conclusion, this thesis suggests that involving pupils as instructional resources for each other and for the teacher requires the advancement of pupils as agents in the classroom practice.

**Keywords:** *English as a foreign language (EFL), L2 writing, formative assessment, assessment for learning, assessment as learning, peer feedback, genre pedagogy, criteria, agency.*

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*Jessica*



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# Abbreviations

CEFR	<i>Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment</i>
CLT	Communicative language teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
ESLC	<i>European Survey on Language Competences</i>
ESP	English for specific purposes
GBWI	Genre-based writing instruction
L1	First language
L2	Second/foreign language
SCT	Sociocultural theories
SFL	Systemic functional linguistics
ZPD	Zone of proximal development

## Transcription conventions used in this thesis

[Name: text]	simultaneous, overlapping talk
(xx)	unintelligible talk
-	lengthening of preceding sound
---	the end of one part of a topic episode
<i>text</i>	talk in Swedish
“text”	speaker reads something
<TEXT>	added information about what is happening (not talk)
[...]	part of the conversation omitted
(text)	something happening which is not related to task

# 1 Introduction

Assessment is a broad concept which encompasses all judgements teachers and students make, and the outcomes can be used for a number of different purposes. It is common to distinguish between summative and formative assessment; summative assessment, also known as assessment *of* learning, is used to measure performance at the end of a teaching unit or term, whereas formative assessment, or assessment *for* learning, is used as a helping hand in the process of learning (Black & Jones, 2006; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Davison & Leung, 2009; Earl, 2013; N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006; Sadler, 1989). However, this dichotomy is misleading; there is an ongoing debate about the extent to which the two concepts overlap and where to draw the dividing line (Harlen, 2012; Taras, 2005). In school, both formative and summative assessment are intrinsically linked to teaching and learning; assessment can be described as a system through which education signals “what knowledge is important and how knowledge, skills, and proficiency can be expressed, discerned, and communicated” (Forsberg & Lindberg, 2010, p. 6). Hence, it is relevant to highlight and explore classroom assessment practices in relation to subject teaching and learning.

Assessment can also form an integral part of the instruction, thus functioning as a learning-oriented activity. In line with the labelling that distinguishes assessment *of* learning from assessment *for* learning, this use can be referred to as assessment *as* learning (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013). Student-centred approaches to assessment, as opposed to traditional assessments performed by teachers, are conventionally collected under the umbrella term “alternative assessment” (Brown, 2004; Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011). Research studies devoted to different aspects of peer and self-assessment are plentiful; however, these pedagogical methods have yet to be established in practice.

Assessment and good assessment practice are often discussed in general terms and associated with certain methods or techniques (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015). However, establishing a link between assessment and learning primarily entails specifying learning objectives and considering teaching. The recent focus on formative assessment in school has in the extreme lead to the foregrounding of assessment before teaching and learning. This extreme implies that assessment *per se* has become the learning objective (Carlgrén, 2015; Skolverket, 2018c; Torrance, 2007). To counter this trend, Black &

William stress the idea of “formative assessment as *assessment*” in one of their recent papers (2018, p. 3).

This thesis treats formative assessment, or more specifically peer feedback, as a “teaching tool” (cf. Orsmond, Merry, & Reiling, 2000, p. 33) and a “learning-oriented activity” (cf. Yu & Lee, 2015, p. 578), thus considering assessment *as* learning (cf. Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013). It is argued that a precondition for using peer feedback for learning in the classroom is that the teaching emanates from the subject matter. As such, this thesis is primarily situated within the field of language education, with a focus on English.

The didactic triangle commonly represents teaching by depicting the relationship between teacher, student, and subject matter. Like most representations it is simplified, but in this context it is a useful reminder of the role of subject matter with respect to pedagogical choices. This *what* influences, for example, the *how* of teaching. The triangle also highlights the relationship, roles, and agency of the teacher and the students in relation to the subject matter, which are factors I believe are relevant to explore in relation to the student-centeredness of assessment as learning (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013; B. Lundahl, 2012).

In Sweden, research concerning assessment in school has seen an upsurge since the mid-noughties (Forsberg & Lindberg, 2010). Various aspects of assessment and especially formative assessment have been researched in several theses in Sweden recently, for instance the effect of the structure of assessment practices on pupils’ understanding and agency (Gyllander Torkildsen, 2016) and pupils’ perception of the meaning of formal school assessment (Sivenbring, 2016). Some studies have also investigated formative assessment from a subject matter perspective. Among other things, these studies have investigated formative assessment practices in Physical Education (Tolgfors, 2017) and Technology education (Hartell, 2015), and formative assessment linked to self-regulation in Mathematics (Vingsle, 2017).

To determine the *what* of the present project, I built on my own experience as an English teacher and turned to national and international evaluations of pupils’ proficiency. Swedish pupils’ proficiency of English is generally high (Sundqvist, 2009), but results on the writing skill parts of *The European Survey on Language Competences* (ESLC) and the national standardised tests are lower than on the other skills (Skolverket, 2012b; SIRIS, 2018). It therefore seemed pertinent to focus on written skills and to link them to the use of peer feedback in the EFL classroom.

The use of peer and self-assessment in the second language classroom entails loosening the teachers’ grip on assessment and inviting the students into the practice and guild knowledge (Sadler, 1989; Topping, 2009). This promotion and development of student agency implies a shift of the power relationship in the classroom and a change in the way the teacher role is perceived. Some teachers question the effects of introducing student-centred

assessment activities (Bruffee, 1984; Bullock, 2011; K. Cho & MacArthur, 2011; N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006; Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011). Their uncertainties encompass implementation as well as the validity and reliability of peer and self-assessments (Gielen, Peeters, Dochy, Onghena & Struyven, 2010; Topping & Ehly, 2001). Triggered by these reservations, several studies have juxtaposed teacher, peer, and self-feedback, using teacher assessments as norms or standards (W. Cheng & Warren, 2005; K. Cho, Schunn & Wilson, 2006; Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; Gielen et al., 2010; Matsuno, 2009; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Suzuki, 2009). These studies mainly examined validity and reliability from a summative perspective, by comparing teacher and student scores and grades. Consequently, the peer and self-assessment in these studies were not primarily considered formative activities and thus “of less interest in the context of improvement” (Panadero, Broadbent, Boud, & Lodge, 2018).

Numerous studies have contributed to the understanding of student involvement in the assessment practice of second language writing. These studies have, among other things, compared various aspects of teacher and peer feedback respectively (F. Hyland, 2000; Matsuno, 2009; Paulus, 1999; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Yang, Badger & Yu, 2006), examined the impact of received peer comments on revision (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Diab, 2010, 2011; Min, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000), and evaluated the effects of peer-review training (Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005; Stanley, 1992).

However, the research to date has tended to focus on tertiary-level education and most of the studies were carried out in Asian countries. Many studies have also treated assessment as a learning objective by, for example, comparing teacher and peer feedback (F. Hyland, 2000; Paulus, 1999; Yang et al., 2006). Furthermore, the focal point of most studies concerning peer review has been the students who receive the feedback (e.g. Tsui & Ng, 2000; Kamimura, 2006); thus, the possible benefits in terms of learning about writing for the other party involved in the peer-assessment activities, i.e. the reviewer, is underexplored. The implementation of peer-review activities in writing instruction merits more attention, as does L2 writing *per se*.

Historically, research on younger learners and L2 writing has been limited. EFL and ESL studies in school have often concentrated on literacy and issues related to bi- and multilingualism, focusing on reading and oral proficiency rather than on writing (I. Lee, 2016; Ortmeier-Hooper, Wight, & McCullough, 2016), whereas studies on L2 writing are mainly set at university level (Matsuda & De Pew, 2002; Ortega, 2009). Matsuda and De Pew (2002) suggest several possible reasons for the paucity of studies on emergent L2 writing:

- most L2 writing researchers conduct studies in their own teaching context, that is in tertiary education;
- research with young informants involves special attention to ethical considerations which can be discouraging;

- conducting research in school requires more resources; and
- L2 writing research is traditionally associated with disciplines like L2 acquisition, applied linguistics, and composition studies, and not with the field of education.

In other words, it seems as if the lack of studies can be due to practicalities concerning access to schools and younger learners. Today, when curricula in Sweden and elsewhere call for research-based teaching, it is essential to overcome these obstacles. There has recently been an upsurge of research on L2 writing in primary and secondary school (I. Lee, 2016; Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016) which can be attributed to the fact that EFL instruction is introduced at earlier ages, resulting in more young pupils learning how to write in English (I. Lee, 2016). In addition, recent demographical developments have sparked an interest in ESL writing (Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016).

This increase of studies pays witness to the importance of developing knowledge about the teaching and learning of L2 writing with younger pupils. It is also clear that this need is based in practice; younger pupils, as well as pupils with various backgrounds, place new demands on EFL teaching.

## 1.1 Purpose and aims

The purpose of my project is to contribute to the research field of L2 writing and peer feedback by investigating lower secondary-level pupils' learning about writing from giving feedback. There is a paucity of studies on younger learners both within L2 writing and peer feedback research, especially in a European context. A contribution to this educational research field entails that my project takes on a perspective in which theory and practice interplay.

More specifically, my project aims to provide insights into the teaching and learning of writing across genres and to highlight the formative function of peer feedback. This aim involves a problematisation of the theoretical and practical application of assessment activities in school, as well as an emphasis on the subject matter, in this case L2 writing. Furthermore, the involvement of pupils in my intervention and research design intends to explore the notion of agency in the EFL classroom.

The present thesis consists of two studies with pupils in year 8 in Swedish compulsory school. In collaboration with their teachers, teaching units revolving around the writing of various texts were planned and implemented. The interventions involved the joint formulation of criteria lists for different written genres, feedback training, and the provision of peer feedback. For the pupils, the process also entailed writing, reviewing, and revising texts. The overarching research question is *What do pupils learn about writing from giving feedback?* which joins this project's focus on L2 writing and peer

feedback. The pupils' learning objective is writing specific texts, and peer feedback is explored as an activity intending to support the pupils' learning. A further specification of the research questions is included in Section 4.5.

## 1.2 Outline of thesis

The first part of the present thesis, which leads to a justification of my project, begins with a presentation of the Swedish school context, focusing on writing and assessment (Chapter 2). The theoretical framework that contributes to the research design as well as the interpretation and understanding of my findings, is described next (Chapter 3). The following chapter (4) reviews research relevant for my project: from cognitive studies on revision changes to peer assessment and L2 writing. This chapter concludes with a specification of my research questions.

The key concepts and terms that I use are summarised in a glossary (Chapter 5), and classroom research design, data collection and analysis in my two studies constitute the Methodology chapter (6). This chapter also includes a description of the participants and the lesson plan employed in my studies.

The last part involving results and discussion consists of several chapters. Chapter 7 includes vignettes describing the implementation of the four teaching units in my project, and the two subsequent chapters (8 and 9) present my findings related to research question 1. Results for research questions 2 and 3 are found in Chapters 10 and 11, respectively. The findings are presented chronologically, teaching unit by teaching unit, and each section ends with a summary and commentary. The commentary aims to relate the findings to the classroom activities and to prompt the discussion.

Chapter 12 discusses my findings and includes pedagogical reflections connecting my project to EFL teaching and learning. Last, I describe my contributions to research and conclude my project in the Conclusion (Chapter 13).

### 1.2.1 My licentiate thesis

My doctoral project consists of two studies, Study 1 and Study 2. Study 1, which was conducted 2010–2013, has previously been documented in my licentiate thesis (Berggren, 2013). Study 2 partly builds on the findings from Study 1 and represents a development of the intervention. For my doctoral thesis, I therefore decided to reframe my first study in relation to Study 2 and thus consider them joined in one project. The background, including the presentation of the theoretical framework and the review of relevant studies, has been completely revised compared to the corresponding parts of my licentiate thesis, and so have the Discussion and the Conclusion. There are overlaps between the Methodology in my licentiate thesis and the present



doctoral thesis since I used similar procedures in terms of sampling, research design, data collection, and analysis. The results from the two classes in Study 1 are merged and summarised in the Result chapters. Tables and examples copied from my licentiate thesis are referenced accordingly.

## 2 Background and Swedish context

Many young Europeans encounter the English language not only in school, but also through social media and intercultural exchanges (Berns, de Bot & Hasebrink, 2007). This exposure implies that teenagers in Europe have the possibility to partake in a multitude of situations where English is used. Berns et al. refer to these opportunities as the “multi-optional presence of English” (2007, p. 114). Their use of the term “multi-optional” indicates that the use of English is determined by the teenagers’ own interests and needs; in other words, individual choices guide these young people’s language use and language learning.

Swedish teenagers in particular are exposed to so-called extramural English through music, video games, TV, films, and the Internet (Sundqvist, 2009). However, the multi-optionality mentioned previously could also imply that some teenagers are not exposed to English outside school; a number of studies measuring Swedish adolescents’ use of English on their spare time have found that there is large individual variation (Olsson & Sylvén, 2015; Sundqvist, 2009). Still, the widespread use of English in Swedish society has given rise to discussions regarding the role of the language: Is English a second language or a foreign language in Sweden? A considerable part of the Swedish population uses English on a daily basis for both professional and personal reasons, and English enjoys a certain status compared to other foreign languages in our society. Hult argues that both ESL and EFL perspectives are present in Swedish society and that this suggests “a dynamic process of transculturation in which the local position of English continues to be negotiated” (2012, p. 238). It is, however, not necessary to know English to function in Sweden and from a pedagogical perspective English is certainly a foreign language for many pupils. Thus, in relation to my project which is situated in an educational context, I side with other Swedish researchers and consider the term foreign language to best represent English in Sweden today (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; Olsson, 2016; Pålsson Gröndahl, 2015).

Still, English, both as a language and as a school subject, enjoys a high status (Hyltenstam, 2004), and Swedish teenagers’ general proficiency level is high, especially in terms of reading and listening. *The European Survey on Language Competences* (ESLC) (Skolverket, 2012b), which was carried out in the last year of Swedish compulsory school, evaluated Swedish pupils’ English proficiency as relatively advanced; for the receptive skills, the majority of the pupils reached level B2 as defined in the *Common European*

*Framework of References* (CEFR). Ranging from A1 to C2, this scale identifies language users as “basic” (A), “independent” (B), or “proficient” (C); B2 denotes the higher level for proficient users (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 23).

This high level of English language proficiency among teenagers involves challenges for EFL teaching in Sweden; the instruction should meet the expectations and needs of teenagers who consider themselves competent users of English and who may resist the notion of school English (Ranta, 2010). In fact, one fourth of the pupils in the last year of compulsory school in Sweden expressed that they did not have the opportunity to show their English language skills in school (Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2008). In order to cater for these pupils’ needs, it is necessary to adapt teaching to the teenagers’ expectations in terms of offering challenging and useful tasks and to target teenagers’ productive skills to help them develop a multifaceted communicative competence. Concurrently, differences in exposure to English outside school also imply that there is individual variation in pupils’ experience of the language.

This chapter depicts a background for my project in relation to national steering documents and guidelines. The syllabus for English is explained and other documents are reviewed with special attention to their perspective on formative assessment, peer and self-assessment. In addition, a subsection is devoted to writing in Swedish school.

## 2.1 The Swedish curriculum and the syllabus for English

The current curriculum for compulsory school in Sweden was implemented in 2011. It consists of three parts: 1) Fundamental values and tasks of the school, 2) Overall goals and guidelines, and 3) Syllabuses (Skolverket, 2018b). The syllabuses describe each school subject’s purpose and include the long-term aims of the teaching, expressed as a number of subject-specific abilities<sup>1</sup>. The syllabuses also outline the core content, i.e. the subject content that should be covered in years 1–3, 4–6, and 7–9. Last, the so-called knowledge requirements, equivalent to grading criteria, for each subject are presented. The grading system in Sweden ranges from F–A, where E–A are passing grades; A is the highest grade and there are knowledge requirements for three of the grades: E, C, and A. The pupils in compulsory school receive grades at the end of each term from year 6; in the earlier classes, the pupils have an

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<sup>1</sup> I have chosen to use *ability* as a translation of the Swedish term *förmåga*, in line with Skolverket’s English translation. Another possibility could be *capability* which holds a slightly different connotation (cf. Nussbaum, 2011)

individual study plan which includes judgements about their attainment levels in each subject, as well as a plan for future goals and progression.

English is taught from an early age; the subject is mandatory from year 3, but some schools introduce the language already in the first year of compulsory education. The role of English in today's society is highlighted in the introduction to the syllabus for English:

The English language surrounds us in our daily lives and is used in such diverse areas as politics, education and economics. Knowledge of English thus increases the individual's opportunities to participate in different social and cultural contexts, as well as in international studies and working life (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 34)

Similar to previous syllabuses in English, the most recent one adopts a communicative stance. There are five long-term aims, expressed as abilities:

Teaching in English should essentially give pupils the opportunities to develop their ability to:

- understand and interpret the content of spoken English and in different types of texts,
- express themselves and communicate in speech and writing,
- use language strategies to understand and make themselves understood,
- adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts, and
- reflect over living conditions, social and cultural phenomena in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used (Skolverket, 2018b, pp. 34–35)

The core content for English is presented under the following three headings: 1) Content of communication, 2) Listening and reading – reception, and 3) Speaking, writing and discussing – production and interaction (Skolverket, 2018b, pp. 35–37). It is noteworthy that the Swedish curriculum does not include pedagogical or methodological guidelines.

When implemented in 2011, the syllabuses in most subjects were supplemented by so-called commentaries; one for the syllabus and another one specifically aimed at the knowledge requirements. These commentaries are intended to support the teachers' work. The commentary for the syllabus for English was updated in 2017 and it involves additional information about all the parts of the syllabus: the purpose, the core content and the knowledge requirements (Skolverket, 2017). There is also a section about the connection between the syllabus and the CEFR. This relationship is further explored in Section 2.2.

The commentary focusing solely on the knowledge requirements in English describes the use of descriptors of the expected standard (*värdeord*, my translation) to denote progression in the requirements for E, C, and A in year 6 and year 9 (Skolverket, 2012c). As regards oral and written interaction, for example, the progression in year 9 is illustrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: The use of descriptors to denote progression<sup>a</sup>

E	C	A
In oral and written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves <b>simply and understandably</b> and also <b>to some extent</b> adapted to purpose, recipient and situation.	In oral and written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves <b>clearly and with some ease</b> and <b>with some adaptation</b> to purpose, recipient and situation.	In oral and written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves <b>clearly and with ease</b> , and also <b>with some adaptation</b> to purpose, recipient and situation.

<sup>a</sup> Skolverket (2018b, pp. 39–40). The descriptors are in bold (original).

The commentary states that the interpretation of these words is related to context. To concretise the use of the knowledge requirements for the assessment of specific tasks, this material describes a number of features to take into consideration when assessing, such as cohesion and adaptation to recipient (Skolverket, 2012c). Authentic pupil texts are used to exemplify various levels of writing in terms of these features.

This section has described the Swedish curriculum for compulsory school and the syllabus for the school subject English. The grading system was mentioned briefly; the following section focuses on assessment practices including grading. In parallel with the support material mentioned in this section, the National Education Agency has also issued documents regarding continuous assessment and grading.

## 2.2 Classroom assessment in Sweden

As mentioned in the previous section (2.1), grading in Sweden is classroom based, which means that the teacher is responsible for assessing the pupils' knowledge. Grading is carried out at the end of each term from year 6 in compulsory school. Since 1994, grading is criterion-referenced, a practice which replaced the earlier norm-referenced system. To support teachers' assessment and grading, the National Education Agency (Skolverket) has issued publications such as general guidelines for the planning and execution of teaching (*Planering och genomförande av undervisningen*, 2011b) and grades and grading (*Betyg och betygssättning*, 2018a)<sup>2</sup> and a research-based overview of assessment of subject knowledge. In addition, the national standardised tests and other assessment materials issued by the Agency are complemented with pupil exemplars and comments in order to promote equity

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<sup>2</sup> The guidelines for the planning and execution of teaching were published in 2011 and were current when the present project was carried out. These guidelines were replaced by *Betyg och betygssättning* in October 2018.

in assessment and grading. This supply of material concerning assessment—often in conjunction with planning and documentation—could be considered a reflection of a school discourse where assessment seems to have become a larger issue than teaching and learning.

Since the turn of the century, Swedish school has been overflowed with methods, activities, and tools promoted as formative assessment. Black & Wiliam's review 'Assessment and classroom learning' (1998) has been a clear influence, emphasising the power of assessment to further learning. This attention has also involved a renewed interest in feedback as a component of the formation. Hattie & Timperley's synthesis of research on feedback, 'The power of feedback' (2007), has also had major impact on classroom assessment and feedback provision. Moreover, the interest in assessment is visible in the increased number of Swedish research publications focusing on assessment from 2005 onwards (Forsberg & Lindberg, 2010).

For compulsory school, the National Education Agency has issued some general guidelines related to planning, teaching, assessment, and grading<sup>3</sup>. The general guidelines which were applicable during my project, did not use the term "formative" in relation to assessment. Instead, assessment in general was described as an integral part of teaching, and it said that the teacher should provide the pupils with continuous feedback (Skolverket, 2011b). This advisory document placed emphasis on alignment and assessment in conjunction with grading; among other things, it was stated that each pupil should be given the opportunity to show their skills in various ways and that the teacher should consider all available information when grading.

This all-round assessment of pupils' knowledge is highlighted also in the general guidelines *Grades and grading* which replaced the above-mentioned guidelines in October 2018 (Skolverket, 2018a). Compared to the previous one, these guidelines can be said to foreground grading, even if the planning of teaching, including continuous assessments are mentioned. Interestingly, the term formative assessment is now used (in conjunction with summative assessment). Within the context of this thesis, it is also worth mentioning that the document includes comments related to subject-specific pedagogical choices (Skolverket, 2018a).

Contrary to the above-mentioned general guidelines, the formative function of assessment is placed at the fore in the research-based support material on assessment of subject knowledge, *Kunskapsbedömning i skolan* (Skolverket, 2011a). The main purposes of assessment in school is described as

- mapping knowledge
- evaluating knowledge

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<sup>3</sup> The general guidelines (my translation of *allmänna råd* in Swedish.) consist of recommendations from the National Education Agency. These guidelines should be followed unless the school acts in another way which entails that the demands in the regulations are still fulfilled (Skolverket, 2018a).

- providing feedback for learning
- making practical knowledge visible, and
- evaluating teaching (Skolverket, 2011a)

These purposes should probably be interpreted in direct relation to the Swedish educational context, rather than generally; for example, the emphasis on practical knowledge in the fourth bullet point appears a bit odd. In relation to feedback provision, formative assessment is described as comparing a pupil's weaknesses and strengths to the knowledge requirements in order to make potential development visible. This definition could be considered rather narrow seeing that the knowledge requirements neither cover all aspects of the long-term aims and the core content, nor are intended to be used to assess single tasks (Skolverket, 2018a). However, in this context the knowledge requirements are also applicable to specific tasks, if they are concretised.

The last purpose in this list, to evaluate teaching, can also be considered a formative use of assessment. As regards the tension between summative and formative assessment (Section 3.2), this overview separates them in terms of function: assessments can have a summative and/or formative function (Skolverket, 2011a). One section of the overview is devoted to validity and reliability issues related to assessment. Both the general guidelines and the overview of assessment in school cover assessment across school subjects, which means that they do not provide support specifically for the assessment of English, for example. For this purpose, there are supplementary guidelines, so-called commentaries<sup>4</sup>, concerning the knowledge requirements in each subject.

Classroom assessment and the dual purpose of formative assessment—to support pupils' learning and to adapt teaching—naturally foregrounds the teacher as the agent. However, the pupils, in their roles as peers and learners, are also agents in the Swedish curriculum. The overall goals and guidelines, which constitute the first part of the curriculum for compulsory school, involve the goal that each pupil “develops the ability to assess their own results and relate these and the assessments of others to their own achievements and circumstances” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 16). One way of approaching this aim is to implement peer and self-assessment in the instruction. Indeed, the syllabus for the subject Swedish includes the core content “How to give and receive responses on texts” in relation to reading and writing (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 265). However, the core content “Different ways of working on one's own production and interaction to vary, clarify, specify and adapt them for different purposes” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 37) in English can be linked to self-assessment practices. Similarly, the knowledge requirements involve “[t]o clarify and vary their communication, pupils can

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<sup>4</sup> *Kommentarsmaterial* in Swedish

work on and make **simple** [grade E]/**well-grounded** [grades C and A] improvements to their own<sup>5</sup> communications” (Skolverket, 2018b, pp. 39–41). In a commentary, this approach is referred to as process-oriented (cf. process writing, Section 3.1).

The overview of assessment in school, *Kunskapsbedömning i skolan* (Skolverket, 2011a), briefly mentions peer and self-assessment. It is noteworthy that peer assessment is described mainly as a means to improve the pupils’ assessment skills, whereas self-assessment is connected to learning. The document stresses the importance of classroom ambiance and time for successful implementation of peer and self-assessment. It is unclear to which extent these activities are employed in practice across Swedish schools; a survey of foreign language teachers’ use of peer and self-assessment revealed that only a small share applied these activities as part of their assessment repertoire (Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011).

So far, this chapter has described national steering documents, guidelines, and supplementary material for teachers in Sweden. The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) was mentioned earlier in connection to the scales used in *The European Survey on Language Competences* (ESLC). Apart from these scales, CEFR also presents a functional view on language use and foregrounds the learner.

## 2.3 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The aim of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) is to provide “a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (2001, p. 1). It is a comprehensive work initiated and supported by the Council of Europe. The extent to which countries actually have implemented this framework varies; in Sweden, the most recent syllabus for English is influenced by the CEFR, but in practice, the knowledge and use of the CEFR for pedagogical purposes differs between schools and language teachers. Despite the fact that the impact of the CEFR on language teaching in Sweden in general is relatively small, its emphasis on functional language use and self-agency in language learning makes this framework relevant to consider in light of my project.

Based on a communicative and functional approach to language use, the CEFR considers the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic components of language competence. Three of the so-called language activities referred to in the CEFR—reception, production, and interaction—have influenced the

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<sup>5</sup> For some reason, the knowledge requirement for grade E does not include the word “own”.



categorisation of the core content in the most recent syllabuses for English in Sweden (Skolverket, 2017, 2018b; Subsection 2.1). The fourth activity, mediation, which involves interpreting and translation, does not have a counterpart in the Swedish language syllabuses. The focus on functional language use in the CEFR is also expressed with the contextualisation of language activities in four domains: the public domain, the personal domain, the educational domain, and the occupational domain (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 14).

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the CEFR includes a common scale depicting language proficiency. As regards these levels, it is possible to draw broad comparisons to the Swedish attainment levels as expressed in the knowledge requirements, but the scope and specificity vary between the scales (Skolverket, 2012a, 2017). There are six reference levels in the CEFR: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, and the A-levels represent “basic user”, the B-levels “independent user”, and the C-levels “proficient user” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 23). In some contexts, these levels can be further divided. Level A2.1, for example, corresponds to the attainment level for English in year 6 in Sweden, and for year 9 the corresponding level in the CEFR is B1.1 for a passing grade. The levels in the CEFR are illustrated by “can do” descriptors, and the framework contains a number of scales.

Of specific relevance for my project is the framework’s focus on the learner and self-agency. As Little and Erickson (2015) point out, the order of the nouns in the CEFR’s subtitle—learning, teaching, assessment—“implies a learner- and learning-centred view” (p. 122). This learner-centeredness is clearly expressed in relation to formative assessment; whereas the strength is described as the potential to improve learning, the weakness is related to the feed back function of feedback which presupposes a receiver who can handle the information provided. This receiver needs to have a sense of self-direction in order to be able to notice, receive, interpret, and integrate the information (Council of Europe, 2001). Peer assessment is not a priority in the CEFR; it is briefly mentioned as a way towards self-autonomy. Self-assessment, on the other hand is depicted as “a tool for motivation and awareness raising: helping learners to appreciate their strengths, recognise their weaknesses and orient their learning more effectively” (2001, p. 192).

Among other things, this focus on the learner is visible in the *European language portfolio* (ELP), which is a collection of documents intended to support “the development of learner autonomy, plurilingualism and intercultural awareness” (Council of Europe, 2017). The ELP consists of three obligatory parts: a language passport, a language biography, and a dossier. More concretely, it “supports reflective learning in which goal setting and self-assessment play a central role” (Little, 2005, p. 323). The ELP employs the “can do” descriptors from CEFR for self-assessment, focusing on task performance, which most language learners are able to assess. Similar to the CEFR, the use of the ELP varies across classrooms.

So far, this chapter has presented documents which impact teaching and learning in the Swedish language classroom. The subsequent subsection highlights classroom writing in a Swedish perspective.

## 2.4 Writing in Swedish school

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Swedish pupils' level of English language proficiency in terms of reading and listening is high. Written production, however, yielded lower results in the *European Survey of Language Competences* (ESLC), although the pupils still held their ground in relation to other European countries (Skolverket, 2012b). As opposed to the receptive skills that language learners develop both outside and inside school, writing is mainly the product of instruction (Cushing Weigle, 2002). Many Swedish pupils are rather proficient in writing tasks with informal language, which could be a result of exposure to extramural English (Olsson, 2016); it is therefore important that school assignments focus on more formal and academic tasks.

Writing tasks given in Swedish schools tend to differ on a number of accounts from the tasks that pupils meet in international large-scale surveys. Generally, school writing assignments in Sweden are more open and not as rigid in terms of content and organisation as the tasks included in, for example, ESLC. These assignments can be said to mirror a tendency to favour fluency before accuracy and confidence before competence (Skolverket, 2012a). Writing prompts used in Swedish classrooms and the national standardised tests are “accordion-like” tasks, i.e. tasks constructed to suit all proficiency levels. Moreover, the guidelines are relatively free, which enables pupils to interpret the same topic in a range of different ways, and pupils are encouraged to write longer texts. In contrast, the writing tasks in ESLC were adapted for different levels of proficiency and clearly guided by information on purpose, audience and content (Skolverket, 2012a). These divergences may partly explain why Swedish pupils received lower scores on the writing tests, than on reading and listening. Nevertheless, it is clear that Swedish pupils' written proficiency in English is not on a par with the receptive skills; it is, thus, an important and relevant object of study.

Writing instruction and assessment pose challenges for teachers in Sweden. As mentioned previously, the development of written proficiency is mainly a concern for formal instruction (Cushing Weigle, 2002), and pupils are dependent on their teachers' ability to organise successful teaching in order to improve this skill (Skolverket, 2012a). The results on written production in ESLC within Sweden display significant intra-school variation, which indicates that there is variability in the efficacy of the teaching (Skolverket, 2012a). Furthermore, teachers find the assessment of writing somewhat problematic. Challenges include, for example, the salience of content,

organisation, task fulfilment and length (Erickson, 2009), which roughly correspond to the areas likely to pose problems for Swedish pupils in international studies. Judging by the increased focus on language use in various situations, expressed in the ability to “adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35), the most recent syllabus for English in Sweden seems to have been influenced by these problems.

Similar issues have been described in studies on L1 (Swedish) writing instruction in upper secondary school. Two studies carried out before the implementation of the current curriculum depict teaching as mainly focused on typical school genres or school forms of genres used outside the school context, which foreground the writer rather than the text or the social context of writing (Norberg Brorsson, 2007; Nyström, 2000). This practice probably reflects the influence of process writing in language classrooms. A more recent study of discourses of writing in the subject Swedish expresses that a genre perspective is visible in the current syllabus (Palmér, 2013).

A study comparing upper secondary-level pupils’ writing progression in Swedish and English at the level of structure found that there was surprisingly little progression (Apelgren & Holmberg, 2018). Progression was assessed on a scale moving from associative structure to logical structure, where the latter represents academic conventions. The pupils tended to use similar text structures in both languages which indicates transfer. Curiously, the pupils whose text structures differed between English and Swedish displayed a more logical structure in English. Apelgren and Holmberg (2018) concluded that teaching can be more effective.

Against this Swedish background, my project focuses on the teaching and learning of writing in EFL classrooms. More specifically, it concerns the ability to write certain genres. The curricular abilities to “express themselves and communicate in speech and writing” and to “adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35; Section 2.1) are thus especially relevant for the research design of my project. My project also considers the pupils’ active role in learning English, by linking learning about writing to the implementation of peer review as a learning-oriented activity. This activity is in line with the curriculum; in the second section of the curriculum it is stated that “[t]he goals of the school are that each pupil [...] develops the ability to assess their own results and relate these and the assessments of others to their own achievements and circumstances” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 16).

There is hardly any mention of the use of peer and self-assessment in the Swedish steering documents or general advice from the National Education Agency. This absence is probably due to the fact that the curriculum does not promote certain methods. The CEFR, which has a learner-centred perspective, is based on personal goal-setting and self-assessment, characterised by the “can do” statements in their scales. This perspective is also visible in their

placement of learning before teaching in their subheading, whereas the opposite—teaching before learning—is more common in terms of school and the classroom. Assessment, though, is generally placed last. One of the leading ideas in my project is that assessment activities, more specifically peer review, can be used as a learning-oriented activity and thus form part of the teaching. The next chapter describes the theoretical framework for my project.

### 3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for my project draws on L2 writing theories and pedagogies, formative assessment, and sociocultural theories. This chapter presents these theories, focusing on how they each contribute to my project and on how they fit together; for example, they inform the research design (Section 6.2) and help operationalising and interpreting learning from giving feedback (Subsection 6.4.3).

The first section concerns L2 writing, since it constitutes the core of my project. Although writing in my project is primarily linked to genre theories and pedagogies, it is not possible to draw clear boundaries between various orientations and perspectives on writing. For this reason, writer-, text-, and reader-oriented strands of L2 writing are presented, even if communicative language teaching (CLT) and genre-based writing instruction (GBWI) supply the main framework for the intervention in my project. There is a separate subsection on revision in writing; revisions, or more specifically revision changes, comprise an essential part of my project as a unit of analysis.

Learning about L2 writing in my project is connected to formative assessment in general and peer review specifically; the research design, including the pedagogical intervention, relies on formative assessment theory and peer review is explored as a “teaching tool” (Orsmond et al., 2000, p. 37) and a “learning-oriented activity” (Yu & Lee, 2015, p. 578). The second section discusses the history and distinction between summative and formative assessment and introduces a framework for classroom implementation of formative assessment. Feedback and criteria, which are key concepts of formative assessment, are problematised, and peer assessment and feedback are introduced in conjunction with the notion of agency.

The main contribution of the last section on sociocultural theories in relation to my project is a definition of learning. The section also presents concepts relevant for the use of peer-assessment activities in the classroom, such as mediation, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Last, dynamic assessment is mentioned since it shares similarities with formative assessment.

### 3.1 L2 writing theories and pedagogies

In this section, I introduce selected theoretical and pedagogical approaches to L2 writing. First, the complexity of L2 writing is discussed in relation to the apparent lack of a unified theory, which also is manifested in the numerous pedagogical approaches and methods (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Communicative language teaching (CLT) is presented next. CLT forms the basis of the syllabus for English in Sweden (Section 2.1) and is important to understand the current global teaching paradigm. Last, this section zooms in on genre theories and pedagogies which directly have informed the intervention in my project.

The importance of the ability to write in order to be a fully proficient L2 language user has become increasingly important with globalisation (Kroll, 2003). Earlier, the purpose of classroom writing was to strengthen the oral language use and practise grammar and vocabulary, but today the writing skill is regarded an essential piece of communicative language use in its own right (Cushing Weigle, 2002). As a consequence, research on L2 writing and instruction has multiplied in the last decades; however, studies including children and teenage learners are still relatively few (I. Lee, 2016; Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2008; Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016).

Due to the complexity of L2 writing, there is no single theory to guide researchers in the field (Cumming, 2016; Kroll, 2003; Polio & Williams, 2009). Drawing on several researchers' conceptualisations, Cumming describes L2 writing as

a complex, multifaceted, and variable phenomenon, realized in diverse ways by differing populations of learners producing differing kinds of texts in differing societal contexts and acted upon for differing purposes in particular educational, settlement or workplace programs around the world (2016, p. 65).

Following this complexity, L2 writing research has been informed by a multitude of theories. Four theories have been especially prominent: contrastive rhetoric, cognitive models of composing, genre theories and sociocultural theories (Cumming, 2016). In terms of popularity, sociocultural theories (Section 3.3), focusing on collaboration and interaction, dominate current L2 writing research. Contrastive rhetoric, on the other hand, is now more commonly referred to as intercultural rhetoric (Connor, 2011), and parts have been adopted by genre theories, for example (Cumming, 2016).

In education, L2 writing can serve both as a means to achieve a specific learning outcome or as a goal in itself; this distinction is reflected in research, theories, and pedagogies. From a writing-to-learn perspective, writing is considered an instrument for learning either language (writing-to-learn-language) or content (writing-to-learn-content) (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016). When writing as such is the aim, it is a learning-to-write perspective.

This perspective can be further divided into three distinct approaches to writing: writer-oriented, text-oriented, and reader-oriented (Hirvela et al., 2016; K. Hyland, 2011, 2016).

The writer-oriented approach studies expert writers as models to be used in teaching and has given birth to the linear description of writing as planning–writing–reviewing which used to be common in composition classes (K. Hyland, 2011). Early research in this orientation relied on cognitive psychology and focused on writing as a problem-solving activity rather than communication; more recent studies stress the composition process (Hirvela et al., 2016). In terms of pedagogy, the writer-oriented approach has informed process-writing, which emphasises the importance of teacher and peer feedback during the process (Matsuda, 2003).

Text-based approaches focus on the product of the writing activity, i.e. the text. A text can be seen as a context-independent entity based on grammatical rules or as discourse dependent on the writer’s intentions. The former approach, with accuracy placed at the fore, is today considered obsolete by the research community (Hirvela et al., 2016); it remains, however, a common practice in some EFL classrooms (K. Hyland, 2016). Seeing texts as discourse means highlighting language use to achieve certain purposes. The pedagogical manifestation of a product-based or discourse approach to writing often relies on text analyses of recurrent rhetorical patterns in specific genres (K. Hyland, 2016).

The third approach in the learning-to-write perspective on writing foregrounds the reader, thus broadening the context in comparison to the previously mentioned approaches and defining writing as a social activity. In this orientation, writing is viewed as interaction:

Writing always has a purpose, a context and an intended audience, and involves making choices about how best to get one’s meanings over effectively to particular readers by writing in ways they will recognise and understand (K. Hyland, 2016, p. 158)

As pointed out by K. Hyland (2016), especially novice student writers find it difficult to imagine other readers than their teachers, which entails that fostering reader awareness is considered essential in teaching. Genre-based writing instruction (GBWI) often emphasises this reader perspective (Hirvela et al., 2016).

These three orientations are not mutually exclusive; as Grabe notes in his brief history of theories of writing (2001), earlier cognitive models of L1 writing were expanded to include social context during the 1990’s (cf. Hayes, 2012). In parallel, genre knowledge was explored which led to an interest in the communicative purpose of writing (Grabe, 2001). This interplay is also expressed in Polio and Friedman’s description of L2 writing as “a *cognitive process*, in which a writer draws upon a set of internalized skills and

knowledge to produce a text, and a *situated activity* that takes place in a specific context with a specific goal and for a specific audience” (2016, p. 1). Similarly, text analysis described as a typical trait of text-based approaches is also a common activity in genre pedagogies.

This amalgamation of various writing orientations can also be extended to involve writing pedagogies; the process-oriented approaches and genre pedagogies have already been mentioned in relation to the orientations of writing presented above. Matsuda (2003) discusses how various approaches to teaching writing are described to be distinct as a result of a “discursive history”, when in fact process-writing, for example, involves several different approaches. Similarly, the communicative approach to teaching language and writing is realised differently across countries and classrooms (Savignon, 2002; Ur, 2013). In a survey of genre theory and pedagogy, Johns suggests that “process writing practices—peer editing, revising, and other strategies—should not be forgotten in the effort to encourage second language students to understand and produce texts from various genres” (2003, p. 204). Indeed, the process genre approach to writing, a “hybrid” pedagogy which draws on elements from writer-, text- and reader-based orientations, neatly embodies this combination (Badger & White, 2000).

The above-mentioned process genre approach can be used to describe the pedagogical underpinning of my project and research design. Accordingly, this section on L2 writing theories and pedagogies presents both cognitive models of writing as well as genre theories. In terms of pedagogy, the communicative approach and genre-based writing are highlighted; the contribution from the process-oriented approach to teaching writing in my research design is the use of peer review which is explored in the subsequent section (3.2), in relation to formative assessment.

### 3.1.1 Cognitive models of writing

A number of cognitive models of writing have been influential in the field of L1 writing and these models formed the basis for writer-oriented pedagogies to writing. One example is Flower and Hayes’ model of the writing process (1981). The starting and end point in their model is the task itself, which is described as a “rhetorical problem” (Flower & Hayes, 1981, p. 369). The original model involved three main processes: planning, translating, and reviewing. Planning encompassed subprocesses such as generating ideas, organising, and goal setting. Translation in this model referred to verbalising the ideas, by choosing appropriate syntactic and lexical representations. Last, the model included reviewing with the subprocesses of evaluating and revising. The process of reviewing could be unplanned or planned. Apart from the task setting and these three processes, the model involved the long-term memory (Flower & Hayes, 1981). This model has been developed and modified over the years (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Hayes, 1996) and in its



most recent form it also encompasses, among other things, working memory and motivation (Hayes, 2012). Another modification is the inclusion of a transcription process. The transcription process substitutes the translation process; this alteration is a response to critique raised towards the original model.

The transcription process (Hayes, 2012) is similar to what some L2 writing researchers refer to as formulation (Roca de Larios, Manchón, & Murphy 2006; Roca de Larios, Manchón, Murphy, & Marín, 2008). It was introduced as a critique towards the idea of translation in Flower and Hayes' original model (1981); Roca de Larios et al. (2006) argued that the process of putting words on paper was more complex than depicted by the translation process and that it could not be portrayed as "automatic" when text generation in reality entails making decisions and solving problems (p. 101). Hayes (2012), in justifying his modifications, raised similar concerns as regards especially younger L1 learners' writing processes, where orthography, for instance, can affect other cognitive processes involved in writing. Transcription mode, by hand or by keyboard, also impacts on the cognitive processes.

The substitution of the translation process for a more complex transcription process is not the only modification in Hayes' 2012 model. The most striking alteration is the omission of planning and revision, a change which derives from a reinterpretation of the role of the audience in writing (cf. Grabe, 2001). Instead, these processes are now understood as separate writing activities. To justify this change of view, Hayes declares that "[g]enerally speaking, writing is an activity designed to create a text for some audience" (2012, p. 375). Planning, as in writing a plan, can therefore be considered a "special application of the writing model" (Hayes, 2012, p. 376) from the formal written task, since the writers themselves are the audience. Likewise, revision as a problem-detection and problem-solving activity would require special attention. In view of the three orientations to learning-to-write described earlier in this section (3.1), this shift implies that the model, which originally held a writer-oriented approach to writing, also acknowledges the role of the audience in the description of the writing process. Furthermore, the substitution of the translation process for a more complex transcription process as discussed above makes the model applicable to L2 writing processes as well.

To account for L2 writing and specifically with L2 writers' parallel use of L1 and L2 in mind, W. Y. Wang and Wen (2002) suggested an adapted version of Flower and Hayes' model (1981; Hayes, 1996). W. Y. Wang and Wen's model, which is partly based on findings from a study involving skilled L2 writers at a Chinese university, proposes that both L1 and L2 are employed in most processes. L1 dominates the retrieval of world knowledge and rhetorical knowledge from the writer's long-term memory, as well as the generation and organisation of ideas. L2, on the other hand, is dominant in the retrieval of linguistic knowledge and in the processes of understanding the task and

generating text. The only part which is solely related to L2 in their model is the writing prompt and the finished product. A problem with this model is that it does not account for various L2 proficiency levels. As W. Y. Wang and Wen (2002) themselves point out, high-proficiency L2 users can rely more on L2 than on L1 when generating text, and writers with very low proficiency can use their L1 when writing.

The transcription/formulation process has received substantial attention in L2 writing research; among other things, this process affects fluency and thus directly impacts the quality of the written product (Subsection 4.1.1). The following subsection focuses on the process of revision in writing.

### 3.1.2 Revision in writing

Revision is perceived as one of the key processes involved in writing and it is considered a significant part of successful L1 and L2 writing (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hayes, 1996; Rijlaarsdam, Couzijn, & Van den Bergh, 2004). Revision is usually understood as an embedded part of the writing activity *per se* as writers move back and forth in the text and changes are made as a piece of writing evolves. In other words, revision can be defined as “an ongoing, recursive, problem-solving process” (Barkaoui, 2007, p. 81). Similarly, Sommers defines revision as “a sequence of changes in a composition—changes which are initiated by cues and occur continually throughout the writing of a work” (1980, p. 380, italics removed from original). In her definition, Sommers (1980) critiques linear or staged models of writing, often based on speech, which placed revision as the last component of writing, preceded by prevision and vision (Fitzgerald, 1987); in educational contexts, this depiction of the writing process is often referred to as planning, writing, and revising.

Bereiter and Scardamalia’s cognitive model of revision (1987), the CDO process (Compare, Diagnose, Operate), has been influential in understanding choices made during writing and has also served as a pedagogical model to teach revision (van Gelderen, 1997). This process is triggered by a disparity of a “[mental] representation of the text written so far, and a representation of the text as intended” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p. 266). This way of depicting this part of writing can be likened to assessment and feedback in educational contexts (Section 3.2).

Revision can further be considered both a process and a product (Barkaoui, 2016); the distinction can be defined as internal (process) and external (product) revision (Lindgren & Sullivan, 2006; Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004; cf. Flower & Hayes, 1981, unplanned and planned revision). Essentially, internal revision refers to the mental process which occurs before the writers formulate their ideas, whereas external revision is the visible changes made to the text, the “editing” so to speak.

In contrast to the integral part revision plays in theoretical models of writing, it seems less prominent in writing instruction (Barkaoui, 2007; Porte, 1996). Barkaoui (2007) draws on previous studies on revisions and suggests that teaching revision includes:

- practicing the comparison of texts to a perceived aim;
- informing students about the purpose of revising;
- modelling revision strategies, such as focusing on meaning initially, and proofreading at later stages;
- highlighting the importance of addressing a reader, the intended audience of the text; and
- developing students' self-assessment skills

In my project, I use the term revision to denote the alterations that the pupils make to their first draft, that is visible changes that are noticeable for teachers and peers. This definition is in line with Rijlaarsdam et al. (2004) who propose that the term revision is used solely when referring to external revision, that is revision where the object or input of the evaluation is the written text, as opposed to the so-called pre-text. More specifically, the unit of analysis in my project is a revision change (Subsection 6.4.2). The idea of revision as a change works well with the idea of formative assessment that also involves alterations, often based on a comparison of the present work with a perceived goal (cf. Barkaoui, 2007; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Ramaprasad, 1983; Sadler, 1998; Section 3.2).

Revision in writing is revisited in Chapter 4, where studies on revision in L1 and L2 writing are reviewed. The following two subsections in this chapter bring writing into the classroom and explore communicative language teaching as well as genre theories and pedagogies.

### 3.1.3 Communicative language teaching

Various approaches to language teaching and learning, such as the grammar-translation method, the audiolingual method, and communicative language teaching, have been introduced the last century (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). They are based on theories of language and language learning and, as pointed out by J. C. Richards and Rogers (2014), various combinations of theories are possible even if some may seem more natural than others. In addition, these approaches are connected to methods which involve considerations regarding learning objectives, structure, types of activities, and the role of the teacher and the students, respectively (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Savignon, 2002).

The past decades have experienced “a whirlwind of transitions” in English language teaching (Pica, 2000, p. 2). Different communicative approaches to second language teaching began to surface from the 1960s onward and represented what can be described as a paradigm shift. Today, communicative

language teaching (CLT) holds the position as the “appropriate approach” to teaching English as a foreign/second language (Whong, 2013, p. 115). CLT developed concurrently in North America and Europe (Savignon, 2002), and one of the major driving forces was to cater for the needs of foreign labour, where The Council of Europe, for example, presented a syllabus based on functional language use (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014; cf. *The Common European framework*, Section 2.3). Similarly, language use in social contexts was placed at the core as the notion of communicative competence was introduced by Hymes (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Savignon, 2002).

Some of the previous approaches and methods defined language as a construct of discrete items or building blocks to be memorised and accumulated before the language could be used in any communicative situation (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This view was challenged by research on first language acquisition which found that declarative knowledge developed from language use in meaningful situations rather than the other way around, thus placing production in first place (Van den Branden, Bygate & Norris, 2009). In other words, these findings opposed the Present–Practise–Produce (PPP) procedure which was, and still is, used in many language classrooms, and CLT which highlights communication both as goal and as process for language learning emerged.

CLT places the learner at the core of instruction and rejects what can be referred to as traditional language teaching activities, such as grammar drills and translation exercises. Instead, role-playing and problem-solving tasks are examples of popular activities (Pica, 2000). The teacher’s role is described as “facilitator and monitor” (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 98), and the learners often collaborate and work together. The pronounced focus on meaning, which in practice means that fluency is favoured before accuracy, has led to the negligence of grammar instruction in language teaching in certain contexts and classrooms. However, the interpretation that a meaning-focused approach to language teaching and learning does not involve attention to structure or form neglects to take into account the functional aspects of forms (Savignon, 2002). Research suggests that a communicative approach without explicit focus on forms fails to advance the language proficiency to the levels needed in today’s global society (Pica, 2000). As Whong (2013) puts it “[t]he form/function debate within academic discourse is healthy” (p. 116).

CLT can be considered an umbrella term which covers several distinct teaching methods. Some of these methods, such as task-based approaches to teaching and learning, have been criticised for downplaying the role of grammar in communication (Savignon, 2002). Others, such as genre pedagogies, emphasise the connection between function and form (Martin, 2009; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Swales, 1990). In terms of theoretical ground, my project is influenced by genre theories and pedagogies; genre-

based writing instruction (GBWI) has especially informed the research design and the pedagogical intervention.

### 3.1.4 Genre theories and pedagogies

Numerous disciplines utilise the term “genre” with considerably different definitions; even within the field of applied linguistics, the concept of genre is not clear-cut. However, a broad definition is that a genre constitutes a “set of texts that share the same socially recognised purpose” (K. Hyland, 2006, p. 313). In line with the definition of L2 writing as a cognitive process and a situated activity (Polio & Friedman, 2016; Section 3.1), genre can also be considered a cognitive and cultural concept (A. Cheng, 2006; Johns, 2003).

Genre theory recognises that writing emanates from the purpose, context and audience of a text, instead of being guided by specific universal rules (K. Hyland, 2004; Swales, 1990). It is a “theory of the borders of our social world, and our familiarity with what to expect” (Martin, 2009, p. 13). There are three distinctive linguistic schools of genre: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and the North American New Rhetoric studies (NR) (Hyon, 1996). The approaches represented by SFL and ESP are more linguistically and pedagogically oriented than NR, which tends to focus on the situational context and, accordingly, challenges the notion that genres are teachable (Cumming, 2016; Flowerdew, 2002).

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) has had an extensive impact on school teaching, especially in Australia. In fact, the common pedagogical manifestation of SFL is often referred to as the Sydney School. SFL is also gaining ground in Sweden through research about text use in schools and through the teaching of the school subject Swedish as a second language (Holmberg, Grahn, & Magnusson, 2014). Within SFL, genre can be defined as a “staged goal-oriented social process” (Martin, 2009, p. 10), which is further explained as a way of “mov[ing] in steps, assembling meaning as we go, so that by the end of a text or spoken interaction we have ended up more or less where we wanted to be” (p. 12). As such, genre coordinates other levels of language. In SFL-oriented pedagogies implemented and practiced in schools, the genres are often set and model texts are used to present distinctive traits. These pedagogies are also typically linked to the teaching/learning cycle (Rothery, 1996). This cycle consists of a number of phases, including the deconstruction, joint construction, and individual construction of the genre in question. All phases include attention to the context and the field, i.e. the content of the text (Martin, 2009). Schleppegrell lists some “prototypical school-based genres”, such as Narrative, Report, and Exposition (2004, p. 84); these examples can also represent increased levels of complexity for the learners.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is mainly concerned with professional and academic genres, which can be defined in relation to specific discourse

communities (Swales, 1990). Examples of ESP genres include the research proposal, the business letter, and the lab report. Regarding the definition of genre within this school, Swales proposes that “[a] genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. [...] In addition to purpose, exemplars of genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience” (1990, p. 58). Similar to the SFL definition presented above, a genre can be described in terms of moves and steps which achieve certain communicative functions (Swales, 1990). In line with the scope covered by SFL, ESP also encompasses both macro- and micro-level features of writing.

ESP courses, which predominantly are taught at university level, usually include genre analysis, which can provide transferrable skills to be used when students encounter new and unknown genres beyond the educational context (A. Cheng, 2006; Johns, 2003). The primary concern in genre analysis is the communicative purpose of the genre, and focus lies on how language is used to convey the text’s communicative objective (e.g. Bhatia, 1993; K. Hyland, 2004). The intention of genre analysis in ESP is to inform the teaching and learning of the genre. Genre analysis is based on authentic texts which can present some variation, and rhetorical choices are, among other things, explained by the discipline or professional context (if applicable) and the intended audience, which is referred to as discourse community (Swales, 1990).

Genre-based writing instruction (GBWI) highlights authenticity, meaning, and social interaction by placing the communicative purpose of a text in the foreground (K. Hyland, 2004; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). It is situated within the learning-to-write perspective (cf. Hirvela et al., 2016; Section 3.1) and could be aligned both with a text-oriented (SFL) and a reader-oriented (ESP) approach to writing. Both SFL and ESP approaches to writing instruction have many advantages (K. Hyland, 2004; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014):

- It is based on the specific needs of the learner, focusing on genres that the learners are likely to encounter in real-world situations, whether for professional, academic, or daily purposes.
- It combines both micro- and macro-levels of writing by highlighting textual and contextual aspects, such as genre-typic lexico-grammatical patterns, structure, audience, and social purpose.
- It is explicit, which entails providing the learner with transparent and lucid criteria. This is especially important for L2 learners, aiming to write for an audience whose context and cultural background are different from their own.
- It is supportive and implies cooperation between the teacher and the students, especially in the initial steps. Scaffolding, as defined by

Vygotskian followers, is a key concept in most genre-based teaching models (Subsection 3.3.1).

- It is a tool for raising teachers' genre knowledge, thus improving their comprehension of writing in a second language.

Critics voice concerns that GBWI stifles learners' creativity and identity, since they are supposed to adhere to conventions and follow specific models (K. Hyland, 2011; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). SFL, especially, has been criticised for presenting texts as more static forms (Ferris, 2011; Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016), whereas ESP genres generally are referred to as "dynamic social process[es]" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 16), subjected to constant evolution by members of the discourse community that utilises them. However, as Johns points out, models can be "misused" (2003, p. 204), and Martin & Rose encourage learners to "experiment creatively with the genre" (2005, p. 254) as a final stage in the learning cycle. Indeed, the ESP approach can also be considered fixed and hierarchical (A. Cheng, 2006), even if the foundation of its pedagogy is the learners' needs. In addition, the procedures based on the teaching and learning cycle can be perceived as monotonous if employed in the instruction of both productive and receptive skills (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Even though this critique certainly highlights potential problems related to the way this approach is interpreted and implemented in practice, it is also likely that it is partly based on comparisons to other pedagogies, such as a process-oriented writing pedagogy (cf. Section 3.1, about discursive history and hybrid pedagogies).

CLT in general and GBWI specifically have informed the design of my project. A communicative classroom formed part of the sampling criteria (Subsection 6.1.1), and genre-based pedagogy complies with the long-term aim of developing the ability to adapt language to context, purpose, and audience in the Swedish syllabus for English (Section 2.1). Although SFL targets younger learners and school genres, the approach adopted in my project bears more resemblance to ESP in that the pupils were involved in the genre analysis which in turn was based on sample texts of various quality, as opposed to model texts. The initial genre analyses produced by me guided the teaching, but the final analyses as presented in the jointly written criteria lists also reflect the pupils' contribution. In addition, the selection of genres was informed by the pupils' needs; the informative reply letter, the newspaper article, and the argumentative essay can all be considered both extramural genres and school genres.

In terms of learning, GBWI is often related to sociocultural theories (SCT), especially via the concept of scaffolding to support learners (K. Hyland, 2004; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). SCT in relation to my project is introduced in Section 3.3. The following subsection will focus on formative assessment. It includes a brief history of the terms summative and formative with reference to assessment and a problematisation of criteria and feedback, which are two key concepts of formative assessment. Next, implementation of formative

assessment practices in the classroom is explored, including the involvement of students via peer-assessment activities.

## 3.2 Formative assessment

As described in the Introduction (Chapter 1), the relationship between summative and formative assessment is subject to debate (Harlen, 2012; Taras, 2005, 2007). There is consensus as regards the meaning of the terms summative and formative, respectively, but not as regards their application and role in the classroom. Differences in the way concepts are theorised and practiced are unavoidable, perhaps especially in relation to education with its heterogeneous contexts. My project is rooted in formative assessment, and this section focuses on the definition of formative in educational contexts. In defining “formative”, it is relevant to compare and contrast with “summative”, although the summative use of assessments is not directly relevant for my studies.

Perspectives on and understanding of the theorisation and practice of formative assessment vary between countries, schools, subjects, and teachers. As Bennett puts it, “[t]he term, ‘formative assessment’, does not yet represent a well-defined set of artefacts or practices” (2011, p. 19). The definition of formative assessment adopted in my project is the one by Black and Wiliam:

Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. (2009, p. 10)

This is a reformulation of the perhaps most-cited definition of formative assessment from the seminal paper by the same researchers: “all those activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged” (Black & Wiliam, 1998, pp. 7–8). Both versions express the dual function of formative assessment; the information obtained from the activities can be used to modify both teaching and learning. What is evident in these definitions is the link to feedback and to the importance of the action taken as a result of the feedback. This action could be geared towards the learning and/or towards the teaching. Harlen denotes the former “assessment for purposes” and the latter “matching” on her scale of dimensions of assessment purposes (2012, p. 10).

Other conceptualisations of formative assessment seem to focus mainly on learning; for example, Sadler (1989) defines formative assessment as concerned with “how judgments about the quality of student responses



(performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the student's competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning" (p. 120). In line with Black & Wiliam (1998, 2009), Sadler's definition of formative assessment involves feedback and expresses how it can be used differently by teachers and students, respectively:

Teachers use feedback to make programmatic decisions with respect to readiness, diagnosis and remediation. Students use it to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of their performances, so that aspects associated with success or high quality can be recognized and reinforced, and unsatisfactory aspects modified or improved. (Sadler, 1989, pp. 120–121)

In terms of teaching, Sadler appears to focus on the development of students' assessment skills and a sense of quality in relation to their work (1989, 2009), rather than developing subject knowledge, although the former presupposes the latter. This is also an aspect that deserves attention; if the students are intended to make informed decisions related to their own learning, they need to be taught how to do this (Subsection 3.2.3, on agency). Learning in relation to formation, defined as an action taken by the learner, thus involves both subject knowledge and skills to use the information from teacher, peers, or themselves.

In higher education, the notion of learning-oriented assessment (LOA) has been promoted by Carless (e.g. 2007). LOA is a response to the various interpretations and practices of formative assessment; as indicated by its denomination, learning is foregrounded in "denoting assessment processes in which learning elements are emphasised more than measurement ones" (Carless, 2007, p. 58).

In line with these definitions, Taras suggests the following formula to depict the relationship between formative and summative assessment: FA [formative assessment] = SA [summative assessment] + feedback (2007, p. 369). In other words, the addition of feedback makes a summative assessment formative. The connection between summative and formative uses of assessments is subject to some debate both on a theoretical and a practical level.

Already in 1967, Scriven stated that it is necessary to distinguish between the goal and the role of an assessment<sup>6</sup>: "At the general level, we may talk about the goals of evaluation; in a particular educational context, of the roles of evaluation" (p. 2, underline original). The goal is basically always the same: to find out if something works or not, by using a scale or some other measurement. This result can subsequently be used for several purposes. As regards the relationship between summative and formative assessment, Scriven (1967) considered them different functions emanating from the same

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<sup>6</sup> Scriven (1967) uses the term evaluation. I use the term assessment instead to refer to "evaluations" related to students' abilities and knowledge.

assessment. For example, he describes formative assessment as “simply outcome evaluation at an intermediate stage in the development” (p. 16).

Another view on the relationship was introduced by Bloom (1969), who recommended that summative and formative assessments be separated; he also introduced the notion that different types of assessment activities be used for the different functions. His definition therefore opposed the idea that a formative and a summative function of an assessment can be obtained from the same process. A middle ground is proposed by Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and Wiliam:

Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting pupils' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence. (2004, p. 10)

This definition brings forth the notion of priority vis-à-vis the intended role of the assessment and links prioritisation to the “design and practice” of the assessment activity (Black et al., 2004, p. 10). The focus on choice of assessment activity links the role of the assessment to the type of evidence needed to make informed summative and formative decisions (cf. the above-mentioned definition of formative assessment by Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 10). Recently, Black & Wiliam have further clarified their view on summative vs. formative as “a distinction in the kinds of inferences being drawn from assessment outcomes” (2018, p. 3, italics removed). These inferences often result in some kind of feedback:

An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes “formative assessment” when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs. (Black et al., 2004, p. 10)

It seems probable that certain assessment activities are better equipped to meet the needs of formative and summative functions, respectively. It is therefore relevant to consider the instruments employed to gather the information on which the judgement is based. Harlen (2012) problematises the collection of data in educational contexts in relation to the formative function of an assessment:

The limitation of using evidence which has initially been gathered for a summative purpose to help learning bears on the validity of the evidence; it is just not sufficiently rich and readily available to be adequate for formative use. The limitation of using evidence which has initially been gathered by teachers to help learning to report on learning, bears on the reliability of the evidence. (Harlen, 2012, p. 99)

It is important to consider validity and reliability in relation to the functions of assessment in school<sup>7</sup>. Validity relates to the purpose of an assessment: “[w]e cannot say an assessment is valid without knowing what the intention was in using it and how well this intention was met” (Stobart, 2012, p. 233). For formative assessments, the validity involves the advance of learning. Assessment activities such as high-stakes tests, designed for summative purposes, can be too narrow to be used also for formative and diagnostic purposes, while the often more informal ways of gathering information for formative purposes impose on the reliability of a summative function (Harlen, 2012). This line of reasoning conflicts with Scriven’s notion of one process with several roles (1967). Harlen advocates that the distinction between summative and formative related to assessment purposes is maintained due to the “asymmetry in dual use” (2012, p. 100); at the same time, she suggests that “the relationship between formative and summative assessment might be better described as a ‘dimension’ rather than a ‘dichotomy’” (Harlen, 2012, p. 98). In terms of the reliability of formative assessments, Stobart (2012) suggests that it is mainly concerned with the relevance of the formative information (feedback, for example); since learner needs vary, it is not possible to provide the same feedback to everyone.

In practice, the question about the relationship between summative and formative assessments has come to be associated with certain assessment activities. Some methods to elicit information about pupils’ learning, such as “traffic lights”, “mini whiteboards”, and “no hands up” are intrinsically connected to formative assessment, even if the formative use—that is the subsequent adaptation of teaching—often is neglected (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015). Written tests, on the other hand, are still often considered summative by nature. In educational settings, the connection between summative and formative uses of information is also a question of time. Taras acknowledges that considering that summative and formative assessments derive from the same process saves teachers’ time since they do not need to “repeat and duplicate the assessment process” (2005, p. 474).

With respect to the instruments employed to gather information (or evidence), another important issue is raised by Harlen: “the well-known influence of what is assessed on what is taught” (2012, p. 88). The notion of ‘teaching for the test’ can imply that subject knowledge is reduced to echo the limited scope of a high-stake test, for example. Similarly, formative assessment has been criticised for leading to an oversimplification of the criteria by promoting the use of bullet points and easily quantifiable measures in order to increase the transparency for the students (Marshall, 2004; Torrance, 2007). Even though the intention behind various clarifications and

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<sup>7</sup> This section deals with validity and reliability in relation to assessment in school. These two concepts are relevant also for my research design (Subsection 6.1.4).

representations of learning objectives is good, Little and Erickson fear that they “can encourage instrumental teaching and learning to a test rather than to the intended construct in all its complexity” (2015, p. 133). Correspondingly, Davies and Ecclestone discuss formative assessment practice as a “straitjacket” or a “springboard”, respectively (2008, p. 73).

Similar concerns have been raised in the Nordic context. The transparency advocated within formative assessment could lead to a limitation of the subject knowledge and a simplified and one-dimensional view of learning (Carlgren, 2015; Pettersson, 2015). In L2 teaching, for instance, it can be easier to define clear lexico-grammatical goals in a check-list for a piece of writing, than communicative goals. This lopsidedness could entail that the form is perceived as more important than the function. In order to avoid measuring what is easy to measure rather than what is relevant to measure, it is essential to consider the validity of an assessment activity in relation to the learning objective. An assessment is a spot check which cannot encompass all that a learner knows or is able to do; however, it does signal the importance of a certain subject knowledge (Pettersson, 2015).

Likewise, Lund underscores that when assessment is interlinked with learning it also affects the processes, and that the assessment “will reflect a particular view of knowledge and what counts as relevant competencies, goals, and results” (2008, p. 33). Hence, while determining what is to be assessed, it is also essential to consider what is not being assessed, which again highlights the importance of the design of activities employed to gather information about students’ performance (cf. Black et al., 2004).

In line with this focus on transparency and formative uses of information, assessment activities in educational contexts are typically accompanied by criteria and feedback. The following subsection zooms in specifically at these two features of classroom assessment. Criteria and feedback link formative assessment to the subject-specific learning objectives.

### 3.2.1 Criteria and feedback

Criteria and feedback are interlinked with the notion of assessment in general and formative assessment in particular. In relation to formative assessment, it is common to talk about success criteria: criteria that when fulfilled imply success for the learner. The development of criteria and the communication of them to students can be challenging. Wiliam (2011, p. 62) suggests that the following need to be considered:

1. Task-specific versus generic scoring rubrics
2. Product-focused versus process-focused criteria
3. Official versus student-friendly language

These choices have bearing on how the students understand the criteria and consequently the task. They also impact on students’ learning. For example, task-specific criteria can pinpoint what students need to learn in relation to a

specific activity, whereas more generic criteria can promote transfer and generalisation (Wiliam, 2011). Process-focused criteria are quite common in writing and they can take on various forms, such as writing templates or check lists. These kinds of criteria can be especially vital in order to promote peer and self-learning (Wiliam, 2011). The question of official versus student-friendly language is interesting; it is relevant to ask what happens to the content when the language in the syllabus is transformed into simpler and more informal wordings.

Sadler's theory of formative assessment specifically targets qualitative assessment and this form of assessment can be characterised by the following components (1989):

1. Multiple criteria, which need to be considered as a whole, rather than isolated parts.
2. A mix of sharp and fuzzy criteria; sharp criteria contain a clear "right-or-wrong" quality, whereas fuzzy criteria are "abstract mental construct[s]" which need to be contextually defined.
3. The selection of relevant criteria from a "large pool" of applicable qualities; this selection is based on "metacriteria" defined by a professional.
4. The lack of a straightforward method for ensuring the validity of an assessment.
5. Representations of summative assessments (grades, scores) can only be assigned after the qualitative judgement. (pp. 124–125)

These characteristics describe the complexity of qualitative assessment. As with most complex systems, people tend to seek less complicating ways of portraying and dealing practically with the perceived difficulties; there is concern that the transparency and student involvement associated with formative assessment lead to the reduction and simplification of the criteria and the subject knowledge (Carlgren, 2015; Lund, 2008; Marshall, 2004; Pettersson, 2015; Stobart, 2012; Torrance, 2007; Section 3.2). The above-mentioned critiques claim that the representations of quality neglect to take into account the complexity and multidimensionality of learning; Stobart refers to this quest for explicitness as "walking a tightrope" (2012, p. 237), and Torrance warns us that "'criteria compliance' [can] come to replace 'learning'" (2007, p. 2). These concerns are neatly condensed and problematised in a paper challenging two myths associated with assessment criteria: that "transparency is achievable" and that "transparency is neutral" (Bearman & Ajjawi, 2018, p. 2).

Similar ideas have been raised previously (e.g. Sadler, 1989) and in order to counter this critique, it has been suggested that a metaphorical horizon better describes the end product instead of a one-dimensional goal. For instance, within the context of L2 writing, many criteria may be applied to the same task, but still fail to capture its complexity: "the sum of a piece of writing is more than its constituent parts" (Marshall, 2004, p. 105). Consequently, it

is argued that pre-set criteria cannot account for all the qualities that constitute a well-executed written composition (Sadler, 2009).

This discussion has points in common with the debate on holistic versus analytical assessment on writing (cf. Hamp-Lyons, 1991). Holistic assessments can focus on the whole text, while at the same time stress specific features (Hamp-Lyons, 1991). Assessment criteria can also be accompanied by a variety of authentic sample texts, which function as reference levels against which students can compare their own writing (Sadler, 1989, 2009). An approach that accounts for certain aspects of writing, without neglecting the context, also has pedagogical and formative benefits, since it facilitates the communication of the classroom assessment (Hamp-Lyons, 1991).

Criteria are connected to another key ingredient in formative assessment: feedback. Ramaprasad's definition of feedback as "information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way" (1983, p. 4) is echoed in most definitions of formative feedback (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2009; Sadler, 1989; Scriven, 1967; Taras, 2005). Ramaprasad's notion of feedback was developed in relation to management theory, which means that it is applicable to several fields (1983). In educational contexts, it is a challenge that the comparison of the reference and the actual level normally is based on qualitative measures. This implies that "breaking down the parameter into its components" is necessary (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 5); these components are commonly referred to as criteria in school.

This definition clearly involves the formative action, that feedback "is used to alter the gap in some way" (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 4). Grades and scores say very little, if anything, about this gap and the students' learning, so it can be argued that these forms of responses are not feedback (Hedge, 2000; Perrenoud, 1998). A metaphorical road map is often used to depict how the result of a classroom assessment can be communicated. This map describes that feedback should provide the learner with 1) a sense of the goal (Where am I going?), 2) an idea about progress in relation to the standard (How am I doing?), and finally, 3) information about how to progress (Where am I going next?) (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). This metaphor is also based on the work of Ramaprasad (1983); he states that feedback presupposes "data on the reference level of the parameter, data on the actual level of the parameter, and a mechanism for comparing the two to generate information about the gap between the two levels" (1983, p. 5).

In terms of successful communication, research has showed that formative feedback comments should target the task at hand, thus focusing on the intended outcome of the activity or the "system parameter" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hedge, 2000; Ramaprasad, 1983). Conversely, feedback targeting off-task norms, for example the learner, can have negative effects on the learning process (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). These findings relate to teacher feedback but could have bearing also on peer

feedback. Clear criteria and a shared understanding of learning objectives are some of the underpinnings of successful implementation of classroom formative assessment.

### 3.2.2 Implementing formative assessment

Although the dual function of formative assessment as described by Black & Wiliam (1998) has dominated theoretical discussions about formative assessment, empirical studies have tended to focus on the learner: it is the learner who should be formed rather than the instruction or environment (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015). This lopsided attention has partly reduced formative assessment to methods and techniques aimed at the learner, both in research and in practice.

Black & Wiliam acknowledge this diversity and address the practical rather than theoretical orientation of ‘Assessment and classroom learning’ (1998) in two more recent papers (2009, 2018). They bring forth the need for a “unifying basis” and location of formative assessment in relation to theories of pedagogy and learning interactions (2009, p. 6). In order to present a comprehensive framework of the aspects of formative assessment, they draw on five key strategies for formative assessment, which are based on Ramaprasad’s three key processes for teaching and learning (1983). These five strategies exist in different forms and slightly different wordings. The figure reproduced here (Figure 3.1) relates to the “road map” as discussed in the previous subsection on feedback (3.2.1) and it also describes three agents who take part in the processes: teacher, peer, and learner.

	<i>Where the learner is going</i>	<i>Where the learner is right now</i>	<i>How to get there</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	<b>1</b> Clarifying learning intentions and criteria for success	<b>2</b> Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student learning	<b>3</b> Providing feedback that moves learners forward
<i>Peer</i>	Understanding and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success	<b>4</b> Activating students as instructional resources for one another	
<i>Learner</i>	Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success	<b>5</b> Activating students as the owners of their own learning	

Figure 3.1: Aspects of formative assessment (adapted from Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8)

In terms of responsibility, Black & Wiliam emphasise that “[t]he teacher is responsible for designing and implementing an effective learning environment, and the learner is responsible for the learning within that environment” (2009, p. 7). The top row of the figure though refers to the learner, and this figure could be interpreted as highlighting the learner rather than the teaching and learning (cf. Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015)<sup>8</sup>. In the elaboration of the theory of assessment, their paper mainly highlights the teachers’ role in classroom oral interaction; peer and self-assessment lie outside their scope (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

In line with Little & Erickson, who involve a fourth agent, the wide notion of “external bodies” (2015, p. 127), I would like to add the curriculum to this model. The teacher could be considered a representative for the curriculum, but with the transparency advocated today, many pupils are also familiar with the curriculum as a written document. In this slightly adapted model, the curriculum can be considered a lens through which the other agents view and carry out their activities. In addition, the notion of agency vis-à-vis the peer and the learner is especially relevant for my project. This connection is further explored in the following subsection (3.2.3).

The five strategies pictured in Figure 3.1 are known in the teacher community through their dissemination via popular books (Wiliam, 2011; Wiliam & Leahy, 2016); in Sweden, they have been promoted by C. Lundahl who addresses them in *Bedömning för lärande* [Assessment as learning] (2011). These strategies encompass many of the elements of formative assessment mentioned previously: the transparency as regards learning objectives and criteria (cf. Sadler, 1989, 2009); the importance of task design to gather relevant information (cf. Harlen, 2012); the role of feedback (cf. Ramaprasad, 1983; Taras, 2005); and student involvement and agency (cf. Sadler, 1989, 2009).

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) also present a pedagogically-oriented model of formative assessment, in which the advice overlaps with Black & Wiliams’ strategies (2009). The main distinction lies in the specified intention of their presentation of good feedback practice: Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick’s model specifically targets higher education and is intended to enhance students’ self-regulation (2006). The model is a response to university teachers’ reluctance to involve students in the assessment practice. Similar tendencies have been reported also by Swedish secondary school teachers in relation to peer and self-assessment (Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011).

So far, this subsection has presented formative assessment, feedback, and criteria in general terms, with the teacher as the main agent. The next

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<sup>8</sup> It is noteworthy that in describing the same figure in a more recent paper (Black & Wiliam, 2018), the third strategy is cited as “feedback that moves **learning** forward” in the running text (p. 10, emphasis added). The corresponding chapter in *Embedded formative assessment* (Wiliam, 2011) also uses learning instead of learner.



subsection focuses on student involvement in the formative assessment practice.

### 3.2.3 Peer assessment and agency

It is widely accepted that peer feedback can enhance learning. For instance, students engage more with feedback from their peers which can lead to a deeper understanding and increased learner autonomy (Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik, & Morgan, 1991; Gielen et al., 2010; Hu, 2005; Topping, 2009), and the fact that there are more students than teachers can increase the frequency of feedback in the classroom (Gielen et al., 2010; Topping, 2009).

In line with the strategies involving “activating students” presented earlier (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Figure 3.1), peer and self-assessment are common activities in formative assessment practices. In relation to student involvement in the classroom assessment practice, peer and self-assessment can be understood as two sides of the same coin (N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006). Student-centred assessment activities form part of the notion of assessment *as* learning (Earl, 2013; I. Lee, 2017) in which “students are ‘active agents’ who connect their current performance in assessments with their own learning” (Chong, 2018, p. 334). Following the debate as regards the distinction between summative and formative assessment, Black & Wiliam make clear that the focus should be on “assessment *as assessment*” (2018, p. 4, italics original) and nothing else. At the same time, they acknowledge that assessments can be used as learning activities, which I believe is the function of the peer review in my project (Black & Wiliam, 2018).

Side by side with the teacher, the peer and the learner are described as agents in formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009). In agreement with previous mentions of the implementation of formative assessment in an instrumental fashion, it is emphasised that activities involving students are linked “within a coherent rationale” (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 9). In this rationale, it is also essential to consider a fourth agent: the curriculum. The curriculum affects the choice of subject matter, teaching methods, and assessment activities. Peer assessment is often considered a pathway to self-assessment and thus linked to metacognition and self-regulation (cf. Chong, 2018; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; I. Lee, 2017). These internal processes are interlinked with formative assessment at large (cf. Panadero et al., 2018) but lie outside the scope of my project.

In my project, I emphasise the roles (inter)played by teachers, peers, and learners and develop the notion of agency. Gyllander Torkildsen and Erickson (2016) connect the idea of agency as expressed in the Swedish curriculum (Skolverket, 2018b) to formative assessment practices. The two initial parts of the curriculum, “Fundamental values and tasks of the school” and “Overall goals and guidelines” (Skolverket, 2018b; Section 2.1), stress that the pupils should be able to influence their education and thereby develop a personal

responsibility for their studies. A concrete realisation of this influence and responsibility is expressed in the aim that each pupil “develops the ability to assess their own results and relate these and the assessments of others to their own achievements and circumstances” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 16). As clearly stated in the curriculum, pupils should develop agency; it is thus an important concern for schools and teachers.

The concept of agency is hard to pinpoint; a “provisional” definition proposed by Ahearn is that agency is “the socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (2001, p. 112). Ahearn’s essay on agency from an anthropological perspective depicts the complexity of this concept and provides an overview of potential components (2001). As she points out, the definition “leaves many details unspecified” (2001, p. 112); it is, however, a functioning definition for educational settings and thus my project. Among other things, both agency and education are connected to identity; Little and Erickson suggest that education “modif[ies] learners’ identity while exploiting and developing their agency” (2015, p. 121).

Agency in language teaching has been promoted in terms of learner autonomy (Little & Erickson, 2015) and it is also a prominent aspect of the literacy movement (Ahearn, 2001). In relating agency to valid and formative assessment practices, Gyllander Torkildsen and Erickson discuss the preconditions. Preconditions in reference to the learners, rather than the teacher, is a key to understanding student involvement and perception of assessment linked to learning. In addition to “relevant teaching, learning and assessment activities”, the language used in communication concerning feedback and criteria seems to matter for learners’ understanding (Gyllander Torkildsen & Erickson, 2016, p. 151). This idea is probably especially important in foreign language teaching, if the target language is also the language of communication (cf. Section 3.1.3, on CLT).

The involvement of students as agents in teaching in general is sometimes referred to as peer-assisted learning. The students’ roles in peer learning vary depending on the purpose of the implemented activities. Topping & Ehly (2001) suggest the following four categories of approaches to peer-assisted learning: 1) peer tutoring, 2) peer monitoring, 3) peer modelling, and 4) peer assessment. Whereas peer tutoring and monitoring closely resemble activities conventionally undertaken by teachers and therefore imply that peers put on the teacher role, both peer modelling and peer assessment can add a further perspective to teaching and learning (Topping & Ehly, 2001). By observing and subsequently imitating peers’ work and behaviour, students can improve their skills within the same domain, but also develop their metacognitive awareness. Similarly, the development of transferable skills is promoted in peer assessment, which is defined as a formative activity: “the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions” (Topping, 2005, p. 631).

N-F. Liu & Carless (2006) make a distinction between peer assessment and peer feedback, which is applicable to my project. In their conceptualisation, peer assessment relates to grading and marking based on pre-set criteria, whereas peer feedback is the “communication process through which learners enter into dialogue related to performance and standards” (2006, p. 280). Likewise, peer feedback can be used to denote the qualitative part of “formative peer assessment” (Gielen et al., 2010). The term assessment is also avoided by J. Liu & Hansen, who use peer response as an umbrella term to denote the use of learners for “commenting on and critiquing each other’s drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing” (2002, p. 1). N-F. Liu & Carless mean that teachers’ and students’ reluctance to embrace peer involvement (in higher education) is due to the focus on grading implied by peer assessment and suggest the use of peer feedback instead to promote the learning element of the activity (2006; cf. Section 3.2, on LOA). In relation to writing instruction, it is also relevant to recognise that the role of the peer in peer feedback can fluctuate between being an intended reader and being a commentator (Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004). In brief, the intended reader can have a subjective stance towards the text, whereas the commentator’s perspective is more objective. These roles are not opposites; they correspond to a continuum.

This subsection has described the role of the students’ as peers in formative assessment. In doing so, the connection to the notion of agency has been explored. The depiction of the people in the classroom—teacher, peer, and learner—as agents does not entail that they act in isolation. The definition of agency as the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112) and the preconditions (Gyllander Torkildsen & Erickson, 2016) intrinsically link the agents to each other in forming the teaching and the learning.

### 3.3 Sociocultural theories

Sociocultural theories of learning (SCT) imply that language learning is closely linked to social interaction (Mitchell & Myles, 2013). This idea stems from the works of Vygotsky on child development (e.g. 1978) which have been interpreted and transformed by other psychologists and educationalists. Indeed, today some strands differ widely from the original writings, and it has been suggested that the term neo-Vygotskian is more appropriate for denoting contemporary uses (Mitchell & Myles, 2013). As a theory of development, SCT can be applied to various kinds of informal and formal learning situations; it has been adopted and adapted by educational research and L2 language research (e.g. Donato, 1994; Lantolf, 2000; Mercer, 2000; Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002).

One of the pillars of SCT is the notion that learning and meaningful use of language cannot be separated. This idea is in line with communicative language teaching (CLT, Subsection 3.1.3) and the communicative classroom defined as a setting where language use is stressed. Thus, collaborative activities and interaction are essential for learning, and thinking and communication are fundamentally inseparable (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mercer, 2000). Language, perceived as the “quintessential human signification system” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014, p. 9), transforms experience into understanding by constituting a “tool for thought” (Mitchell & Myles, 2013, p. 221) and a “means for people to think and learn together” (Mercer, 2000, p. 4). Consequently, in L2 learning studies, language becomes both the object of study and the primary tool through which classroom learning is mediated. This dual perspective implies a real challenge for teachers as “effective instruction requires the teacher to use a medium the students do not yet understand” (Borg, 2006, p. 5).

The idea that interaction is an essential component for language learning is not exclusive to sociocultural theories. The relevance of input (e.g. Krashen, 1981), output (e.g. Swain, 1985), and negotiation (e.g. Pica, 1994) has shaped SLA and L2 research for decades. However, what differentiates SCT from other learning theories is that learning is described as occurring collectively and individually. This combination of the collective and individual dimensions has prompted an extended understanding of the importance of output. Wells (1999) draws attention to output as both process and product, which corresponds to the dual function of thinking and communication mentioned earlier in this section.

Even if this broadened perception of output does not conflict with the initial understanding, Swain (2000) proposes the use of, for example, collaborative dialogue instead of output, in order to discern the perspectives. Swain (2000) defines the collaborative dialogue as follows:

[...] it is dialogue that constructs linguistic knowledge. It is what allows performance to outstrip competence. It is where language use and language learning can co-occur. It is language use mediating language learning. It is cognitive activity and it is social activity. (p. 97)

Swain and other L2 researchers have mainly studied learning in terms of language *per se*, for example focus on form. In my project, the pupils’ joint knowledge construction is studied in relation to learning about language use in writing and is evaluated based on their performance; the pupils write newspaper articles, informative reply letters, and argumentative essays, as well as read and comment on their peers’ texts. This focus on various genres and language use for certain communicative purposes does not exclude the possibility that language learning in general also improves during the peer-review activity, since it involves oral interaction. Indeed, in relation to micro-

level issues of writing, such as grammatical structures, the boundary between general language use and genre-specific choices is fuzzy. Nevertheless, the analysis of learning about writing from giving feedback in my project emanates from a genre perspective and is linked to task-specific criteria rather than language development in general (Subsection 6.4.3).

While interaction is essential for learning, the knowledge or skills obtained need to be internalised by the learner. SCT normally describes successful learning as a “shift from collaborative inter-mental activity to autonomous intra-mental activity” (Mitchell & Myles, 2013, p. 222); learning occurs as people move from other-regulation to self-regulation. As such, learning both occurs and is made visible in the interaction. This notion entails that a sign of learning is, for example, the use of new concepts in discourse (Mitchell & Myles, 2013; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). In my project, learning is operationalised as a revision change between the first and the final drafts of the pupils’ texts. The definition of learning as a change in performance can be criticised for suggesting that learning is “local, individual and short-term” (Mitchell & Myles, 2013, p. 249). Within the framework of SCT, this focus on changes over short periods of time is not really an issue since “the fact that learners are able to control the feature, if only briefly, indicates that it is within their ZPD [zone of proximal development]” (Lantolf, 2005, p. 345). This perspective separates SCT from other learning theories; SCT focuses learners’ potential development, as opposed to their actual level.

In my project, SCT has mainly contributed to the operationalisation of learning as mentioned above. It is also a learning theory which often is connected to genre-based teaching and learning, and so-called “dynamic assessment” is rooted in SCT. The following subsection explains some of the key concepts of SCT in relation to teaching, learning, and assessment in school.

### 3.3.1 Mediation, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development

Lantolf and Poehner emphasise that SCT as a theory of developmental education assumes that “the social environment has a significant impact on development and this includes appropriately organized L2 classrooms” (2014, p. 57). In this regard, they challenge the idea that language learning occurs in a universal predictable order (Krashen, 1981; Pieneman, 1989). Instead, prediction can be related to language instruction and the “individual learner’s responsiveness to mediation” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014, p. 54).

Mediation is a fundamental concept in SCT; whereas other theories of mind suppose a one-directional connection between the mind and biology, the dialectic relationship in SCT assumes that “symbolic artifacts and cultural practices [...] empower us to control our biological endowment (i.e. our

brains) through auxiliary means” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 27). In other words, mediation can help us develop our higher-order thinking through the use of symbolic artifacts, such as numeracy, concepts, and language (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Lund argues that the practice of assessment in school can be considered a “social practice mediated by a number of social (coordination of views), material (criteria, guidelines), and contextual (historically and culturally valid knowledge) means” (2008, p. 35).

In school contexts, the term scaffolding is sometimes used to denote external support, or mediation, intended to help a learner towards a specific goal, and as mentioned in the previous section, scaffolding is often associated with GBWL. Teacher scaffolding is described as a complex activity with a multitude of purposes, such as raising interest, simplifying, focusing the goal, indicating gaps in relation to standard and modelling (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976); these activities have also been explored in different L2 contexts (e.g. Aljafreeh & Lantolf, 1994; van Lier, 1996). Typically, this support represents guidance provided by adults or “more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86), i.e. an asymmetrical novice-expert relationship in which the expert possesses a clear sense of directions and consciously guides the novice towards this goal. To be purposeful, scaffolding needs to be realised within the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

Vygotsky defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (1978, p. 86). This definition of the ZPD describes development on an individual level and the mediation or scaffolding needs to be adapted to the individual’s ZPD. Scaffolding in school contexts, which generally has a predetermined goal, has been criticised for being too static and thus problematic to adjust to the ZPD (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

More recent interpretations have challenged the conventional understanding of scaffolding and the ZPD. For instance, the idea of scaffolding as a conscious interplay between an expert and a novice has been tested by suggesting that this relationship can be symmetrical (cf. Donato, 1994; Lantolf, 2000); likewise, there is now focus on development as a collective and dynamic process (Fernández, Wegerif, Mercer, & Rojas-Drummond, 2001; Lund, 2008)

These reinterpretations are relevant for the understanding of students’ learning from collaborative peer-assessment activities and peer feedback. Indeed, Swain et al. (2002) reviewed several studies which included peer-peer dialogue and concluded that this collaboration can mediate second language learning. Similar techniques as the ones described by Wood et al. (1976) have been observed by participants engaged with symmetrical peer scaffolding (Donato, 1994). Moreover, Lantolf (2000) acknowledges that the support can come from “someone else” (p. 17), thus omitting the notion of a “more

capable” person from the original definition (Vygotsky, 1978). This symmetrical relationship can also be referred to as mutual or joint scaffolding (Donato, 1994). The fact that no expert is present may seem problematic from a learning and developmental perspective, but this reciprocal support can instead be understood as if “people working jointly are able to co-construct contexts in which expertise emerges as a feature of the group” (Lantolf, 2000, p. 17).

In relation to assessment practice, Lund (2008) explores the potential of a collective ZPD in light of SCT. Two cases involving assessment in education serve as illustrations to his argument, and assessment is described as a collective practice which includes learners, teachers, and cultural tools, for example guidelines and criteria. This assessment practice involves an interplay between “heterogeneous voices” and “institutionally developed tools” (Lund, 2008, p. 37). One of the cases involves a group of secondary-level EFL learners assessing and grading an oral examination. That the activity is collective entails that “it makes visible a shared zone of potential development for those involved” (Lund, 2008, p. 37). In other words, the ZPD can be interpreted as both individual and shared and it is the interaction that mediates the joint ZPD. By drawing on examples from the case, Lund describes the collective ZPD as represented by the students’ “overlapping, complementary, and contesting views” as expressed in interaction (2008, p. 45).

Fernández et al. (2001) have also explored symmetrical learning in peer groups. They suggest that scaffolding and the ZPD are interpreted as “characterisations of dynamic processes within dialogues” (p. 40). Thus, this reconceptualisation foregrounds collaboration. Potential development is described as a joint endeavour in the Intermental Development Zone (IDZ). Accordingly, scaffolding is understood as the communicative strategies used within the group to achieve intersubjectivity and joint understanding. These processes are described as “dynamic and continuous” (Fernández et al., 2001, p. 53), which challenges the traditional idea of scaffolding as temporary guidance.

### 3.3.2 Dynamic assessment

Advancing learners’ development by mediation in their ZPD shares similarities with formative assessment (Leung, 2007); however, in line with the critique concerning the static view of scaffolding in school mentioned in the previous subsection (3.3.1; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), formative assessment can also be considered too focused on task-specific pre-set goals (Carlgren, 2015; Lund, 2008; Marshall, 2004; Pettersson, 2015; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005; Stobart, 2012; Torrance, 2007; Section 3.2).

Dynamic assessment is characterised by the idea that abilities are malleable and it is concerned with future development; it is in opposition to static, or

non-dynamic assessment, which aims to measure a certain ability at a certain time (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Leung, 2007). In other words, focus is shifted from “typical performance” to “best performance”, where the latter is supported by external aid (Gipps, 1999, p. 375). To be beneficial, this external aid needs to be within the learner’s ZPD, and Leung describes the ideal situation as a

dynamic interaction between the examiner and the examinee in which the examiner responds to the examinee’s difficulties with appropriate support in the form of leading questions, meta-cognitive prompts and other forms of feedback (2007, p. 260)

Some proponents for SCT and dynamic assessment have described formative assessment as performed in practice as a random “hit-or-miss process” compared with dynamic assessment, since the negotiation of a ZPD is missing (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005, p. 254). This comment can be interpreted as critique towards the lack of theorisation of learning within the framework of formative assessment (Leung, 2007) and it is likely that it also reflects the focus on techniques and activities rather than formation mentioned previously (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015; Section 3.2). Another issue which possibly causes conflict between dynamic and formative assessment is related to instructional perspective: “mediation that is negotiated between instructors and learners should not be directed at just ‘getting the learner through’ the task, but at preparing them for future tasks” (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005, p. 257). It is not difficult to meet this kind of objection; formative assessment practice is not homogeneous nor standardised and it is possible to find examples of formative assessment with short-term or long-term focus (Leung, 2007). In addition, student-centred activities with formative purposes could imply a more dynamic, and flexible notion of ZPD (cf. Fernández et al., 2001; Lantolf, 2000; Lund 2008; Subsection 3.3.1).

In fact, the so-called interactionist approach to dynamic assessment, “assessment as teaching” (Leung, 2007, p. 262), shares similarities with formative assessment:

- a commitment to improving student learning through assessment activities;
- use of students’ current knowledge and ability as the starting point for assessment; and
- a belief in teacher intervention through interactive feedback (Leung, 2007, p. 267).

The external aid and/or supportive examiner that play important roles for the assessment of potential development (Gipps, 1999; Leung, 2007) can be difficult to realise in school contexts, especially in high-stakes testing. Within the context of institutionalised assessment, focus is generally on the individual



learner's performance. Summative assessments resulting in scores or grades neither take into account the process nor allow too much help (Gipps, 1999) and turning to outside sources for help during tests and exams is traditionally labelled plagiarism or cheating. In writing instruction, the use of exemplars and writing templates, for example, could invoke this type of critique; peer feedback has also been contested as a way of receiving too much help outside the teacher's control.

This section on sociocultural theories has highlighted some concepts which are relevant for my project. The following section aims to bring together the theoretical framework of L2 writing theories and pedagogies, formative assessment, and sociocultural theories and explain how they have informed my project.

### 3.4 The role of theory in my project

Each of the three parts of my theoretical framework contributes to the formation of a teaching and learning perspective on the use of peer feedback in L2 writing. Theory has informed the research design, for instance the implementation of formative assessment in the classrooms and the genre-based writing instruction, as well as the units of analysis. In addition, the theoretical underpinnings have partly served as factors influencing the areas included in the literature review (Chapter 4). This section reiterates some of the links between the theoretical background and my project mentioned in this chapter (3), as well as introduces a rationale for my choices.

In order to be able to study learning as an outcome of a formative activity, such as peer feedback provision, the intended learning outcome(s), i.e. the learning objectives, need to be specified. The learning objective for the pupils in my project was to improve their ability to write certain types of texts in English; thus, L2 writing theories and pedagogies are essential parts of my framework. According to Polio and Friedman (2016), L2 writing can be described as a situated activity and a cognitive process and these two parts are addressed via genre theory and cognitive models of writing.

The genre-based approach to defining a "good" text and to organise the instruction complies with a learning-to-write perspective and reader orientation of writing (K. Hyland, 2016). At the same time, the other two orientations as presented previously (writer-orientation and text-orientation; Section 3.1) have been and still are influential in both research and teaching. The writer-oriented approach has been especially important for the development of cognitive models of writing which, among other things, shed light on the planning and revision process of writing (Section 4.1).

The way the teaching units in my project were implemented, the pre-writing (planning) activities and the lessons allocated for revisions of the first drafts are likely to affect the written outcome and the way the pupils construe

the written task. The instruction adopts a genre-based approach to writing that can be linked to both formative assessment and SCT. Like formative assessment, genre pedagogy is explicit (K. Hyland, 2004); sample texts can be used to deconstruct a genre and at the same time serve as exemplars of student writing to demonstrate criteria and to assess achievement. The guidance offered by the teacher in genre-inspired activities is usually referred to as scaffolding, and Lund's suggestion that assessment in school is mediated by social, material, and contextual tools is useful to consider the function of the material produced and used in the classroom (2008). To emphasise student involvement, I draw on ESP and genre analysis. I also use the terms genre and moves (cf. Swales, 1990). By connecting formative assessment to genre pedagogies, I want to stress that peer feedback is considered an integral part of teaching and learning about writing in my project.

Formative assessment links peer feedback to teaching and learning about L2 writing, as well as connects the project to concerns voiced by both teachers and researchers in relation to the use of formative assessment in the classroom (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015; Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011). More specifically, my project adopts the notion of assessment as learning in order to emphasise the formative function of the peer-review activity in conjunction with student involvement (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013). Characteristics of assessment as learning include discussions about learning objectives, standards, and criteria, as well as the use of various methods for ongoing assessment which involve the students, for instance peer and self-reviewing techniques (B. Lundahl, 2012). In other words, assessment as learning emphasises the students' role in building the bridge between assessment and their own learning process (Earl, 2013).

As mentioned in the subsection on dynamic assessment (3.3.2), the theorisation of formative assessment is subject to discussion (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005); in my project, I have relied on the five key strategies for the implementation of formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018) for the lesson design. Criteria and other descriptors of quality play important roles in the formative assessment practice and as will be shown in the research review, there is some debate about the use and shape of criteria in peer assessment and feedback (Subsection 4.4.2). The distinction between peer assessment and peer feedback proposed by N-F. Liu & Carless (2006) is useful to distinguish between what can be considered a summative (peer assessment) and formative (peer feedback) function of peer involvement in the classroom assessment practice. This distinction is vital for the design of the peer-review activity in my project.

The formative function of feedback is also underscored in Ramaprasad's definition of feedback as "information about the gap between the actual level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way" (1983, p. 4). This notion of the modification of the gap and the use of information to move learning forward (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018) prompted the decision

to use the revision change as one of the units of analysis in my project. In addition, the formative function of feedback is mirrored in the definition of useful peer feedback in my project as including explanations and suggestions (Min, 2005; Subsection 6.4.1).

To operationalise learning from giving feedback, this project draws on SCT. Links between the revision changes the pupils made to their first draft and the peer-review activity in each of the teaching units were considered signs of learning about writing. This operationalisation connects to the idea that learning is visible in performance. Furthermore, the idea of joint or mutual scaffolding (Donato, 1994) as opposed to the traditional asymmetrical expert–novice relationship (Vygotsky, 1978) can elucidate the potential of learning from peer collaboration.

Another common denominator between the theories forming the framework for my project is the importance of interaction. In SCT, interaction is considered a means for the collective learning and scaffolding and teacher–peer interaction is essential in genre pedagogies. The definition of peer feedback adopted by this project also highlights interaction in describing peer feedback as a “dialogue related to performance and standards” (N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006, p. 280).

As described above, my intervention is influenced by a theoretical framework relying on L2 writing theories and pedagogies, formative assessment, and sociocultural theories. Presenting the theoretical underpinnings of my project increases the transparency of my research design and, thus, contributes to the generalisability of the results (Subsection 6.1.4). The following chapter reviews research on L2 writing and peer feedback.

## 4 Previous research

This chapter presents research relevant for my project and covers both L2 writing and peer assessment. The description of L2 writing as “a complex, multifaceted, and variable phenomenon” (Cumming, 2016, p. 65; Section 3.1) entails that the research field comprises a wide range of studies. For example, the distinction between writing-to-learn and learning-to-write, as mentioned in Section 3.1, implies different objects of study, and the field encompasses foci on writing processes, texts, contexts, pedagogical approaches, attitudes, assessment, and feedback, just to mention some major strands (cf. Polio & Friedman, 2016). Ortega (2009) emphasises that writing is highly contextualised and that our knowledge of writing is intertwined with our historical and social background. From a pedagogical perspective, writing is also shaped by the curriculum.

The contextualisation and curricular influence on L2 writing is visible in the distinction between ESL and EFL writing research. Traditionally, ESL writing research tends to focus on literacy and has a strong link to societal issues, such as identity and policies, especially in school contexts (Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016). EFL writing research, on the other hand, is more focused on language learning where the pupils’ texts are used to study language development (I. Lee, 2016), that is a writing-to-learn perspective. In a way, my project traverses the fields of both ESL and EFL writing with younger pupils; it is set in an EFL context but employs a genre-based pedagogy which in school settings often is linked to literacy.

Even if my project is primarily situated in the reader-oriented strand of learning-to-write which highlights the social context of writing, it cannot be ignored that writing also is a cognitive activity (Dysthe, 1996; Polio & Friedman, 2016). As Dysthe points out, most writers are involved in processes of thinking, such as trying new ideas, before engaging in the communicative aspect of writing, that is adapting the text to a reader (1996). This blend of perspectives is also visible in writing pedagogy; Palmér (2013) describes a hybrid of process and genre approaches in Swedish L1 writing classrooms, and Badger & White (2000) promote a process genre approach to writing.

In terms of writing research, this chapter focuses on revision and on the social context of writing (Sections 4.1 and 4.2). Revision changes constitute one of the main units of analysis in my project, and the social context of writing is important in genre theory but also in considering the educational context. The last two sections review studies on peer assessment linked to

writing and include studies on the effectiveness of peer assessment in general and on potential benefits for the feedback provider. In addition, a section on preparation and guidance links peer-assessment activities to teaching.

## 4.1 Revising writing

Revising is a fundamental part of writing (Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004). As presented in Subsection 3.1.2, revision can be considered a process as well as a product and can thus be operationalised in various ways depending on context and purpose. My operationalisation of a revision change is a visible difference between the first and the second draft of the pupils' texts. This definition is similar to the one employed by Allal, who uses the term transformation to denote "all observable differences between two versions of a text" (2000, p. 151). Likewise, studies in which revision is separated from the formulation process also focus on the product (Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Roca de Larios et al., 2008). Other studies, primarily those adopting a cognitive perspective, consider all revisions made during the writing process (e.g. Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Lindgren, Spelman Miller, & Sullivan, 2008) and some of these studies further distinguish between changes made during and between drafting (e.g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Hall, 1990; Porte, 1996).

This variety of operationalisations mirrors the different fields of research using revision as a unit of analysis. These fields encompass cognitive studies about the writing process (e.g. Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Roca de Larios et al., 2006), metacognitively oriented investigations (e.g. Allal, 2000; Victori, 1999), explorations of strategy use (e.g. Sengupta, 2000), and mappings of students' perceptions of revisions (e.g. Porte, 1997; Sommers, 1980). Moreover, many studies on teacher and peer feedback use revision changes to explore and measure the impact of the feedback (Berg, 1999b; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; F. Hyland, 2000; Jacobs, 1989; Kamimura, 2006; Lam, 2013; Min, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Pålsson Gröndahl, 2015; Sengupta, 1998). Common traits for these studies, including mine, include that they are set in educational settings and are concerned with the possible link between feedback and revision.

This diversity further entails that various methods have been used for data collection: think aloud protocols (e.g. Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Stevenson, Schoonen, & de Glopper, 2006; Victori, 1999), video recordings (e.g. Hall, 1990; van Gelderen, 1997), keystroke logging (e.g. Lindgren et al., 2008; Stevenson et al., 2006), texts (e.g. Allal, 2000; Faigley & Witte, 1981; F. Hyland, 2000; Min, 2006), and interviews (e.g. Porte, 1997; Sengupta, 2000; Sommers, 1980).

This section reviews studies in which revision is linked to fluency and characteristics of good writers. As mentioned above, the studies operationalise

and categorise revision changes in different ways. One similarity though is that they make a distinction between changes affecting the macro- level of writing (also referred to as global or conceptual revision) and changes affecting the micro-level of writing (also referred to as local, form-focused, or linguistic revision). Revision changes are also a common unit of analysis in studies on peer assessment and writing. This research is reviewed in Section 4.3.

#### 4.1.1 Linking revision to fluency

Cognitive models (Flower & Hayes, 1980; Hayes, 2012; W. Y. Wang & Wen, 2002; Subsection 3.1.1) depict writing as involving several interdependent parallel processes. Following the three orientations within the learning-to-write perspective (Section 3.1), research investigating cognitive processes focuses on the writer rather than the text, i.e. the product (Hirvela et al., 2016; I. Lee, 2016). Many of the studies within this field of L2 writing investigate the composition process and revolve around planning, formulation and revision. One of the interests related especially to L2 writing is fluency. In brief, being a fluent writer entails that the formulation process is less demanding, which in theory means that more time and effort can be devoted to idea development and organisation. Even if my project does not focus on either the writer or on fluency, research within these fields can shed light on my findings.

A temporal analysis of L2 (English) student writers in Spain found that proficiency level affected time allocation during the writing process (Roca de Larios et al., 2008). Three groups of students with varying levels of proficiency (referred to as Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) in English wrote timed argumentative essays while thinking aloud. It was clear that the less proficient students (Level 1, secondary-level students) devoted most of their time to formulation, that is “trying to convert thoughts and ideas into language” (Roca de Larios et al., 2008, p. 36) and very little time to planning and revision. The university students at Levels 2 and 3 allocated more time for planning and revision. Even if time devoted to formulation was high in all three groups, the more balanced division of time in the most proficient group suggests that “the ability of L2 writers to make their composition processes interact increases along with their command of the L2” (Roca de Larios et al., 2008, p. 43).

With the same research design and organisation of participants in three levels, formulation was further explored in another paper which included a comparison to L1 writing (Roca de Larios et al., 2006). In the analysis, a distinction was made between *Fluent Formulation* and *Problem-solving Formulation*. The latter, which constituted the focus of that study, consisted of compensatory and upgrading problems. Twice as much time was devoted to problem-solving in L2 compared to L1 across the three levels of

proficiency. However, while the less proficient writers in the Level 1 group mainly dealt with compensatory problems in L2, the Level 2 and Level 3 students paid attention to upgrading problems. In L1, compensatory problem-solving was practically non-existent across the three groups. In relation to L2 writing, it was suggested that “there is a developmental trend that seems to move in the direction of replacing one-dimensional models [of writing] with multidimensional ones” (Roca de Larios et al., 2006, p. 109).

Concerning planning, Manchón and Roca de Larios carried out a cognitively-oriented study which included secondary-level EFL students in Spain (2007). The students wrote timed argumentative texts in their L1 and L2 in a laboratory setting, and data were collected using think-aloud protocols. Findings showed that the secondary-level students hardly planned their work at all, neither in their L1 nor L2. In fact, none of the less proficient students completed outlines or produced any written preparation prior to writing. The more proficient writers in the same study used significantly more time for planning, for example by paying attention to idea development and organisation in an outline.

The studies reviewed above (Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008) indicate that writing processes vary depending on proficiency; especially the formulation process is more demanding in terms of time for the less proficient students. More specifically, these students engaged primarily with compensatory problem-solving, i.e. focusing on form during formulation. These studies were carried out in Spain. Even if the number of years that the secondary-level students had studied English correspond to the experience of the participants in my project, it is likely that the actual level of proficiency was lower (cf. *ESLC*, Skolverket, 2012b). In addition, the experimental design involving a timed essay and concurrent attention to verbalising the procedure could have affected the participants’ time allocation. However, it seems clear that the formulation process is more demanding in L2 than in L1 which affects the fluency of writing and therefore also the conceptualisation and rhetorical organisation.

These findings are corroborated by a large-scale study comparing L1 and L2 (English) writing with Dutch pupils in grade 8 (Schoonen et al., 2003). It was suggested that the effort put into formulation could inhibit the conceptual processing of young L2 writers, and the investigation showed that writing performance in both L1 and L2 was dependent on metacognitive and linguistic knowledge, as well as lexical and grammatical retrieval rates. For L2 writing, the correlation of linguistic knowledge and fluency was stronger.

Another way of studying fluency is to analyse revisions during the process. A Swedish study used keystroke logging to investigate 22 lower secondary pupils’ development of fluency and revision in L1 and L2 (English) writing (Lindgren et al., 2008). Not surprisingly, fluency was higher in L1; L2 writing fluency was inhibited by pauses and form-focused revisions. The number of conceptual revisions in these pupils’ writing seemed to be related to linguistic

experience, operationalised as years studying the language, rather than L1 or L2. Despite the relatively low L2 writing fluency, the pupils improved their L2 writing quality more than their L1 writing during the longitudinal study. This development could be attributed to increased fluency and the higher number of conceptual revisions in their texts. Interestingly, the pupils seemed to compensate for the low fluency in L2 by devoting more time to writing. This finding could indicate that they developed “a general view of both writing and text quality that transfers between the languages” (Lindgren et al., 2008, p. 147).

Similarly, lower secondary pupils in a Dutch study performed more linguistic, i.e. form-focused revisions in L2 (English) than in L1 (Stevenson et al., 2006). This small-scale study employed a keystroke analysis programme and think-aloud protocols to compare writing processes in L1 and L2 when the participants wrote two equivalent argumentative texts in each language. Despite the fact that the frequency of form-focused revisions was higher in L2, the number of conceptual revisions, affecting organisation and content, was similar in L1 and L2. In other words, the pupils’ attention to local level revision in L2 did not inhibit their attention to global-level revisions. It is worth noting though that the pupils made relatively few changes at the global level in both L1 and L2 and it is suggested that this was due to their age and inexperience of writing.

These studies with younger learners in the Netherlands and Sweden showed that the pupils had a high frequency of form-focused revisions in L2. This attention to linguistic difficulties affected the pupils’ fluency (Lindgren et al., 2008), a result which corresponds to the findings in the Spanish studies reviewed earlier (Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008) where compensatory problem-solving was common in the less proficient learners’ writing. However, this attention to form during writing did not seem to have an effect on conceptual revision as the pupils became more skilled at writing. Attention to so-called upgrading problems before compensatory problems increased with the level of proficiency in Roca de Larios et al. (2006), and the comparison of L1 and L2 writing by Stevenson et al. (2006) showed an equally low number of conceptual revisions in both languages. In these two studies, the students wrote timed essays; the Swedish lower secondary pupils in Lindgren et al. (2008) who had unlimited time to complete their essays increased the number of conceptual revisions during the course of the study. This improvement could indicate that these pupils used extra time to compensate for the lack of fluency. In addition, it was suggested that their perception of text quality was transferred between languages; this idea is comparable to Roca de Larios et al.’s implication that students move towards a multidimensional perspective on writing (2006).

Similar results have been documented in studies with adult learners; studies comparing fluency defined as a temporal phenomenon and measured by the rate of production of a written text have observed that L2 writers need more



time to formulate their texts (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Hall, 1990). Hall's (1990) case study with four ESL writers at advanced level showed that they made more revision changes in their L2 than in their L1; however, in terms of the proportion of types of revision changes, there were similarities in L1 and L2. Most of the alterations across the languages focused on single words and phrases. It was suggested that the similarities were due to transfer, either one-directional (L1 to L2) or bidirectional, and that this transfer constantly progressed.

It is evident that linguistic knowledge and fluency affect writing, which is also theorised in L1 and L2 cognitive models of the writing process (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hayes, 2012; W. Y. Wang & Wen, 2002). As these models show, other factors, such as world knowledge and task environment, also influence the process and the product. Consequently, the writers' age, experience, and conceptualisation of writing probably shape the writing process and the outcome (Stevenson et al., 2006). It is also likely that choice of genre affects writing quality (Porte, 1996; Stevenson et al., 2006).

The studies reviewed above focused on fluency by looking at revisions. The following subsection reviews studies which used revisions in writing to pinpoint characteristics of so-called good writers.

#### 4.1.2 Linking revision to good writers

Revision changes are also used to describe writers at various levels of proficiency and experience. Two articles on L1 writing published in the early 1980s, Sommers (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981), have influenced later studies in both L1 and L2 writing. Especially the taxonomy of revision changes developed by the latter has been used in several studies on peer assessment (Berg, 1999b; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Lam, 2013; Paulus, 1999) and it was also the inspiration for the categories developed and used in my project.

Using discontent with the "parody of writing" depicted by staged linear models of writing as a starting point, Sommers studied the revision processes of L1 student writers and experienced writers (1980, p. 379). The informants wrote three drafts of texts in three different genres: one expressive, one explanatory, and one persuasive essay, in addition to being interviewed. The student writers' main concern was lexical issues, "can I find a better word or phrase?" (Sommers, 1980, p. 381), and the changes were not related to the meaning of the text. Overall, their revisions seemed to be triggered by rules, inspiration, or by beliefs about the teacher reader's expectations. Conversely, the experienced writers perceived revision as "finding the form or shape of their argument" (p. 386); in other words, their changes were mainly meaning oriented, and they looked at the text holistically. They described the revision process as a quest in which they searched for their line of reasoning and the best way of presenting their ideas for the intended audience. Sommers'

conclusion was that the experienced writers attended to the dissonance, “the incongruities between intention and execution”, when revising their texts, whereas the student writers did not recognise these mismatches.

Faigley and Witte compared revision changes by three groups of writers: inexperienced student writers, advanced student writers, and expert adult writers (1981). The informants wrote two drafts of a descriptive text and their changes were analysed using a taxonomy which separates surface changes from text-based changes that alter the meaning. In terms of frequency, the vast majority of the inexperienced student writers’ revisions were surface-level changes. The other two groups also made numerous changes at the surface level; however, the advanced student writers completed twice as many meaning changes as the inexperienced student group and the expert writers three times as many. The most common type of revision change in both student groups entailed substituting a word for a synonym. By studying the various stages of the informants’ writing, Faigley and Witte also observed that the advanced students and the expert writers paid more attention to meaning in the early drafts and later focused on surface-level changes. The less experienced student writers revised for surface-level issues already in early versions of their drafts; at the end of the second writing session, they were hardly engaged in revision. Both Sommers (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981) concluded that revision need to be integrated with the other aspects of composition in instruction.

These two studies were carried out at university level with adult L1 writers. The comparison was made between groups of writers with various experience: student writers and expert writers, such as journalists or writers of fiction. In L2 writing studies, the informants are more often categorised according to language proficiency level.

With two participants considered to be good writers and two considered to be poor writers based on scores on an argumentative written task, Victori’s (1999) case study of Spanish EFL students examined their perceptions of themselves as EFL writers as well as their metacognitive knowledge. While writing and revising their texts, the good writers reported focusing on coherence and reorganisation, whereas the poor writers’ focus was on lexical and grammatical issues. Moreover, the poor writers’ view of writing was less complex than that of the better writers. In terms of genre knowledge, none of the students seemed aware of the purpose of the text; however, all but one reported that the audience influenced their writing. It was also clear that they saw the teacher as the reader of their essay and they believed that the teacher rated accuracy higher than content. Overall, the two skilled writers adopted a more flexible perspective on writing, for example by linking text organisation to various genres. The two less skilled writers, on the other hand, had a more rigid view of writing and seemed less aware of their strategy use during composition.

Another study with Spanish EFL students only included informants with low proficiency, as determined by a combination of a grammar test, a written text, and a judgement by their instructors (Porte, 1996). The students wrote four texts: two about a personal experience and two which involved argumentation. Two of the texts, one of each genre, were written during one timed session (first and final draft); the other two texts, again one of each genre, were written during two timed sessions (first, “in-between”, and final draft). The drafts were analysed using Faigley and Witte’s taxonomy of revision changes (1981), and the students were also interviewed. Results showed that the students mainly revised surface-level aspects of the texts, especially in their argumentative essays. Meaning-related changes did occur and they were slightly more frequent in the texts about personal experiences. The researchers believed that the topic, the personal experience, rather than the discourse type prompted more attention to ideas and content during revision. In the interviews, some students reported that they found it especially difficult to perform text-based revisions and others explained that they avoided changes to the meaning because of lack of time. These students also expressed the belief that EFL teachers mostly paid attention to grammar and spelling when grading essays, which affected their revision strategies. Another relevant piece of information obtained from interviews was that the students could not recall ever being taught how to revise texts.

The theme of the teacher’s implicit influence on revision changes was explored further in an interview-based study by the same researcher (Porte, 1997). Again, the participants were so-called underachievers. Similarly to the above-mentioned study (Porte, 1996), results showed that teachers’ apparent preferences influenced the students’ revisions. In addition, the students mainly characterised revision as a proofreading activity.

The studies summarised thus far compared inexperienced and experienced L1 writers (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980), good and poor L2 writers at similar levels of language proficiency (Victori, 1999), L2 students with various levels of language proficiency (Roca de Larios et al., 2008), or only included low proficiency L2 learners (Porte, 1996, 1997). Even if these studies included learners at various levels of proficiency, they were all university students with the exception of a small group of upper secondary students in Roca de Larios et al. (2008). The following study includes younger learners being trained to revise texts in their L1.

Van Gelderen carried out a study with Dutch L1 elementary pupils (1997). This study differs from the others not only due to its focus on young informants, but also since the pupils received some guidance in revision. The CDO-model (compare, diagnose, operate, see Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) was used to guide the pupils through the revision process, and an experimenter was also present to provide additional support. The research design was experimental, and the pupils did not revise their own writing; instead, they were given a text with micro-, meso-, and macro-level issues which was

composed especially for this experiment. Among other things, it was concluded that the pupils could use the CDO-model rather effectively. Nevertheless, whereas all pupils could fix micro-level issues, the more proficient pupils were extra successful in revising at the macro-level. The lack of revisions at the macro-level among some pupils could also explain the fact that most texts were not of higher quality after revision. Other interesting findings were that many of the young pupils seemed to operate on sentence level, thus neglecting to take the whole text into account when revising. Similarly, it seemed as if some pupils found it difficult to understand the text globally, missing the communicative content.

Allal (2000) reports on several studies involving sixth-grade L1 writers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. All studies adopted a metacognitive and self-regulatory perspective and two of the studies are relevant for younger learners' revision of writing. Revision changes (labelled transformations) were coded according to 1) the level of language affected by the transformation; 2) the type of transformation; 3) the object of the transformation; and 4) the relationship to language conventions (Allal, 2000, p. 151). The first small-scale case study with four pupils who wrote informative texts showed that all of them performed transformations belonging to all the categories listed above. However, the two high-achieving pupils carried out more optional transformations, paid more attention to organisation, and also used more complex transformations: substitutions and rearrangements (as opposed to addition and deletion). The results were explained by high achievers' better mastery of basic skills which affect the use of their metacognitive strategies.

To further investigate the role of instruction in the development of basic writing skills, an experimental study with a larger sample of sixth graders ( $n=135$ ) was carried out (Allal, 2000). Whereas half of the informants received instruction in what is described as a textbook approach to writing, focusing on componential skills, the other half were subjected to a socio-cognitive approach to writing. Among other things, activities within this approach involved focus on the communicative aim, audience and rhetorical choices, as well as scaffolding from teachers and peers during writing. At the end of the one-year intervention, the pupils wrote a narrative text and their revisions were coded in accordance with the categories used in the first study. The two experimental groups performed rather similarly and in contrast to the first study, the majority of the transformations were conventional and most of the operations were simple. The small number of optional transformations indicate that the pupils perceived revision as a proofreading activity. The differences between the revision changes in the two studies could be explained by the fact that the transformations occurred at different phases of the text production; the alterations during the first study were analysed at an early stage of writing (from notes to draft), whereas the alterations in the second study were revisions of a full draft (cf. Faigley and Witte, 1981).

Overall, a distinction appears in the comparison of inexperienced and less proficient writers on the one hand, and experienced and more proficient writers on the other hand, with regard to both L1 and L2 writing. The experienced and more proficient writers have a holistic approach to their text and to revision (Chenoweth, 1987; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980). Seeing a text holistically implies that meaning is foregrounded; consequently, experienced writers make more meaning-changing revisions than inexperienced ones (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980; van Gelderen, 1997; Victori, 1999). The expert writers seem to be guided by a mental image of the text's communicative purpose and intended audience and adjust their text accordingly by focusing on conceptualising their ideas before attending to micro-level aspects of writing. This image also indicates that they have a flexible view of texts and writing (Victori, 1999).

The writers referred to as inexperienced, less proficient, less effective, or even poor perceive revision as a proofreading activity (Allal, 2000; Porte, 1997). In terms of revision, this perception entails that these writers mainly operate on the surface-level and make lexical and grammatical changes (Allal, 2000; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Porte, 1996; van Gelderen, 1997; Victori, 1999). They do not share the expert writers' holistic picture of a text; these less experienced writers seem to regard the word and the phrase as the largest units of discourse. It has been suggested that inexperienced writers believe that the message is given once the words are put on paper (Sommers, 1980; van Gelderen, 1997). Van Gelderen's study with young writers also indicated that local revisions actually can affect writing quality negatively (1997). If words and phrases are changed without considering the text as a whole, the text can become incoherent. In the cases where the inexperienced writers do attend to meaning-changing revisions, they seem to be guided by inspiration or familiarity with the subject (Porte, 1996; Sommers, 1980).

It is interesting that text revisions by this diverse group of writers, referred to as inexperienced and/or less proficient, share similar characteristics. Some of them write in their L1, while others use their L2. Some of them are advanced-level university students, while others are primary school pupils. In terms of language proficiency, it is unclear how they compare since the studies use different standards. However, there is one common denominator; they are students: L1 university students (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980), L2 university students (Hall, 1990; Porte, 1996; Victori, 1999), and L1 elementary-level pupils (van Gelderen, 1997). It is not surprising that their revision strategies differ from those of the experienced writers, who are described as advanced student writers (Faigley & Witte, 1980) or professional writers (Sommers, 1980; Faigley & Witte, 1981). The students' idea of writing and revision is probably shaped by their writing instruction and the educational context. This idea is developed further in Subsection 4.2.2.

This subsection on revision changes has outlined differences between writers labelled as experienced or inexperienced. The so-called inexperienced

writers in the reviewed studies are students. The following section places the findings in the educational context and relates them to writing instruction.

## 4.2 The social context of writing

Writing can be linked to social context in various ways. Within the reader-oriented approach to teaching writing, context refers to “the purposes, goals and uses that the completed text may eventually fulfil” (K. Hyland, 2016, p. 21). This is also the broad understanding of context to which the present thesis adheres, in line with the notion of L2 writing as a cognitive and situated activity “tak[ing] place in a specific context with a specific goal and for a specific audience (Polio & Friedman, 2016, p. 1). Similarly, one of the long-term aims in the Swedish syllabus for English states that the pupils should develop their ability to “adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35).

The idea of a social context which influences texts is fundamental in genre theories and, thus, in genre-based pedagogies. There is, however, little research on genre-based pedagogies in EFL writing in school (I. Lee, 2016), and with few exceptions (e.g. A. Cheng, 2006; Kuteeva, 2013; Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011), ESP studies tend to focus on genre analysis rather than the learner or learning-to-write. Also, little attention has been paid to how genre analysis affects students’ written performance (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011). Instead, genre pedagogy in school is primarily associated with literacy studies and ESL writing research (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Ortmeier Hooper et al., 2016). Research in ESL contexts is often driven by social concerns, such as identity, empowerment, and social inclusion. More relevant for my project are studies exploring genre teaching linked to genre learning and awareness, especially related to the reader perspective; the notion of reader recurred in the review of studies on revision in writing (Section 4.1) and it is also a pertinent feature of genre pedagogy.

### 4.2.1 Genre teaching and learning

Two studies conducted in Asian EFL contexts attempted to link genre choices, and thus teaching and learning, closer to the students’ needs (Firkins, Forey, & Sengupta, 2007; Myskow & Gordon, 2010). Using a genre approach, Japanese EFL high school pupils were taught how to write a university application letter (Myskow & Gordon, 2010). The purpose of the study was to show how genre pedagogy can be used in the teaching of L2 writing. The selected genre addressed the pupils’ need to write this type of letter, and the importance of a well-defined audience, in this case described as the “gatekeepers of the universities they [the pupils] hope to attend”, was highlighted (2010, p. 286). In line with GBWI, the social context of the genre

was explored initially. The pupils studied university websites and identified the values and beliefs of their hoped future departments. On their own initiative, some pupils also attended open-campus days outside school hours. Next, the pupils engaged with genre analysis of sample texts, focusing not only on similarities but also on variation in the rhetorical patterns. The pedagogical idea behind this implementation was the “conception of students as investigators of social contexts and written texts” and the development of genre awareness by stressing the “bidirectional relationship between text and context” as a prerequisite for rule-breaking (Myskow & Gordon, 2010, p. 291). The study concluded that the dynamic nature of genres needs to be emphasised and that this feature distinguishes the genre-based approach from the product-based approach.

Another approach to contextualising the social and communicative context of a genre was explored in a study with Hong Kong EFL learners with learning disabilities (Firkins et al., 2007). For example, while working with a text on how to make Halloween decorations, the pupils also made masks, and to strengthen vocabulary learning before embarking on a new genre, the pupils smelled, tasted, and touched objects. The intervention was successful in terms of writing development and genre awareness and it was suggested that the approach provided the pupils “with the cognitive awareness that language is part of a complete text that occurs within an identifiable context” (Firkins et al., 2007, p. 348).

These two intervention studies placed emphasis on the social context of writing by actually involving the pupils in activities linked to the “real-world” usage of the genres (Firkins et al., 2007; Myskow & Gordon, 2010). Similarly, an intervention study of L1 English writing in an American high school set out to teach writing through “authentic exposure and immersion”; the specific goal was developing genre awareness and avoiding the “false” school writing for “unspecified audiences” (Whitney, Ridgeman, & Masquelier, 2011, p. 525). Key activities in the intervention involved focusing on the purpose of the two genres in question, nature writing and fairy tale, and engaging in metatalk about the texts; important ideas were the notions of “genres as living tools” and variability (Whitney et al., 2011, p. 527), similar to the intervention by Myskow and Gordon (2010). To strengthen the idea of authenticity, the teachers and pupils visited sites outside the school for nature writing and met with a professional writer to feel as part of the discourse community. This affiliation was again part of the idea of authenticity intended to help the pupils picture themselves as proficient users of the genre, rather than pupils completing a task. Interestingly, the researchers describe this venture as taking away some of the focus from genre writing, and for the second part of the writing project, the fairy tale, the instruction relied more greatly on metatalk. The intervention as a whole was described as successful in that the pupils placed themselves in the social situations of their genres.

It could, however, be argued that the school context weighed heavily upon these pupils' writing as they received teacher feedback during the writing process; it is likely that the revisions resulting from this feedback were more in line with the school context of writing. At least, this scenario is described in a Swedish study of the writing discourse in a Swedish (L1) year-six classroom (Lundgren, 2013). Adopting a critical literacy perspective, Lundgren followed this class during a teaching unit revolving around the genre letter to a newspaper editor. Similarly to the syllabus for English, one of the long-term aims of the teaching of Swedish is that the pupils develop their ability to "adapt language to different purposes, recipients and contexts" (Skolverket, 2018b, pp. 35, 263). The class teacher initially set the context and the purpose of the genre in interaction with the pupils, and the pupils studied authentic samples from a Swedish newspaper, as well as a magazine for young adolescents. It is reported that the oral feedback from the teacher on the pupils' first drafts of their letter to the editor lacked "meaningful response" on the structure of the text; consequently, the subsequent drafts missed some of the characteristics of this genre. After an intervention from the researcher, the rhetorical organisation was revisited, and the pupils self-assessed their own texts, revised them, and then produced drafts which were more in line with the expectations on letters to the editor. The conclusion discusses how the teaching of writing could present limitations and/or opportunities. For instance, teaching can "create a considerable difference for the student between copying down, understanding and reflecting and, by extension, being able to switch perspective to recipient" and should "act as a bridge between giving the students access to a genre's language and structure and possibilities to reconstruct a text from a critical perspective" (Lundgren, 2013, pp. 328–329).

This study portrays the challenge in bringing a "real-world" genre into a school context; for example, it is also mentioned the task did not have a clear recipient (Lundgren, 2013). The relationship between the reader and the writer in educational contexts is explored in a study by Holmberg with upper secondary pupils in Sweden (2010). The idea that the use of digital tools could reduce the distance between school writing and "real-world" writing constituted a starting point for the writing intervention in the subject Swedish (L1); indeed, an explicit goal of the teaching unit was that the pupils' letters to the editor would be published in an online version of a local newspaper. As such, guidelines for publication in this newspaper, as well as authentic exemplars of published letters constituted part of the teaching material. From studying the interaction in one of the writing groups, it became clear that the relationship between the writer, the writer-in-the-text, the genre, the reader-in-the-text, and the reader was complex (cf. Thompson & Thetela, 1995). For example, the teenagers adapted their personal opinions to a writer-in-the-text in order to adjust to the reader-in-the-text, in this case a reader of the local newspaper, in their initial discussions. After having been reminded of the



instructions and the limits in terms of time and length, the pupils seemed to switch perspectives and the text became a school task with the teacher as their reader. Consequently, it was suggested that the difference between the strategic choices involved with the publication of a letter to the editor and the institutional expectations of the school context created a tension and a distance between the writer and the writer-in-the-text. This study adopted an SFL perspective of genre and, as pointed out by Holmberg (2010), this genre pedagogy is primarily concerned with school writing; the ambiguous writing context (school and real world) is accepted and considered necessary (cf. Martin & Rose, 2005).

This ambiguity with regard to the writer(s) and the reader(s) was a recurrent theme in quite a few of the studies reviewed in Section 4.1. This theme is revisited in the subsequent section, where it is problematised with respect to the educational context and the task setting.

#### 4.2.2 Educational context and task setting

In terms of social context and writing, it is impossible to disregard the influence of the educational context on the writing process and product. As pointed out in Section 4.1, the common denominator for the informants labelled as inexperienced, unskilled, or less proficient writers in the reviewed studies seemed to be that they were students; hence, their writing took place in educational contexts, as opposed to that of so-called expert writers. It is obvious that students' approach to writing and revising is formed by the way writing is construed in their educational context, which was also considered in the research on genre teaching and learning in the previous subsection (4.2.1).

Many studies have compared the writing processes of students in L1 and L2 (Subsection 4.1.1). While it is clear that fluency is higher in L1 writing (Lindgren et al., 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003), some results indicate that time allocation and revision are similar in L1 and L2 (Lindgren et al., 2008; Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Roca de Larios et al., 2006; Stevenson et al., 2006). These similarities could be explained by a multidimensional model of writing (Roca de Larios et al., 2006, p. 109) and examined from a "multi-competency perspective" (Lindgren & Stevenson, 2013, p. 391).

Younger learners develop L1 and L2 writing concurrently. A study by Lindgren and Stevenson (2013) with 11-year-old Swedish pupils observed that these pupils' writing in L1 (Swedish) and L2 (English) showed "more commonalities than differences" in terms of interactional resources (p. 402). As in my project, the pupils wrote letters about themselves and their lives; at the macro-level of writing, which in Lindgren and Stevenson's study comprised of information and interaction, there was an equal ratio of units across the languages. A tentative conclusion is that these novice writers are multi-competent; the similarities are not a result of transfer, but rather an

emerging general writing competence. This notion of multi-competence is relevant to consider from a pedagogical perspective. It is, for instance, likely that students' previous experience of writing is not only formed in school but also stems from extramural language use.

Students' revision practices can also reflect previous experiences of writing. It seems as if less experienced writers tend to conceptualise revision differently from experienced writers. The less skilled writers perceive revision as a proofreading activity (Porte, 1997) and a final stage of writing rather than as a recursive process (Barkaoui, 2007). It is possible that these perceptions are due to the students' experience of writing throughout education. Indeed, it could be argued that writing instruction is still influenced by a linear model of writing: planning–writing–revising. It is therefore vital that teachers keep up to date with writing theories and research (Barkaoui, 2007). Some of the students asserted that they had never been taught how to revise (Porte, 1997), while the study by van Gelderen included revision training (1997). In addition, feedback, which normally precedes revision in school contexts, can be used to draw the inexperienced writers' attention to the global aspects of writing, rather than surface-level corrections (Chenoweth, 1987).

Another aspect of writing which is said to distinguish experienced and inexperienced writers is audience awareness; the experienced writers see the dissonance, the gap between the message they want to convey and how the readers understand the text (Sommers, 1980). Interestingly, findings from studies with student writers indicate that they also have a reader in mind when revising: their teacher (Porte, 1996, 1997; Sommers, 1980; Victori, 1999). If the students perceive that their teachers favour accuracy in their assessment and grading, the students revise their texts in line with this expectation.

This perception is supported by research on teacher feedback and student self-assessment. For instance, a longitudinal experimental study with secondary-level pupils in Hong Kong evaluated the effects of explicit instruction into revision strategies, including elements of peer and self-assessment (Sengupta, 2000). The revision instruction focused on making the text "reader-friendly", as opposed to the traditional teaching which highlighted accuracy. Holistic pre- and post-testing of writing proficiency found that the pupils in the experimental group improved their writing more than the pupils in the control group. The experimental group had adopted the idea of a reader, but it was clear that the reader was the teacher and that the driving force was to receive better grades and to "get a glimpse of 'how the teacher thought'" (Sengupta, 2000, p. 108).

A study on feedback provision on a narrative text with teachers from several countries showed that their comments mainly addressed local aspects of writing, such as grammar and lexis; thus, the teachers did not react to the text as "readers of communication" (Furieux, Paran, & Fairfax, 2007). Similarly, secondary-level pupils in a study on self-assessment of writing in Sweden highlighted grammar and language in their own writing, probably

mirroring the teacher assessment to which they were accustomed (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009), and pupils in a Swedish L1 writing study also perceived the teacher as the reader (Norberg Brorsson, 2007). In contrast, the English teachers in Pålsson Gröndahl's study carried out in a Swedish lower secondary school included an equal amount of feedback on global and local aspects on their pupils' writing (2015). In her study on Swedish lower secondary pupils' L1 writing, Norberg asks if it is possible to turn school writing into a truly meaningful activity (2015). Drawing on research on L1 writing in Norway and Sweden (e.g. Berge, 1988; Palmér & Östlund-Stjärnegård, 2005), it is discussed to what extent pupils actually can disregard the school context when writing, by for example addressing a fictitious reader (Norberg, 2015). The purpose of writing in educational settings is still first and foremost to show writing ability and to be assessed.

Likewise, seeing the reader as "someone who provides feedback" was also characteristic for the ten-year-old writers in a study that especially investigated writers' reader awareness (Lindgren, Leijten, and Van Waes, 2011, p. 213). The study compared six writers from Sweden and Belgium as they wrote three texts intended for different audiences. The writers represented three levels of experience: two ten-year-old pupils, two fourteen-year-old pupils, and two professional writers. Similar to the studies reported in Subsection 4.1.2, the professional writers displayed an explicit reader awareness as observed in their writing processes and reported in interviews. What distinguishes this study from many others in the field is that instruction and training were considered. The results indicated that there were similarities between the professional writers and the fourteen-year-old writers in terms of reader awareness; however, writing strategies and knowledge differed. The authors suggest that learning—and thus teaching—is more important than maturation for writing development: "[c]onscious practice and knowledge of genre, writing strategies, and language will enable writers to automatise more features during writing and focus more on the intended learner" (Lindgren et al., 2011, p. 215).

The role of the intended audience in shaping the format, style, and content of the text is fundamental in genre theory and pedagogy (K. Hyland, 2004; Swales, 1990; Subsection 3.1.4). The intended reader and audience awareness are therefore explicitly addressed in GBWI. Even so, there is conflict between the notion of the reader-in-the-text and the real reader, as observed in the studies reviewed in the previous subsection (4.2.1). The studies describe how teaching involved activities intended to connect the genre to real-world activities by addressing pupils' needs (Myskow & Gordon, 2010), engaging the pupils in related activities (Firkins et al., 2007), experiencing the context and meeting professional writers (Whitney et al., 2011), and writing for publication in a newspaper (Holmberg, 2010). However, it is also described how the educational context interferes with and supersedes the real-world context when pupils receive feedback or are reminded of constraints in terms

of process and time (Holmberg, 2010; Lundgren, 2013). A similar observation was made by Palmér (2013) in her report on the national standardised test in Swedish (L1) before and after the implementation of the most recent syllabus in 2011. The duality of the fictitious reader and the teacher as the real reader is problematised from a pedagogical perspective and it is concluded that this duality is necessary. Without the real-world connection and the fictitious reader, school writing would be limited and one-dimensional.

Following the discussion about the reader, genre choices can also affect the writing process and outcome. A descriptive study in Swedish lower secondary L1 classrooms showed that typical school genres and especially narrative texts are the most common (Norberg Brorsson, 2007). In line with a process-oriented approach to writing, the individual was foregrounded, and most texts were based on personal experience. In upper secondary school, a core of genres could be identified (Nyström, 2000). Two typical school genres, expository essay and factual presentation, were frequent, as were the story and the book review, which could be considered real-world genres presented in a “school form”. Similar to Norberg Brorsson (2007), Nyström noted that there is little progression in terms of genre complexity (2000).

A lack of progression was also apparent in a study comparing upper secondary pupils’ discursive writing in English and Swedish (Apelgren & Holmberg, 2018). Regardless of text type and language, most pupils adopted a similar text structure with little development over three years. Comparable to the discussion related to the reader, it is suggested that pupils’ perception of the context and of themselves as writers affect the way they structure their texts.

Genre choices in studies with EFL pupils differ. Pålsson Gröndahl’s (2015) informants wrote letters and film reviews, whereas genres such as the article, the letter to editor, and the letter of complaint were employed by Dragemark Oscarson (2009). In the latter case, the researcher cooperated with the teachers in the planning of one of the writing tasks (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009). This procedure is obviously common when it comes to research; the use of genres in studies of L2 writing does not necessarily reflect ordinary classroom practice.

Not surprisingly, most of the studies reviewed in this chapter have employed some kind of expository text (e.g. M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005; Moore & MacArthur, 2012; Porte, 1996; Roca de Larios et al., 2006; Stevenson et al., 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Other types of texts used are, for example, paragraphs (Rahimi, 2013), summaries (Hu & Lam, 2010), discussions (Tsui & Ng, 2000), and narratives (Chang, 2015). Overall, there is little reference to the potential impact of genre on revision, feedback, and final product; most of them used the broad distinction between the macro- and micro-level aspects of writing to evaluate the revision changes, but without reference to genre-specific traits.

The role of time in relation to revision and text quality is also worth considering from the perspective of educational context. As shown in several studies, L2 writers spend much time formulating their texts (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008); as a result, fluency, defined as rate of production, is lower in L2 than in L1 (Hall, 1990; Schoonen et al., 2003). If time is limited, it is possible that the learners focus on quick fixes. Indeed, the Spanish EFL learners in Porte's study found text-based revisions difficult and time-consuming (1996). In their study comparing EFL students at three levels, 6, 9, and 12 years of English instruction, Roca de Larios et al. (2008) observed that the least proficient students only devoted 6% of their time to revision. The equivalent percentages for the more proficient students were 21% and 16%, respectively. Seeing that the students only had one hour to complete their texts and that the time devoted to formulation was higher for the Level 1 students, it is not surprising that they had less time for revision. Lindgren et al. (2008) found that the secondary-level students compensated the lack of fluency in L2 with time; they spent more time writing their texts in L2 than in L1. This strategy entails that the students get sufficient time for writing.

Time can also be related to drafting. Porte (1996) evaluated two types of writing conditions: one 60-minute session or two 60-minute sessions three days apart. The students reported that time mattered in their writing; they needed time to reflect on their writing. It was therefore concluded that it was not time as such which affected revision quality but "rather the distance that can be created between the writer and his or her text by the judicious distribution of time across a number of sessions" (Porte, 1996, p. 115). Consequently, time and task setting can affect students' writing quality.

Writing under time pressure can be considered unnatural from an authentic extramural perspective and can put pressure on the student writers (Porto, 2001). Still, timed essays are common for assessment purposes, even if the teaching of writing often involves multiple drafts and feedback (Walker & Pérez Ríu, 2008). This condition reflects the Swedish context; feedback and multiple drafting are common in writing instruction, but the national standardised test for writing in English in year 9 has a time cap, 80 minutes, during which the pupils should plan, write, and revise their text. By comparison, the pupils are allowed more time for writing in Swedish, 200 minutes, and the entire test, including the oral and receptive parts, is organised around the same theme.

As shown, students' perception of writing influences their process and their products. This perception is construed in school and it is therefore vital to consider writing instruction in L2 writing research. The impact of peer assessment on L2 writing is also linked to teaching. The subsequent sections review studies on peer assessment of L2 writing.

### 4.3 Peer assessment of L2 writing

The impact of peer assessment and peer feedback on learning about writing has received much attention, and numerous studies have contributed to the understanding of student involvement in the assessment practice of L2 writing. Two recent review articles on L2 writing and peer assessment bear testimony to this interest (Chang, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2016).

In direct relation to L2 writing and peer feedback provision, research has focused on

- students' perception and use of teacher, peer and self-feedback (Birjandi & Hadidi Tamjid, 2012; Chen, 2010; Diab, 2010, 2011; F. Hyland, 2000; Lam, 2013; M-K. Lee, 2015; Matsuno, 2009; Paulus, 1999; Ruegg, 2017; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Sengupta, 1998; Suzuki, 2009; Yang et al., 2006; Zhao, 2014);
- the effect of students' language proficiency on peer feedback (Kamimura, 2006; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009);
- the impact of received peer comments on revision (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Diab, 2010, 2011; Min, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhao, 2014);
- the influence of text quality on peer comments (Gao, Schunn, & Yu, 2019);
- potential benefits for the peer reviewer (Berggren, 2015; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Yu, 2019);
- the effects of peer-review training (Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013; Stanley, 1992);
- students' stances towards peer review (Min, 2008; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Yu & Lee, 2015);
- the impact of cultural context (F. Hyland, 2000; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhao, 2014); and
- the use of language during interaction (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Villamil & de Guerrero, 2006).

The review articles highlight some under-researched areas; for instance, the research is concentrated to certain Asian countries and explores ESL/EFL students at tertiary-level education, which means that there are few studies in European contexts and with primary- and secondary-level pupils (Chang, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2016). In terms of writing development, little research has explored the impact of feedback on the various aspects of writing, such as organisation, content, and language (Yu & Lee, 2016). Interestingly, most studies are classroom-based, but few studies have focused on the role of instruction in implementing peer feedback; in addition, there is still a need to "bridge the gap between research and practice" (Yu & Lee, 2016, p. 485).

Even if the research field is rather dynamic, relatively few teachers adopt and use peer-review activities regularly in their classroom practice.

#### 4.3.1 Effectiveness and perceptions of peer assessment in L2 writing

Studies on the effectiveness of peer feedback on L2 writing often use feedback adoption rate or comparison of pre- and post-tests to determine the impact of peer feedback on L2 writing. Peer assessment or feedback is then often contrasted with teacher and/or self-feedback, with the purpose of pinpointing the most effective feedback provider (Chen, 2010; Diab, 2010; Lam, 2013; Matsuno, 2009; Suzuki, 2008; Yang et al., 2006). In terms of adoption rate of feedback comments, which is a quantitative measurement, the results consistently show that teacher feedback is favoured before peer feedback.

For example, 90% of the usable teacher feedback resulted in changes, whereas the corresponding percentage of peer feedback was 67% in a study with Chinese EFL university students (Yang et al., 2006). Usable, in this context, refers to the feedback's "potential for revision of a draft" (F. Hyland, 1998, pp. 261–262). Nevertheless, nearly all the adopted peer feedback resulted in successful revision, as compared to less than 90% of the teacher feedback. The group of students receiving teacher feedback also improved their texts more than the students in the peer feedback group. The improvement was measured by a comparison of the teacher's grades on the draft and the final version, respectively (Yang et al., 2006).

Similar differences have been reported in several studies (e.g. Lam, 2013; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000). A research design where the students receive peer feedback on early drafts and teacher feedback on subsequent drafts, as in Lam (2013), Paulus (1999), and Tsui and Ng (2000), is likely to influence the adoption rate. In addition, revisions which cannot be attributed to either teacher or peer feedback are probably self-initiated or from "another outside source" (Paulus, 1999, p. 269); some studies explicitly include self-induced revision in their research design in order to account for these changes (e.g. Diab, 2010; Lam, 2013; Suzuki, 2008). Training also affects peer feedback adoption rates (Min 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006; Section 4.4.1). It could be argued that adoption rates as a measurement of impact on writing is a rather blunt instrument; by complementing these quantitative measurements with qualitative analyses, a more complex and to some degree different representation of the usefulness of peer feedback emerges.

Feedback from teachers and peers, respectively, seem to emphasise different aspects of writing. In Yang et al.'s study (2006), the peer feedback resulted in more meaning-based changes and more successful revision compared to teacher feedback. It is discussed that the relatively small number of surface changes based on peer feedback was due to a mistrust of peers'

linguistic knowledge. The students in the peer feedback group also made more changes considered self-corrections. It was concluded that the oral peer interaction reduced the misinterpretation of feedback and that “the more they [the students] doubted the feedback, the more likely it was that they would develop their own independent ideas they had for revision”; in other words, peer feedback “appears to promote student autonomy” (Yang et al., 2006, pp. 192–193).

By contrast, a group of secondary-level pupils considered the teacher feedback at macro-level more useful than peer feedback (Tsui & Ng, 2000). This perception was partly due to the lack of specificity in peers’ comments which made them difficult to adopt. In terms of adoption rate, there was large variation in the group. The trustworthiness of the feedback giver seemed to be a determining factor; the teacher as a figure of authority, knowledgeable person, and educator was, not surprisingly, considered a more reliable source of feedback. The pupils who adopted a high percentage of peer comments seemed to rely more on their own ability to assess the feedback; hence, peer feedback can promote autonomy and ownership of text (Tsui & Ng, 2000).

An intervention study with Chinese university students sought to address students’ concerns with the trustworthiness by letting the teacher comment on the peer feedback (Zhao, 2014). Not surprisingly, the feedback points to which the teacher ‘fully agreed’ were more frequently ‘fully used’ by the feedback receivers, than feedback points without the teacher’s stamp of approval.

In Paulus’ study, both teacher and peer feedback resulted in a high number of meaning-based changes (1999). However, the majority of the changes were attributed to other sources than the teacher or the peer, most likely the self. There was much variation between the individual students though, similar to Tsui & Ng (2000). This variation could be related to students’ differing revision practices: “students need to develop individualized strategies for incorporating feedback in an effective and positive way before their writing will improve” (Paulus, 1999, p. 283).

Understanding feedback was an issue in a study by Zhao (2010). More teacher feedback than peer feedback was incorporated in the Chinese EFL learners’ revisions, but a higher percentage of the peer comments were understood by the students. As mentioned previously, this can be related to student autonomy and the ability to value the feedback received (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006); likewise, it is possible to draw comparisons with the notion of “mindful reception” as suggested by Bangert-Drowns et al. (1991, p. 233).

The studies reviewed so far relate the idea of autonomy and reflection to peer feedback, as peers can be considered a less reliable source of information. Another take is presented by Lam (2013). His investigation of different sources of assessment in a portfolio found that the teacher feedback encouraged the students to reflect on and subsequently revise their draft; in this case the formulation of the feedback promoted self-assessment.



To say the least, peer feedback is complex, and studies present partly contradictory findings. As was explored in relation to L2 writing, teaching and task setting can affect the product (Subsection 4.2.2), and Section 4.4 will zoom in on the role of instruction, preparation, and guidance in relation to peer-review activities in the classroom. Another factor which is often considered in relation to peer assessment is the students' perceptions. Implementing peer assessment procedures entails a shift of power from the teacher to the students which can seem frightening and make students—and teachers—insecure. As mentioned above, this insecurity often relates to doubts concerning peers' ability to provide valid feedback (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). As summarised by Chang (2016), studies show that peer feedback is appreciated as a complement to teacher feedback; if students are forced to choose between teacher and peer feedback, teacher feedback is favoured.

A recent study by Gao et al. (2019) is innovative as the starting point is the text, instead of the “writer/reviewer/comment-centric perspective” (p. 1) adopted in most other studies. They examined the extent to which reviewers attended to specific problems in peers' text. The participants were BA students of English at a Chinese university writing literature reviews. Hence, the task was considered complex. They found that the comments did not always match the relevance of the writing problems; basic elements of academic writing received more comments. It was suggested that the more complex issues of writing need to be highlighted in instruction and feedback training.

My project focuses on pupils as peer reviewers; the following section reviews studies with special attention to feedback provision.

#### 4.3.2 Learning by giving feedback

There are few studies which focus primarily on the peer reviewer and L2 writing. The two reviews on peer feedback in L2 writing recently published confirm the paucity (Chang, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2016); this subsection also includes research which has addressed potential benefits for reviewers even if this was not the primary aim of the study. In addition, some studies on peer review in L1 writing are included, since they attend to topics relevant for my project.

In a study by Lundstrom & Baker (2009), students enrolled in university L2 writing classes at two proficiency levels were divided into two groups with the purpose of studying potential benefits in terms of writing proficiency for the peer reviewers. The study employed an experimental design with a control group of receivers, i.e. students who only received peer feedback and an experimental group of reviewers, i.e. students who only provided feedback. The receivers were trained in how to use feedback for revision, whereas the reviewers practised giving feedback intended to improve a piece of writing. A rubric comprising both holistic and analytical aspects of writing was used to

score essays written before and after the treatment, i.e. receiving or giving feedback. It was discerned that the reviewers, especially at the beginner level, improved the global aspects of their essays more than the local aspects. Also, students who reviewed their peers' writing improved their own written proficiency more than those who only received peer feedback. This improvement was explained by the development of transferrable skills which could be used for self-assessment.

Another study which focused on the peer reviewers was carried out with a group of EFL writers in Japan (Rosalia, 2010, cited in Yu & Lee, 2016). The study used a mixed-method approach, including proficiency tests, student texts, and interviews. The informants were EFL students working as peer advisors in an online writing centre who received feedback training and gave feedback to other students. After 12 weeks, the peer reviewers' writing quality was compared with other EFL students' in a persuasive written task. Findings show that the overall written quality did not improve from giving feedback, but the peer reviewers' texts were longer and comprised more metadiscoursal features. In comparison with the group of students who did not provide feedback, the peer reviewers employed more writing strategies; also, these students' self-regulation was prompted by engagement with peer review.

Yu (2019) investigated learning from giving feedback on Master's degree theses at a Chinese university. The study involved seven students who received feedback training, including explanations of the criteria. Peer feedback was provided on subsequent drafts, and the participants were interviewed about their perception of learning; they were also engaged in stimulated recall related to their written comments. The master students self-reported increased genre awareness that they found helpful for enhancing their own theses; they transferred good examples from their peers' writing into their texts. To complement the brief feedback training, the students consulted external sources to be able to provide good feedback. These sources included dictionaries, research articles and online information about referencing, among other things. These results indicate that the incorporation of peer feedback can improve students' learning about writing theses (Yu, 2019).

To my knowledge, these three studies of ESL and EFL university students (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Rosalia, 2010, cited in Yu & Lee, 2016; Yu, 2019) are the only ones focusing primarily on the peer reviewer and L2 writing, except for Berggren (2013, 2015) that are based on data from my Study 1 and incorporated in the present thesis. However, some studies have also reported findings related to giving feedback, even if that was not the main object of study. These findings are generally based on self-report.

It has been suggested that peer reviewers' own writing can benefit from improved audience awareness as a result of giving feedback. Berg (1999b) discussed how peer response can improve students' ability to identify potential communication problems since this activity provides a "model for how to read a text through the eyes of someone else" (p. 232) that the students can employ

in their own revision process. Similarly, junior high school pupils in Hong Kong self-reported enhanced awareness of the readability of their own texts after having reviewed peers' texts (M-K. Lee, 2015). The reader perspective was also commented on by Tsui & Ng (2000) whose results indicated that by addressing peers rather than the teacher, more effort was placed on avoiding miscommunication. In fact, the secondary school pupils in their study self-reported that reading peers' texts was more useful for their own writing than receiving peer comments. A case study with Chinese university students also showed that peer feedback provision can be considered a "learning-oriented activity", beneficial for the reviewer (Yu & Lee, 2015, p. 578).

Chang addressed audience awareness directly and stated that peer reviewers need a dual perspective: "awareness of reviewer-reviewee relationship as well as reviewees' needs" (2015, p. 5). Since the reviewees' needs involve being able to improve their text, the peer reviewers should provide comments that focus on global aspects of writing. Simultaneously, the peer reviewers need to consider their audience, i.e. the feedback receivers, when formulating the feedback (Chang, 2015). Providing peer feedback can therefore enhance audience awareness from two angles. Conversely, the secondary-level pupils in Sengupta (1998) did not perceive that acting as peer reviewers developed their awareness of the reader. The study was based on an intervention emphasising texts' reader-friendliness and revision strategies; however, despite defining the reader as a "real-world" concept, the pupils believed that the teacher was the real reader. Consequently, the perceived purpose of reading essays was grading, and most of the pupils believed that peer feedback was a "waste of time" (Sengupta, 1998, p. 22).

L2 learners in several studies have self-reported an increased awareness of the importance of global aspects in their own writing due to peer-review activities, including training on how to provide useful feedback (e.g. Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005). Generally, global feedback comments are considered more effective than comments on local issues, since the former are more likely to prompt high-quality revision changes with the receiver (Chang, 2015; Rahimi, 2013). As such, the importance of rhetorical organisation and content before grammar and spelling is frequently emphasised in feedback training (Berg, 1999b; Chang, 2015; Connor & Asenavage, 1994). This emphasis seems to not only impact the peer feedback, but also influence the reviewers' own perception of good writing. Several studies comparing feedback comments from trained and untrained reviewers, respectively, report an increase in comments dealing with organisation and meaning with the trained peer reviewers (Berg, 1999b; Chang, 2015; Min, 2005).

In addition to the development of the students' writing proficiency in terms of audience awareness and focus on global aspects of writing, vocabulary learning, enhanced self-reflection, and problem-solving have been reported from several studies (Chen, 2010; Diab, 2011; Hu & Lam, 2010; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013; Ruegg, 2017; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhao, 2014). For example,

70% of the students in Yang et al. (2006) recognised that reviewing peers' texts provided them with good examples of writing that could help them overcome their own weaknesses. In Min's study about effective feedback training (2005), some peer reviewers reported vocabulary learning from having to formulate specific feedback. In addition, students found it easier to identify and solve problems in their own text after the peer-review activity. Likewise, secondary-level pupils believed that they improved their ability to spot weaknesses in their own writing thanks to giving feedback (Tsui & Ng, 2000), and Iranian university students in a study by Rahimi (2013) developed their critical thinking in relation to their own writing. Considering sociocultural theory, Rahimi (2013) discusses that benefits for the reviewers can be attributed to the various social and cognitive activities involved in peer review.

To sum up, research has shown that peer reviewing can be beneficial for L2 writing. Global aspects of writing seem to benefit especially from reading and commenting on peers' texts and it is likely that this advantage is strengthened by the emphasis on organisation and content in feedback training (Subsection 4.4.1). There is also some evidence that providing peer feedback is more useful than receiving peer feedback (e.g. Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Ruegg, 2017).

In addition to the above-mentioned research on L2 writing, a number of studies on L1 disciplinary writing are relevant for the present investigation since they focus on the peer reviewers. Y. H. Cho & Cho (2011) studied the relationship between giving feedback comments and improving the quality of essay writing with undergraduates in physics. It was found that providing comments which focused on the meaning of the reviewed essays, both weaknesses and strengths, prompted an improved quality of writing after the reviewers' own revisions. Similar to some of the above-mentioned studies, these findings were discussed in the light of an increase of audience awareness. In addition, the enhanced written proficiency was attributed to a better understanding of the essay criteria. Y. H. Cho & Cho (2011) also suggested that both good and bad examples of writing can prove beneficial for the reviewers' writing skills. In short, the results supported their learning-writing-by-reviewing hypothesis.

Another experimental study by K. Cho & MacArthur (2011) introduced a distinction between reading and reviewing. Physics undergraduates either read or peer reviewed lab reports in their L1, followed by the undertaking of an individual writing assignment. A comparison of the writing outcomes post treatment revealed that the group of reviewers outperformed the readers as well as the students in the control group, who neither read nor reviewed sample lab reports. The difference was explained by the higher cognitive process involved in identifying and solving problems, i.e. producing peer feedback. It was also found that the number of comments identifying problems in the peer-reviewed texts could be connected to the increased writing quality.

That receiving feedback impacted more on learning than producing feedback was self-reported by university students of engineering in the UK (Nicol, Thomson, & Breslin, 2014). However, when asked directly about their revisions, the students found giving and receiving feedback equally useful. Whereas receiving feedback helped them identify and specify problem areas in their writing and provide a reader's perspective on their text, producing feedback seems to have triggered "powerful mental processes" such as critical thinking, understanding of assessment criteria, and skill transfer (Nicol et al., 2014, p. 112). Similarly to K. Cho & MacArthur (2011), this study describes peer reviewing as a reflective process which engages students' critical judgment.

These studies on L1 disciplinary writing support findings from L2 writing research which suggest that peer reviewing is beneficial. In addition, the experimental design of K. Cho & MacArthur (2011) rendered possible a comparison of reading and reviewing as two separate activities. This comparison clearly showed that peer reviewing improves writing proficiency more than reading alone.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are very few studies with younger learners. Except for the study by Tsui & Ng (2000), all the studies reviewed so far were conducted at university level. Moore & MacArthur (2012) carried out an experimental study with primary-level L1 learners and compared three conditions: 1) reading and analysing peers' texts; 2) observing classmates' text discussions; and 3) practicing writing (the control group). The fifth-grade pupils wrote a draft of a persuasive text before they were placed in one of the treatment groups. The pupils assigned to the reading-and-analysing group, i.e. peer review, improved the quality of their subsequent drafts significantly compared to the pupils in the control group. During the activity, the peer reviewers had read and discussed their peers' texts with a focus on the persuasive elements of the texts; think-aloud data showed that the improved writing quality could be attributed to increased awareness of the text's communicative purpose. However, a transfer writing task carried out one week after the first written task showed no significant differences between the three experimental groups. It was hypothesised that this result was due to the briefness of the intervention.

To conclude, studies within both L2 writing and L1 disciplinary writing have reported benefits for the peer reviewer. These benefits include an increased understanding of the reader perspective, resulting in global-level revisions rather than mere error correction. Moreover, reviewing peers' texts seems to inspire students to include new ideas when they revise their own texts. Students have also self-reported improved critical thinking skills which facilitate self-review; this indicates that transfer of skills developed in peer-review activities results in improved writing proficiency for the reviewer. Contradictory findings have been reported; some students find receiving feedback more useful for revision than giving feedback, and for the EFL

writers acting as peer advisors in Rosalia's study (2010, cited in Yu & Lee, 2016), the writing quality did not improve from giving feedback.

With the paucity of studies on writing and learning from giving feedback it is not possible to draw any general conclusions. It is noteworthy that the studies reviewed above employ various methods. Two of the studies focusing on the peer reviewer in L2 or L1 writing are experimental and use different measurements. Lundstrom & Baker (2009) compared the writing quality of feedback-givers and feedback-receivers after revision, whereas K. Cho & MacArthur's (2011) treatment groups either simply read peers' texts or reviewed them. Yu's (2019) exploration of benefits at a Chinese university is a case study relying primarily on self-reports and stimulated recall, and some of the studies that compare teacher and peer feedback (Tsui & Ng, 2000) or effects of feedback training on comments (Min, 2005) report findings related to learning from giving feedback based on student questionnaires or interviews.

#### 4.3.3 Collaborative writing

Peer interaction and collaboration form part of successful peer review; these are factors which are also highlighted in research on collaborative writing. In addition, peer-review activities and collaborative writing activities both involve assessment of texts intended to improve a draft. The most significant difference appears to be that in collaborative writing the process as well as the product are shared (Storch, 2013); peer review, on the other hand, occurs once or at certain intervals of the writing process, and the decision-making and the writing as such are individual activities. Thus, the ownership of the text lies with the one writer and not with a group.

Storch (2013) provides an extensive overview of research into collaborative writing. Most of the studies involve high proficiency L2 learners and the research is mainly SLA-oriented; in other words, writing-to-learn, especially in terms of accuracy, is emphasised rather than learning-to-write (cf. Hirvela et al., 2016). Nevertheless, collaborative writing research shows that learners engage in discussions about both micro- and macro-level aspects of writing (Neuman & McDonough, 2015).

A synthesis of studies involving peer collaboration in relation to L2 writing suggests that the negotiations which occur within the group direct the learners' attention to specific linguistic features, by involving the students in speech acts such as disagreements, agreements, and explanations (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012). The researchers discuss whether the collaboration allows the students to work at a higher cognitive level, while at the same time reducing the cognitive load. Overall, results show that students who are at or above intermediate level improve their vocabulary and develop their grammatical awareness and usage from working together (Storch, 2013; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012). Results from a longitudinal experimental study indicate that the

students who worked in pairs learned more about the macro-level of writing and vocabulary than the students who worked individually on the written tasks. Vis-à-vis mechanics and grammar, there were no differences between the experimental and control groups. It is discussed whether the results can be explained by the students' relatively low proficiency level (Storch, 2013).

A small number of studies present what could be considered hybrids of collaborative writing and peer review. A recent paper reports on an initial phase of a larger study examining collaborative writing, review, and revision at a college in Saudi Arabia (Alshuraidah & Storch, 2019). The experimental study compared collaborative and individual peer feedback provision. Overall, there were only minor differences between the two conditions: the number of feedback points was similar and the focus of the feedback in terms of structure, content, and language of the reviewed texts was equally distributed. However, in the collaborative peer feedback, there was a higher ratio of comments focusing on problems in the reviewed texts than in the individual feedback group.

Neumann and McDonough's study (2015) with EAP students focused on peer interaction during pre-writing activities. The study involved structured collaborative prewriting tasks, including, for example, brainstorming and discussion of students' individual plans. Similar to peer review, the students wrote individual texts after this activity. In relation to text quality, the findings indicated a correlation between pre-writing discussions and overall text quality.

Another example of an amalgamation between collaborative writing and peer review is what Memari Hanjani (2016) refers to as collaborative revision. The participants were Persian EFL university students, and the study addressed issues discussed in relation to the implementation of peer feedback in contexts where the teacher role is authoritative; collaborative revision is described as "an intermediate approach" between teacher and peer feedback and as "a method during which classmates jointly revise their individually written papers by using the feedback and comments provided by their instructors" (Memari Hanjani, 2016, pp. 296–297). The participants perceived this activity beneficial for their L2 writing, both in terms of pedagogy and affective factors.

## 4.4 Preparation and guidance

A recurring theme in studies concerning peer review in L2 writing is the importance of training in order to be a proficient peer or self-reviewer (e.g. Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013; Stanley, 1992). This practice generally focuses on several features relevant for useful peer review, such as feedback etiquette, what aspects of writing to consider, and how to include formative information. Feedback training usually involves activities such as

modelling (e.g. Berg, 1999a) and teacher-student conferences focusing especially on the production of effective feedback comments (e.g. Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013). In addition, it is common that the students receive written guidelines to help them through the process. It has been observed that successful training results in higher quality comments, i.e. comments which are more specific and target global aspects of writing, such as organisation and content rather than surface errors (e.g. Stanley, 1992).

This section of the literature review aims to describe feedback training in previous studies on L2 writing and peer feedback: the implementation and outcome of feedback training, the use of criteria lists or feedback guidelines, and the mode (written or oral). The reporting of these various features of feedback training are given different importance, depending on the aims and scopes of the published research. Included here are studies that evaluated the effects of training (e.g. Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005), examined the impact of received peer comments on revision (e.g. Diab, 2010, 2011; Min, 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000), and compared teacher and peer feedback (e.g. Matsuno, 2009; Yang et al., 2006).

#### 4.4.1 Feedback training

There is consensus that feedback training for peer reviewers is vital for the quality and effect of peer feedback comments. The scope and the duration of this training, as well as the implemented activities, differ widely between the studies due to practical circumstances, time, and type of study, among other things.

Berg (1999b) carried out an experimental study aiming to measure effects of trained peer response on student receivers' revisions and writing quality. The participants, with different nationalities, were enrolled in an intensive English program at an American university. The training procedure implemented in the experimental groups was based on eleven sequenced activities presented in another paper by the same researcher (Berg, 1999a). Examples of these activities included developing a good social atmosphere in the group, explaining the role of peer review in the writing process, modelling teacher and peer feedback, and practicing in class and smaller groups. In addition, a response sheet was introduced to support the reviewers. The impact of the training on the feedback comments was not analysed in this study; however, it was found that the comments from the trained peer reviewers triggered a large number of meaning revision changes and resulted in higher writing quality of the receivers' drafts. The study did not include an evaluation of the specific activities included in the feedback training, but it is stated that the approach was experience-based.

Another way of studying and implementing peer feedback is presented by Hu (2005). For three years, he used an action research approach to evaluate and improve the peer feedback practice in an academic writing course for



Chinese ESL learners. The starting point was that the first attempt to integrate peer review in the course was considered unsuccessful. For instance, the students questioned the validity of their peers' feedback, found it difficult to provide critique, and made very few remarks. Also, these remarks predominantly focused on accuracy. By testing and evaluating various activities during two cycles, a more successful procedure developed. This procedure included several types of activities intended to raise the students' awareness of the usefulness of peer feedback, to demonstrate good feedback, to practice, to explain the procedures involved in giving feedback, and to organise pre-response review of the key features of feedback provision. In class, equal focus was placed on global and local aspects of a text; however, the procedure stated that the reviewers responded to global issues before attending to local ones. The peer reviewers were guided by lists of questions at these two levels of writing, as well as a list of common language errors. Before providing written feedback, the students engaged in oral paired peer response in order to be able to sort out potential misunderstandings in the text. In addition, the teacher tried to model good feedback in his own practice. Compared to Berg (1999a, 1999b), Hu's focus was the implementation of certain feedback-related activities and their usefulness (2005). This usefulness was not analysed systematically; in line with the practice-oriented framing of his study, the evaluation was based on informal interviews with the students and teacher reflection.

A more systematic approach to evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of feedback training is presented in a study by Min (2005). She based her training of Taiwanese university students on a number of steps derived from a synthesis of findings in other studies about peer feedback. Among other things, the synthesis showed that problems could be related to students' misunderstanding of the writer's intention and to unclear feedback comments. To tackle these issues, a four-step procedure was implemented as part of the training: 1) clarifying writer's intention, 2) identifying problems, 3) explaining the nature of problems, and 4) making suggestions by giving examples (Min, 2005, p. 296). In addition, only the written mode was used in order to give the L2 peer reviewers more time to organise and formulate their comments. The training consisted of in-class modelling of the procedure. During feedback provision, the students used a guidance sheet with specific questions related to the written tasks. After the peer-review sessions, the teacher met each student individually to go through the comments on their peers' expository essays. This support focused both on the content and the presentation of the feedback. Post training, the students produced not only more feedback comments, but also comments including more of the steps described above. There was a small increase of comments on global aspects of writing, but it was not significant. It is important to note that equal consideration was given to global and local aspects of writing during the training.

Drawing on Min's four steps (2005), a study with university students in an advanced writing class in Iran studied effects of peer-review training on comments using an experimental design (Rahimi, 2013). The treatment group received training via teacher presentations and modelling and practice on sample paragraphs. During class, the teacher stressed the importance of the content in writing, and the students were told to provide feedback on global aspects of writing prior to attending to formal issues. Similar to Min's study (2005), individual student-teacher conferences were organised to assist the peer reviewers. Findings showed that the trained peer reviewers provided significantly more comments related to global aspects of writing and that these students' adoption rate of received global comments to their own writing was high. Interestingly, the control group's number of formal comments increased significantly. Both groups improved the written quality of their paragraphs, but whereas the treatment group improved the content, the control group improved their accuracy. The scoring rubric used to evaluate written quality awarded global and formal aspects of the paragraphs equally, which contradicts the importance placed on content and organisation in the feedback training sessions.

The study by Lundstrom & Baker, which is one of the few studying potential benefits for the peer reviewer, also included some training for the students (2009). Their experimental design, with one group acting as feedback providers and another group acting as feedback receivers, involved similar writing-related tasks in both groups. For example, the groups were given instructions on how to write an introduction and a paragraph and they read sample essays. However, the receiver group also practiced revision based on feedback, while the provider group instead were taught how to give effective feedback and provide suggestions on how to improve a text. It is not specified how this training was implemented.

The studies cited so far have been conducted at university level. M-K. Lee (2015) sought to investigate junior high school learners' perceptions of peer and teacher feedback, respectively. In doing so, an intervention which included inter-feedback and intra-feedback was instigated. Inter-feedback is feedback from a reviewer to a receiver on a text, in this case an argumentative essay, whereas intra-feedback is defined as a "peer-feedback-on-peer-feedback task" where it is the feedback which is being reviewed (M-K. Lee, 2015, p. 3). These two types of peer feedback were integrated in a two-week writing cycle: the pupils were introduced to the genre, the argumentative essay, via sample texts and teacher-led instruction, and after having written their first drafts, they received feedback training which involved information about the purpose of peer feedback and modelling. A guidance worksheet was used as support for the learners. When they had prepared feedback individually, they were paired with another reviewer in an intra-feedback session, which was followed by inter-feedback conferences. Since the purpose of this study was to compare peer and teacher feedback, the pupils also

received individual comments from the teacher prior to revising their texts. Results indicated that these pupils preferred teacher feedback before peer feedback and that the combination of peer and teacher feedback can be beneficial as they complement each other.

These examples show that feedback training can be realised in many ways. The training varied in terms of procedures, time, and mode. In addition, attention given to various aspects of writing differed between the studies. Since most of the studies did not primarily evaluate the implementation, the information provided about training is sometimes scant. Activities involved in feedback training include discussions about the purpose of peer feedback (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Hu, 2005; M-K. Lee, 2015), representations of effective feedback (Hu, 2005; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013), modelling (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005, Rahimi, 2013), practice in groups (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Rahimi, 2013), feedback on the feedback by peers (M-K. Lee, 2015) or by the teacher (Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013), and attention to affective aspects (Berg, 1999a, 1999b). Some studies on peer feedback and L2 writing seem to have neglected including peer-review training in the research design; for instance, Suzuki (2009), comparing the compatibility of peer and self-revisions and teacher assessment; Chen (2010), comparing peer and tutor feedback; and Jacobs (1989), investigating students' miscorrections from peer feedback.

Overall, the formative information included in the peer feedback training seems to focus on pinpointing problems and offering solutions, without explicit attention to describing why this is a problem (e.g. Berg, 1999b; Jacobs, 1987; Kamimura, 2006). Exceptions are the study by Min (2005) and a study using Min's framework, Rahimi (2013), that included a step requesting the peer reviewers to explain the identified problems. A similar approach was also proposed in a study with L1 writers by K. Cho & MacArthur, suggesting that students practise "problem detection, diagnosis, and solution generation" (2011, p. 75).

The time devoted to training varies immensely: from no time at all as mentioned above (Chen, 2010; Jacobs, 1989; Suzuki, 2009) to a few sessions during one writing cycle (Diab, 2011; Hu & Lam, 2010; M-K. Lee, 2015) to several sessions spread out over a longer period with different types of written texts (Hu, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). Not surprisingly, training improves the peer reviewers' comments (Chang, 2015; Min, 2005). Stanley (1992) investigated the effect of two ways of coaching peer reviewers. One group received extensive training for seven hours, focusing on both the genre and communication. The other group was prepared in a "more economical manner" (Stanley, 1992, p. 222) in the form a teacher demonstration through role play. The group that received the most coaching produced more peer comments and during interaction their responses were more specific. Also, the coached students relied more on the feedback from their peers when they revised their own texts. In conclusion, Stanley asserted that peer assessment

on writing can be beneficial; however, “productivity does not come without a considerable investment of time and effort in preparing students for group work” (1992, p. 230).

#### 4.4.2 Feedback guidance and criteria

Being a proficient peer reviewer also means giving relevant and valid feedback, i.e. feedback which is related to the task or more specifically the type of text the students are writing. Various types of texts have been used in studies on peer review and writing, which also reflects the variety in terms of proficiency and context: paragraphs (Rahimi, 2013), summaries (Hu & Lam, 2010), expository and argumentative essays (Berg, 1999b; Diab, 2011; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005), to name a few. To help the students produce valid and revision-oriented feedback, it is common that written guidance is provided. In the literature, this help is referred to as feedback guidance sheets, peer-response sheets, guiding questions, rubrics, coding schemes, peer-editing forms, essay evaluation sheets, and checklists. These written guidelines often direct the students’ attention to certain parts of the texts under review and thus form the students’ perception of good writing.

As mentioned earlier (Subsection 4.3.2), providing feedback seems to enhance the reviewers’ awareness of the importance of global aspects of writing (Berg, 1999b; Min, 2005). Indeed, in many studies it is explicitly stated that the teacher stressed organisation and content (Berg, 1999b; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Kamimura, 2006) and this is also evident in some of the written guidance: “Remember, you are reading and discussing how well the IDEAS are presented in this essay—DO NOT spend time talking about the GRAMMAR!” (Paulus, 1999, p. 288). At the same time, most sheets also include some attention to micro-level aspects of writing. For example, Chang provided genre-specific checklists focusing on organisation, “Arrange events chronologically”, idea development, “Explain the purpose of a step when necessary”, as well as language “Use present tense” (2015, p. 18). This guidance also included an error coding system. Similarly, Hu (2005) provided questions at both the macro- and micro-level of writing and a list of common language errors with explications. Another way of emphasising the written text as a whole is to provide a peer feedback worksheet which involves an analysis of the different parts of the text, followed by a request to list suggested improvements (Kamimura, 2006). One of the few studies which explicitly addresses micro-level aspects of writing in feedback training is Zhao (2014) who justified this choice by explaining that “accuracy is the main criteria for examination essays” (p. 157).

Questions included in the sheets are realised in different ways. Some interventions employ yes/no questions, “Can you find a thesis statement” (Berg, 1999b, p. 238) or “Is there a conclusion in the final conclusion?” (Yang et al., 2006, p. 196) or checklists, “Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence”

(Diab, 2011, p. 290). These types of questions are complemented with requests, such as “Please explain your answer” (Berg, 1999b, p. 238) and open-ended general questions, “What part(s) should be developed more?” (Yang et al., 2006, p. 196) and “What are the main strengths of this paper?” (Chen, 2010, p. 156). One of the treatment groups in the study by Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid employed a rubric to evaluate their peers’ writing (2012). Likewise, an essay evaluation sheet was used by Kamimura (2006). The rubric and the evaluation sheet were used to score the essays and no formative feedback was produced. In terms of guidance to formulate formative or revision-oriented feedback, which is the purpose of the feedback in most of the studies on peer feedback and L2 writing, the sheets sometimes include reminders to “BE SPECIFIC. BE CONSTRUCTIVE.” (Yang et al., 2006, p. 196) or “Please answer the following questions, keeping in mind that the purpose of peer response is to help each other write better” (Berg, 1999b, p. 238).

Regardless of focus and form, these written guidelines are supposed to help the students formulate feedback which is valid and formative. In most studies, the guidance sheets are presented as complementary to the in-class training sessions; to function as a pedagogical tool, the students also need to practice how to use the questions or checklists (Min, 2005). In addition, the students’ understanding of the written genre and writing quality affect the quality of the feedback. Following Ramaprasad’s definition of feedback as “information about the gap between the actual level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way” (1983, p. 4), the assessor needs to have some idea about the criteria, standards, and progression.

In most of the reviewed articles, the descriptions of the instruction and/or intervention emphasise the feedback-related activities rather than the teaching of writing as such. One exception is Stanley who describes that the goal of the first part of the feedback training in her coached group was “familiarizing students with the genre of the student essay” (1992, p. 221). In other words, the teaching of writing and the training of peer reviewers went hand in hand. The intervention carried out by Zhao (2014) also involved feedback training, which, among other things, addressed genre-specific features. Another way of directing the peer reviewers’ attention to relevant aspects of the genre is to mention certain parts or features in the guidance sheets, such as thesis statement, conclusion, and topic sentence (see examples in the previous paragraphs). The use of metalanguage can be helpful, but concerns have been raised as regards students’ understanding of these terms (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009).

It has been suggested that peer-review activities can increase the reviewers’ comprehension of assessment criteria (Althausen & Darnall, 2001; Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011; Nicol et al., 2014) and, consequently, the written task or genre. As mentioned previously (Section 3.2), transparency and shared learning objectives are often considered prerequisites for the use of assessment for and

as learning (Earl, 2013; C. Lundahl, 2011). However, the use of pre-set criteria has also been criticised. With regard to assessment practice in general, concerned voices imply that the use of criteria and checklists can reduce the knowledge and thus result in a simplified and one-dimensional view of learning (Carlgren, 2015; Pettersson, 2015; Sadler, 1989; Torrance, 2007). As Ferris reports, issues concerning “teacher appropriation” have been discussed in relation to teachers’ feedback on writing (2003); similarly, peer response can be considered too governed by the teacher if the training and the guidance sheets are too detailed.

For example, F. Hyland observed that “the imposition of a teacher focus on the peer feedback had a negative effect in terms of the commitment shown by the responders” (2000, p. 51). The students in her study seemed to benefit more from informal writing workshops with their peers than from the organised peer response with teacher-produced feedback forms. Similarly, J. Liu & Hanson stated that student autonomy can be oppressed by checklists (2002). DiPardo and Freedman claimed that “often, what is termed ‘peer interaction’ amounts to little more than teacher-initiated, teacher-controlled episodes in which students follow explicit directives and take turns role-playing their instructor” (1988, p. 144). Hence, the lived purpose of the peer response is to please the teacher. Lockhart and Ng suggested that teachers attempt different ways of coaching peer reviewers but recommended that guiding questions are used as an “initial framework” and “springboard for discussion” (1995, p. 648). Consequently, the student reviewers can be given more autonomy gradually.

Another way of counteracting a top-down and teacher-controlled classroom is to include the students in genre- and criteria-related activities. In an experimental study on the role of self-, peer and teacher assessment in writing, the teacher produced a scoring rubric in collaboration with the students in two of the treatment groups (Brijandi & Hadidi Tamjid, 2012). The students were asked to list elements of writing that they believed affected the marking and to appreciate their importance for the assessment. Next, the teacher introduced a rubric and it is described that the students already had covered most of the features included in the rubric in their discussions. The teacher introduced the remaining elements to ascertain that the students were familiar with the scoring rubric.

In their study of L1 undergraduate biology students, Orsmond et al. (2000) let students produce their own criteria in collaboration with a tutor. The study followed two previous papers by the same group of researchers considering the role of marking criteria for successful self- and peer assessment (Orsmond, Merry, & Reiling, 1996, 1997). In relation to certain criteria, it was found that the students’ marking differed from their tutors and it was hypothesised that this divergence resulted from a lack of shared understanding of some criteria. This led the researchers to pose a question which is highly relevant seeing the starting points and designs of some studies on self- and peer assessment: “Is

the student learning *while* carrying out the assessment, or does the student only learn from the product of assessment?” (Orsmond et al., 2000, p. 24). Student groups were asked to list their own marking criteria on a poster assignment, including the meaning of each criterion. These criteria were merged into a poster marking form that was used for self- and peer assessment. Each criterion was assessed on a scale of 1–4, but it is not clear how the scale was implemented or how the standards were determined. It was observed that the criteria discussions engaged the students, and that the students involved in critical thinking. However, the procedures did not improve the tutor–student joint understanding, and the students did not expand their thinking outside their “comfort zone”. Another conclusion is that some students seemed to assess the posters holistically rather than analytically; thus, they did not view the criteria as discrete items.

Even though some researchers argue that too much guidance can affect student autonomy and peer interaction negatively (e.g. DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; F. Hyland, 2000), most studies on peer feedback and L2 writing employ some kind of criteria or questions intended to help the students provide valid feedback. These worksheets tend to stress the importance of reviewing global aspects of writing before accuracy and sometimes they also include genre-specific criteria. The following subsection focuses on the mode of communication of the assessments based on the help reviewed here.

#### 4.4.3 Medium of communication

One factor that needs to be considered when planning peer review is the mode of communication between the students. In most studies, peers communicate their feedback in writing, usually on a specific sheet as discussed earlier (Subsection 4.4.2) and/or orally, in pair or in groups. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) in education has also sparked an interest in the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) for peer feedback (Yu & Lee, 2016). This subsection focuses on the written and the oral media of communication, since they are relevant for the present project.

To document and communicate peer feedback in writing can be favourable for EFL students, “the written mode allows them more time to organize their ideas in English” (Min, 2005, p. 296). In fact, the studies using only the written mode for peer feedback are predominantly carried out in EFL settings (Chang, 2015; Matsuno, 2009; Min, 2005, 2016; Rahimi, 2013; Suzuki, 2009). In other studies, the students initially prepared feedback using a guidance sheet, but the comments were delivered orally (Berg, 1999b; Chen, 2010; Kamimura, 2006; M-K. Lee, 2015; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). The oral activity as a complement to the written comments implies opportunities to clarify misunderstandings and to negotiate disagreements.

The use of oral communication could also entail that the students use their L1 to complete the peer-review task. In the study by Yang et al. (2006), it is

described that the EFL students were allowed to use their L1. Villamil & de Guerrero (1996), who specifically studied language use during paired peer response, observed that most of the groups communicated in Spanish, their L1. It is discussed that L1 fills the function of a “natural crutch for conducting interactions and solving revision problems” (Villamil & de Guerrero, 2006, p. 67).

Peer review can also be organised in oral peer-response groups, a term associated with process writing. These groups are described as “peer collaboration groups” (Connor & Asenavage, 1994) or “L2 writing groups” (Nelson & Murphy, 1992); in fact, the way these procedures are described this organisation seems to involve elements of collaborative writing (Jacobs, 1989). Stanley (1999) trained the students especially in how to deliver feedback orally and during the peer-response session the students were guided by a sheet including suggested response types. In some cases, the oral peer review was documented in writing by the participants to help them while making the revisions (Diab, 2010, 2011; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). In reviewing the choice of communication mode in these studies, it is worth considering research design vis-à-vis pedagogical choices.

## 4.5 Justification and research questions for my project

This chapter and the previous ones (2 and 3) have provided a theoretical and practical background to my project. L2 writing is complex (Cumming, 2016; Kroll, 2003), which entails that teaching L2 writing poses challenges for teachers. The primary focus of my project is thus the teaching and learning of L2 writing, or more specifically EFL writing, in Swedish lower secondary school. Few studies with younger learners have investigated writing from a learning-to-write perspective. Instead, writing in L2 has primarily been regarded as a means for learning language (I. Lee, 2016; Ortmeier-Hooper et al., 2016). By applying genre theory and pedagogy, my project aims to contribute to our knowledge of learning-to-write, where writing is primarily defined as reader-oriented (Hirvela et al., 2016). A reader-oriented perspective on writing links my project to the most recent syllabus for English in Sweden; it includes a focus on pupils’ ability to “adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35).

Several earlier writing studies, both L1 and L2, explored characteristics of experienced and inexperienced writers (e.g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980). These studies reflect a writer-oriented view on writing, which is not directly compatible with the genre-approach adopted in my project. In line with the definition of writing as a cognitive process and situated activity (Polio & Friedman, 2016), it is still relevant to refer to some of these studies, especially those that, like my project, use the revision change as a unit of analysis.



My project involves an intervention that places focus on the relationship between teaching and learning. In addition to the previously mentioned foundation formed by L2 writing and genre theory and pedagogy, this intervention is based on formative assessment theory (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018) and findings from previous studies linking L2 writing to peer feedback (e.g. Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Min, 2005). As shown, most of these studies have explored tertiary education which is rather different from the Swedish context of EFL teaching in lower secondary school. By recontextualising findings related to feedback training, for example, it is hoped that my project can broaden our understanding of pupils as peer reviewers.

Contrary to previous studies which often deal with peer assessment from a summative viewpoint, the design of the peer-review activity in my project is based on the definition of peer feedback by N-F. Liu & Carless that stresses the “communication process” and the “dialogue” (2006, p. 280). This definition also emphasises the formative aspect of peer feedback.

Another aspect of assessment as learning that is explored in my project is the pupils’ role as agents in the language classroom. Not all educational systems allow a high degree of pupil participation. The Swedish school system, though, encourages pupil involvement and explicitly states that pupils develop their ability to take control of their own learning (Skolverket, 2018b). The notion of agency is also one of the pillars of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR), which has influenced the syllabuses for foreign languages in Sweden. It is therefore appealing to include this perspective.

Against this background, I have formulated the following three research questions to be addressed in this thesis:

1. How do pupils respond to the feedback training?
  - a. How do pupils construe the task and learning objectives?
  - b. To what extent do pupils include formative information in their peer feedback?
2. What types of revision changes do the pupils make?
3. What do pupils learn about writing in terms of structure and rhetorical organisation; content and idea development; and micro-level aspects of writing from giving feedback?

## 5 Terminology in my project

This chapter draws together and defines some of the terms that carry special meaning for the understanding of my project. It includes some conceptual terms that were introduced in the previous chapters (2–4) and that I deem especially relevant for my project, such as peer feedback, learning, and L2 writing. In addition, this list involves explanations of terms that I specifically use in relation to my research design and analysis, like focus group, teaching unit, and topic episode. These terms are introduced in the Methodology chapter (6). The terminology is organised as a glossary, in alphabetical order with the headword set in boldface. The project-specific terms are marked with an asterisk (\*) to separate them from the concepts.

**Agency** is relevant in relation to peer and self-assessment as these activities involve the students in the classroom assessment practice. I use the broad definition that agency is “the socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Formative assessment theory includes teacher, peer, and learner as the agents (Black & Wiliam, 2009). I also consider the curriculum an agent (cf. “external bodies”, Little & Erickson, 2015, p. 127).

**Aim** in the context of teaching and learning is mainly used in conjunction with the long-term aims in the Swedish curriculum as used in the English version (Skolverket, 2018b).

\***Aspect of writing** is employed in relation to the **revision changes** and describes the parts of the texts that these changes affected. There are three aspects in my project: 1) Structure and rhetorical organisation, 2) Content and idea development, and 3) Micro-level aspects of writing. Aspects 1 and 2 are sometimes combined as the global or macro-level of writing in the literature. Likewise, micro-level aspects of writing are sometimes referred to as local ones. The three aspects in my project involve several **categories**.

**Assessment as learning** is employed to describe the use of student-centred assessment activities to promote learning (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013; B. Lundahl, 2012). Within this framework, **peer review** can be considered a **learning-oriented activity**, which resonates with my project.

\***Category** is employed in conjunction with the analysis of **revision changes**. Each **aspect of writing** can be further divided into **categories** and in some cases subcategories. These **categories** can be generic or genre-specific.

\***Consensus groups** are groups of pupils working together to review peers’ texts (Rollinson, 2005). In contrast to **peer response**, the writer does not

participate in these groups. This way of organising the **peer review** rendered possible the study of learning from giving feedback in my project, since none of the pupils received feedback on their writing during the **teaching units**. In addition, **consensus groups** can reduce the potential problems involved with formulating feedback in a foreign language directly to the receiver.

**Curriculum** is used in reference to the Swedish *Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare 2011* (Skolverket, 2018b). The curriculum in Sweden encompasses three parts: 1) Fundamental values and tasks of the school, 2) Overall goals and guidelines, and 3) **Syllabuses**.

**Feedback** can be defined as “information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way” (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 4) which stresses the importance of action for information to be formative (Wiliam, 2011).

\***Feedback comment** is the written outcome of the peer-review activity. The pupils worked in **consensus groups** to fill in a feedback form. In addition to identifying problems in their peers’ texts, the instructions urged the pupils to include explanations and suggestions, that is **formative information**, in their **feedback comments**. The abbreviation **FC** is used to number examples of **feedback comments** employed in the thesis.

\***Focus group** is the term used to describe the three **consensus groups** in Study 2 which were video-recorded and whose oral **peer interaction** formed part of the analysis.

**Formative assessment** is defined in line with Black & Wiliam (2009):

Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. (p. 10)

\***Formative information** refers to the explanations and suggestions included in the **feedback comments** and the **oral peer interaction**. In the analysis, this information forms steps: Step 1) no formative information, Step 2) suggestions, Step 3) explanations, and Step 4) suggestions and explanations. These steps are based on Min (2005), but they have been adapted to suit the nature of the **feedback comments** in my project.

**Genre analysis** plays a role both in the planning and the implementation of the teaching units. **Genre analysis** highlights the communicative purpose of a genre and focus lies on how language is used to convey the text’s communicative objective (e.g. Bhatia, 1993, K. Hyland, 2004). Texts demonstrating the genres covered in my project were analysed with special attention to their rhetorical organisation, content, and use of lexico-grammatical structures pre-teaching. These analyses formed a guidance for

the teachers by helping them scaffold the pupils engaged with a similar task at the beginning of each **teaching unit**.

**Genre** denotes the different kinds of texts that the pupils in my project write: the reply letter, the newspaper article, and the argumentative essay. The use of this term signals the influence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) on my intervention and highlights the reader-oriented perspective.

**Genre-based writing instruction (GBWI)** forms the basis for the pedagogical intervention. This approach primarily involves a reader-oriented perspective on writing (Hirvela et al., 2016; K. Hyland, 2011, 2016). The communicative function of a text is highlighted, and writing is considered a social practice (K. Hyland, 2004; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In my project, this perspective especially influenced the collaborative **genre analysis**, revolving around the context, purpose, and intended recipient of the texts. This approach is in line with the **syllabus** for English where one of the long-term aims is that the pupils should develop their ability to “adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35). **GBWI** is often associated with the teaching and learning cycle (Rothery, 1996).

**Instruction** in my thesis roughly refers to “what happens in the classroom”. More specifically, it is related to the didactic triangle and the relationship between teacher, student, and subject matter. I use this term and **teaching** interchangeably.

**L2 writing** plays a major role in my project since the written skill is the main focus of the **teaching units**. To define this complex activity, I have relied on Polio and Friedman’s description of L2 writing as “a *cognitive process*, in which a writer draws upon a set of internalized skills and knowledge to produce a text, and a *situated activity* that takes place in a specific context with a specific goal and for a specific audience” (2016, p. 1). This way of looking at writing in an L2 connects the cognitive perspective of writing, which foregrounds the writer, to the genre-theoretical perspective, in which the reader is foregrounded.

\***Learning-oriented activity** is a term I use to refer to the **peer review** in my **project**. Similar activities are sometimes described as assessment activities, but I believe that “learning” better describes the intended aim of **peer review** in light of my overarching research question.

\***Learning objective** is used to denote the specified aims of the **teaching units** in my **project**. In other words, the **learning objectives** describe what the intended learning outcome is.

\***Learning outcome** is used to denote what the pupils did learn from the intervention in my **project**.

**Learning**, the way it is understood in relation to my overarching research question *What do pupils learn about writing in English from giving feedback?* is operationalised as a link between a **revision change** and a **feedback comment** or content of the reviewed texts. This operationalisation is in line

with sociocultural theories where learning is visible in performance. It does not, however, state that learning equals improvement. To connect the alterations that the pupils made with the **peer review** also implies the notion of feedback understood as “information [...] which is used to alter the gap in some way” (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 4) and the importance of action for information to be formative (Wiliam, 2011).

**Peer assessment** is an umbrella term denoting the inclusion of activities involving learners who in some way assess the work of their peers, in line with the way it is generally employed in literature on assessment. However, in some contexts this term has come to be mainly associated with summative assessments where learners grade their peers’ works or tick boxes in a rubric, for instance.

**Peer feedback** is defined with special attention to its formative and interactive qualities. These qualities are captured clearly in N-F. Liu & Carless’ definition of the same term as “a communication process through which learners enter into dialogue related to performance and standards” (2006, p. 280). This definition distinguishes **peer feedback** from **peer assessment** which has a summative connotation. Along the same line, Gielen et al. (2010) refer to **peer feedback** as the qualitative part of **peer assessment**.

\***Peer interaction** could encompass all instances of pupil-pupil talk during the **teaching units**. In my project though, **peer interaction** specifically refers to the talk between the pupils during the **peer-review activity**. Three **focus groups** were video-recorded during this activity and their oral **peer interaction** is used both in the descriptions of the implementation of the teaching unit and to broaden the analysis of learning from giving feedback.

**Peer response** denotes the reciprocal act of giving and receiving feedback from peers: “commenting on and critiquing each other’s drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing” (J. Liu & Hansen, 2002, p. 1). Seeing that my project focuses on feedback provision and thus excludes a give-and-take situation, the term **peer response** is seldom employed.

**Peer review** is the term I use to describe the one-sided activity of reading, discussing, and commenting on peers’ texts in which the pupils in my study are involved. Hence, it denotes the feedback provision part of **peer feedback**.

\***Peer-review activity** describes the implementation of the work in the **consensus groups**, where the pupils read, discuss, and comment on peers’ texts.

\***Project** is how I refer to my doctoral thesis, which includes two studies: **Study 1** and **Study 2**.

**Pupils** is used to describe adolescents in primary and secondary school, including the participants in my project. People attending tertiary education are referred to as **students**. **Student** is also used as an umbrella term for pupils and students.

\***Revision changes** constitute the unit of analysis in the comparison of the pupils’ subsequent drafts. More specifically, a **revision change** in my thesis

is operationalised as a difference in the second draft compared to the first draft. This operationalisation differs from the one used in cognitively oriented studies, where it is often relevant to also involve changes made during the process of writing. My definition is linked to the notion of feedback as information which “alter[s] the gap” (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 4), in other words that feedback requires action to be formative or, indeed, feedback. The instances of **revision changes** included in my thesis are numbered using the abbreviation **RC**.

**Second language (L2)/English as a foreign language (EFL)/English as a second language (ESL)** are all three used to denote the status of English and other languages in certain contexts, and specifically in relation to teaching and pedagogy. In circumstances where it is not relevant to distinguish between foreign and second languages, the abbreviation **L2** is used as an umbrella term for all languages which are not a learner’s first language. English in Sweden is defined as a foreign language despite the widespread use for both personal and professional purposes (cf. Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; Olsson, 2016; Pålsson Gröndahl, 2015).

**Students** is used to describe people attending tertiary education. It is also used as an umbrella term for students and pupils. **Pupils** are adolescents in primary and secondary school, including the participants in my project

\***Study 1** and **Study 2**, respectively, describe the two studies included in my **project**. **Study 1** involved two classes in year 8 and comprised one **teaching unit**, whereas **Study 2** involved one class in year 8 and comprised three **teaching units**.

**Syllabus** in my thesis refers to the part of the Swedish **curriculum** which includes the purpose, long-term aims, core content, and knowledge requirements for a specific subject, for instance English.

**Teaching** in my thesis roughly refers to “what happens in the classroom”. More specifically, it is related to the didactic triangle and the relationship between teacher, student, and subject matter. I use this term and **instruction** interchangeably.

\***Teaching unit** is the term used to denote the lesson plans designed for my project. **Study 1** includes one **teaching unit**, *How to write a reply letter*, whereas **Study 2** includes three **teaching units**, *How to write a newspaper article*, *How to write a reply letter*, and *How to write an argumentative essay*. As evident from their names, they cover one genre each. In the numbering of the examples, **teaching unit** is referred to as **TU**, and the three **teaching units** in **Study 2** are labelled TU1, TU2, and TU3.

\***Topic episodes** are relevant in relation to the **peer interaction**, that is the oral interaction between the pupils in the **focus groups**. A **topic episode** is operationalised as an interaction regarding a certain topic related to the text which is being reviewed. Accordingly, a **topic episode** can concern paragraphing, the introduction, or spelling, for instance. This division of the **peer interaction** into episodes rendered possible an analysis of links not only

to the **feedback comments**, but also to the discussions leading up to the written comments. The instances of **topic episodes** presented in this thesis are numbered using the abbreviation **TE**.

## 6 Methodology

This chapter describes my research design and intervention. Furthermore, the ethical considerations as well as issues related to validity and reliability are presented. The participants in Study 1 and 2 are introduced and the data collection and analysis are explained. Due to the similarities between Study 1 and Study 2 in terms of methodology (cf. “partial replication”, Cumming 2012, p. 298), this chapter is based on the corresponding chapter in my licentiate thesis; even if most sections have been developed and to some extent also changed, parts of this chapter are duplicated from Berggren (2013, Chapter 4).

### 6.1 Classroom research design

My project is best described as classroom research, defined by the setting and by the intention of improving practice, that is providing insights into the use of peer feedback in relation to L2 writing (Dörnyei, 2007; Nunan, 2005). Nunan makes a distinction between classroom research and classroom-oriented research; whereas classroom research consists of “empirical investigations carried out in language classrooms”, classroom-oriented research is conducted outside the classroom, but “make[s] claims for the relevance of their outcomes for the classrooms” (2005, pp. 225–226). In terms of methodology, the aim of this project, to explore what pupils can learn about writing from giving feedback, implies the use of qualitative methods for data collection and analysis.

The classroom setting of my project also affects methodology, since choices need to be practicable and ethical. My research design is inspired by case study approaches to educational research but also includes an intervention, which is rare in typical case studies (K. Richards, 2011). Even though far from all classroom studies are case studies, there are several overlapping features, such as the focus on the particular circumstances in which the research is conducted, the flexible research design, and the possible inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative data (Dörnyei, 2007; Stake, 2008; Yin, 2009).

Classroom research is primarily defined by the context and the purpose of the study. Furthermore, this emphasis on the context and the real-life setting, in my project, i.e. communicative EFL classrooms in Swedish secondary



schools, implies that there are two sets of aims which need to be addressed in the design: first, the pupils' aims as learners in this environment, and second, the researcher's aims which entail the collection of viable data (Dörnyei, 2007). In order to merge these possibly divergent aspirations, the research design should endeavour to mimic the type of teaching the pupils would normally meet in their class.

There are many factors involved in classroom research which cannot be controlled. Dörnyei presents no less than ten "particularly salient trouble spots" (2007, pp. 188–190):

1. Meeting different needs and standards
2. Fluidity of the student body
3. Time-consuming nature
4. Working with teachers
5. Working with students
6. Unexpected events and interruptions
7. Obtrusive observer effect
8. Ethical considerations
9. Technical difficulties
10. Multisite design

Although these challenges are considered when a classroom research project is planned, it is virtually impossible to foresee how the implemented design will develop (Dörnyei, 2007). The same uncertainty applies to qualitative research design in general: "design is a process and a way of thinking" (Patton, 2015, p. 244). The design needs to be flexible so that it can be adapted to circumstances and insights obtained as the study unfolds. In my project, for instance, changes to the design were made underway to adapt to time, resources, and pupils' suggestions.

Descriptive and exploratory research in real-life settings aiming to obtain a deeper insight into a specific phenomenon is commonly carried out as case studies (Yin, 2009). However, there is disagreement among researchers about the definition of a case study, and especially what constitutes a case. The term "case" can be used in several research traditions and is not confined to case studies (K. Richards, 2011). Patton addresses these different views and concludes eclectically that "[t]he variety of approaches to defining cases gives you an opportunity (and responsibility) to define what a case is within the context of your own field and focus of inquiry" (2015, p. 260). My project complies with the case study definition as proposed by Yin (2009):

A case study is an empirical inquiry that

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (p. 18)

The contemporary phenomenon in my project is learning from giving feedback and it is studied in a classroom, which I define as my case. Van Lier pinpoints that it is the notion of boundaries or boundedness that divides the researchers adhering to case study (2005). In my project, Yin's proposition that the boundaries "are not clearly evident" is fitting (2009, p. 18); the phenomenon learning from giving feedback is partly shaped by the classroom context, for example through teaching and the interaction between teacher, pupils, and material (cf. the didactical triangle).

To further describe my project, it can be referred to as a multiple instrumental case study. In an instrumental case study, the case is studied to "provide insight into an issue", which implies that the case "plays a supportive role" (Stake, 2008, p. 123). Accordingly, the role of the case is to enable further understanding of a certain matter of interest. Case studies in which the case itself plays the leading part are called intrinsic (Stake, 2008). The "multiple" in the above description of my project signifies that more than one case, that is classroom, was studied in order to provide insight into learning from giving feedback. The sampling process is described in the subsequent subsection (6.1.1). To highlight the importance of the context in my project, vignettes portraying the implementation of the teaching units in Study 1 and 2, respectively, are included in Chapter 7.

Case studies are also characterised by the collection of data from several sources and the use of theory to guide the analysis in order to further the understanding (Yin, 2009); these are characteristics which can also be applied to my project. Data were collected from multiple sources: teaching material, texts produced by the pupils, video-recordings, and questionnaires (Section 6.2.1). Moreover, the design and analysis were guided by theoretical frameworks: L2 writing theories and pedagogies, formative assessment, and sociocultural theories (Chapter 3).

There are divergent views on the use of theory in exploratory studies. This project is dependent on several theoretical perspectives, with the purpose of providing a framework guiding both the teaching and the interpretation of the results. This use is in line with the case study approach advocated by Yin, who promotes the idea that that theory can serve as a helping hand and advance the understanding (2009). Conversely, it is argued that the connection to theory may restrict the explorative approach to data analysis. It is also proposed, however, that theory in combination with pre-knowledge of the studied phenomenon and the use of previously explored tools for analysis can facilitate the justification of the findings as well as accommodate the results to the expectations of the discipline (Stake, 2008; Yin, 2009). In this project, these prerequisites were met by my teaching experience and the application of theories for the understanding of teaching and learning in relation to peer review. Moreover, a theoretical framework is a requirement when multiple cases function as "literal replications" (Yin, 2009, p. 54), which complies with the design of my project.

Thus far, my project fits well into the case study framework. However, the design entailed an intervention; the teaching units which formed the foundation for the classroom activities and data collection in the project were primarily designed by me and implemented by the teacher. Intervention in case studies is a subject of debate, but van Lier acknowledges that case studies can take different approaches along an intervention continuum, from a “least-intervention end” to a “more intervention end” (2005, p. 197), illustrated by an ethnography at one extreme and action research at the other. Conversely, K. Richards says that “case studies rarely, if ever, involve intervention in order to bring about change” (2011, p. 208).

This idea of “bring[ing] about change” (K. Richards, 2011, p. 208) is a strong motivator in action research (Burns, 2011; Elliot, 1991) but interventions can also form other purposes. In experimental classroom research, for example, it is common to subject the experimental group to an intervention, in order to be able to draw comparisons with the control group (Dörnyei, 2007; Tengberg, 2016). In relation to my project, the intervention was necessary to be able to study learning from giving feedback systematically. The design is not experimental: there is no control group and the aim is not to study the effect of a certain treatment. Instead, the design, including the intervention, entailed that I created a possibility to study what pupils can learn about writing from engaging with peer feedback.

As mentioned earlier in this section, an important part of classroom research is to acknowledge the students’ goals as well as the researcher’s aims (Dörnyei, 2007). The intervention was planned based on previous research findings related to the success of peer-review activities in the classroom; in Study 2, the design was also supported by insights obtained in Study 1 (Berggren, 2013, 2015). Moreover, the design was developed within the framework of communicative language teaching (CLT) and genre-based writing instruction (GBWI). These foundations were chosen both in order to provide favourable conditions for the pupils and to facilitate the analysis and relate the teaching to contemporary views on language education. The general lesson plan was also piloted before being implemented in the project. Finally, there was an element of collaboration between the English teachers and I as we discussed the implementation and had regular debriefings.

### 6.1.1 Sampling

The best sample in qualitative studies consists of “individuals who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon under investigation so as to maximise what we can learn” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 126); likewise, the case selection is one of the most important decisions qualitative researchers have to make (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2009).

In my project, I used purposive sampling, and similar strategies were used in Study 1 and Study 2, respectively. In Study 1, I aimed to find several

parallel cases, that is classes in the same year with the same teacher. Sampling in Study 2 followed the same procedure, but it was deemed sufficient to include one case only. The reasons for this decision were twofold: 1) the second study stretched over a longer period of time and it was necessary to delimit data collection for practical purposes, and 2) the two cases analysed in Study 1 showed very similar results, so it was likely that no new insights would be obtained through parallel cases. To be able to draw some comparisons between Study 1 and Study 2, the same sampling criteria as regards the case were used.

The sampling criteria included a communicative classroom, defined as a setting in which language use was focused and in which the target language was the main language of instruction. Another essential condition was the teacher's willingness to collaborate with me throughout the study, in matters concerning content and teaching. Finally, for practical reasons, the geographical position was considered. In Study 1, I also included the sampling criterion that the pupils had yet to receive grades, in order to avoid focus on summative rather than formative assessment. Since then, revisions of the Swedish school system in 2011 included the introduction of grades in the sixth year of compulsory school instead of year eight. In other words, the pupils in Study 2 had already received grades when the data collection was carried out.

I used my professional network to establish contact with teachers who may be interested in participating in my project. In Study 1, I contacted a teacher recommended by colleagues; her classes and approach to teaching complied with the criteria, and she agreed to devote four weeks of teaching to the teaching unit *How to write a reply letter* including learning activities such as peer review. Likewise, a possible candidate for Study 2 was suggested by one of my contacts. This teacher agreed to take part in the project and considered it an opportunity to expand her own knowledge and practice of feedback provision as well as an opportunity for the pupils to develop their writing ability.

Once the teachers had agreed, I also approached the head teachers of the two schools to inform them of the study and obtain their consent. In both cases, I had had previous associations with the head teachers, which possibly facilitated the process.

### 6.1.2 Participants

When the teachers and the head teachers had agreed to participate in my project, I contacted the pupils and their guardians. In Study 1, the sampling process resulted in the possibility to include three parallel cases, each consisting of a class in year 8 in a Swedish secondary school, located in Stockholm. Due to the longitudinal research design of Study 2 and insights from Study 1, only one class was included in this part of the project in order to delimit the scope. The pupils and their parents or guardians were informed

of the project via a letter distributed the term before the data collection took place, in May 2011 (Study 1) and October 2014 (Study 2), respectively. The informed consent included information about the broad purpose of the study and ethical considerations (Appendices A and B). I also visited all classes in order to present the study and to describe what participation would involve for the pupils. During these visits, the classes' English teachers were also present and the pupils were encouraged to ask questions. The informed consent forms, signed by both pupils and parents or guardians, were collected by the teacher and forwarded to me.

The intervention included close collaboration with the two English teachers, and it was facilitated by my own background as a secondary school teacher. The teachers were presented with an outline of the subject matter to be addressed in class, as well as the planned teaching material (Subsection 4.2.1), but they were then free to choose mode of presentation and adapt the teaching to accommodate their pupils' needs. Vignettes describing the implementation of the teaching units in the two studies are included in Chapter 7. In addition, the teachers and I engaged in a debriefing after each class during which we evaluated the lesson and discussed possible alterations to the plan.

**6.1.2.1 Study 1**

Study 1 was conducted in a school situated in the centre of Stockholm. Data were collected in all three cases in Study 1, but in order to limit the study only two of them were analysed. The two selected classes both had 60-minute English lesson two times per week, whereas the third class had three 40-minute lessons, which meant that the lesson plan was somewhat different. External as well as internal attrition and final number of participants in Study 1 is presented in Table 6.1. External attrition refers to the pupils who declined to participate in the study, whereas internal attrition includes the pupils who were excluded during the study.

Table 6.1: Participants and attrition in Study 1

Class	Number of pupils in class	External attrition	Internal attrition	Total number of participants
A	27	2	9	16
B	25	5	9	11
Total	52	7	18	27

In the two classes included in Study 1, here labelled A and B (Table 6.1), the external attrition comprised of two and five pupils, respectively. However, internal attrition was higher; since the purpose of this study was to describe the outcomes of a teaching unit which encompassed several consecutive lessons, the pupils who were absent from one or more of the lessons during the four weeks were excluded from the study. In classroom research this reduction of informants is more or less expected; Dörnyei discusses this type

of attrition in terms of “the fluidity of the student body” (2007, p. 188). Moreover, in class B, five pupils were excluded because they never completed the first drafts of their reply letters. The criterion for incomplete draft was that the pupils themselves reported that they had not finished. One of the pupils in Case A rewrote the entire essay, which implied that it was not possible to analyse the revision changes.

Data collection in Study 1 took place at the beginning of year 8 in Swedish lower secondary school. The two classes had had the same English teacher for a year. The pupils were 14–15 years old, and all but one reported Swedish as their first language. The pupils’ level of proficiency was relatively high: all of them passed a proficiency test (reading and listening comprehension) intended for the last term of year 9 in Swedish compulsory school and most of them received scores which corresponded to top grades.

The teacher had 19 years’ experience of teaching English and described her approach to teaching as focused on language use. According to the teacher, her teaching mainly consisted of tasks that the pupils would not only find interesting, but that would also offer them an opportunity to grow intellectually. The classes that participated in the study had written texts in a number of different genres during their first year together: A “Dear Teacher” letter, a portrait of their favourite singers, an argumentative dialogue, a manuscript for a radio-show, and a text based on a theme from a film. Most of the texts were written on computers. With the exception of the letter, these tasks were similar in the sense that they were part of a larger theme and included some use of pupil examples. The teacher’s feedback on these written assignments consisted of comments identifying strengths and some areas which could be improved. Moreover, classroom activities included a mixture of group and individual work. Teaching had not previously included organised peer review, but the pupils had read parts of each other’s texts occasionally.

### 6.1.2.2 Study 2

This part of my project extended over one term and to limit the scope of this study only one class was included. This class had English lessons twice a week; one lesson of 75 minutes and one of 45 minutes. There were 30 pupils in the class and external and internal attrition is presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Participants and attrition in Study 2

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number of pupils in class</b>	<b>External attrition</b>	<b>Internal attrition</b>	<b>Total number of participants</b>
-	30	3	11	16

The external attrition in Study 2 amounted to three pupils. These three pupils did not want to be included in the study but participated in the lessons. Due to the longitudinal design, the criteria for internal attrition were amended compared to those used in Study 1. The main rationale behind the amendments

was the fact that Study 2 included several teaching units, and if the same criteria had been applied, the final number of participants would have been miniscule. The criterion related to absence was modified to only involve pupils missing the peer-review activity in any of the teaching units; ten of the pupils were omitted based on this criterion. Absence from any other lessons did not exclude pupils from Study 2. One pupil was excepted since they did not hand in one of the drafts. In Study 1, non-completion of the first draft was the second criterion, but this was not a cause for exclusion in Study 2.

The data collection for Study 2 took place during the spring term of year 8 of the compulsory school. The school was situated in a suburb of Stockholm. The pupils were 14–15 years old and had had the same English teacher since the beginning of grade seven. Four of the sixteen participants reported a first language other than Swedish. Similar to the pupils in Study 1, the pupils in Study 2 had a high proficiency of English. A clear majority had obtained the grade A in year seven, and all of them received very high results on receptive skills when tested with a national standardised test intended for nine graders.

The English teacher had few years' experience of teaching English; she had previously worked in the private sector with communication. Her incentive for taking part in the study was to learn more about feedback practice in the classroom. The pupils had written different texts during the previous terms but writing instruction had not been prioritised. In terms of feedback, the pupils usually received some comments in the margins of their texts and a grade. Teaching had not involved any peer-review activities.

Some of the pupils in Study 2 made up focus groups in relation to interaction during the peer-review activity, which meant a second sampling. To sample pupils for these groups, I used a list with the pupils' names in random order and asked the first pupil on the list, then the second, and so on. On the teacher's advice, two of the pupils who agreed were replaced due to the fact that they were to be absent during parts of the term. Two of the nine pupils in these focus groups were later excluded from the study because of absence from one of the peer-review activities, as mentioned previously. Since the analysis of the interaction during the peer-review activity focuses on group level and no links were made to individuals, these pupils' absence did not influence the analysis. Consequently, all the video-recordings of peer interaction formed part of the data analysis.

### 6.1.3 Ethical considerations

This project followed the ethical guidelines promoted by the Swedish Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*) regarding information, consent, confidentiality and use of collected data in research involving children (*Vetenskapsrådet*, 2016). The teachers and head teachers were approached and consented to participation before any contact was made with the pupils. The potential participants were informed about the study orally and in writing

(Appendices A and B). This information included a description of the purpose of the study, the data collection methods, and the voluntariness of participation. In addition, secrecy and anonymity were addressed. Since the potential participants were minors, the informed consent included the consent from both the pupils and their parents or guardians.

The teaching units were planned and implemented in collaboration with the teachers, and the learning objectives were in alignment with the national curriculum for English (Subsection 4.2.2). For the second study, it was possible to highlight the potential benefits of this approach to teaching and learning based on findings from Study 1 (Berggren, 2013). In both studies, the teachers were free to choose the mode of presentation and able to adapt the teaching to the classes, and we also had recurrent debriefings. For example, in Study 2 part of Teaching unit 3 was altered slightly since some of the pupils questioned using exactly the same approach in several consecutive teaching units.

Nevertheless, in any classroom research there are elements which possibly impose on the pupils' education. In this project, the intervention entailed that the pupils did not receive any feedback from the teacher before revising and handing in their final version of the texts. Also, there was data collection equipment, such as dictaphones and video-cameras in the classroom, and parts of the lessons were also used for the completion of questionnaires (approximately 30 minutes per teaching unit). The questionnaires were carried out in class and collected by me. The teachers did not have access to the pupils' responses, nor were they informed of the results. Like all the collected pupil data, including the texts produced in class, the pupils' names were replaced by a code, e.g. A1 (A for class and 1 for pupil) in Study 1 or a fictitious name in Study 2, to ensure anonymity. In addition, all material has been stored and managed carefully during and after use, in line with the ethical guidelines (Vetenskapsrådet, 2016).

#### 6.1.4 Validity, reliability, and generalisation

There are a number of ways to describe issues related to validity and reliability in studies<sup>9</sup>. They depend, for example, on the purpose of the study and the type of knowledge claim; consequently, quantitative and qualitative approaches have different sets of validity criteria (Dörnyei, 2007). My project is best described as a qualitative study. Although part of the data collected in this study was quantitative (closed-ended questionnaire items), this material was not analysed using statistical methods. For the purpose of discussing validity in relation to my project, it is also essential to highlight that it is a classroom study.

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<sup>9</sup> This section deals with validity and reliability in relation to my research design. These two concepts are relevant also for assessment in school (Section 3.2).



Construct validity is used as an umbrella term to denote the validity of the interpretation in research, and validity should relate to both internal and external factors (Dörnyei, 2007). In classroom studies, ecological validity is important to consider, “the degree of similarity between a research study and the authentic context that the study is purportedly investigating” (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015, p. 56). High ecological validity is likely to correlate with a lower internal or measurement validity since the authenticity of the research design makes it impossible to control the variables. Ecological and internal validity in my project was addressed in several ways. First, the learning objectives and the lesson design are linked to the syllabus for English in Sweden (Section 6.2). Second, the rationale behind the choices relating to the operationalisation of key concepts, data collection, and analysis are explained and exemplified to promote transparency (Sections 6.2 and 6.4). In addition, multiple sources were used for the collection of data in my project, in line with recommendations for achieving internal construct validity (Yin, 2009). The ecological validity was also preserved by using intact classes for data collection which entailed that the pupils’ regular English teacher taught the intervention (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015). The use of intact classes refers to sampling; external and internal attrition can affect the “intactness” of the class (Subsection 6.1.2).

In qualitative and case studies, validity is also obtained by “establish[ing] chain of evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 41). This chain refers to the presentation of the findings, which should include examples from the empirical data as support. In my project, these examples consist of excerpts from the pupils’ texts and the feedback forms, as well as quotes from questionnaires and classroom interaction. Throughout the process, my data and preliminary interpretations have also been presented and subjected to scrutiny by fellow researchers, which is another way to ensure construct validity (Yin, 2009).

Generalisation, or external validity, in qualitative studies usually refers to ideas or theories rather than population (Dörnyei, 2007). This entails that generalisability has to be discussed from different perspectives depending on approach. As regards case studies, for example, Dörnyei (2007) proposes two alternative approaches: purposive sampling and analytic generalisation. Purposive sampling, which was used in this project, implies finding the best case by applying relevant sampling criteria, and analytic or theoretical generalisation refers to the formation of models or principles from a bottom-up perspective. A combination of these two approaches ensures the validity of a case study, as long as the claim is in line with the boundaries of the study (Dörnyei, 2007). Generalisation is often linked to the notion of replication (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015). In relation to my project, there are some overlaps between Study 1 and Study 2 which could be considered “partial replication” (Cumming, 2012, p. 298; Section 6.2).

Larsson (2009) adopts a more comprehensive model of generalisation and suggests a “pluralist view” (p. 25). This view presents five different ways of

reasoning, related to the type of study and knowledge claim: 1) the ideographic study, 2) studies that undermine established universal ‘truths’, 3) enhancing generalization potential by maximizing variation, 4) generalization through context similarity, and 5) generalization through recognition of patterns (Larsson, 2009, p. 28). The nature of the first two types of studies implies that generalisation is not an issue. The third suggestion is similar to purposive sampling but refers to multiple case studies where the studied phenomenon is analysed through the prism of a range of cases selected along a continuum. The fourth option which proposes that results could be transferred between comparable contexts is relevant for classroom studies.

An interesting line of reasoning brought forward in relation to this type of generalisation is that “[i]t is the audience that is often in the best position to judge the similarity of a context with the one portrayed in the research work” (Larsson, 2009, p. 33). This approach entails that the researcher needs to convey the setting and the understanding of the object of study in a manner which renders it possible for other people to draw comparisons to their own context. Hence, studies which intend to inform classroom practice should include descriptions of the context and teaching activities. The last suggestion (5) is similar to analytic generalisation, but Larsson stresses that since we can never accurately predict how people will react in a situation, the generalisation is best described as a potential outcome: “generalization is an act, which is completed when someone can make sense of situations” (Larsson, 2009, p. 34). Similarly, it can be useful to regard generalisation in qualitative studies as the transfer of “the main ideas and the process observed”, rather than specifics (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 59). Another way to look at specifics in relation to teachers as the audience is to regard research results as “provisional specifications” (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 142).

The theoretical framework adopted in this study (Chapter 3), as well as the description of the teaching units (Subsection 6.2.1 and Chapter 7) should function as a platform for generalisation to other classroom contexts. The transferability of the results is then subjected to judgements by the readers, teachers and researchers, who, based on the given information and their own experience, can adapt and interpret the findings to suit their contexts.

Reliability is concerned with consistency and rigidity in procedures used for data collection and analysis in order to avoid bias (Dörnyei, 2007; Yin, 2009). Peer checking (Dörnyei, 2007), as described above, also contributed to the reliability of my project. This checking was carried out via the presentation and discussion of my material at data workshops and the aid of an external rater for part of my data. To further ensure reliability, the procedures also need to be transparent; this transparency is normally achieved through clear documentation. Consequently, qualitative studies, including mine, include comprehensive descriptions of the methods used.

The aim of this section on methodology was to present classroom research and the case study approach, the sampling procedure, ethical considerations

and validity and reliability in relation to my project. The next section describes my project in more detail.

## 6.2 The present project

The present project consists of two studies, referred to as Study 1 and Study 2. Study 2 partly builds on the findings from Study 1 and the two studies share the overarching research question *What do pupils learn about writing from giving feedback?* The similarities between the studies can be described as “partial replication” (Cumming, 2012, p. 298) which contributes to the validity of my project. The complexity of L2 writing makes it impossible to ensure identical settings; instead, Cumming suggests that so-called partial replication can entail the “use of previously developed research instruments” (2012, p. 298), which is the case in my project. These instruments include similar lesson plans, questionnaires, and tools for analysis. This section illustrates the research design, focusing on both the commonalities and the differences between the two studies.

As mentioned previously (Section 6.1), conducting a study in a classroom setting entails converging the researcher’s and the participants’ aims (Dörnyei, 2007). Thus, when designing the lesson plans for this project, the main objective was twofold: the plan should function as teaching units for the informants in Study 1 and 2 and it should also elicit the data necessary for analysis in compliance with the aims of the project. Even though the objectives are intertwined, the design will be presented in two sections. This section focuses on the teaching, which implies the pupils’ needs, whereas the data collection, in line with the researcher’s needs, is presented in the subsequent section (6.2.1).

### 6.2.1 Lesson plans in Study 1 and 2

Apart from the pedagogical tools provided by the genre-based approach to writing (Subsection 3.1.4), the sequencing and choice of activities in my project were inspired by the five strategies for teachers to implement formative assessment in the classroom (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8; Subsection 3.2.2):

1. Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success;
2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning;
3. Providing feedback that moves learners forward;
4. Activating students as instructional resources for one another;
5. Activating students as the owners of their own learning.

In addition, previous research informed the organisation of feedback training (Min, 2005) and the peer-review activity (Rollinson, 2005). A primary version of the plan was piloted before being implemented in Study 1. During the pilot, the pupils gave feedback individually to their peers and they also received the peer feedback before revising their own texts. This procedure implied that it was not possible to study learning from giving feedback separately, so in Study 1 and 2 the pupils only provided feedback. Another important change was to organise the peer-review activity in consensus groups (Rollinson, 2005). In a consensus group, reviewers work together to assess their peers' texts. This adaptation strengthened the notion of peer review as collaborative learning and group work. Some of the texts produced during the pilot were employed as teaching material in Study 1 and 2. For more information about the pilot study, see Berggren (2013, Subsection 4.2.1).

An overview of the lesson plan which was implemented in the project is presented in Table 6.3. The goal of the first two lessons was to produce a joint criteria list, based on the discussions of sample reply letters. Due to time constraints, these two lessons were merged in TU2 and TU3 in Study 2. The explicitness of GBWI facilitated classroom discussions about task criteria—how do you write a brilliant newspaper article, reply letter and argumentative essay?—which were scaffolded by the teacher and the use of sample texts. Moreover, GBWI combines a holistic perspective on writing with a more analytical approach which is useful for formative assessment and, subsequently, peer review.

Next, the pupils wrote the first draft of their own text using the criteria list as support. The drafts were written on computers. *Word* was used, and the pupils had access to the spelling and grammar checker. The following two lessons concerned giving feedback and included classroom practice with sample texts and peer review in group. The feedback training was based on the steps proposed by Min (2005; Subsection 4.4.1), and the feedback comments were collected in written form. Even though previous studies have suggested that oral interaction and negotiations between the reviewer and the writer are beneficial (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006), it has also been suggested that the use of written communication may be more appropriate in EFL classrooms (Min, 2005). Apart from anonymising the writer, the use of the written mode for feedback gives the peer reviewers more time to formulate appropriate feedback. Following the evaluation of the pilot study, the peer review was organised in consensus groups (Rollinson, 2005). Hence, since the group task was to agree on what feedback to include in the feedback form, elements of discussions and negotiations could form part of the peer review, even without the writer present.

Table 6.3: General lesson plan<sup>a</sup>

Lesson	Scope	Activities	Teaching material	Purpose <sup>b</sup>
1	Class	Reading sample texts and discussing genre-related aspects of the texts, such as context, purpose, recipient/audience, structure and lexico-grammatical features.	Sample texts	Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
2 <sup>c</sup>	Group Class	Reading and comparing two sample texts Negotiating a joint criteria list.	Sample texts	Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
3	Individual	Writing the first draft.	Writing prompt and instructions Criteria list	
4	Group Class	Practising giving feedback Discussing feedback etiquette	Sample texts Criteria list	Providing feedback that moves learners forward Activating students as instructional resources for one another
5	Group	Giving feedback orally and in writing.	Peers' texts Criteria list Feedback forms	Providing feedback that moves learners forward Activating students as instructional resources for one another
6	Individual	Writing the final version	Writing prompt and instructions Criteria list	Activating students as the owners of their own learning

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Table 4.4, p. 33)

<sup>b</sup> Cf. Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 8)

<sup>c</sup> In Study 2, lesson 2 was merged with lesson 1 in two of the teaching units (TU2 and TU3) due to time constraints

In my project, feedback training only consisted of one lesson, contrary to suggestions promoting lengthy training provided in previous studies (e.g. Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Min, 2005; Stanley, 1992). In lower secondary school,

the limited time allotted for each subject renders comprehensive training nearly impossible. The classes in my project had a total of 120 minutes of English per week to cover the syllabus; therefore, setting time aside to train peer reviewers individually, for example, was not feasible.

Some changes to the written instructions in the feedback form used in Study 1 (Appendix C) were made in Study 2. The phrase “Look at the criteria list and discuss the text” was included in order to emphasise the role of the criteria and to promote interaction, and the instructions as regards the identification of strengths and weaknesses were reformulated as questions. In addition, the pupils were explicitly asked to “[t]ry to be as specific as possible”. Lastly, the part about clarifying the writer’s intention was excluded, since none of the comments in Study 1 included this step (Berggren, 2013). Indeed, Min also questions the importance of this step, but maintains that it is a requirement, especially in heterogeneous ESL classes (2005).

During the last lesson, the pupils revised their first drafts. It is worth emphasising that the pupils did not receive any feedback before writing this final version; consequently, the only input the pupils received from classroom activities was from the feedback training and peer review, i.e. reading and commenting on peers’ texts.

So far, this section has provided a general overview of the lesson plan implemented in the teaching units in Study 1 and 2, as well as a description of the rationale behind the sequencing and organisation of the activities. The following subsections provide more specific information about the three genres and the teaching material used. A detailed description of the implementation of the teaching units in the project is presented in Chapter 7.

### **6.2.1.1 The reply letter**

The teaching unit in Study 1 and Teaching unit 2 in Study 2 concerned *How to write a reply letter*. This genre was chosen because it can be considered a common school genre that has been featured in the Swedish national standardised tests for English on several occasions. In fact, the writing prompt *Hi Ohio!* was originally produced for the written part of these tests (Appendix D). The content of this prompt letter revolves around the pupils’ experiences and reflections about everyday life in Sweden. A similar letter, but this time from British teenagers, was designed to be included in the first part of the teaching unit (Appendix E), and reply letters written by Swedish lower secondary-level pupils were used as sample texts (Appendices F and G). The sample texts were used to formulate the joint criteria list and also served as examples during the feedback training.

Focus during the first part of the classroom discussion about the genre was on context, purpose, and recipients. Next, the teacher scaffolded the pupils’ discussions about the criteria. To guide the teaching, a genre analysis of a small corpus of pupil texts provided the teacher with a list of moves and their functions; this list also included some typical lexico-grammatical traits

(Appendix H). It is important to note that the genre analysis was not considered a key or a fixed model; the teachers could deviate from this list, based on suggestions from the pupils or their own interpretation of the genre. The criteria lists produced by the pupils in Study 1 and TU2, Study 2, are presented in Appendices I and J.

#### **6.2.1.2 The newspaper article**

The first teaching unit in Study 2 was *How to write a newspaper article*. More specifically, the pupils wrote newspaper articles about accidents and it was hoped that the pupils had some pre-knowledge about this type of text from reading newspaper articles. A couple of articles from the online edition of *The Guardian* were used as sample texts to elicit the discussions about criteria (Appendix K); both articles were slightly abridged, but not adapted in any other way. The sample texts for practising giving feedback were written by pupils the same age as the pupils in my project (Appendix L).

Similar to the teaching units about the newspaper article, class talks about context, purpose, and recipient formed the introduction to the genre; I had prepared a list of moves and their functions in the newspaper articles for the teacher, and this list also highlighted some characteristics related to vocabulary and grammar (Appendix M). The list of criteria that the teacher and the pupils agreed upon is presented in Appendix N.

The pupils' newspaper articles were not based on real accidents; they were given a choice of four pictures and were asked to come up with a story based on one of them. For preparation, a sheet with the photos as well as some prompting questions were handed out the lesson before the pupils wrote the first draft of their article (Appendix O).

#### **6.2.1.3 The argumentative essay**

The third genre used in my project was the argumentative essay. As mentioned in the sections about research on writing (Chapter 4), argumentative texts are very common in these types of studies. The pupils in my project wrote opinion-based essays on the same topic: the death penalty. Before the teaching unit as planned for my project began, the class read some texts about the topic and practised debating pros and cons orally. For this purpose, the pupils received a list of useful phrases, that they also had access to when they wrote their argumentative essays.

The instruction in this unit was implemented differently from the other teaching units; instead of producing a list of criteria from sample texts, the pupils were given a pre-set list of criteria (Appendix P) and were asked to identify examples of each criterion in the sample text (Appendix Q). Another sample text written by a lower secondary pupil was used for the feedback training in this teaching unit (Appendix R).

Context, purpose, and recipients were covered, and the organisation of the genre was explained as the pupils related the criteria to the sample essay. The

pupils also received a writing template as preparation for the written task (Appendix S).

### 6.3 Data collection

As mentioned previously, the research design had a dual purpose: 1) to function as a unit of teaching and 2) to collect the data necessary for analysis. The teaching units have been described in Subsection 6.2.1 and the aim of this section is to account for the data collection. Due to the exploratory nature of my project, data were collected using multiples sources: texts used and produced during the teaching unit, audio- and video-recordings from the classroom and group work, observation notes, questionnaires, interviews, and proficiency tests.

This richness of available data is characteristic for both qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007) and classroom research (Nunan, 2005). Furthermore, by collecting various types of data, it was possible to approach the research questions from different perspectives and thereby achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, that is learning from giving feedback. According to Dörnyei, however, “the real challenge [in qualitative studies] is not to generate enough data but rather to generate useful data” (2007, p. 125). In my project this distinction entailed that some of the collected data were never used; these data included, for example, most of the closed-ended items from the questionnaires, the interviews, as well as all data pertaining to the third class in Study 1. Selection of data may be problematic if the researcher picks and chooses without clear criteria. In order to avoid this bias, I used the research questions as a guiding principle and made certain that the sampling from the questionnaire was based on the questions posed to the pupils and not their responses. A number of group interviews were carried out after the last lesson of the teaching unit in Study 1. In Study 2, interviews with the focus group pupils were planned after each teaching unit, but this plan was altered. It was clear that the interviews took up too much of the pupils’ time, so after TU1 I decided to exclude pupil interviews from Study 2 for ethical reasons. Consequently, I decided to omit the interviews carried out in Study 1 from the present thesis, since they have no counterpart in Study 2<sup>10</sup>. The interviews from Study 1 are documented in Berggren (2013, Subsection 4.3.2.3).

This section outlines the relevance of the data in relation to the research questions (Section 4.5) and provides an account of the data collection procedures. Focus lies on the data which were used in this project. The section is divided into two parts: first, the classroom data which include the material

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<sup>10</sup> A small part of the interview data from Study 1 was used to match the content of the questionnaires distributed in Study 2, see Subsection 6.4.4.3.



collected during the lessons, and second, the data which were collected before and after each teaching unit.

### 6.3.1 Classroom data

#### 6.3.1.1 Teaching material and texts produced during class

The teaching material was collected in order to contribute to the description of the classroom activities and to the interpretation of the results. This material included the written plans of the teaching units presented to the pupils; the sample texts used to discuss the three genres, negotiate a list of success criteria, and practise giving feedback; the writing prompts and instructions; and the feedback forms (the templates distributed to the pupils). This material is presented in Subsection 6.2.1.

In addition, some of the texts produced in class during the project also functioned as teaching material. These texts included the criteria lists which were employed by the pupils when they wrote their own drafts and peer reviewed classmates' texts. The lists, as presented on the whiteboard at the end of the classroom discussions, were typed and distributed to the pupils. The distinction between organisation, content, and language was underlined to provide a structure. Furthermore, some of the first drafts of the pupils' texts were used during the peer-review activity. The pupils emailed their drafts to me as attachments<sup>11</sup>, and in order to ensure anonymity, personal information was deleted before the texts were distributed for peer review.

Other textual data produced in class included the feedback comments and the final version of the pupils' texts. The completed feedback forms were collected by the teacher and forwarded to me after the lesson had finished. Like the first drafts of the texts produced by the pupils, the final versions were sent to me as attachments via email. The criteria lists and the feedback comments in the form contributed to the analysis of the pupils' task understanding and feedback provision, and the two subsequent drafts of the texts in each teaching unit constituted the basis for the exploration of the pupils' learning from giving feedback.

Classroom data also included video- and audio-recordings. Apart from providing useful information about the implementation of the teaching units, in combination with the teaching material mentioned above, the teacher-pupil interaction contributed to the interpretation of the findings. In addition, three focus groups were video-recorded during the peer-review activity in Study 2.

#### 6.3.1.2 Observation

Observation is one of the most basic methods for data collection since it provides the researcher with a first-hand perspective of the setting and

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<sup>11</sup> In a few cases drafts were saved on a memory stick provided by me due to technical problems.

activities and it is frequently used in classroom research (Dörnyei, 2007). Contrary to ethnographic observation, where the aim is to provide a thick description, thus covering the entire field, classroom observation normally targets certain features of the learning activities (Dörnyei, 2007). Dörnyei (2007) also distinguishes between structured and unstructured observations, where the former targets specific features and the latter lacks a specific focus. The observations in my project are best described as unstructured; however, decisions made in relation to the location of the equipment employed for documentation, in this case video-camera and dictaphones, still entail that certain features are placed in the foreground, whereas others are in the background (Heikkilä & Sahlström, 2003).

In order to provide a picture of the classroom activities and interaction, a video-camera and two dictaphones were positioned in the classrooms. The video-camera was placed at the front of the classroom, targeting the whiteboard with the purpose of documenting the development of the discussions via the teacher's notes. The microphone integrated with the camera also recorded the class conversations. In order to ensure that all oral interaction between the teacher and the class was captured, a dictaphone was also placed at the opposite side of the classroom from the video-camera. In Study 2, I used GoPro cameras which are small and less obtrusive.

In addition, the teacher was equipped with a microphone and recording device. For the purpose of this project, it was not necessary to include footage of the pupils, since individual pupils were not the focus. Instead, all pupils were regarded as part of the classroom ecology and as contributors to the teaching. It is possible that the presence of this equipment affected the informants and, thus, constituted an intrusion in the natural setting. To limit possible consequences of this disturbance, the equipment to record the whole classroom was placed and switched on before the pupils entered the classroom.

For the recording of the focus groups in Study 2, GoPro cameras were placed at their tables. The cameras were facing the wall to prevent filming pupils not included in the study. The groups also had a dictaphone on the table, to ensure high-quality recording of the sound.

I was present in the classroom as observer. Initially, the purpose of the attendance was to certify that the technical equipment functioned and was not tampered with by the pupils, which happened during the pilot study. However, during the first debriefing with the teacher in Study 1, we decided to include this method for observation since it meant that the teacher and I could discuss our impressions from the teaching in direct relation to the lessons and, if deemed necessary, make appropriate adjustments in the following lesson plan; this arrangement was employed also in Study 2. I did not function primarily as an observer, since the camera and dictaphones recorded the instruction, but I made notes of reflections and questions related to specific classroom events that were later helpful during the analysis. I sat in the back of the classroom,

behind the pupils, and I did not engage in any conversations with them. Nevertheless, this could also be considered an intrusion in the natural setting, the “obtrusive observer effect” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 190).

To conclude, the purpose of the classroom data in my project was to provide material to help describe and explore the pupils as peer reviewers, to study the revision changes, and to investigate learning from giving feedback (RQs 1, 2, and 3). The material was also used to depict the implementation of the teaching units to facilitate generalisation (Chapter 7) and to contribute to the interpretation of my findings.

In order to include the pupils’ perspectives, questionnaires were carried out in relation to the teaching units. Furthermore, the pupils completed reading and listening comprehension tests to assess their proficiency levels. These additional data are described in the following subsection.

### 6.3.2 Additional data

#### 6.3.2.1 Proficiency tests

In order to assess the pupils’ general level of proficiency, which formed part of the participants’ background description, they were given reading and listening comprehension tests. These tests consisted of two parts of a former national standardised test in the school subject English and included both multiple choice items and open questions where the pupils had to formulate their own answers. The tests were comprehensive and took approximately three hours to perform. In Study 2, these tests were carried out before the first teaching unit and in Study 1 after the teaching unit, for practical reasons. The selection of tests was a joint decision by the teachers and me. The distribution and collection of the tests were carried out by the teachers. In Study 1, it was the teacher who corrected and compiled the informants’ results and in Study 2, I completed these tasks.

#### 6.3.2.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are useful tools for collecting large amounts of data, since they are relatively easy to distribute and administer (Dörnyei, 2003). Questionnaires were distributed in both Study 1 and Study 2, before the first teaching unit and after each teaching unit (one in Study 1 and three in Study 2). The purpose was to provide some background information and to map the pupils’ self-perception of learning. In Study 2, which spanned over three units, the questionnaires also provided useful information about the pupils’ view of the teaching units.

More specifically, the post-teaching unit questionnaires targeted the following content areas: 1) the pupils’ use of the criteria, 2) the pupils’ perception of learning about writing from giving feedback, and 3) the pupils’ background (in Study 2 this last content area was covered in the questionnaire

distributed before the first teaching unit). The questionnaires were composed in accordance with the guidelines provided by Dörnyei (2003), which include attention to choice of items, formulations, instructions, sensitive items, anonymity, motivation, and time. The questionnaires comprised of both open- and closed-ended questions, but only the responses to the open-ended questions were analysed and included in this project. They related directly to my research questions, whereas the other items fell outside the scope of my project (cf. Dörnyei, 2007).

The open-ended questions included in the questionnaire were constructed as relatively broad *How-* and *What-*questions (Appendix T). Also, there were relatively few items in order to encourage the respondents to give more substantial and detailed answers. Contrary to Dörnyei's guidelines (2003), the open-ended items were placed first in the questionnaire, followed by the closed-ended items since it was assumed that the young informants would be more alert at the beginning of the session.

The instructions were placed on a separate page together with an example guiding the respondents in the completion of the questionnaire. These written instructions were complemented by an oral introduction by me during which the pupils were given the opportunity to pose questions. For some of the items in the questionnaires, short introductions reminding the pupils of specific activities during the teaching units were inserted.

In order to ensure the pupils' anonymity, the teacher did not have access to the questionnaires. Also, the pupils' names were replaced by a code (Study1) or a fictitious name (Study 2) once the information had been transferred from paper to digital version.

Two additional factors which required consideration included time and motivation. The questionnaires used in my project were short; a maximum of twenty minutes was estimated for completion. They were distributed and answered at the end of an English class, so the informants were not asked to take up any of their spare time. In addition, most of the items were piloted by a group of pupils in year nine, who filled in a questionnaire so that potential problems could be identified. As a result of their comments (e.g. "It's obvious how I should answer these if I want to be the teacher's pet"), some wordings were changed and the instructions concerning their anonymity in relation to their own teacher were emphasised.

By combining data from texts, observations, and questionnaires the findings based on the material that the pupils produced in class (i.e. criteria list, feedback form, and first and second drafts of the texts) could be interpreted in light of the teaching as well as the pupils' perceptions. Thus, it was possible to triangulate the findings which provided further support and understanding of the studied phenomenon (Dörnyei, 2007; Yin, 2009). The collection of data from multiple sources also facilitated an exploratory approach to the analysis; the following section describes the iterative and inquiring approach adopted for the analysis.

## 6.4 Data coding and analysis

This section describes the process of coding and analysing the data used in this project. The exploratory approach entailed the collection of large quantities of material; thus, data sampling, that is the selection of data relevant in light of the research questions, formed part of the analysis process (Dörnyei, 2007). The analysis was iterative in the sense that the analysis and findings resulted in additional queries. Accordingly, more data were sampled and analysed. The coding and analysis presented here do not depict a linear process; instead, they represent the result of a recurrent engagement with the data.

The exploratory nature of qualitative studies often entails that the research questions emerge and are specified during the process (Dörnyei, 2007). Similarly, Holliday discusses the use of hypotheses in qualitative research and suggests that it is “more common to produce, rather than begin with, hypotheses” (2007, p. 31). It is important to note that contrary to quantitative research qualitative studies do not primarily seek to verify or falsify a hypothesis; instead, their purpose is to “enabl[e] an identifiable progression of understanding in dialogue with research action” (Holliday, 2007, p. 31).

This way of describing a qualitative research process also applies to my project; the research purpose, to study what pupils can learn about writing from giving feedback, formed a starting point, and the specific research questions were formulated during the initial analyses. Hence, the purpose of the research questions was to guide the analysis and to function as an organising principle for the results. The overarching research question for this project (Study 1 and 2) is *What do pupils learn about writing from giving feedback?* and the three research questions in the project are formulated as follows:

1. How do pupils respond to the feedback training?
  - a. How do pupils construe the task and learning objectives?
  - b. To what extent do pupils include formative information in their peer feedback?
2. What types of revision changes do the pupils make?
3. What do pupils learn about writing in terms of structure and rhetorical organisation; content and idea development; and micro-level aspects of writing from giving feedback?

Concerning the process of coding and analysing data, the approach was similar in Study 1 and 2 since the research questions and the data are comparable.

One modification is that I used *NVivo*<sup>12</sup> to organise, code, and analyse part of the material in Study 2.

Some abbreviations are introduced in the following subsections. They are used to separate the various examples and teaching units from each other. An overview is presented in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: List of abbreviations in my project

FC	Feedback comment
FG	Focus group (video-recorded consensus group)
G	Group (consensus group)
LC	Link to comment (revision change)
LR	Link to reading (revision change)
PR	Pupil response (self-report)
RC	Revision change
RQ	Research question
TE	Topic episode
TU	Teaching unit

This section presents the coding and analysis procedures from both Study 1 and 2 and provides a background to the decisions made regarding these procedures. The organisation follows the research questions. First, the analysis of feedback provision is presented, both in the written and the oral mode (RQ1). Next, it is described how the revision changes were categorised (RQ2) and then linked to the peer-review activity (RQ3). Last, the preparation of the data used to triangulate, or interpret, the findings from RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 is described.

### 6.4.1 Analysis of feedback provision

The primary material used for the analysis of feedback provision consisted of the feedback forms that the pupils filled in during the peer-review sessions in both Study 1 and Study 2. The comments are significant both in relation to the research question about pupils' response to feedback training (RQ1) and in relation to the research question about pupils' learning about writing from giving feedback (RQ3). To supplement the written feedback, transcripts of the peer review in the focus groups also formed part of the analysis of feedback provision in Study 2.

The first subsection describes the analysis of the feedback comments, since the procedure was similar in the two studies, and in the second subsection I go

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<sup>12</sup> NVivo is a software intended to facilitate qualitative data analysis. It was, however, not suitable to use for text analysis in my project, so in practice it was employed to organise rather than analyse my data.

through how the peer interaction was analysed and compared to the written feedback in Study 2.

#### **6.4.1.1 Written feedback provision**

The analysis of the written feedback comments was carried out in several steps, which will be further explained below:

1. Exclusion of feedback forms from groups with pupils not included in the study;
2. Identification of units of analysis;
3. Exclusion of comments not relevant for the task;
4. Coding of comments as focused on good features of the text or on potential problems;
5. Coding of the formative information in the comments identifying problems.

In order to compile a relevant corpus of written feedback comments, the first step comprised cross-referencing the feedback forms with the individual informants to ensure that only data from the informants included in the study remained. If at least one of the group members was a participant in the study, the comments were included in the corpus. For the purpose of this analysis, it is important to note that it was assumed that all the members of the consensus groups had participated in the discussion and formulation of the feedback comments. Hence, the written feedback was considered a joint product from the members of the consensus group.

Subsequently, the comments were divided into units of analysis, each defined as a feedback comment (FC) concerning one feature of the draft (FC1<sup>13</sup>, FC2). In some instances, this meant that sentences had to be divided into smaller units, for example FC3 which consisted of two units of analysis: one regarding the lack of questions and the other the absence of an ending in the reviewed reply letter.

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| FC1 | you didn't sign off   |
| FC2 | You could be a bit more specific in your letter, because sometimes the reader may want to know more |
| FC3 | Some things to improve was that you didn't ask any questions and your letter didn't have an ending  |

At this stage, comments which were not deemed relevant for the written task were excluded. The relevance was evaluated primarily in relation to the list of criteria, but also to the classroom discussion about the genre in question.

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<sup>13</sup> These examples of written feedback (FC1-FC3) are from Berggren (2013, p. 44).

The resulting comments were coded depending on the attention to good features of the text or problems, respectively. The category of feedback comments denoting problems was next given some extra attention, since these comments could be carriers of formative information.

The starting point for this stage of the analysis was Min's four steps (2005, p. 296): 1) clarifying writers' intentions, 2) identifying problems, 3) explaining the nature of problems, and 4) making suggestions by giving specific examples. These steps are based on previous research into effective peer feedback and they have been applied in other studies (Rahimi, 2013). This framework was also the basis for the feedback training in class. However, I made some alterations during the process, in order to adapt the steps to my project and the pupils' execution of the task.

In Study 1, it was problematic to draw a clear dividing line between the first two steps in the pupils' comments, so they were merged under the step "identifying problems". In addition, I organised the combinations of steps as they appeared in the pupils' comments on an increasing scale, based on their formative information:

- 1) identifying problem;
- 2) identifying problem and making suggestion(s);
- 3) identifying problem and explaining the nature of the problem; and
- 4) identifying problem, explaining the nature of the problem, and making suggestion(s).

As regards the distinction between steps 2 and 3 on this scale, I judged that the inclusion of explanations was more difficult for the pupils than the inclusion of suggestions. This judgement was based on the analysed comments from the consensus groups. Examples of comments at the different steps are presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Overview of the coding of feedback comments<sup>a</sup>

Step	Feedback comment
1	You didn't answer all the questions
	You for got the question about what we talk about
2	Watch out for miss spelings, you may want to check that
	For next time remember to hav a comma after the greeting and then a capital letter
3	Some sentences are a little hard to understand right away. In the 6th paragraph it was a few sentences that were a bit confusing.
4	We didn't understand the last paragraph, can you maybe develop it?
	It would be better for your organisation e.g. Sweden is a good place but sometimes like in the winter is it depressing (you put the sentence is the beging)

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Table 4.6, p. 45)



Apart from the adaptations described above, I also use the terms specific and relevant differently from Min (2005). Min uses these terms to describe the comments in relation to the steps: more steps equals more specific and relevant feedback. In my project, a relevant comment includes information related to the written task; in other words, it is valid in relation to the task. A specific comment includes formative information which could help the receiver by locating the problem described or solving the problem by offering a certain solution.

In Study 1, part of the analysis of the feedback comments regarded introducing a distinction between general and specific comments. In retrospection, this distinction was problematic since a comment could include a general problem and a specific solution at the same time, for instance. It was also evident that the way the criteria were formulated in the criteria lists affected the specificity of the comment. Consequently, I decided not to use this distinction at the level of comment in the analysis in Study 2. In the running text though, I occasionally use these terms to describe the formulation of a problem, a suggestion, or an explanation.

#### **6.4.1.2 Oral feedback provision**

The feedback comments described above represent the written outcome of the peer-review activity. In order to agree on and formulate these comments, the consensus groups discussed their peers' texts orally. To be able to compare this interaction to the written comments, the peer interaction in the focus groups in Study 2 was transcribed and analysed using the adapted steps as described in the previous subsection (Table 6.5). The transcription was word-only.

To identify a unit of analysis comparable to the written comments, the focus groups' interactions were divided into what I call topic episodes (TE). A topic episode is operationalised as an interaction regarding a certain topic relating to the reviewed text. Consequently, a topic episode can concern, for example, paragraphing, the introduction, or spelling. A similar division was adopted by Neumann and McDonough (2015); they refer to the units as "content episodes" (p. 87). In my project, I call them topic episodes in order to avoid confusion with content in the pupils' texts.

A challenge at this stage of the analysis was that the pupils often discussed the same topic more than once during the peer review which made it problematic to delimit the topic episodes. Since the pupils seemed to be aware of this recurrence, "and the size as we said before" (TU1, FG2<sup>14</sup>, emphasis added) and quite often repeated the same remarks, I decided to merge all references to the same topic in one topic episode. Thus, the length of the topic episodes varies considerably: some of them consist of an assessment followed

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<sup>14</sup> The abbreviation TU is short for 'Teaching unit' and FG for 'Focus group'. In other words, this excerpt is from Teaching unit 1 and Focus group 2.

by short confirmations (TE1), whereas others include many turns and occurrences and span over several minutes (TE2<sup>15</sup>).

- TE1        Elis: The first thing I spotted was that it was a rule on the fact text that it was gonna be short paragraphs and [Nikita: Yeah] there isn't so short paragraphs here  
             Emmy: No (*end of topic episode*) (TU1, FG3)
- TE2        Oscar: <READS> (xx) "it's very special it's pretty free"  
             ---  
             Albin: You could say uh for example here again say example this [Oscar: Example mate I said rephrase] well okay then you can you can leave it out uh in Swedish school system that you ask about is not very special  
             Oscar: It's very special  
             Albin: Yeah it is special  
             Oscar: I- it's pretty free I like that one <LAUGHS> [Albin: It's pretty free for everyone yeah it- eh] what does he mean he/she mean with free?  
             Oscar: Free I think the reason why is it a guy or the X writes pretty free is because of like em ice-skating and eh going on uh what is called  
             Albin: But that isn't free  
             Oscar: Y- you you get yeah that's why it's pretty free because you have to buy some things that uh [Albin: Is it that (xx)] yeah that's is probably what the person means  
             Albin: O-kay yeah well okay I don't know  
             Oscar: It's pretty free  
             Albin: Pretty f- I think I don't think that is what they mean  
             Oscar: I- it's wrong to say like [Albin: Yeah] but I understand what the person wants to get from me  
             Albin: It's pretty free I don't I think it as you can it's that that you can wear whatever you want like you s- he she X says they don't wear what you want I mean you can almost say what you want and that that is what she meant is really not that you have to pay things for eh for  
             Oscar: Per per uh ah  
             Albin: And then it says uh yeah it seems weird you can you can write that [Oscar:]  
             Oscar: <LAUGHS> Right uh and she coulds yeah  
             Albin: Uh she have to define what pretty free is [Oscar: Yeah] you could uh define what pretty free means  
             Oscar: Explain  
             Albin: Oh yeah explain yeah that works better uh  
             ---  
             Oscar: There you have it and uh <COUGHS> rop- uh eh rubber what pretty free

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<sup>15</sup> Most of the examples labelled TE only represent an excerpt of the complete topic episode. If the excerpt is longer and includes several parts of the same topic episode, each occurrence is separated by three hyphens (---).

Albin: She says that s- school is not very special I think uh it is quite special it is a bit difference diff- (TU2, FG2)

These topic episodes were coded using labels such as *Grammar*, *Headline* or *Ending* depending on what the pupils talked about. This procedure excluded interactions about other things than the text being reviewed, for example social talk and task management. In addition, instances where the pupils discussed criteria and vocabulary without directly linking them to the assessment of their peers' texts were omitted, as well as a few remarks by individual pupils which were not followed-up by the group. This process so far corresponds to the stages 1–3 as described in relation to the feedback comments in the previous subsection (6.4.1.1). Thus, two stages remain: coding of topic episodes as focused on good features of the text or on potential problems and coding of the formative information in the topic episodes identifying problems.

The topic episodes were categorised as focusing on good features of the text or problems. In addition, a third category emerged: *Undecided*. In some cases, it was impossible to determine whether the group discussed a certain feature of the text as a strength or a weakness. In TE3, for example, the two pupils from FG2 talk about the headline in a newspaper article and bring forward both strengths “it’s very straightforward” and things that could be improved “it’s kind of but not so much catchy”.

- TE3      Edvin: The headline he explains  
            Oscar: It’s very straightforward  
            Edvin: It’s good  
            Oscar: Yeah very good  
            Edvin: You understand like all and you get stuck and you want to read it  
                    it’s kind of but not so much catchy it’s a little bit catchy but I don’t  
                    think it’s that very catchy if if they use like man stuck under snow or  
                    something else because if I saw avalanche I don’t think I would  
                    understand without someone explaining for me  
            Oscar: I like the headline that’s my best bit (TU2, FG2)

Subsequently, the topic episodes dealing with potential problems were coded according to the four steps stemming from the analysis of the written feedback (Table 6.5). This procedure rendered possible a comparison between the assessment and feedback as discussed orally and the written outcome of the discussion, i.e. the feedback comments, in the three focus groups in Study 2.

The analysis of the written feedback comments provided information about the impact and outcome of the feedback training, leading to a description of the pupils as peer reviewers. Since the comments were related to the criteria and the classroom discussion about the genres, they could also provide information about the pupils’ construal of the written task. In addition, the analysis of the topic episodes in terms of formative information made possible

a comparison between the feedback as part of the oral interaction and as a written end-product of the peer-review activity.

## 6.4.2 Analysis of revision changes

In order to be able to determine possible effects of peer reviewing, the revision changes, i.e. the alterations that the pupils made to the first draft of their texts, were identified and classified. The unit of analysis was defined as every noticeable alteration between the subsequent drafts of a text; these changes were identified through a close reading and comparative analysis of each pupil's two drafts from the same teaching unit. This definition of a revision change focuses on revision as a product (Barkaoui, 2016; Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004; Subsection 3.1.2). Consequently, the revision changes (RC) could differ greatly in terms of scope: from the capitalisation of a letter (RC1)<sup>16</sup>, to the inclusion of a new answer to one of the questions posed by the American teenagers in the reply letters (RC2), or the deletion of information (RC3).

RC1	I don't really know so much about ohio, but many Swedish people think that	I don't really know so much about <b>Ohio</b> , but many Swedish people think that (A20)
RC2	we don't were school uniforms. I'm born in Stockholm	we don't were school uniforms. <b>Here in Sweden when you are a little child you can go to kinder garden, and then you go to the elementary school and after that you go to, almost like college. In Sweden the college it's called "gymnasiet", it's not like you work out every day as it sounds.</b> // I'm born in Stockholm (A13)
RC3	I also like to paint caricatures. // <b>I heard that in some schools in England you are only boys or girls. // In Sweden I don't think there are any schools with just boys or girls. And I like it that way :D.</b> //In my school we are also a lot of children	I also like to paint caricatures. // In my school we are also a lot of children (A10)

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<sup>16</sup> The examples include corresponding parts of the text from the first and the final drafts of the texts (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> column respectively). Double slashes (//) indicate paragraph break and square brackets [...] indicate that a part of the text has been omitted. The revision change is indicated in bold type. The informant code in the parenthesis refers to the pupil who made the change: A or B signify the class and the number replaces the pupil's name. All the examples of revision changes presented here (RC1-RC5) are from Berggren (2013, pp. 46–47).

In some of the instances, it was initially unclear whether the alterations represented one or more units of analysis (RC4, RC5). The distinguishing criterion in these cases was whether the change regarded one or several ideas or features of the informative reply letter. Thus, RC4 exemplifies one revision change since the informant added some questions for the recipient clustered in a separate new paragraph. Conversely, the two subsequent sentences in RC5 concerned different topics or answers in the reply letter: the first one is related to personal information about the writer, whereas the second addition is part of an answer describing Sweden. Hence, these two consecutive sentences exemplify two revision changes.

RC4	what's your plan for the future? // Goodbye, Debbie, Carlos, Said and Tom,	what's your plan for the future? // <b>What do you talk about in your country? What are your people interested in and what do they think is funny to do? What is your favorite TV-show, and finally what are your plans for the future?</b> // Goodbye, Debbie, Carlos, Said and Tom, (A13)
RC5	live in Sweden. We don't have that many	live in Sweden. <b>I'm living in Stockholm which is the capital of Sweden. It's a lot of forest here in Sweden.</b> We don't have that many (A15)

This analysis resulted in a corpus of revision changes which were subsequently evaluated based on the aspect of writing affected by the alteration. Previous research has provided various models of classifications of revision changes in successive drafts of writing, each adapted for different purposes, stances and scopes of writing (e.g. Sommers, 1980; Faigley & Witte, 1981). Common features include focus on the level of changes (e.g. word, sentence, surface, global), as well as type of procedure (e.g. deletion, addition, substitution).

The coding of my corpus of revision changes was inspired by these studies but adapted to suit the nature of my data and the pupils' writing. Consequently, most of the categories are context- and genre-dependent and they also mirror the success criteria the pupils used as support when revising. The exploratory approach adopted in Study 1 entailed that a number of different levels and types of operations were introduced and evaluated in conjunction with the examples of revision changes. The aim was to find a coding scheme which accounted for all the alterations made by the pupils and which was relevant in relation to the task used in Study 1: to write a reply letter. For this reason, an iterative process which included recurrent engagement with the data was

initialised and the end result was a categorisation which included a division of the revision changes into three main aspects:

- 1) *Structure and rhetorical organisation*;
- 2) *Content and idea development*; and
- 3) *Micro-level aspects of writing*.

These three classifications describe various aspects of the texts. As described above, these three broad aspects of writing could also be applied to the same genre, the reply letter, in Study 2, as well as to the other genres that were used in Study 2, i.e. the newspaper article and the argumentative essay. It is common to group revisions as affecting global or local aspects of writing (e.g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Min, 2005). In my project, the global level of writing was represented by two aspects: *Structure and rhetorical organisation* and *Content and idea development*. This distinction matched the genre-based writing instruction adopted in my research design and facilitated the analysis of the links between the revision changes and the feedback comments (Subsection 6.4.3). In Study 2, it was possible to use the categories developed in the first study with some minor adjustments related to genre-specific features in the texts.

The three aspects were further divided into a number of categories with the purpose of providing a more comprehensive picture of the alterations made to these aspects of writing. Most of these categories, such as *Paragraphing*, *New moves*, *Additions*, *Substitutions*, *Vocabulary*, and *Punctuation*, are the same across the genres. However, there are also categories and subcategories that are genre-specific, for instance, *New answer*, a subcategory to *Addition* in the reply letter and *Font* as a category of *Structure and rhetorical organisation* in the newspaper article. An overview of the aspects, categories and subcategories as introduced in Study 1 (the reply letter) is presented in Table 6.6 and explained in detail below. Adaptations to accommodate for the genre-specific features in the newspaper article and the argumentative essay are presented in Table 6.7 and Table 6.8.

As shown in Table 6.6, revision changes affecting *Structure and rhetorical organisation* were also coded either as *Paragraphing* or *New moves*. *Paragraphing* encompasses the inclusion or deletion of paragraph breaks, whereas alterations coded *New moves* entail that a new move, for instance an ending, was included.

The aspect of revision changes which alter the meaning or content of the text, *Content and idea development*, consists of the generic categories *Deletion*, *Substitution*, and *Addition*. Revision changes which resulted in the omission of information were coded as *Deletions* and revision changes which caused a change in meaning, such as the example in Table 6.6, were labelled *Substitutions*. Revision changes coded as *Additions*, comprising all the changes which in some way added information to the first draft, were further

Table 6.6: Overview of coding of revision changes in the reply letter

Aspect of writing	Type of revision change	Excerpt from first draft	Excerpt from final draft (revision change in bold, informant code in brackets)
Structure and rhetorical organisation	Paragraphing	we can start playing like soccer with a team. I think the Swedish school system is pretty good	we can start playing like soccer with a team. // I think the Swedish school system is pretty good (A12)
	New move	Please write back if it's something more you want to know about Sweden ore Swedes // Best wishes X	Please write back if it's something more you want to know about Sweden ore Swedes // <b>Good luck with your project! Hope I helped and taught you guys something about Sweden</b> // Best wishes X ☺ (A12)
Content and idea development	Addition	Clarification*	from "Xskolan" In Stockholm (A16)
		Elaboration	I'm living in the middle of Stockholm, Stockholm, (A16)
		New answer*	American teenagers. <b>Almost everyone here has "facebook", and uses it daily. Do you have facebook? And in that case maybe we can get friends?</b> // I don't really know (A21)
		New question*	whatever we want to. When it comes to <b>if, what do you think about it?</b> // [...]. When it comes to (A16)
	Deletion		make a lot of money. (B8)
	Substitution		I'm so excited to start <b>gymnasium</b> , it's going to be so fun I think. (A21)
Micro-level aspects of writing	Grammar		In Stockholm <b>are there</b> a lot of parks (B15)
	Punctuation		My school it's called "Xskolan" (A6)
	Rearrangement		It's not common to play American football <b>in Sweden.</b> (A15)
	Vocabulary		Hello <b>friends</b> from Ohio! (A12)

<sup>a</sup> Berggren (2013, Table 4.7, p. 49)

Note: The asterisk (\*) signals a genre-specific subcategory

categorised as *Clarification*, *Elaboration*, *New answer* or *New question*. These subcategories cover the different types of information added.

Both *Clarification* and *Elaboration* include revision changes which add information or ideas to themes introduced in the first draft. The distinction between the two subcategories is that whereas *Elaboration* provides more information in general, *Clarification* includes alterations which specifically explain or describe something. This difference was deemed significant for communicative purposes, especially since the reply letter includes information about Swedish school or names of typical touristic sites. In the example of a clarification provided in Table 6.6, the addition “a school” clarifies that the name “Xskolan” refers to a school.

In the category *Addition*, there are also two subcategories which comprise entirely new content: *New answer* and *New question*. *New answer* includes revision changes which provided answers to questions (in the writing prompt) that were not answered in the first draft; alterations which resulted in questions aimed for the recipients were labelled *New question*. Like *Clarification*, these two subcategories are genre-specific in the sense that they describe revision changes typical for the reply letter used in this project.

Last, the revision changes coded *Micro-level aspects of writing* involve four categories: *Grammar*, *Punctuation*, *Rearrangement*, and *Vocabulary*. They encompass changes which do not alter the meaning. *Grammar* includes alterations regarding, for example, article use and concord, and *Punctuation* contains additions or deletions of punctuation and quotation marks, as shown in Table 6.6. Changes affecting sentence structure or order of elements in the text were coded as *Rearrangement*. Finally, the category *Vocabulary* includes changes affecting spelling and substitutions of words for synonyms or equivalents.

The analysis of the revision changes in the three teaching units in Study 2 was based on the coding scheme developed in Study 1. This procedure was a way to ensure comparable results, but also to test the aspects and categories with another group of pupils and with various genres. Providentially, the revision changes by the pupils in Study 2 could be coded in accordance with the categories developed in Study 1, with the exception of some genre-specific subcategories pertaining to *Addition* and categories of *Structure and rhetorical organisation* in the newspaper article and the argumentative essay. These genre-specific categories and subcategories are presented below.



Table 6.7: Overview of coding of revision changes in the newspaper article

Aspect of writing	Type of revision change	
Structure and rhetorical organisation	Font*	
	New move	
	Paragraphing	
	Reorganisation	
Content and idea development	Addition	Elaboration
		New information*
	Deletion	
	Substitution	
Micro-level aspects of writing	Grammar	
	Punctuation	
	Rearrangement	
	Vocabulary	

Note: The asterisk (\*) signals a genre-specific subcategory

In parallel with the subcategories in Study 1, the additions made to the newspaper articles consisted of elaborations of ideas and information from the first draft and the inclusion of new information (Table 6.7). Due to the genre, which to a certain extent builds on the iteration of facts, “new information” can signify that new witnesses to the accident were introduced or that something that had been mentioned elsewhere in the text, e.g. in the headline, also was mentioned in another part of the newspaper article. In the example (RC6), the information about the targeted cat was copied from the subheadline.

RC6	95 Year Old Died in Bomb Explosion, Terry Hills, Sydney, Australia.	<b>95 Year Old Died in Bomb Explosion, Terry Hills, Sydney, Australia.Targeted cat survived.</b> (TU1, Max)
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The same revision change (RC6) can also be used to illustrate the category *Font*, pertaining to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. This category was added to depict changes to the structure of the newspaper article, where font size, for example, plays an important role.

In relation to the argumentative essay, the three aspects as well as most of the categories mirror the ones used to code revision changes in the reply letters and the newspaper articles (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8: Overview of coding of revision changes in the argumentative essay

Aspect of writing	Type of revision change	
Structure and rhetorical organisation	Font*	
	New move	
	Paragraphing	
	Reorganisation	
	Transition signal*	
Content and idea development	Addition	Elaboration
		New argument*
	Deletion	
Micro-level aspects of writing	Substitution	
	Grammar	
	Punctuation	
	Rearrangement	
	Vocabulary	

Note: The asterisk (\*) signals a genre-specific subcategory

Another new category is *Transition signals* which are placed under the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, since their function is to help organise the information in the argumentative essay. These types of alterations include substitutions of transition signals (RC8) as well as the introduction of new ones. Similar operations would have been categorised as *Vocabulary* or, possibly, *Substitutions*, in the newspaper article and the reply letter. The difference here is that the transitions signals were introduced to the pupils as a genre-specific trait and that the pupils’ attention especially was drawn to the organising function of these kinds of words in the argumentative essay.

Similar to the newspaper article, revision changes affecting the font are considered changes to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. All the alterations concerned the title of the essay, so they represent a way of separating the title from the rest of the text. The genre-specific subcategory *New argument* includes the addition of new arguments which were developed in a new paragraph (RC9).

RC9       mistakes.// Many people

mistakes.// **In some countries it is even legal to execute someone for a crime they did when they were under the age of 18 or if they are mentally ill. In those cases the person may not have known what they were doing or what it would result in. And do you really think it is right to kill someone for something they did when they were a kid or when they didn’t know what they**

**were doing when you could  
instead help and treat them. //**  
Many people (TU3, Isak)

Apart from these genre-specific additions to the coding scheme, a new generic category pertaining to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* is *Reorganisation*. This category denotes changes which alter the overall organisation. For example, one of the pupils moved a quote from the introduction to the conclusion in her argumentative essay (RC7). This kind of operation did not occur in any of the reply letters, but it is not genre-specific.

RC7	<Introduction> The death penalty is something I honestly think is stupid and ignorant. As Cassandra Clare wrote “Do not seek revenge and call it justice”. What do we really want	<Conclusion> That our leaders are as intelligent as blobfishes and that revenge is right. I don`t think so. <b>As Cassandra Clare wrote “Do not seek revenge and call it justice”.</b> (TU3, Ebba)
RC8	And finally, innocent have been	<b>Next</b> , innocent have been (TU3, Emmy)

The analysis of revision changes described in this subsection resulted in a coding scheme which provided information about the informants’ alterations. These data formed the basis for the analysis conducted to study possible relations to the peer-review activity, which is described in the following subsection.

6.4.3 Analysis of links between revision changes and peer review

The purpose of this analysis was to identify possible links between the pupils’ revision changes and the peer-review activity in order to identify signs of learning. Before the procedure is described, it is important to clarify the foundation for this analysis. First, learning from giving feedback in this project is operationalised as a revision change that can be linked to either a feedback comment or the content of reviewed peer texts. Second, for the purpose of this analysis, the feedback comments are assumed to be the written outcome of a discussion in the consensus group, in other words, the result of an assessment of a specific feature of the reviewed text.

The same procedure was employed in both Study 1 and Study 2. In Study 2, it was also possible to link the oral interaction in the focus groups, the topic episodes, to the revision changes to study potential discrepancies between the oral and the written mode. This subsection first describes the main part of the analysis, i.e. the links between written feedback comments and revision

changes in all participants’ texts. Second, it is explained how the oral topic episodes were cross-referenced with the revision changes to provide additional insights into learning about writing from giving feedback.

**6.4.3.1 Links between revision changes and reading or commenting on peers’ texts**

The plan was that the analysis should target links only between the revision changes and the feedback comments. However, during the analysis in Study 1 similarities between features of the reviewed drafts and the revision changes suggested that certain features of the peer-reviewed reply letter had prompted some changes directly; the peer reviewers had transferred or copied parts of their peers’ letters into their own text. Therefore, the peer review was divided into two activities for analysis: commenting and reading. The informants’ revision changes were cross-referenced with the comments produced in the consensus group (commenting) as well as to the peer-reviewed texts (reading). The same procedure was applied in Study 2.

To demonstrate the nature of these two links, some instances are presented below. The examples of links to comments are labelled LC (Link to Comment) and the examples of links to reading are labelled LR (Link to Reading). All examples are presented in three columns: excerpt from first draft; excerpt from final version; and part of reviewed text (LR) or feedback comment (LC), respectively. The revision change is indicated by the use of bold type in the second column and double slashes (//) indicate paragraph break.

Examples LC1<sup>17</sup>, LC2, and LC3 show how revision changes are linked to feedback comments. Comments about sentence length (LC1), responding to questions (LC2), and about the specificity of provided information (LC3) have been linked to revision changes in the peer reviewers’ reply letters.

LC1	and guitars, my friends and I go	and <b>guitars. My</b> friends and I go (A16)	you had perfect length of the sentences
LC2	think that? // Some more questions	think that? // <b>I haven’t decided what I want to be when I grow up, but I probably want to travel to some warm place after high school and work there. After that I don’t know yet.</b> //	you can answer more questions

<sup>17</sup> All the examples of links presented here (LC1–LC3 and LR1–LR3) are from Berggren (2013, pp. 51–52).

Some more questions  
(A20)

LC3	a really popular sport here.	a really popular sport here. <b>Many people have favourite football-teams.</b> (A1)	You could be a bit more specific
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Correspondingly, examples LR1, LR2, and LR3 illustrate how the content in the reviewed reply letters prompted revision changes; for example, information about the number of pupils in school (LR1), substitution of *class* for “*grad*” (LR2), and the move *Ending* (LR3).

LR1	8:th class. // Now I have some questions	8:th grad. // <b>But we are not as much students as in your school. I think we are around 700 people in my school.</b> // Now I have some questions (A10)	In my school it is like around 700 students
LR2	classes just for 8:th class. //	classes just for 8:th <b>grad.</b> // (A10)	I’m in 8th grade
LR3	ore Swedes // Best wishes X	ore Swedes // <b>Good luck with your project! Hope I helped and taught you guys something about Sweden</b> // Best wishes X (A12)	And last good luck on the project! [...] more about Sweden now

This analysis of links provided information about the extent to which peer reviewing influenced subsequent revision changes. In combination with the coding of the revision changes as described in the previous subsection, it was also possible to pinpoint which aspects of writing that were affected.

#### 6.4.4 Interpretation through triangulation

The analyses of feedback provision, revision changes, and links between revision changes as described in the previous subsections (6.4.1–6.4.3) constitute the core of my project as they correspond to my three research questions. To further our understanding, additional data were employed to relate the findings to the classroom, that is the teaching. The teaching in my project is represented by the classroom interaction and the teaching material. The pupils’ perception of learning was also included in this part of the process.

This interpretation of the findings in light of teaching is a form of triangulation, intended to deepen the understanding of the findings from a pedagogical perspective.

Triangulation is broadly defined as “mixing methods” and this mixing can concern, for instance, data collection techniques, methods for analysis, and application of theories (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). The purpose is usually to gain deeper insights into a phenomenon or to validate findings (Dörnyei, 2007). In fact, it has been suggested that triangulation is especially relevant for classroom research in general and peer revision in particular (McGroarty & Zhu, 1997). In my project, triangulation entailed an interpretation of the findings related to peer review and L2 writing in light of the instruction. The purpose was to contextualise the results and to facilitate the transfer to other classrooms (cf. Larsson, 2009). The data employed as metaphorical sounding boards included the observations, the teaching material, and the questionnaires. The following subsections describe how these data were prepared and employed for triangulation. The interpretations are presented as part of the Summary and commentary sections of each of the Result chapters (7–11) and in the Discussion (Chapter 12)

#### **6.4.4.1 Classroom video- and audio-recordings**

The video-recordings of the teaching, that is the lessons in all four teaching units and the focus groups in Study 2, were transcribed to facilitate the triangulation. The lessons were transcribed broadly, in order to provide an overview of what happened in the classroom. This transcription covered the interaction between the pupils and the teachers, as well as the text written on the whiteboard, but the dialogues were not rendered verbatim. During the process of interpretation, these transcripts were employed to identify episodes relevant for my understanding of the results. The transcripts also formed the basis for the vignettes describing the implementation of the teaching units in Chapter 7.

The recordings of the peer-review activity in the three focus groups in Study 2 were also transcribed. The transcript of the pupil dialogue was word-only, but included some notations of multimodal actions, such as laughs or gestures, where deemed necessary to capture the meaning. Similar to the transcripts of the instruction, these transcripts were used to single out relevant events and to provide an overall depiction of how the focus groups approached the peer-review activity (Subsections 7.2.1, 7.3.1, and 7.4.1).

#### **6.4.4.2 Teaching material**

From a pedagogical perspective, the teaching material can help explain findings related to the pupils as peer reviewers and learning from giving feedback. For this purpose, I used the writing prompts and preparation sheets, the criteria lists, and the feedback forms. These materials were consulted as part of the interpretation of the responses to RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. For

example, the way the instructions in the feedback forms were formulated and organised could help explain how the pupils approach the peer-review activity and worded their comments.

#### **6.4.4.3 Questionnaires**

Apart from contributing to the information about the participants (Subsection 6.1.2), the purpose of the questionnaires distributed after each teaching unit was to map the pupils' self-perceptions of learning in relation to peer feedback provision. The open-ended questions were transferred into a spread-sheet to obtain an overview of each item. There were some differences between the questionnaires distributed in Study 1 and Study 2 and to get comparable data sets, a few alterations were made. The first item in the questionnaires used in Study 2 asked the pupils to list the perceived learning objectives of the teaching unit. This item was not included in the questionnaire in Study 1; instead, it was the first question in the interviews. Thus, these data were deemed equivalent. The items related to the pupils' perception of learning from giving feedback were also slightly different but could still be matched under the headings Organisation/Structure; Content; and Language (Appendix T).

To map the pupils' task construal and use of criteria (Chapter 8), the open-ended responses were coded following the procedure suggested by Dörnyei (2007): read several times to get to know the data, mark interesting passages, and give these relevant labels. The same process was employed to analyse the pupils' self-perceptions of learning from giving feedback. The responses used as examples in my thesis were translated from Swedish into English.

To conclude, data from a multitude of sources were evaluated and analysed with the aim of exploring and describing what pupils learn from giving feedback: classroom material such as the joint criteria lists, feedback comments written during the peer-review activity, the two subsequent drafts of the pupils' texts, and video-recordings, as well as additional material from questionnaires. During the analysis, the data were categorised, cross-referenced, and compared in order to answer the research questions.

## 7 Implementation of teaching units in Study 1 and 2

This chapter presents the implementation of the teaching units in my project. The purpose of these vignettes is to provide a description of the classrooms and the instruction. Since circumstances in a classroom study like the present one are contextually dependent, no situation can ever be completely replicated. It is therefore vital to include descriptions of the classroom settings in order to be able to study and discuss similarities and differences found in the analysis of the collected material. To depict the context is also important for the transferability of findings in qualitative studies (cf. Larsson, 2009). Studies 1 and 2 are described in separate sections and these are followed by a summary and commentary which highlight some of the similarities and differences.

In Study 1, two classes were followed during one teaching unit, and in Study 2, data were collected from three teaching units with the same class in year 8. The overall organisation of the teaching units was similar in both studies (Subsection 6.2.1). First, the introduction to the genre through sample texts and discussions about strengths and weaknesses resulting in a joint criteria list, followed by the production of an individual first draft. Next, feedback training and peer review in consensus groups, and last, individual revision of the first draft. In Study 1 and the first teaching unit in Study 2, the teaching units covered six lessons; Teaching units 2 and 3 covered only five lessons due to time constraints.

Feedback forms were used in both Study 1 and Study 2 to guide the pupils during the peer-review activity (Appendix C), and the instructions encouraged the pupils to include feedback on both good features of the reviewed texts and on potential problems. Most groups organised their written feedback in a similar way; they initially mentioned some good features and then they focused on things that could be improved. These sections were sometimes indicated by a short heading, for example “Strengths:” and “Improve:” (Figure 7.1) or by “-“ and “+” (Figure 7.2).



Strengths: The person follows the criteria list. The text is personal and describes a normal Swedish life very good. The text follows the letter its replying to.

Improve: The person should have more questions so the one shes replying to can have something they can reply to.

The person could use more

Figure 7.1: Feedback form (TU2, FG1)

⊖ You have a good language, if you read the text <sup>and spelling</sup> again you will find a few grammatical errors, for example "we've a TV..." and "democracy". You could check the facts on taxes, because it depends on how big the salary is.

⊕ Good spelling. You keep the whole subject interesting. Good start on each paragraphs. You used quotation mark.

Figure 7.2: Feedback form (TU2, FG2)

A couple of groups also tried to structure the feedback by following the criteria list and assessing each of the criteria in order. These groups initially included both praise and critique in relation to most of the criteria; however, as shown in Figure 7.3, the critique was crossed out and moved to the end of the form. This reorganisation was probably an attempt to conform to the instructions, which separated strengths and weaknesses.

Headline  
Cathy and dramatic. "Ice cold" made it more dramatic, good! You ~~would have stripped the word "lost" to make it more compressed.~~

Sub-headline  
Good summary of the text, including most of the W's. ~~We would have chosen to use the word "about" instead of "around" in "around 1 hour"~~

Figure 7.3: Feedback form (TU1, G6)

Furthermore, some of the consensus groups included some holistic comments, such as “over all your text is really great :) :)” (TU2, G7). This kind of comment may serve as encouragement for the writer; however, since it is not directly linked to any of the criteria, this comment and similar ones were excluded from the analysis in my project (Subsection 6.4.1).

Instructions, both written and oral in class, stressed the importance of feedback etiquette. All comments were formulated in a polite way, but the groups displayed various ways of addressing the potential receiver. Most commonly the groups used “you” (FC4<sup>18</sup>); other examples were “he” or “she” (FC5) or the more impersonal “writer” or “person” (FC6).

FC4        You also wrote witch instead of which, gays instead of guys and then instead of than, but it was still understandable. (TU2, G4)

FC5        She explains the words: “lågstadiet”, “mellanstadiet” and “högstadiet”. (TU2, FG3)

FC6        The person follows the criteria list. (TU2, FG1)

It is important to note that since the purpose of this project was to examine the effect of giving feedback, none of the pupils received feedback on their writing before revising their own texts.

The recordings of the focus groups during the peer-review activity in Study 2 makes it possible to describe how these three groups approached this task, similar to the vignettes describing the teaching in the present chapter.

## 7.1 Study 1: How to write a reply letter

With the lesson plan as a starting point, the teaching unit in Study 1 was implemented in the two classes that participated in the study. Overall, the teaching in the two classes was similar so this section provides a presentation of the implementation in both classes<sup>19</sup>.

The purpose of the first two lessons of *How to write a reply letter* was to produce a list of criteria, thus setting a standard for the task to write an informative reply letter. The starting point for the instruction consisted of various sample texts, and the pupils were introduced to the concepts of context, purpose, and audience, which were discussed in relation to the genre. The pupils read some sample texts together and subsequently engaged in a dialogue with each other and the teacher about the different moves of the

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<sup>18</sup> FC= Feedback comment

<sup>19</sup> This section is based on the corresponding subsection, 4.2.2.1, in my licentiate thesis (Berggren, 2013). Some alterations have been made, mainly restructuring and elaboration of the content to resemble the equivalent depiction of the teaching units in Study 2.

informative reply letter, as represented by the sample texts. Scaffolded by the teacher, the pupils were also asked to identify strengths and weaknesses in the sample reply letters. This discussion resulted in a list of criteria considered important characteristics of a well-written informative reply letter (Appendix I).

The first drafts of the reply letters were written during the third lesson. The task was timed, 60 minutes, and the pupils worked on computers. The writing prompt *Hi Ohio!* is presented in Appendix D. The pupils were not allowed any aids, except for the spelling and grammar check in *Word*; however, the teacher helped them with technical issues. The finished drafts were emailed to the teacher and to the researcher.

The second half of the teaching unit focused on giving feedback. During the fourth lesson, the pupils practiced giving feedback using sample texts. The feedback training was influenced by the four steps suggested by Min (2005; Subsection 4.4.1). The pupils provided examples of features of the sample texts that could be improved, and the teacher scaffolded them by posing questions. The purposes of the questions were to demonstrate feedback etiquette, “How can you tell her in a nice way?”; to specify the problem, “What was the question Linda [the fictitious writer] forgot to answer?”; to explain why something is a problem, “Why is it good to paragraph?”; and to suggest solutions, “What would you put in the introduction, acknowledging the writer?”. The pupils were also encouraged to include praise and good examples, in addition to the four steps. Examples of feedback comments were written on the whiteboard; few of the examples jointly produced by the teacher and the pupils during the instruction included all the steps. Especially the third step, explaining the nature of problems, was lacking.

The second to last lesson, the pupils read and commented on a couple of their peers’ texts. Each consensus group consisted of 3–4 pupils and the principle underlying group selection was that they should be able to collaborate well. The pupils were asked to read and jointly produce written comments on two letters written by classmates and they had feedback forms with instructions and space for the written comments (Appendix C). The teacher walked around in the classroom and scaffolded the groups’ work by providing guiding questions and suggestions. It was also pointed out that the purpose of the peer-review activity was to give the pupils some ideas to improve their own work.

During the last lesson, the pupils revised their first drafts. Again, they were in the computer room and the instructions were the same as for the first draft; the essay was timed and they were not allowed any help. The final versions were emailed to the teacher and me.

## 7.2 Teaching unit 1, Study 2: How to write a newspaper article

The first lesson took place after the Christmas holiday, so the pupils initially shared some stories about their break before they moved on to newspaper articles. The teacher posed questions about the purpose of newspapers, the difference between paper copies and digital versions, and the different sections you can find in a newspaper. The pupils responded that the purpose is to share news, entertain, and also “earning money”. As regards paper and digital newspaper, it was discussed that the digital issue can be updated continuously, has a different type of organisation with headlines and hyperlinks for the main text of the article, can contain more material, and also that it is more environmental-friendly. These distinctions are important to emphasise since the sample texts used during this teaching unit were copied from the digital issue of *The Guardian*. The teacher initiated the different topics and mainly reacted to the pupils’ responses by repeating or elaborating their answers. A couple of times the pupils’ answers were used as “lead-ins” to the next topic. The paper with instructions and examples of potential answers that she and I had discussed prior to the lesson was on the table in front of her.

When they talked about the pupils’ personal reading habits, the teacher asked follow-up questions which helped the pupils elaborate their own answers. Most pupils read newspapers regularly and did so usually on their smart phones; the discussion was summarised by the teacher: “But it sounds as if a lot of you sort of read over breakfast or before breakfast. Time is limited anyway”.

Next, the teacher drew on her own experience from growing up in the UK to introduce *The Guardian*. It was described as a newspaper read by “middle-middles and upper-middles” and “slightly conservative”. One of the pupils mentioned that this meant that what is included in the newspaper is aimed towards that particular group of people, a remark that the teacher used to introduce the learning objectives of the teaching unit and how they were linked to the long-term aims in the syllabus.

In the following part of the lesson, they focused on one of the sample articles: ‘Miracle escape for father and girl, 4, as explosion destroys Southampton home’ (Appendix K). The pupils read the article and to check their understanding the teacher referred to “the five W’s”: Who? What? When? Where? Why? Subsequently, the concepts context, purpose, and audience were introduced and discussed one by one. The idea of context seemed a bit difficult to convey; some pupils confused the term with content and in the end it was mainly linked to the newspaper section in which the article appeared. As regards the purpose, they agreed that it is to inform people and in order to delimitate the audience, the local context and home owners were mentioned especially along with the general readers of *The Guardian*.

Like in the first part of the lesson, the teacher mainly responded to the pupils' answers by repeating or elaborating on the pupils' suggestions.

The pupils worked in groups following the instructions to "look at the way it's [the sample text] organised and structured. And you have to be thinking of context, audience, and purpose when you think about this as well". As the pupils worked, the teacher walked around the classroom helping them. Next, they looked at the text together. Different parts and features of the text were identified and written on the whiteboard:

- Headline
- Subheadline/Subheading/Introduction/Preamble
- Picture
- Caption
- Text
- Paragraphs
- Language

The teacher scaffolded the pupils and sometimes introduced technical terms, such as caption instead of "picture text". As a follow-up, the pupils were asked to analyse these terms and "bear in mind audience, purpose, context". They work in groups again, and the teacher moved around the classroom.

The pupils' suggestions were added to the list on the whiteboard. The teacher scaffolded the pupils and repeated some of the things they said, as well as challenged some suggestions. The last few minutes of the lesson, the teacher did most of the talking herself since time was running out.

The second lesson of the teaching unit started with a recap of the previous lesson, and the pupils were informed of the goal of this lesson: to write a joint criteria list for Friday when they are going to write their own newspaper article. The pupils read another article from *The Guardian* entitled 'Man jailed for driving car on to Brands Hatch circuit during race' (Appendix K) and their task was to work in groups and do the same kind of analysis they did last time. The teacher had her own notes in front of her and this time she had also planned the time of each activity.

Then, the groups' ideas were collected and they discussed "How do you write a good newspaper article?" They talked about the different parts of the newspaper as identified in the first lesson, and the teacher wrote key words on the whiteboard; for example, the headline should be interesting, catchy, and dramatic. This time they also said more about language and the distinction between direct and indirect speech, for instance. Before the pupils left, a worksheet aimed at helping the pupils plan their own newspaper article was handed out (Appendix O).

The subsequent lesson, the pupils wrote the first draft of their newspaper article. They used computers, and the teacher informed them that this was a test situation. They also received written instructions, including the criteria list

(Appendix J). They could also use the worksheet that they had been given during the previous lesson and they were encouraged to use online dictionaries if necessary. As a starting point for their articles, they had four pictures to choose from and these were circulated on USB-sticks so that the pupils could insert them into their texts. Since it was a test situation, they were told not to ask friends or the teacher for help. However, both the teacher and I were available to help with technical issues, such as forgotten passwords, language settings, and pasting in pictures. The completed drafts were emailed to both the teacher and me.

The following lesson treated giving feedback, and the pupils read two sample essays. First, they discussed feedback in groups and then provided examples for the class. The pupils were told to bear the criteria list in mind. The pupils gave examples of strengths and weaknesses in the sample texts, and the teacher sometimes helped them elaborate their answers, especially regarding explanations: “What made it interesting?”, and sometimes she asked them to relate their suggestions more specifically to the text. First, they worked with “positive feedback” and then “negative feedback... the fun bit”. The teacher told them to pretend that the feedback was addressed to her (as a writer, not as a teacher). The pupils provided examples of problems and usually also suggested how they could be fixed. Like before, the teacher sometimes asked them to elaborate or helped them with technical terms, such as font and contractions. She also made sure that that they said something about how to adapt language to situation and audience and that they needed to consider the purpose of the article. A few times, she directed the pupils’ attention to certain parts or words in the texts. Before reading the second sample text, the pupils were reminded to be polite, and they made a list of good phrases to use when providing feedback on the whiteboard. They then talked about strengths and weaknesses in the second text in a similar way as described above.

The fifth lesson was devoted to providing feedback on peers’ newspaper articles. Initially, the pupils were reminded that the people who wrote the texts were in the classroom and they also quickly summarised what it means to be polite and constructive. Some written feedback comments were projected on a large screen to provide good examples of feedback, and the teacher read part of the instructions on the feedback forms out loud (Appendix C). She also told them that it is important that everyone is active in the discussions, that they help and support each other, and take initiatives to talk. The newspaper drafts were distributed and the rest of the lesson the pupils worked in groups reading and commenting on their peers’ texts. The teacher stayed with each group for about ten minutes and helped them if necessary, while at the same time listening and taking notes on the oral communication. Vignettes describing the pupils’ interaction in three of the consensus groups are presented in Subsection 7.2.1.

During the last lesson of this teaching unit, the pupils revised their first drafts. They were reminded to think about the feedback they had provided as well as the two authentic newspaper articles they had read. One pupil asked if they were meant to improve the first text and more pupils seemed uncertain of the meaning of “revise”. The pupils were told that it is a “semi-test situation” and during the activity they were asked to be quiet a couple of times. When the texts were done, they emailed a copy to both the teacher and me.

To summarise, the teaching unit was introduced by a general discussion about newspapers and their function linked to the pupils’ own experience. Two authentic articles from *The Guardian* were used as sample texts, and scaffolded by the teacher, the pupils formulated a shared criteria list, that they had access to when they wrote the first draft of their own newspaper article and during the peer-review activity. The peer-review activity was preceded by feedback training focusing on identifying good features and potential problems in sample texts and formulating feedback which included formative information. During the last lesson, the pupils revised the first draft of their newspaper article.

### 7.2.1 Peer review in focus groups

The pupils in Focus group 1 (FG1) immediately started sharing ideas about the first text they read. There did not seem to be a specific order for the topics they discussed. After about ten minutes, they were reminded to write feedback in the form and this was also when they read the instructions for the peer-review activity. As suggested in the instructions, they first focused on strengths and next on problems. Their secretary wrote as they talked and sometimes asked for help regarding wordings. Sometimes, the pupils talked to and about the camera. Towards the end, the teacher requested them to “check what you’ve written against the criteria list” and this prompted the pupils to take out and to use the criteria list for the first time. They quickly compared what they had written to the criteria, but they did not make any changes to the feedback form.

Focus group 2 (FG2) had a somewhat more structured approach. They appointed a secretary before they started talking about the texts; initially they followed the list of criteria, starting with a discussion about the headline. After about ten minutes, Oscar remembered that “we were supposed to write”. They read the instructions on the feedback form and decided to focus first on good features of the text and then problems, rather than following the criteria list. They often discussed how to formulate the written feedback jointly and they paid attention to the proportion of feedback on strengths and weaknesses, respectively. However, for both texts they concluded that they had not included enough praise, “but we did get it on camera” (Oscar).

In Focus group 3 (FG3), two pupils, Elis and Emmy, did most of the talking. Initially, the group talked about the text in an apparently random

order, and they explicitly decided to discuss first and write later. They started writing after about twenty minutes, “cause time’s ticking way” (Elis). This was also the time when the pupils turned to the criteria list. They read the instructions in the feedback form out loud and decided to focus on good features first. The formulation of the written feedback was a joint endeavour. For the second text, they had a more structured approach and followed the criteria list, even if they still partly separated the oral discussion from the written comments. Before handing in the feedback form, they read the instructions again and quickly checked their comments, but they did not make any changes.

All three groups initially engaged in a discussion without looking at the written instructions on the feedback form. Whereas FG2 used the criteria list to organise their talk, the other groups did not pay attention to the list until they started writing. In all groups, there was some collaboration as regards the formulation of the written comments.

### 7.3 Teaching unit 2, Study 2: How to write a reply letter

Due to time constraints, Teaching unit 2 (TU2) comprised one lesson less than Teaching unit 1 (TU1) but followed the same structure (Table 6.3). Only one lesson was devoted to producing the joint criteria list, whereas the rest of the unit was planned in accordance with TU1: two lessons concerned giving feedback and during two other lessons the pupils wrote the first and final drafts of their reply letters.

The first lesson was after a one-week winter holiday, so the teacher greeted the pupils with an anecdote from her skiing trip and a reminder of tasks and homework that were due before the break. To introduce the unit, she went through the overall plan and informed the pupils that the writing part of the national standardised tests often includes writing a letter. The pupils were asked to name different types of letters or emails and they agreed that a broad distinction could be made between personal and business letters.

The following part of the lesson revolved around context, purpose, and recipient. According to the plan, this discussion was supposed to be based on a sample letter similar to the one that would be used as writing prompt in the unit. However, this text was not distributed. Instead, the teacher focused on differences between phoning and emailing in terms of context, purpose, and recipient: what is the purpose of emailing instead of phoning someone and who would you email rather than phone? It was clear that the pupils mainly used emails for school assignments; they normally used other media to contact people. Emails are for grown-ups and work.



Next, a sample reply letter was distributed, and the pupils worked in pairs to identify the structure and seven different sections. This activity was linked to TU1, when the pupils did a similar task. The sample reply letter was a response to the letter which was supposed to have been handed out earlier, so part of the context was missing. The pupils found it hard to understand the task “analyse the text”, so the teacher decided to abandon the pair work and instead guided the whole class through the task of compiling a criteria list: “every good reply letter must contain these things”. The teacher needed to prompt the pupils extensively to get suggestions. In the end, they had a list of five things on the board:

- Greeting
- Intro/acknowledgement
- Suggestions/ask own questions/replying
- Outro
- Signing off

Since the goal, as stated earlier during the lesson, was to include seven parts, some of the items were separated later. The pupils were also asked to attend to language use and they quickly revised what they had said about the newspaper article in TU1. Again, the teacher asked questions and the pupils needed support to find the expected answers. The final list on the whiteboard read as follows:

- Punctuation
- Translate Swedish
- Personal language
- Paragraphing - new one for new subject
- Informal - no swearing
- Understandable
- Full stops
- Exclamation marks - some to show that you’re happy

Before the lesson ended, the teacher browsed through her own notes again and quickly added a couple of things that they had not covered, such as how to introduce suggestions and how to choose signing off.

During the second lesson, the pupils wrote the first draft of their reply letter. The teacher had the instructions in front of her during the introduction. The pupils initially read the instructions and the writing prompt, a letter from four American teenagers (Appendix D), and the teacher reminded them that this is a test situation. They were also told to avoid including too personal information since their draft may be used in class later. Context, purpose, and audience were discussed in relation to the writing prompt to clarify the task.

Before the pupils started writing, the criteria list was distributed (Appendix J), and the pupils were asked to “Have a read-through. See what you remember from Monday” by their teacher. They quickly recapped what they discussed

the previous lesson. The teacher browsed through the instructions to make sure that everything was covered and reminded the pupils again that this is a test situation. When the pupils started writing, they had approximately 50 minutes to write the first draft. The teacher and I helped the pupils with technical issues, such as login and activating the spelling and grammar check. The drafts were emailed to the teacher and me at the end of the class, or in some cases saved on a USB-stick.

The third lesson was devoted to practicing giving feedback based on a sample reply letter (Appendix G). The teacher had instructions on her desk and also some examples in a notebook. While the pupils read the sample text, the teacher wrote instructions on the whiteboard telling them to “use the criteria list”; “find problem, explain, solve it”; “say what’s good and why”; and “be polite and constructive”. The last point was stressed when the teacher went through these instructions. Furthermore, the pupils were reminded of the main points in the criteria list: the seven parts, content and language. Language was emphasised, and the pupils were asked to provide some examples that the teacher elaborated on using some metalanguage. She also started a list on the whiteboard with some useful phrases for the discussion: rephrase, 3<sup>rd</sup> person *s*, and verb agreement. This list was later complemented with “singular plural” and “noun pronoun”, which were other grammatical points brought up based on the pupils’ examples.

The pupils first discussed feedback in groups and then a spokesperson from each group reported back to the class. Most of the examples from the pupils included explanations and suggestions, and the teacher provided follow-up questions to clarify or in some cases challenge the pupils’ suggestions: “Is there an outro would you say?” or “Is that because of word order?”. At one point, she also recognised that two groups seemed to be in disagreement about the acknowledgement in the text. Some of the suggestions from the pupils were worded rather impolitely. It is also worth noting that all the examples discussed concerned problems and that the pupils jumped between the various criteria. At the end of the lesson, the teacher raised some issues that they had not touched upon, such as paragraphing and punctuation.

The last two lessons of this teaching unit mainly consisted of pupils working in groups or by themselves. During the fourth lesson, which was the peer-review activity, quite a few pupils were absent. This absence meant that some of the consensus groups had to be rearranged, and this lesson alone contributed in large part to the internal attrition in Study 2. The peer interaction in three of the consensus groups is described in the subsequent subsection (7.3.1).

The last lesson, the pupils revised their first drafts. Again, it was stressed that it was a test situation. Some pupils finished their task rather promptly and were given an extra assignment that was not related to the study. As before, the finished drafts were emailed or saved on a USB-stick.

To sum up, the introduction of the reply letter as genre was rendered difficult as the first letter in the interaction was not distributed or referred to during the lesson. Consequently, the pupils found it hard to formulate their own criteria. To compensate and provide the whole context, the writing prompt and especially the genre-related aspects of context, purpose, and audience were presented orally by the teacher the following lesson, before the pupils wrote the first draft of their own reply letter. During feedback training, the teacher stressed language use and provided some examples using metalanguage. The peer-review activity took place during the penultimate lesson and followed the same procedure as in TU1; however, many pupils were absent and some changes had to be made to the consensus groups. Last, the pupils revised their drafts and submitted a final version of the reply letters.

### 7.3.1 Peer review in focus groups

The three pupils in FG1, Liam, Max, and Gustav, read the text and then used the criteria as a checklist. They went through each criterion to see if the writer had included it in the reply letter or not. There was little assessment in terms of quality; a typical remark from this group was “she does have paragraphs” (Liam). When they had checked all the criteria, they took out the feedback form, read the instructions and started talking about strengths, followed by things that could be improved. They employed the same procedure when they worked with the second reply letter. The group members also spent quite some time talking about other things than the texts, such as computer games and the Illuminati. In the end, there was some irritation between them as Liam preferred to play with his phone rather than participate. Before they handed in the feedback form, Liam was told by the teacher to check their writing.

One of the pupils in FG2 was absent, so the group consisted of Albin and Oscar. They read the first text and started commenting and writing feedback concurrently. They did not follow the criteria list; they seemed to just pick the features that first sprung to mind and these features were identified problems and things to be improved. It was not until they started looking for good things that they took out the criteria list. When they worked on the second text, they followed the order of the criteria on the list and discussed each of them. Through the whole peer-review activity, they devoted time to jointly formulate the written feedback and make sure that it was “super polite” (Oscar). Time was a recurring topic; especially Oscar kept track of time and the minutes they had left to complete the task. When time was up, they remarked that “we didn’t say anything positive about it” (Albin) and quickly jotted down some good features before they handed in the feedback form.

Emmy, Elis, and Nikita in FG3 “start[ed] from the beginning” (Elis) with the greeting and then followed the criteria list. They discussed all the criteria before they wrote anything in the feedback form and then they began with the strengths. The feedback was formulated together. For the second text, they

also discussed the criteria in the order they occurred in the list, but this time the secretary, Elis, was asked to “write while we talk” (Emmy). The interaction was mainly between Elis and Emmy; sometimes Emmy tried to involve Nikita by asking her direct questions.

In summary, both FG1 and FG3 used the criteria list to structure their conversation about their peers’ texts, but for FG1 the criteria served as a checklist rather than basis for discussion. In FG2, the pupils primarily focused on weaknesses in the reviewed texts and they formulated the written comments together.

## 7.4 Teaching unit 3, Study 2: How to write an argumentative essay

The third and last teaching unit in Study 2 focused on writing an argumentative essay. In accordance with the previous teaching unit, Teaching unit 3 (TU3) comprised five lessons since time was scarce. As will be presented, some changes were made in relation to the criteria list and the feedback training. These alterations resulted from pupils’ responses in the questionnaire after TU2, where a number of pupils expressed that it was a bit repetitive to follow the same procedure. Another difference is that *How to write an argumentative essay* was preceded by a couple of lessons where the class read a text about the topic of the essay, death penalty, discussed pros and cons, and engaged in a debate. These lessons were not part of the intervention.

The teacher started the lesson by handing out a list of common errors that the pupils made when writing the reply letter, before introducing the genre argumentative essay and linking it to the previous lessons and the debate. The pupils said that they were not familiar with the genre from Swedish class. During the introduction, the teacher reminded the pupils that they were going to look at both structure and language and drew some parallels to the other genres that they had worked with: the newspaper article and the reply letter. She had the instructions from me as well as her own notes on her desk and consulted them occasionally. A sample argumentative essay was handed out and the pupils read the text individually.

The pupils were asked about the three “key words” that had been used in previous teaching units: context, purpose, and audience. The pupils still seemed to find the notion of context difficult to grasp; the teacher explained it as the situation, what is around the text, and finally posed the direct question “where are you?” to draw out the answer. When someone finally responded “school”, it was mentioned that this means that it is a school task related to the national grading criteria. It was agreed that the purpose of an argumentative essay is to convince someone of something and that for this task the recipients were first and foremost the teacher and the researcher.

Next, the criteria list (Appendix P), which had been prepared before class, was handed out and together they used a sample argumentative essay to illustrate each criterion (Appendix Q). The pupils were scaffolded by questions from the teacher, urging them to provide specific examples from the text. In some cases, specifically in relation to the hook, the thesis, and refuting cons, pupils asked the teacher for further explanations and clarifications. In relation to the discussion about pros and cons, parallels were drawn to the debate carried out a couple of weeks earlier. It was also highlighted that in this genre, the argumentative essay, pros and cons are relative to the thesis rather than the overarching topic. Before the class ended, the pupils were given a template so that they could prepare their essay at home and save time during the next lesson when they were going to write their argumentative essays (Appendix S).

During the subsequent lesson, the pupils used computers to write a first draft of their text. They had approximately 60 minutes to complete the draft and they were encouraged to use the criteria list, their templates, and to argue their point of view. Not all pupils had taken the chance to prepare their writing at home. In addition, they had a list of useful phrases that had been introduced in relation to the debate. At the end of the lesson, the pupils followed the procedure from the previous teaching units and emailed their draft to the teacher and me.

The third lesson started with a repetition of giving feedback. To the question “Why does one give feedback?”, the pupils’ answers mainly focused on benefits for themselves, such as noticing their own mistakes, but it was also mentioned that they could help others improve their texts. The criteria list was highlighted as a standard to indicate what they should comment on. In terms of the “how” of feedback provision, the pupils mentioned being polite and give constructive and relevant feedback. The teacher then guided them towards the three steps included in the written instruction in the feedback form: identifying problem, explaining, and suggesting a solution (Appendix C).

The feedback training in this last unit consisted of two parts: first, the teacher and I engaged in two enactments of discussions about texts and second, the pupils received some written feedback comments to evaluate. The first enacted discussion was supposed to be a rather poor one, where the participants mainly engaged with so-called cumulative talk (cf. Littleton & Mercer, 2013), i.e. uncritical talk characterised by agreement. Feedback provision also focused on irrelevant issues, such as the writer’s standpoint. The second discussion was more substantial and included evaluative discussions. After each of the representations, the pupils were asked to comment on the interaction; they mentioned things such as the lack of specific examples and “going off track” in the first discussion and the focus on relevant issues and provision of solutions in the second one.

Similarly, the pupils were then asked to “provide feedback on the feedback” and evaluate some written comments. The written feedback included both good and bad examples, and among other things it was discussed whether the comment would be useful for the recipient. At the end of class, the pupils were asked to summarise the criteria for useful feedback and again, with some help from the instructors, the three steps, identifying problem, explaining, and suggesting a solution, were mentioned.

During the penultimate lesson, the pupils worked in groups and provided feedback on peers’ texts. The teacher reminded them of the things covered in the previous lesson. Like the peer-review activity in the other teaching units, each consensus group received two texts to review; since this lesson was shorter than the previous ones, the groups only had to complete one, however. Next subsection (7.4.1) describes the interaction in three of the consensus groups. In the last lesson, the pupils revised their first draft. There were some technical issues with the laptops and for some pupils it took some time to get started. The finished drafts were emailed to the teacher and me.

This teaching unit, the last one of the three implemented in Study 2, started with a pre-unit introduction of the death penalty as topic and of oral argumentation in the form of a debate. Another modification included the presentation of a criteria list, instead of the joint production of one. To relate the criteria to the argumentative essay, the pupils were asked to provide examples of each criterion from a sample essay. Feedback training this time consisted of enactments of peer-review discussions and instances of written comments; the pupils evaluated these two parts of the peer-review activity and the instructors highlighted the good examples. Also, the three steps on which the feedback training was based were repeated.

#### 7.4.1 Peer review in focus groups

In FG1, the pupils read the text individually and then Max said, “we’re supposed to have a discussion first”. One of them suggested that they start with an overall assessment of the argumentative essay, but this was rejected by the others since it did not correspond to the criteria list. Instead, they started from the top of the essay and talked about the first paragraph. However, they soon deviated from this topic and discussed grammar instead. Then they went back to following the criteria list, but during the remainder of the discussion they continued jumping back and forth between topics. Similar to their approach in TU2, they ticked off the criteria on the list, but this time they did assess the quality of the discussed criteria; in addition to ticking, they introduced the “rund cirkel” (round circle) which indicated that the criterion was sort of or “half” fulfilled. In their discussions, the pupils often returned to the writer and potential reasons for the shortcomings identified in the essay. They started writing in the feedback form when it was ten minutes left of the

class and when formulating comments, they also focused on good features of the text for the first time.

In FG2, they read both texts and then decided which one to peer review. The criteria list was pinned on a cupboard on the wall. They started from the top of the list with the title of the essay and discussed each criterion rather lengthily. They formulated the comments together and the secretary, Albin, stressed the importance of being polite and made sure that he had enough time to write: “saying so many stuffs makes it impossible for [Albin] to write everything”. They were concerned with the short time devoted for the task and laughed every time the teacher reminded them of how much, or rather little, time they had left.

One of the pupils in FG3, Nikita, was absent so the group consisted of Elis and Emmy. Elis was appointed secretary. They started with the title and a little bit later, they took out the criteria list to help them organise the discussion. They talked about all the paragraphs and they also referred to the list of phrases handed out before the teaching unit. They started to formulate the written comments when there were ten minutes left and initially focused on the good features of the reviewed argumentative essay.

It was evident that time was an issue; FG1 and FG3 reserved relatively little time for writing. All groups used the criteria list to organise their peer review and focused primarily on weaknesses in their peers’ texts.

## 7.5 Summary and commentary

This section summarises the previous sections (7.1–7.4) by highlighting some of the similarities and differences in the implementation. It is divided into two subsections to separate the whole class implementation of the teaching units from the peer review in consensus groups.

### 7.5.1 Implementation of teaching units

The two studies comprised a total of four teaching units which covered three genres: the reply letter, the newspaper article, and the argumentative essay. In Study 1, two classes in year eight worked with the teaching unit *How to write a reply letter*; in Study 2, one class in year eight worked with three teaching units: *How to write a newspaper article*, *How to write a reply letter*, and *How to write an argumentative essay*. This difference entailed that Study 2 adopted a more longitudinal perspective with the possibility to study the treatment of several genres, whereas Study 1 provided an opportunity to study two classrooms. However, in this presentation of the implementation of the teaching units, the two classes from Study 1 were merged; it is clear from the video-recordings that instruction was very similar, which is not surprising considering that the two classes had the same teacher.

Overall, the lesson plans for the teaching units followed the same procedure (Table 6.3). However, some modifications need to be highlighted. The last two teaching units in Study 2 only covered five lessons, while the others comprised six lessons. This alteration was due to time constraints; among other things, the pupils in Study 2 participated in national standardised tests and teaching was also affected by a number of holidays occurring on Fridays, when one of the English lessons was scheduled. To solve this situation, lessons 1 and 2 (Table 6.3) were combined, which meant that there was less time to discuss sample texts and to work with the criteria list in TU2 and TU3.

Another modification was introduced in TU3, Study 2. Pupils' responses from the questionnaire distributed after TU2 indicated that most of the pupils found this way of working with texts useful; however, a number of them also expressed that they had found it tedious to work according to the same routines twice, for example "It has been a good structure but I think that if you work in the same way every teaching unit it could be boring for the pupils" (Elis<sup>20</sup>). After some consideration, it was decided to introduce pre-prepared criteria and feedback comments.

As can be expected, the lesson plans were followed in all teaching units, but some deviations should be noted. In terms of the teaching approach, the teacher and the pupils in Study 1 were more familiar with the type of instruction which constituted the basis of the research design. They had not worked with a genre approach or peer response previously, but they were used to focusing on the macro-level of writing as well as writing multiple drafts. Furthermore, classroom discussions led by the teacher were rather common in this classroom. The teacher was also more experienced in terms of time in the profession. These factors probably contributed to the way in which the teaching was performed; the teacher adopted the genre-based approach and studied my instructions, but during the lessons she did not use detailed notes as support.

Teaching in Study 2 proved a bit more challenging, as the approach was rather different from the one the teacher and the pupils were used to. This distance was reflected in some of the pupils' reluctance to engage with revision, and the teacher's reliance on rather detailed notes. Since lessons 1 and 2 in the original lesson plan had to be merged, time also became an issue which led to notes with time indications. Moreover, this modification caused more teacher-led discussions which was not the norm in this classroom. The teacher was less experienced and relatively new as a language teacher; on the other hand, she viewed participation in this study as professional development and adopted a genre approach to teaching also in other classes during this period.

During the classroom discussions and the group work around the sample texts, teaching was characterised by teacher scaffolding in both studies. When

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<sup>20</sup> My translation



the pupils were engaged with the peer-review activity, the teachers continued to scaffold the pupils; during TU1, the teacher in Study 2 also used the peer discussions to assess the pupils' oral proficiency and interaction. A difference to the peer-review activity in the studies was that the pupils in Study 2 were given a time limit in order to be able to review two texts in TU1 and TU2. Approximately half way into the lesson, the pupils were told to switch texts. During TU3, there was only time to review one text. In Study 1, the pupils also received two texts to read and comment on, but there was no time cap. Consequently, most groups only produced written feedback on one of the texts, but it is clear from pencil markings in both texts that they at least read both texts.

The fact that the two studies included the same teaching unit, *How to write a reply letter*, implies that it is possible to draw comparisons. However, it is important to note that the corresponding teaching unit in Study 2, was one of the units which only comprised five lessons. In addition, the initial lesson in the second study did not exactly follow the plan, as the teacher forgot to distribute the letter to which the sample reply letter responded. This mistake meant that it proved difficult to pinpoint context, purpose, and audience for this kind of reply letter. To make up for this confusion, these terms and other clarifications preceded the production of the first draft during the subsequent lesson.

On the whole, the teaching units and the lessons followed the same procedure. Differences are unavoidable as teaching is formed in the interaction between teachers, pupils, and materials (cf. the didactic triangle). These vignettes have depicted the classroom implementation of the four teaching units in my project. The next subsection zooms in on three of the peer-review consensus groups: the focus groups.

### 7.5.2 Implementation of peer review in the focus groups

The three groups approached the peer-review activity in various manners compared to each other, but also compared to themselves in the three teaching units. The pupils did not always refer to or follow the criteria lists in order, but the topics they discussed corresponded to the criteria. Thus, the pupils seemed aware of the guiding function of the criteria. In TU2, FG1 followed the criteria list meticulously, but as a checklist rather than a list of criteria to discuss. Accordingly, they did not assess the quality of the various features of the reviewed reply letters but seemed content with determining whether the letters had a greeting or not, for example.

As was mentioned previously in this section, in relation to the feedback forms, the idea of organising the feedback according to its focus on strengths or weaknesses proved problematic. This was apparent in the groups where they had to remind each other to focus on the good parts of the texts. It is understandable that the feedback instructions caused confusion, since they

conflicted with the approach of structuring the peer-review discussion according to the criteria list.

The formulation of the written feedback was arranged in various ways in the three groups. FG1 appointed a secretary who seemingly produced some of the comments by themselves and occasionally had to stop the discussion to ask the other group members for help. In FG2, the written part of the peer-review activity seemed to be considered a joint endeavour and often the formulation as such formed part of the discussion and assessment of the texts. Finally, FG3 preferred to discuss orally at length first and then write the comments. It is worth mentioning that all groups apparently experienced that that the time allotted for the activity was insufficient.

The following chapters (8–11) present the results, organised around my research questions. Chapters 8 and 9 are linked to RQ1 about task construal and feedback provision, Chapter 10 responds to RQ2, concerning revision changes, and Chapter 11 deals with links between the revision changes and the peer review, i.e. learning from giving feedback, RQ3.

## 8 Construal of the task and use of criteria

In line with the key strategies for implementing formative assessment and the notion of assessment as learning, it is important that the pupils share an understanding of the learning objectives and the criteria with their teachers and their peers (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013; B. Lundahl, 2012). To analyse the perceived usefulness of the material and activities realised in the classroom in relation to the written tasks, I have studied the pupils' responses in the questionnaires distributed after each of the teaching units, the relevance and validity of the feedback comments in relation to the written task and genre, and also instances of talk about criteria in the focus groups during the peer-review activity. The results from Study 1 are summarised and presented with references to the relevant sections from my licentiate thesis (Berggren, 2013).

### 8.1 Study 1

The pupils in Study 1 described the learning objectives of the teaching unit as improving writing and more specifically writing (and reading) a reply letter. Some of them also mentioned being able to provide feedback and to make sure that others understood their writing. The criteria list was perceived as a guideline for writing, and many pupils self-reported that they used the list to check their text before handing it in. Almost all feedback comments produced in the consensus groups agreed with the criteria in the joint list and were thus deemed relevant and valid for the written task to write a reply letter (see Berggren, 2013, Subsections 5.1.1, 5.2.1, and 5.3).

### 8.2 Study 2

In the questionnaires, the pupils described the learning objectives of the first teaching unit, *How to write a newspaper article*, as writing a certain type of text and/or providing feedback. In terms of writing, some pupils mentioned the genre (PR1<sup>21</sup>), whereas others provided more specific information (PR2).

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<sup>21</sup> PR=Pupil response. The pupils responded to the questionnaires in Swedish, so all the examples have been translated.

Some pupils also, or only, mentioned feedback provision and revision as objectives. For example, Liam highlighted providing feedback in a nice way and also improving his own text (PR3).

PR1 I was supposed to learn a new way of writing a text. (an article) (Gustav)

PR2 To learn how to write with structure and with facts. (Mohamed)

PR3 To give constructive feedback without being “nasty”. Also be able to give yourself feedback and improve your text. (Liam)

Responses along the same lines were delivered after the second teaching unit, *How to write a reply letter*. Most pupils mentioned learning how to write a reply letter as an objective (PR4) and a couple of them perceived that the main objective was to learn how to provide feedback (PR5).

PR4 The objective was to learn how to write a personal letter by means of everything we learnt in class. And by means of the criteria be able to improve your own text. We were also supposed to learn to adapt the language to this situation. (Albin)

PR5 The objective was to learn how to give constructive critique to different types of texts. (Gustav)

These two pupil responses (PR4 and PR5) also illustrate another more specific learning objective which several pupils mentioned: to be able to adapt language use to different texts, situations, and recipients.

In the teaching unit *How to write an argumentative essay*, all the pupils described the learning objective as being able to write a specific type of text (PR6), and no one mentioned feedback provision as an intended learning outcome. Only one pupil included the adaptation of language as a learning objective. A couple of pupils also specifically stated the topic of the essay, the death penalty, as a learning objective (PR7).

PR6 The objective was that I would learn how an argumentative text is organised and how to write one (How to present the arguments, which words to use etc). (Emmy)

PR7 To learn about the death penalty, but at the same time learn how an essay is organised with all different parts. (Henrik)

The pupils were asked to report on how they had used the criteria in the questionnaires. The responses were similar regardless of teaching unit; all pupils said that they used the criteria lists as guidance during some part of their writing. Most of them employed the criteria to check their text before handing it in (PR8), whereas others also viewed them as support while writing

the text (PR9). In all three questionnaires, a couple of pupils reported that the criteria functioned as guidelines while writing, but that they made individual choices as well (PR10).

- PR8 I browsed through my article afterwards to see if I had included everything (Emmy)
- PR9 I had the criteria next to me when I wrote and I had some difficulties coming up with a sentence I checked what to include and then wrote. I checked the text with the criteria after each occasion. (Max)
- PR10 I thought about the criteria while writing the letter but I mainly focused on doing it as good and easy to understand as possible. (Isak)

As described in the implementations of the peer-review activity in the focus groups (Subsections 7.2.1, 7.3.1, and 7.4.1), the criteria lists were used in different ways. They were sometimes employed to organise the discussion, as the pupils talked about or ticked off each criterion in the given order. In other cases, the focus group pupils used the list to check that they had provided written feedback for all the criteria. In these instances, the pupils did not use the document with the criteria list until it was time to check, but they still largely relied on the agreed-upon criteria in their peer review.

On the whole, the written feedback comments in all three teaching units were task relevant, that is they could be related to the criteria lists jointly constructed in class. In the oral peer interaction and in the written feedback comments, there were some occasions where the pupils talked about and referred to features of the texts which were not included in the lists. For example, all three focus groups discussed the level of credibility of the accidents reported in the newspaper articles written during TU1.

The formulation of a criteria list for the newspaper articles in class was based on examples of authentic articles from *The Guardian*; it was thus taken for granted that the articles were reporting on real facts. The pupils' school task had a different prerequisite, though. The pupils were given a number of pictures and were asked to come up with a story inspired by these photographs. As a consequence, some of the stories were rather incredible, such as being chased by an angry dog and falling out of a window (Noel) or being involved in a ski crash caused by a UFO sighting (Henrik). Since this type of discussion occurred in all three focus groups and a criterion related to the trustworthiness of the story was relevant for this type of task (writing a newspaper article for *The Guardian*), comments along this line were deemed task-relevant and valid.

Other instances of discussions and comments about "new" criteria also occurred in regard to the newspaper article; pupils debated the font and the use of columns to organise the text. The type and size of the font in newspaper articles was not included in the criteria list, nor was the possible use of

columns to structure the text. The sample articles were from the online version of *The Guardian* and did not conform with the traditional use of columns to save space and facilitate reading as in a paper version of a newspaper. It is notable that this was the only teaching unit which used authentic, real-world texts as sample texts and not texts produced by pupils for school purposes. Font size was also touched upon by some of the consensus groups when reviewing the argumentative essays. While the instructions for the reply letter included the line “Use Times New Roman, 12 points” (Appendix D), there were no similar guidelines for the other two genres.

### 8.3 Summary and commentary

In terms of learning objectives, most pupils mentioned writing, either in general or more specifically as in writing a specific genre. The pupils in Study 2, who were introduced to several genres, tended to be more specific in their objectives related to writing and compared the teaching units and genres (cf. Bronia, 2005; Johns, 1997, 2011; Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011). In Study 1, TU1 and Study 2, TU2, some pupils also self-reported being able to evaluate peers’ writing and give feedback as perceived objectives of the teaching units. In TU3, where feedback training was carried out differently, none of the pupils mentioned feedback provision as an intended learning outcome. The pupils’ response to the feedback training is further explored in the following chapter (9).

The topic of the argumentative essay, the death penalty, was suggested as a learning objective for some of the pupils in TU3, Study 2. This topic was introduced to the pupils in the lessons before the teaching unit included in my project. In class, the pupils read some texts dealing with death penalty selected by their teacher and also practised debating pros and cons. It is therefore not strange that the topic as such was perceived as an intended learning outcome.

The pupils in Study 1 and 2 reported finding the criteria useful and they used the criteria list at different stages of their writing. Most commonly, the list was used to check their texts before handing them in. A similar routine was observed in the three focus groups. A small number of pupils expressed that they relied on their own ideas in addition to the criteria during writing. Similarly, a couple of criteria included in the written feedback comments or discussed orally in the focus groups were not included in the lists, but could be deemed relevant for the genres in question (cf. F. Hyland, 2000; Orsmond et al., 2000; Torrance, 2007).

Judging by the written feedback comments, which almost exclusively were task relevant, the pupils also adhered to the criteria while giving feedback. In school contexts and especially in relation to the notion of assessment for and as learning with student involvement, observing criteria is considered central (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018; Earl, 2013; Sadler, 1989).

This chapter has described how the pupils construed the learning objectives of the teaching units and the written task as described by the jointly produced criteria lists for the newspaper article, the reply letter, and the argumentative essay. The following chapter relates to the second part of my first research question and presents findings concerning the pupils as peer reviewers.

## 9 Feedback provision

This chapter presents the analysis responding to research question 1b: *To what extent do pupils include formative information in their peer feedback?* During the penultimate lesson of every teaching unit, the pupils in Study 1 and Study 2 reviewed their peers' texts in consensus groups. Each group consisted of 2–3 pupils; according to plan, there were supposed to be three people in the groups, but the groups were reorganised at the beginning of these lessons due to absences. Absence from the peer-review activity also affected the internal attrition, since “learning from giving feedback” constituted the core of my project; consequently, the individual texts written by pupils who did not take part in the peer-review activity were excluded from the project (Subsection 6.1.2.2).

During the peer-review activity, the pupils read and commented in writing on their peers' texts in a feedback form. The pupils in my project produced a total of 498 comments and 485 of these were deemed task-relevant and subsequently included in the feedback corpus. This means that thirteen of the comments were excluded from the analysis since they were not task-relevant. Most of the excluded comments gave general praise (FC7 and FC8), while another one referred to the writer's process (FC9). Moreover, one comment described that the group ran out of time (FC10).

FC7        we think the article is good (TU1, G5)

FC8        It's a great text over all, and we really liked it! (TU2, G7)

FC9        Theres a thought behind every sentence (TU2, G5)

FC10      The things we don't mention about your work means that we think it's good. We did need a bit more time. (TU2, FG2)

All comments considering potential problems in the reviewed texts were analysed using an adapted version of the model of peer feedback suggested by Min (2005; Subsection 6.4.1). The comments which denoted good aspects of peers' texts are briefly mentioned in the following subsections, but the emphasis is on the formative information in the feedback identifying weaknesses. Formative information was defined as explanations and suggestions.



The research design of my project, which focused on the peer reviewer, did not include any communication between the reviewer and the writer. Instead, the peer review and the peer interaction occurred in consensus groups (Rollinson, 2005), and the written feedback was formulated in writing based on discussions in these groups. The fact that the data for Study 2 included both the oral interaction and the written feedback for three of the consensus groups, the focus groups FG1, FG2, and FG3, provided the opportunity to draw some comparisons between the two modes.

The analysis of the peer interaction was based on the topic episodes (TE) from the focus groups. Each topic episode denoted a group conversation on a certain topic or criterion (Subsection 6.4.1.2) and could thus be associated with the written comments. The analysis was based on the same model for peer feedback used to identify formative information in the written feedback (Min, 2005; Subsection 6.4.1). In some topic episodes, it was not possible to determine whether the group decided that the criterion was performed well or not, that is if it was considered a good feature or a problem. These episodes were labelled *Undecided*. Similar to the analysis of the written feedback, the episodes which revolved around identified problems were categorised in steps, distinguished by the type of formative information.

The results from each of the four teaching units in Study 1 and 2 are presented in separate subsections. In Study 2, a distinction is made between the written and the oral part of the peer-review activity. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the two modes were interlinked; the pupils discussed the texts and formulated the written comments as part of the interaction. The results from the teaching units are followed by a subsection that summarises and comments on similarities and differences.

## 9.1 Study 1

### 9.1.1 Written peer feedback

In the teaching unit *How to write a reply letter* in Study 1, the fourteen consensus groups wrote a total of 169 task-relevant comments. There was large variation between the groups; the number of comments produced ranged from six to 23 (Berggren, 2013). The majority of these comments denoted good features in the peer-reviewed texts (Table 9.1); at the level of group though, there were a few instances where comments identifying problems outnumbered comments on good features.

Table 9.1: Categorisation of feedback comments in Study 1<sup>a</sup>

<b>Good features<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Step 1<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
102	19	35	1	12	<b>169</b>

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Tables 5.2 and 5.8, case A and B combined)

<sup>b</sup> “Good features” refers to the feedback comments which provided information about strengths.

<sup>c</sup> The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

The majority of the comments on weaknesses included some formative information apart from identifying the problem (Step 1); this information was mainly suggestions on how to solve the problems, that is Step 2. There were considerably fewer comments which included explanations. On group level, all fourteen consensus groups involved formative information in some of their comments; indeed, five of the groups only produced formative comments. Regarding explanations which pertain to Steps 3 and 4, five of the consensus groups overlooked this type of formative information completely. The groups which included explanations in their feedback often related them to the intended audience, the American teenagers (Berggren, 2013, Subsections 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, and 5.3.2).

## 9.2 Teaching unit 1, Study 2

### 9.2.1 Written peer feedback

The corpus of feedback comments from the peer review of the newspaper articles comprised a total of 141 comments, and the number of feedback comments that each consensus group produced varied from eleven to 26 (Table 9.2). Overall, comments that highlighted good features of the reviewed texts outnumbered comments identifying potential problems. This was true also at group level with two exceptions: G7 focused more on weaknesses in their written feedback and FG2 had an equal amount of comments on good features and problems.

Table 9.2: Categorisation of feedback comments in TU1, Study 2

<b>Consensus group</b>	<b>Good features<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Step 1<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
FG1	9	0	1	0	5	<b>15</b>
FG2	12	1	6	0	5	<b>24</b>
FG3	12	0	3	0	2	<b>17</b>
G4	18	5	1	0	2	<b>26</b>
G5	7	1	0	3	0	<b>11</b>
G6	16	0	6	0	1	<b>23</b>
G7	10	0	8	2	5	<b>25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>141</b>

<sup>a</sup> “Good features” refers to the feedback comments which provided information about strengths.

<sup>b</sup> The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

The praise concerned all aspects of the texts, from the headline (FC11), to the interviews (FC12), and the language (FC13). About half of the comments on good features in the newspaper articles included some kind of elaborated information, comparable to the explanation in the analysis of the comments on potential problems. In FC11 and FC13, this elaboration provided a justification of the assessment. FC12 lacked this formative information; it was more like a description of the text.

FC11      The headline is very dramatic and catchy. Good with the age of the girl in the headline. (G7)

FC12      The main texts included a lot of interviews (G6)

FC13      Professional language, used good words and sounded like a real newspaper article. (G4)

Since the emphasis of my analysis was on the formative information relating to improvements, the feedback that concerned problems received the most attention. As illustrated in Table 9.2, the vast majority of these comments included some formative information in the form of either solutions (Step 2), explanations (Step 3), or both solutions and explanations (Step 4). In fact, four of the seven consensus groups only produced feedback comments with formative information. Some of the solutions suggested in Step 2 were rather generic, for example a request that the writer “checks” something, such as the grammar (FC14), or a suggestion that the paragraphs are shortened (FC15). Specific solutions could potentially be more helpful for the writer, like suggesting better formulations (FC16) or that the caption also contains the name of the person who took the picture (FC17).

FC14      You could have checked your grammar (FG1)

- FC15      The paragraphs could have been a bit shorter, but we don't really think that's too important. (G7)
- FC16      Maybe you could have written "two and a half hours" or 2.5 hours" instead of "2 and a half hour". (G7)
- FC17      It might have been better if you wrote the photographer. (FG2)

Step 3, which was a small category in TU1, involved feedback comments containing an explanation, but no explicit suggestion (FC18). There were only five comments in this category.

- FC18      Though the article was easy to follow, it suffered from some logical issues, such as having to turn the car around in order to save them, the person in the 911 call talking about his/her personal experiences during the call, and the mother explicitly saying that "she was going to miss her daughter", which is something that no mother in their right mind would say. (G5)

The last category, Step 4, comprised comments which provided dual formative information: explanations and suggestions. It was a relatively large category, with approximately one third of the comments about problems. Examples from this category related to a variety of text features, such as the choice of unit depending on the context (FC19), how to condense the headline (FC20), and the credibility of the story (FC21). As has previously been discussed in relation to Step 2, the suggested solutions in this category could be considered either generic (FC21) or specific (FC19, FC20).

- FC19      You should have used "mph" instead of "kph" because this article was probably written in U.S.A. or UK, but this is just a minor thing. (FG2)
- FC20      It could have been more compressed and skipped the words "her" and "the". (G7)
- FC21      Some part could have been changed to make it more realistic. (FG2)

To sum up, the number of comments produced by each consensus group varied considerably. Most groups emphasised the good features of the reviewed newspaper articles in their feedback form and the majority of the comments on potential problems included formative information.

### 9.2.2 Oral peer interaction

In Teaching unit 1, the three focus groups engaged in 92 topic episodes related to the newspaper articles written by their peers. As presented in Table 9.3, 38 of the topic episodes dealt with good features of the peer-reviewed texts, whereas 41 identified problems. In the remaining thirteen episodes, it was unclear from the oral interaction whether the topic discussed was considered a problem or not. These episodes were labelled *Undecided*. At the level of group, the number of topic episodes ranged from 27 to 37 and there were differences between the three focus groups as regards the distribution of episodes dealing with problems and those which were “undecided”.

Table 9.3: Distribution of topic episodes in relation to feedback in TU1, Study 2

Focus group	Good features	Problems	Undecided	Total
FG1	12	8	7	<b>27</b>
FG2	11	21	5	<b>37</b>
FG3	15	12	1	<b>28</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>92</b>

Like in the case of the written feedback comments, the analysis of the topic episodes focused mainly on the problems identified in the reviewed texts. Initially, a couple of examples from the other two categories, *Good features* and *Undecided*, are presented.

TE4 provides a rather typical description of how the focus groups worked together to develop and justify their assessment, in this case “I like the subheadline” (Nikita<sup>22</sup>).

- TE4      Nikita: Eh I like the the subheadline <LOOKS AT CRITERIA LIST>  
             it was kind of short and not too long and still it  
             Elis: It’s kind of interesting  
             Nikita: Yeah it gave me the impression I needed to know what the  
                     article was going to be be about and yeah I like that was good but  
             ---  
             Nikita: I thought that the subheadline was kind of good  
             Elis: It was interesting  
             Nikita: Yeah  
             Elis: It was a summary of the whole text so it was  
             Nikita: Not too long not too boring (FG3)

In this example, Nikita introduced the topic, the subheadline, and provided a justification, “kind of short and not too long” which was supported and elaborated by Elis. In the end, they had jointly pinpointed several reasons

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<sup>22</sup> Nikita as an individual informant was excluded from the study due to absence during one of the teaching units.

supporting the assessment of the subheadline as good: it is a good length; it is interesting; it is a summary of the article; and it is not boring.

It is clear that the focus group regarded the subheadline a good feature of the reviewed newspaper article in TE4. However, in some topic episodes it was unclear whether a group decided that the topic of the interaction was a good feature of the text or a problem. What these instances had in common was that it appeared as if the interaction was not finished; the pupils did not reach agreement, but neither did the interaction end in explicit disagreement. This is illustrated by the following example (TE5) in which the pupils talked about the interviews in the text. Interesting in this episode are some “buts” that were not elaborated.

- TE5           Max: Well the interview's maybe a bit too short  
              Gustav: Yes it's like and then she said this and oh yeah that's it  
              Max: All  
              Liam: Yes please  
              ---  
              Gustav: Interviews yes it was a little too short interview though but  
              Max: Yeah well there were two interviews  
              Gustav: Oh yeah but  
              Max: They were really short but they didn't  
              Gustav: But the language is good the language is good no slang and  
                  (FG1)

In the second part of the episode Gustav wanted to add something that could elaborate on or justify his opinion that the interview was short. However, Max pointed out that there were two interviews and then also seemed to want to add something, but Gustav changed the topic and the interviews were not discussed again. It was thus unclear whether the group considered the interviews in the reviewed newspaper article successful or not.

41 of the 92 topic episodes concerned problems as identified by the pupils and the majority were categorised as Step 4 (Table 9.4). Not surprisingly, there was variation between the focus groups; especially FG2 stood out since they were involved in many more topic episodes about problems than the other groups. This lopsidedness was something the group members also noticed, “we’re going to write more good things like this it makes it look better” (Albin, FG2). The same group also had a relatively high proportion of episodes on Step 2, that is only including formative information in the form of solutions.

Table 9.4: Distribution of topic episodes dealing with feedback on problems in TU1, Study 2

Consensus group	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
FG1	0	1	1	6	8
FG2	2	7	2	10	21
FG3	0	0	3	9	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>41</b>

<sup>a</sup>The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

Only two of the topic episodes simply identified a problem, without a supporting explanation or a suggested solution (Step 1). Both episodes were from FG2 and both dealt with punctuation: “it was somewhere in the text he like forgot a dot” (Oscar, FG2) and “for example the dot in the headline” (Albin, FG2). The former concerned the main text and the latter specifically identified the problem with a full stop in the headline, which is the reason they were counted as two distinct topic episodes.

There were also instances where the focus group pupils suggested a solution to a problem, without providing an explanation (Step 2). FG2 discussed the layout, specifically the positioning of the picture in the text (TE6); the sole justification provided was that “it’s my opinion” (Albin).

- TE6      Albin: The picture could have been [Oscar: Capti-] moved a bit to the middle it’s my opinion but  
             Edvin: Yeah  
             Oscar: That’s what happen when you use Word [Albin: Unless you] it is a bit confusing when you use Word  
             Albin: Unless you you know you have the button if you put everything in the middle you could have used it there  
             Oscar: Yeah you should make it in Publisher  
             Edvin: Okay can’t you like press here <POINTS TO PAPER> then use space  
             Albin: Yeah yeah that would work (FG2)

The pupils did discuss a potential reason for the picture being placed with left margin, “that’s what happen when you use *Word*” (Oscar), but that did not explain why the picture in a newspaper article should be centred in the first place. The technical solutions suggested were to either use the correct button in *Word* or to use *Publisher*.

The category which included explanations as formative information, Step 3, mainly dealt with topics related to the story, that is the accident on which the article reported. To illustrate a topic episode categorised as Step 3, FG1 had a long discussion about the reported fact that the people involved in an accident in the Swedish village Sälen called 911 for help (TE7). This example

is from the last part of a long topic episode and the pupils did not agree on how to treat this problem.

- TE7      Max: I don't think 911 is an error because [Gustav: I] technically if they're from England or something they could call 911  
            Gustav: But it is an error because she  
            Liam: I will just write 911 *lika med* 112 112  
            Gustav: This person wrote wrong because [Liam: Yeah] it is in Sweden so  
            Liam: Yeah (xx)  
            Max: But I mean if they are from England or somewhere where 911 is the [Liam: Yeah]  
            emergence call they could technically call that because they don't know we have a different number in Sweden  
            Liam: Yeah  
            Max: Because most of Europe have the same  
            Liam: Yeah I think so oh anyway  
            Max: But that's just a fact that's not what we're supposed to  
            Liam: You could have  
            Gustav: It doesn't say where they're from [Liam: No] Sweden or  
            Liam: You could've checked so actually (FG1)

This topic episode included an identified specific problem, the emergency number, and the pupils provided various explanations as to why this could be considered a problem. In fact, Max questioned whether this was a mistake from the writer or if it was part of the story. What is also interesting with this episode and the three similar episodes from FG3 questioning the made-up story, is that they related to a criterion dealing with the credibility of the story. Since the joint criteria list was based on authentic newspaper articles, this issue was not discussed in class; however, all three focus groups raised similar concerns in their peers' newspaper articles.

The final category is the one which includes all three steps and, thus, illustrates "good" feedback, Step 4. This step comprised the majority of the topic episodes, 25 out of 41. As is the case with most of the topic episodes, the inclusion of all steps is best described as a joint endeavour, where the group members added little pieces to the overall assessment and justification. In the following example (TE8), the identified problem is that the photographer's name was not included in the caption. It was an episode in two parts and it was in the second part that the explanation and the solution were brought up.

- TE8      Oscar: Then the caption I don't know it is or he didn't wrote who took the photograph  
            Albin: Yeah just what?  
            Oscar: Yeah he didn't write who  
            Albin: Yeah

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Edvin: He he didn't write who took the picture so he could do that  
 Albin: <SCANS TEXT FOR MISSING "DOT" (other topic)> Na  
 Oscar: That would be like author of the picture  
 Edvin: Cause that would be more convincing now it could it might just  
       be a picture from wherever you want like Google or something  
       <LAUGHS> it's like exactly that use a picture from from (xx)  
       (FG2)

Edvin explained that it would be more “convincing” if the photographer’s name appeared in the caption and the proposed solution was the straightforward “he didn’t write who took the picture so he could do that”.

In conclusion, the focus groups talked about both good features and problems identified in the reviewed newspaper articles during their interaction. FG2 were involved in many more topic episodes about problems than the other groups. Most topic episodes concerning problems also contained formative information, such as suggestions or explanations.

### 9.2.3 Comparison of written peer feedback and oral peer interaction

These three focus groups produced 56 written feedback comments and were involved in 92 topic episodes in the first teaching unit; consequently, some of the topic episodes did not result in written feedback comments. A cross-reference of the topic episodes to the feedback comments matched 54 of the topic episodes to the written feedback. That the links were fewer than the number of written comments was due to the fact that three of the topic episodes resulted in two comments each and that one comment could be linked to two topic episodes.

It is pertinent to study the apparent discrepancy in the numbers of topic episodes in relation to the feedback comments from the focus groups. Likewise, it is relevant to study other potential differences or similarities between the two modes. These results are not applicable to the whole class since only the focus groups’ oral interaction was video-recorded and analysed.

At the level of group, there were some differences; in both FG1 and FG3 about half of the topics discussed also occurred in the written feedback comments, but in FG2 the corresponding ratio was two thirds. Not surprisingly, very few of the topic episodes labelled *Undecided* were matched to the written feedback comments; only two of the thirteen undecided topic episodes resulted in written feedback. A similar trend was noticeable in relation to the topic episodes treating potential problems; less than six out of ten occurred in the written feedback comments. Interestingly, it seemed as if the pupils deliberately decided not to turn all the discussions into written comments.

In contrast to the undecided topic episodes discussed above, the majority of the topic episodes covering good features were also turned into comments.

There were some instances where the pupils explicitly discussed whether to write down a comment or not, such as “What do you think Nikita, should we should we write this about the police” (Emmy, FG3) and “should we write that?” (Albin, FG2). In a discussion about a photograph which did not really match the story in the newspaper article, Liam said that “yeah but we have to remember like they she only got this picture” (Liam, FG1), thus relating the problem to the task setting. In another topic episode, when the pupils talked about formatting causing the problem, it was concluded that “it is a bit confusing when you use *Word*” (Oscar, FG2).

Table 9.5: Comparison of formative information in topic episodes and feedback comments in TU1, Study 2

Mode	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
Topic episode	1	6*	1*	17	25
Feedback comment	0	11	0	12	23*

Note: \*Two of the topic episodes (one from Step 2 and one from Step 3) resulted in a feedback comment about a good feature of the peer-reviewed text.

In relation to formative information, it is apparent that the oral discussions about the newspaper articles were richer than their written counterparts. In other words, the topic episodes overall included more explanations and suggestions than the feedback comments (Table 9.5).

To sum up, more topic episodes dealing with good features of writing than dealing with potential problems resulted in written feedback. In some cases, where the problem discussed was not deemed serious or relevant, the pupils deliberately chose not to include the remarks in the written feedback. In general, the topic episodes included more formative information than the equivalent feedback comments.

## 9.3 Teaching unit 2, Study 2

### 9.3.1 Written peer feedback

Altogether, the consensus groups wrote 115 feedback comments about their peers’ reply letters in TU2. Similar to TU1, there was variation between the groups; the number of comments ranged from eleven to 23 (Table 9.6). As regards the proportion of comments on good features and potential problems, it was almost a tie at the level of class. A comparison between the groups showed differences though: FG2, for instance, identified more weaknesses than strengths in the texts that they reviewed, whereas G7 highlighted good features before potential problems.

Table 9.6: Categorisation of feedback comments in TU2, Study 2

Consensus group	Good features <sup>a</sup>	Step 1 <sup>b</sup>	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
FG1	6	0	3	0	2	<b>11</b>
FG2	5	2	13	2	1	<b>23</b>
FG3	8	0	5	0	0	<b>13</b>
G4	9	4	0	2	0	<b>15</b>
G5	6	0	2	3	3	<b>14</b>
G6	12	3	2	0	2	<b>19</b>
G7	13	1	2	0	4	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>115</b>

<sup>a</sup> “Good features” refers to the feedback comments which provided information about strengths.

<sup>b</sup> The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

Proportionally, there were more comments regarding strengths overall, but the vast majority of these comments were descriptive rather than formative. This means that the comments highlighted a feature that the group found well-executed, but that they did not provide any elaborated information justifying their assessment. For example, the feedback described the language (FC22) or the content (FC23) but neglected to explain why these were considered good features by the consensus group. An exception was FC24, where it was clear that the translated passages helped the reader understand the message.

FC22      You have a good language (FG2)

FC23      You answered a lot of questions (G4)

FC24      You translated everything that you wrote in Swedish so the receiver could understand (G4)

Most of the feedback comments which identified problems in the reviewed reply letters included some formative information, that is explanations and/or suggestions (Table 9.6). The comments labelled Step 1 read more like descriptions than feedback (FC25, FC26) and even if a solution could be inferred in most cases, it was not explicitly expressed.

FC25      Some sentences had an incorrect structure, such as “so to signing of”. (G4)

FC26      You don’t ask any questions at all (G6)

Three of the groups, FG1, FG3, and G5, only produced comments with formative information. With the exception of G4, all groups included suggested solutions in some of their comments, either on Step 2 or Step 4.

These solutions comprised both generic suggestions requesting that the writer adds “something” (FC27) and more specific solutions, indicating what kind of information to add (FC28).

FC27        You should also add something to the sign off (FG2)

FC28        You could say some more thigs about the school like “Grottan”.  
(FG1)

All groups but one (FG3) also produced at least a couple of comments with explanations, that is Steps 3 and 4. Among other things, the explanations referred to the overall quality of the text (FC29), the function of certain moves (FC30), or understanding (FC31).

FC29        And she doesn’t really answer all the questions thats obligatory for the text, and thus making the text short and unvaried. (G5)

FC30        The intro could be rephrased since the next parts of the text doesn’t follow what the intro says. (G5)

FC31        It would be easier for the amaricans to understand if you didn’t translate the word “primary school” directly. Instead you could have wroten it in swedish and then explained it. (G7)

FC31 (last above) also illustrates Step 4: feedback comments which identify a problem, explain the nature of the problem, and suggest a solution. This was the most elaborated category in terms of formative information; two of the groups, FG3 and G4, did not write any comments which included both explanations and suggestions, and the other groups only had a few examples. Most of the comments by G7 were categorised as Step 4, but since the total number of comments was so small these differences were negligible.

To summarise TU2, the overall results were similar to the ones in TU1. Most of the feedback concerning potential problems included some formative information, but there were differences on group level as regards the inclusion of solutions and explanations.

### 9.3.2 Oral peer interaction

There were 122 topic episodes in total in TU2, and similarly to TU1, the total number of feedback comments were considerably lower, 46. This difference between the topic episodes and the written comments will be explored in the following subsection (9.3.3). The topic episodes were placed in three categories: *Good features*, *Problems*, and *Undecided*.

Table 9.7: Distribution of topic episodes in relation to feedback in TU2, Study 2

Focus group	Good features	Problems	Undecided	Total
FG1	32	8	4	<b>44</b>
FG2	18	21	7	<b>46</b>
FG3	19	10	3	<b>32</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>122</b>

Unlike in TU1, there were many more topic episodes identifying good features than identifying problems in the peer-reviewed reply letters (Table 9.7). There were also topic episodes labelled *Undecided*. The number of topic episodes differed between the groups: from 32 in FG3, to 44 in FG1, and 46 in FG2.

Parallel to the feedback comments, emphasis in the analysis was on the topic episodes concerning identified problems, but primarily a couple of examples of interactions in the categories *Good features* and *Undecided* are presented here. In TE9, FG1 talked about the acknowledgement in the reply letter. Liam introduced the topic and there was agreement that there was indeed an acknowledgement in the reviewed reply letter.

- TE9      Liam: [...] Greetings hello Debbie intro yeah Rebecka blablabluh check  
              check acknowledgement  
              Max: Acknowledgement  
              Liam: Yeah I guess the first thing you wanted to hear about I think she  
                  an- I think she she like yeah I I have heard this  
              Gustav: Eh mm yes  
              Liam: What do you think?  
              Gustav: Now th- there isn't a lot of acknowledgement but (xx) [Liam:  
                  Yeah] enough  
              Liam: I know but it's still it's one so  
              Max: It's definitely an acknowledgement  
              Liam: Yeah check that  
              Gustav: Yeah we can check  
              Liam: Check check ch (FG1)

Initially, Liam seemed a bit unsure about the acknowledgement and asked the other two members of the group "What do you think?" to which Gustav responded that there is "enough" of acknowledgement. Max, on the other hand, said that "It's definitely an acknowledgement", and they decided to "check that". This is a rather typical example from FG1 in this teaching unit; they did not assess the quality of the feature discussed. Instead, they used the criteria list as a checklist.

There were also topic episodes where the pupils seemed not to reach an agreement as to whether the criterion was realised well or could be improved. In TE10, Albin and Oscar discussed the number of students in their school. In

the reviewed reply letter, it said that there were a thousand students, but Oscar questioned this number.

- TE10        Oscar: Do we have one thousand students here <LAUGHS>?  
              Albin: Yeah if you put uh gymnasium together high school  
              Oscar: Uuh nah  
              Albin: Maybe  
              Oscar: That’s not one thousand  
              Albin: Maybe it’s not one thousand but it’s quite an amount big  
                      amount  
              ---  
              Albin: Uh you could actually I don’t know it says one thousand  
                      students it might be another school this here it might be another  
                      school person if you cause we don’t know (FG2)

During this topic episode, Oscar’s opinion was clear, whereas Albin tried to find alternative explanations. For example, he suggested that there was a “big amount” of students at the school, if both primary and secondary school were included; in the end, he also implied that the writer may have had another school than theirs in mind. This was the last turn in this interaction and there was no sign of agreement in the group.

The topic episodes dealing with problems were analysed and categorised based on their formative information (Table 9.8). Compared to TU1, there were more topic episodes that lacked formative information, Step 1. Again, FG2 had many more topic episodes regarding problematic features than the other two groups, and this time they tried to gloss over this imbalance by including the comment “The things we don’t mention about your work means that we think it’s good” (FG2, TU2)<sup>23</sup>.

Table 9.8: Distribution of topic episodes dealing with feedback on problems in TU2, Study 2

Consensus group	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
FG1	2	1	1	4	8
FG2	6	7	1	7	21
FG3	2	3	1	4	10
Total	10	11	3	15	39

<sup>a</sup>The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

TE11 exemplifies a topic episode pertaining to Step 1. Albin and Oscar observed that there was no ending, but they did not explain explicitly why this was a problem, nor did they suggest a solution.

<sup>23</sup> This comment was excluded from the analysis of the written feedback since it did not comply with the criteria for relevant and valid feedback (Subsection 6.4.1).



Despite the distractions, they managed to include both an explanation and a solution in their interaction.

- TE13      Max: Well there are some things in the text that are the like exclamation marks I like having more of them  
             Liam: Yeah  
             Max: Because for example the eh <READS> I would gladly like to tell you about Sweden that's you can have an exclamation mark there  
             Gustav: Use more exclamation marks to show your  
             Max: Y- you can  
             Liam: Happiness  
             Max: You could use more exclamation marks just to show that you're  
             Liam: To show that you're hap-peh (FG1)

In the transcribed part of the episode, Max identified the problem as too few exclamation marks and suggested places where the writer could exchange a full stop for an exclamation mark: "I would gladly like to tell you about Sweden". Gustav, who was appointed secretary, fished for an explanation and Liam proposed that exclamation marks are needed to show "happiness" or "that you're hap-peh", which was in accordance with the criteria.

A noteworthy observation from the beginning of the same topic episode, which consisted of several occurrences throughout the peer review, is how Liam linked the peer review to his own writing by addressing the feedback to himself: "I didn't have them [exclamation marks] and I I will probably get an F but it's okay". A similar instance was noted in FG2, when Albin realised that "I should I I have to do it [reply to all questions] on my text as well now when I think of it".

During the peer-review activity in this teaching unit, two of the groups also expressed that another potential feedback receiver was the teacher or the researcher (TE14, TE15), which in this case actually was true due to the research design.

- TE14      Emmy: That's good and then we hope that [the teacher's name] gets what we mean it's doesn't mean that she should have one question paragraph one [Elis: no <LAUGHS>] question paragraph  
             Elis: She should yeah  
             Matilda: Yeah she hopefully she knows and otherwise Jessica can say it when she read this (FG3)
- TE15      Oscar: They got it on tape mate  
             Albin: <LOOKS INTO CAMERA>: Yeah remember it you can add it on you know (FG2)

To sum up, most of the topic episodes from TU2 dealing with identified problems contained formative information in the form of explanations or



solutions. FG2 had considerably more topic episodes about problems than FG1 and FG3, respectively.

### 9.3.3 Comparison of written peer feedback and oral peer interaction

Judging by the high number of topic episodes, 122, and the much lower number of feedback comments, 47, from the three focus groups, it was clear that many of the topic episodes did not result in written feedback. A cross-check showed that 52 of the topic episodes could be matched to written comments, which was less than half of them. The number of matches exceeded the number of feedback comments due to the fact that some comments could be linked to several topic episodes. For instance, the comment “She could’ve thought about [...] some spelling issues” could be connected to both a topic episode about the spelling of *guys* and one episode about the spelling of *which*. At group level, about half of the topics discussed in FG2 and FG3 also occurred in the written feedback; the corresponding proportion in FG1 was one third.

There were 39 topic episodes which dealt with identified problems and most of these, 28, also resulted in written comments. All groups contributed to this number, even if slightly more topic episodes on weaknesses from FG2 were turned into comments. Rather few of the topic episodes about good features led to comments; only twenty of the 69 episodes could be matched to the feedback forms. FG3 seemed to have put more emphasis on good features in their comments than the other two groups. Of the fourteen undecided topic episodes, only four resulted in written feedback. It is interesting that three of these could be connected to the same comment(s)<sup>24</sup>: “You have a good language, if you read the text you will find a few grammatical and spelling errors, for example ‘...’we’ve a TV...’ and ‘democracy’” (FG2). This sentence highlighted both a good feature and identified some problems, which was in line with the undecidedness of the peer interaction in these topic episodes. FG2 also provided another plausible explanation for the discrepancy between the topic episodes and the feedback comments: deliberate choices due to task setting and time allocation, “yeah because I think it’s just an unfinished” (Albin, FG2).

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<sup>24</sup> In the analysis of feedback comments, this example counts as two comments: “You have a good language” (good feature) and “if you read the text you will find a few grammatical and spelling errors, for example ‘...’we’ve a TV...’ and ‘democracy’” (problem).

Table 9.9: Comparison of formative information in topic episodes and feedback comments in TU2, Study 2

Mode	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
Topic episode	6	10	1	11	28
Feedback comment	2	22	1	3	28

There were 28 matches between the topic episodes and the feedback comments about problems (Table 9.9). Some of the topic episodes could be matched to the same comment, for example if the focus group had decided to refer to all “grammar and spelling issues” in one comment. In half of the matched cases, the topic episode and the comment contained the same step of formative information. However, there were also instances of differences; most of them entailed the loss of explanations or solutions in the transfer from the oral to the written mode. Interestingly, there were also instances where there was more formative information in the written comment, primarily a solution to an identified problem. In these cases, it was likely that the secretary decided to elaborate the written feedback themselves. Overall though, it was obvious that part of the formative information was lost in the transfer from the oral to the written mode.

To sum up the comparison of the written feedback and the topic episodes in TU2, topic episodes about identified problems resulted more frequently in feedback comments than topic episodes about good features. Furthermore, topic episodes labelled *Undecided* were seldom turned into written feedback. Similar to TU1, the topic episodes included more formative information than the written comments. More specifically, it seemed as if the explanations were not included in the written feedback.

## 9.4 Teaching unit 3, Study 2

### 9.4.1 Written peer feedback

In Teaching unit 3, *How to write an argumentative essay*, the peer-review session was shorter than in the previous two units. Consequently, the consensus groups only had time to review one of their peers’ argumentative essays. This time constraint affected the number of feedback comments which was 60 in total (Table 9.10). The group with the smallest amount counted only five comments (G5), whereas fourteen comments were produced by the group with the highest amount (G7). As in TU2, the ratio of comments focusing on good features and potential problems, respectively, was rather even, with a slightly higher number of the former. With the small number of comments overall, it was problematic to compare ratios of comments on strengths and

weaknesses between the groups; however, G7 stood out due to their highlighting of good features of the reviewed argumentative essay.

Table 9.10: Categorisation of feedback comments in TU3, Study 2

<b>Consensus group</b>	<b>Good features<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Step 1<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
FG1	4	0	0	0	5	<b>9</b>
FG2	3	0	1	0	2	<b>6</b>
FG3	5	0	0	1	2	<b>8</b>
G4	3	0	1	0	4	<b>8</b>
G5	3	1	0	0	1	<b>5</b>
G6	5	0	0	2	3	<b>10</b>
G7	10	0	1	0	3	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>60</b>

<sup>a</sup> “Good features” refers to the feedback comments which provided information about strengths.

<sup>b</sup> The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

The comments on good features of the argumentative essays mentioned clever hooks (FC32), well-structured paragraphs (FC33), and correctness (FC34). Parallel to TU1 and TU2, it was possible to draw a distinction between comments which were descriptive (FC34) and comments which included explanations (FC32, FC33). A small majority of the comments regarding strong features of the argumentative essay comprised explanations.

FC32      We think that to capture the reader the hook has to be clever, which the text accomplished (G5)

FC33      Strong concluding sentences, your opinion gets clear after every paragraph (G7)

FC34      Good grammar (G7)

Contrary to the previous teaching units in Study 2 (Subsections 9.2 and 9.3), the category Step 4 contained the highest number of comments, a whole twenty out of 28. All seven consensus groups contributed to this number. Apart from identifying problems, these comments also provided solutions and explanations; among other things, the groups commented on vocabulary (FC35), argumentation (FC36), and style (FC37).

FC35      Try not to use genders like you did in the first paragraph (these guys in prison) you could’ve write “persons” because all murderers is’nt guys. (FG3)

- FC36 In some sentences you agreed with the opposing team (people against death penalties) which made your opinion seem a bit weak. If you would have showed some cons instead your text would have been more convincing. (G4)
- FC37 You may have been too personal in the first paragraph when you wrote “do you seriously think.....”. We feel that it’s a bit harsh, and instead you could change it to “do you believe that.”... (G5)

Only one group, G5, had a comment categorised as Step 1 (FC38) and on the whole, there were also very few comments on Step 2 (FC39) and Step 3 (FC40).

- FC38 Furthermore, the text had some grammatical errors (G5)
- FC39 but you could have included some more cons and refute them (G7)
- FC40 Don’t make us feel empathy for the murderer like in the third paragraph. It makes us feel bad for the murderers because they have a tough time (FG3)

In summary, most of the comments regarding potential problems in the reviewed texts included both suggestions and explanations, Step 4. There was some variation between the groups in terms of both number of comments and degree of formative information; there were also slightly more comments denoting good features of the reviewed argumentative essays than potential problems.

## 9.4.2 Oral peer interaction

Since the pupils had less time for the peer-review activity in this teaching unit, there were only 31 topic episodes in total. In Table 9.11, the distribution of topic episodes in the categories *Good features*, *Problems*, and *Undecided* is presented.

Table 9.11: Distribution of topic episodes in relation to feedback in TU3, Study 2

Focus group	Good features	Problems	Undecided	Total
FG1	2	7	4	13
FG2	1	3	0	4
FG3	8	6	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>

The largest category, *Problems*, included half of the topic episodes. Good features of the reviewed texts were discussed in eleven of the 31 topic episodes and in the remaining four it was unclear from the interaction if the group talked

about a strength or a weakness. FG2 discussed very few topics compared to both FG1 and FG3. FG3 identified more strengths than problems in their text, whereas FG1 found more potential problems.

Before turning the attention to the topic episodes covering problems, some examples of interactions about good features and unclear assessments are presented. In TE16, Emmy and Elis talked about the language, the formal words, used in the reviewed argumentative essay. There is no doubt that they found this to be good feature.

- TE16      Emmy: They have really used formal words [Elis: Yes] okay some slang but still um most of the time it's very and <READS FROM TEXT> "therefore they will not feel empathy for that person and probably not forget it at all"  
Elis: It's a good paragraph you know  
---  
Emmy: And we liked the summary or yeah [Elis: The conclusion] the conclusion thank you <LAUGHS> and to just another thing we like we like the words they used we love that they used very formal words (FG3)

In this interaction, Emmy stated that even though there was some slang in the text, formal words were used "most of the time" and she read a passage from the essay to support her opinion. In the second part, she even concluded that they "love" the use of formal words.

All the topic episodes categorised as undecided in this teaching unit were interactions from FG1. The topics discussed were the hook, the thesis, transition signals, and the conclusion (TE17). Two of the group members had to leave the lesson five minutes before it ended due to other school-related matters which may explain some of these undecided, or perhaps more correctly, unfinished episodes.

- TE17      Gustav: And uh the conclusion summary of your arguments stop uh *nej* strong ending linked to intro uh the ending is very bad because you don't uh [Liam: <LAUGHS>] know [Liam: <LAUGHS> Understand] what they're talking about you don't understand a single shit uh  
---  
Liam: Is it like linked to intro I don't I wouldn't say like this could be a part of of the part like it uh I I wouldn't say like it really links to the beginning  
Gustav: Yes (xx)  
Max: I I I'mma say that I think that you can put this as the end of the uh intro  
---  
Gustav: Just finish off with uh the [Liam: Sen-ten] strong ending like [Liam: S-] no it wasn't like (xx) have you wrote about uh the grammatical errors

(Teacher asks them to hand over writing to Max because someone would like to talk to the other two members)

Liam: Oh

Max: Okay

Liam: Uh you know

Max: This has to be at the same time or [Liam: Yes sorry] ah okay like eh I- I were I was starting write if you ma- eh if you pa- eh uh no it's hard if you maybe you are supporting sentences are better

---

Liam <RETURNS TO COLLECT BAG>: Just the last you have to summary your arguments and strong links and stuff the big thing you know. I take this I take the other text too <COLLECTS PAPERS>

Max: I'm not going to have time to do it

Liam: You can do it Max that's okay (FG1)

The pupils talked about the conclusion and whether or not it corresponded to the information in the introduction. Liam and Max seemed to be on opposite sides: Liam said that he “wouldn't say like it really links to the beginning”, and Max stated that “you can put this as the end of the uh intro”. It is unclear if Gustav's “yes” indicated agreement with Liam's idea or was a “yes” as in yes, there is a link between the introduction and the conclusion. In the end, Liam returned and told Max what he should write, but there was no time for further discussion or assessment.

In parallel with the treatment of the written feedback, the topic episodes dealing with potential problems were categorised based on their formative information (Table 9.12), similar to the analysis of the written feedback.

Table 9.12: Distribution of topic episodes dealing with feedback on problems in TU3, Study 2

Consensus group	Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
FG1	0	1	0	6	7
FG2	0	0	0	3	3
FG3	0	0	0	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>

<sup>a</sup>The steps refer to the categorisation of the feedback comments which is presented in Subsection 6.4.1.

Almost all topic episodes contained both explanations and suggestions (Step 4). The sole exception, one episode, did include some formative information, but only in the form of suggestions (Step 2). The suggestions mentioned in TE18 were that the writer should explain or improve something; it is unclear from the somewhat unfocused dialogue what feature they were indeed talking about.

- TE18      Gustav: It is it's not just only eh grammatic it's also like giving more feeling into the sentences like [Max: Yeah] so you really just [Max: Now it's just if feels like she's] it's like it's like murder's wrong like you need more like eh  
 Max: Uh ah explaining [Gustav: Yes improving] y- eks- improve the explaining of why it [Gustav: <LAUGHS> Improve explain] my love yeah they run against an excuse to keep the (xx) a certain *vad fan med okej alltså* the crime if they put a criminal pris- they the ho- their whole life that's worse than killing them except <LAUGHS> (xx)  
 Gustav: God this sentence is fucked up  
 Max: I don't know bruh okay in thsh- I don't know if she really does  
 Gustav: Read rawr rewr (FG1)

This interaction was mainly focused on a solution. Max seemed to introduce an explanation, to “improve the explaining of why it” but he was interrupted by Gustav’s laugh and then apparently lost the thread.

The other topic episodes in TU3 were categorised as Step 4. In the next example (TE19), the pupils spent a lot of time elaborating on the explanation: how a paragraph in the argumentative essay against the death penalty made them feel empathy for the murderer. The only solution mentioned though was that the writer “could have changed” the paragraph.

- TE19      Elis: Oh we have to hurry up [Emmy: Yeah] u- usually when murders get out of prison they're having a difficult time finding a job eh and some of them (xx) by  
 Emmy: I don't like this at all  
 Elis: *Nej* because [Emmy: Oh wait that was mean said] oh <LAUGHS>  
 Emmy: Em [Elis: <LAUGHS>] I don't I don't think this is good  
 Elis: Nah I forget [Emmy: Thesis] I I I think that uh murders they started robbing and stuff when they can't find jobs you know uh I don't [Emmy: Yeah] I think that's a little mean to the pe- that sort of people who wants to change you know so I I wouldn't put put that as a paragraph  
 Emmy: No and I also think it's quite weak argument [Elis: Yeah I-] cause um they've real time y- you kind of feel you start feeling empathy for the murderer and that's what in this text in a text where you're not going to kill somebody or if they're or the death penalty I I think you shouldn't you shouldn't make us feel empathy for the murderer at all that's quite that's what I'm starting to do here ooh and oh my god they can't find a job and [Elis: Yeah] and they have to rob but and then I don't feel like but it's okay that they don't ts-murder they murder are they going to have help [Elis: Yeah] then I kind of start siding with the other side just basically cause I start feeling sad I I'm starting I I'm r- regretful so that I I don't think this is (xx) they could have changed so I I mean they could have changed so that you don't feel sad for the murderers you don't feel empathy  
 Elis: Mhm  
 Emmy: Okay (FG3)

Both Elis and Emmy agreed that the paragraph discussed could be improved. Elis' justification was that some criminals do want to change and "that's a little mean to the pe- that sort of people who wants to change you know", whereas Emmy put more emphasis on the risk that the reader sides with the opposing side: "you shouldn't make us feel empathy for the murderer". The suggested solution was generic: that the writer could change something.

Another example of a topic episode with both an explanation and a solution is from FG2 (TE20). This focus group talked about the use of rhetorical questions and initially the pupils discussed this use as a good feature, because the reviewed argumentative essay did include some examples of this feature. However, Oscar had some objections.

- TE20      Oscar: *Vänta vänta vänta vänta* <LAUGHS>  
              Albin: Rhe-torical  
              Oscar: Ques-tion but that's also a negative use three rhetorical questions in the first two paragraph [Albin: Yeah] so that's kind of bad too  
              Edvin: I- it was good to use a rhetorical question [Albin: But] but  
              Oscar: You used them three times in the same paragraph <LAUGHS>  
              Edvin: But eh  
              Oscar: Maybe spread them out over the whole thing [Edvin: Yeah maybe] and not just use them all together [Edvin: But you could spread them out in the whole text] there is like [Edvin: There's a lot of rhetorical question one here] one there one there [Edvin: Yeah one I think someone here to what's this word] v- vernible eh  
              <LAUGHS> (FG2)

Oscar asked his group and especially Albin who started formulating the feedback to wait, "*Vänta vänta vänta vänta*", and drew their attention to the fact that the rhetorical questions were in the same paragraph. Edvin agreed and together they suggested that the rhetorical questions should be spread out over the text.

To summarise, the topic episodes in TU3 primarily treated problems identified in the peer-reviewed texts. There were also a small number of topic episodes categorised as *Undecided*. All topic episodes involved formative information; indeed, all but one included both explanations and solutions, Step 4.

### 9.4.3 Comparison of written peer feedback and oral peer interaction

The discrepancy between the number of topic episodes and the feedback comments was smaller in this teaching unit than in the others; there were 31 topic episodes and 23 written comments. Eighteen topic episodes could be linked to the comments; four of these episodes resulted in two or more



comments which is why the number of topic episodes were fewer than the number of feedback comments. FG2 included both praise and critique in some of their comments and in the analysis of the written feedback these remarks were counted as two comments. For example, FC41, which was the written feedback based on the topic episode about rhetorical questions described above (TE20), highlighted the rhetorical questions both as a good feature and a problem.

FC41      Very good of you to use a rethorical question, but you could minimize them out of the text and not just using a lot of them in the whole text, because it makes the text harder to read. (FG2)

All of the topic episodes in FG2 resulted in written feedback, but they discussed fewer topics than the other two groups. Furthermore, this group spent time discussing the meaning of the criteria, which did not count as topic episodes. About half of the topic episodes in FG1 and FG3, respectively, resulted in comments in the written feedback forms.

As has been pointed out in relation to TU1 and TU2, it seemed as if few of the topic episodes labelled *Undecided* resulted in written feedback and this trend was also apparent in TU3. In fact, none of the four undecided topic episodes could be linked to the written comments. Six of the sixteen topic episodes identifying problems were not represented in the feedback and the equivalent number for good features was three out of eleven.

In the other teaching units, the focus groups made some deliberate decisions not to include some feedback in the form. There were no such examples in TU3, even if one remark from Gustav in FG1 to the secretary about the title in the reviewed argumentative essay, “so if you want you can eh write informative title but uh needs to be more interesting”, opened up for some kind of choice, but the justification was unclear.

Table 9.13: Comparison of formative information in topic episodes and feedback comments in TU3, Study 2

Mode	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Total
Topic episode	0	0	0	10	<b>10</b>
Feedback comment	0	1	1	8	<b>10</b>

Of the eighteen topic episodes which could be linked to written feedback, ten focused on problems. All of them included both explanations and solutions (Table 9.13). This was true for almost all of the corresponding feedback comments as well, eight out of ten. In these instances, the formative information from the topic episodes was also transferred to the written feedback.

To summarise, most of the topic episodes about good features or problems in TU3 resulted in written feedback. None of the interactions categorised as

undecided were transferred to the written mode. In addition, there was only a small difference between the quality of the formative information in the topic episodes and the feedback comments.

## 9.5 Summary and commentary

This section summarises and synthesises the findings from each of the four teaching units. Attention is mainly paid to similarities and differences and where applicable this comparison is related to the implementation of the teaching units (Chapter 7). There are also some nods to the discussion of the results (Chapter 12). The section is divided into three subsections equivalent to the other subsections of this chapter.

### 9.5.1 Written peer feedback

There was large variation between the consensus groups in all teaching units. The variation concerned the number of feedback comments, the ratio of feedback on good features and potential problems in the peer-reviewed texts, and the type of formative information included in the feedback. Across the teaching units, the majority of the feedback comments shared the similarity that they denoted strengths in the reviewed texts, but the ratio was slightly higher in two teaching units: Study 1 and TU1 in Study 2.

As regards elaborated information, that is explanations, in the comments about good features of the text, there were differences between the teaching units: a similar amount of comments with and without explanations in TU1; more comments without explanations in Study 1 and TU2; and proportionally more comments with explanations in TU3. The similar result in Study 1 and TU2 is interesting since these teaching units both dealt with the reply letter. On the other hand, there were differences between the examples used in the feedback training. Whereas few of the examples that resulted from the classroom discussion in Study 1 included explanations, the pupils in Study 2 encountered more comments with formative information in their training (Sections 7.1 and 7.3).

In all teaching units, the majority of the comments about potential problems included some formative information, that is suggestions and/or explanations (cf. Min, 2005). The feedback comments from the third teaching unit in Study 2, *How to write an argumentative essay*, stood out since all but one comment included formative information and most of them comprised both suggestions and explanations, Step 4. Most of the feedback comments in the other teaching units also contained formative information; however, a rather large share of them only included suggestions, Step 2. Overall, Step 3, which involved feedback that identified a problem and provided an explanation, counted few examples. Providing explanations demands an understanding of the function

of various features of the text and lexico-grammatical choices, as well as vocabulary to describe linguistic phenomena. The criteria lists and the teaching involved some metalanguage, but it is uncertain to what extent these words formed part of the pupils' vocabulary (cf. Dragemark Oscarson, 2009).

Similarities and differences could be explained by several factors: the implementation of the teaching units and especially the feedback training sessions (cf. Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Hu, 2005; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013); the genre and the criteria jointly developed in class (cf. Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; K. Hyland, 2016; Kamimura, 2006; Stanley, 1992), or the way the groups approached and interpreted the peer-review activity (Chapter 7).

The differences at the level of group in terms of task approach presented earlier (Subsections 7.2.1, 7.3.1, and 7.4.1) and in terms of feedback comments presented here could be further elucidated by a closer look at the peer interaction. The following subsection summarises and comments on the comparison of the formative information in the written feedback to the formative information in the oral interaction in the focus groups in Study 2.

### 9.5.2 Oral peer interaction

In Study 1, feedback provision was studied only via the written feedback comments, that is the written outcome of the peer-review activity. Since the activity as such was mainly based on oral interaction, Study 2 also included peer interaction data. By exploring the peer interaction in the focus groups and especially the topic episodes, the understanding of pupils as peer reviewers can be furthered.

The topic episodes were analysed and categorised in a similar way to the feedback comments: attention to good features or problems and type of formative information. About one out of ten topic episodes in each teaching unit pertained to a third category exclusive for the oral interaction: *Undecided*.

In relation to the ratio of topic episodes dealing with good features and problems, there was some variation between the three teaching units and the groups. Overall, the number of topic episodes treating good features and problems was equal in TU1, whereas there were twice as many "good" topic episodes in TU2. In TU3, there were more topic episodes on problems than on good features. At the level of group, FG2 and FG3 showed rather consistent preferences; FG3 constantly had many more topic episodes about good features in the reviewed texts and FG2 discussed more weaknesses than strengths in all teaching units.

FG2 seemed to be aware of this imbalance: "let's write more stuff more good stuff" (Edvin, FG2, TU1) and "aigh aigh aight the good things the good things man" (Oscar, FG2, TU2). The group tried to stay focused on and identifying good features of writing in the reviewed texts, but it proved difficult. FG3, on the other hand, seemed to have a generally positive

perspective on their peers' texts; the word *good* was more frequent in their conversations than in the conversations in FG1 and FG2.

FG1 displayed an uneven profile in terms of distribution of topic episodes. Good features were discussed in more topic episodes in TU1 and TU2, whereas there were very few positive topic episodes in TU3. In TU2, FG1 used a "check-list approach" to the peer-review task and ticked off criteria based on presence in the text rather than quality (cf. DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; J. Liu & Hansen, 2002; Min, 2005). Therefore, a high number of their topic episodes denoted what they perceived as strengths.

In terms of formative information, the majority of the topic episodes expressing problems were categorised as Step 4, which means that they included explanations and suggestions. There were some differences between the teaching units; in TU2, the reply letter, about one fourth of the topic episodes did not contain any formative information. The corresponding number in the other teaching units was minimal. In TU3, all episodes but one were labelled Step 4. Possible explanations could relate to pupils' development as peer reviewers (cf. Berg, 1999b; Hu 2005; M-K. Lee, 2015; Stanley 1992), focus on oral and written communication, respectively (cf. Mercer, 2000; Neumann & McDonough, 2015; Section 7.4), and the genre (cf. Schleppegrell, 2004; Yu, 2019).

### 9.5.3 Comparison of written peer feedback and oral peer interaction

As highlighted in previous subsections (9.2.3, 9.3.3, and 9.4.3), many of the topics raised in the oral interaction were not included in the written feedback. In TU1 and TU3, six out of ten topic episodes could be connected to written comments; the corresponding ratio in TU2 was four out of ten. Not surprisingly, very few of the topic episodes labelled *Undecided* resulted in written comments, only six of 31. Nearly half of the topic episodes about good features resulted in written feedback; at group level, FG3 had a slightly higher ratio and FG1 a lower one. For topic episodes about problems, two thirds also occurred in the written feedback. In FG2 this proportion was higher, but it was still above 50% in FG1 and FG3. In other words, it seems as if the pupils primarily focused on including written comments intended to improve the text in the feedback form.

There was a rather large variation between the groups in terms of overall proportion of topic episodes that resulted in written feedback and it is possible that these differences can be elucidated by their various approaches to the peer-review activity (Subsections 7.2.1, 7.3.1, and 7.4.1). These factors in turn are obviously related to teaching and pedagogical decisions, that is the research design and the implementation. From the descriptions of the implementation of the peer-review activity, it is clear that the three focus

groups structured their work differently, for example in terms of time management and focus on the oral interaction and the formulation of written feedback. Other factors which could have contributed to the discrepancy are deliberate choices not to include all ideas in the feedback form, as well as the absence of a real receiver since the feedback never reached the writer. On the other hand, some instances from the peer interaction indicated that the pupils considered themselves, their teacher, or the researcher potential feedback receivers.

In parallel with the written feedback comments, the topic episodes pertaining to the category *Problems* were also categorised in steps, based on their formative information (Min, 2005). Most of these topic episodes, 55 out of 96, involved both explanations and suggestions (Step 4) and relatively few of them, twelve, did not include any formative information. The comparison of the formative information in the topic episodes and their written counterparts, as presented in the previous subsections (9.2.3, 9.3.3, and 9.4.3) showed that some of the suggestions and explanations expressed orally were not transferred to the written feedback. Apart from the reasons mentioned above in relation to the discrepancy between topic episodes and written feedback, a number of other things could help explain this difference in formative information.

Moving from one mode to another, in this case from the oral to the written mode, naturally involves some adaptation. It is a skill to summarise an oral discussion in writing, especially if it has included many turns and ideas. In previous studies on peer feedback of writing, the mode of communication has been linked to the setting: EFL learners (cf. Chang, 2015; Matsuno, 2009; Min, 2005, 2016; Rahimi, 2013; Suzuki, 2009) or ESL learners (cf. Berg, 1999b; Chen, 2010; Kamimura, 2006; M-K. Lee, 2015; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). In my project both modes were used, but the purpose of the oral peer interaction and the written peer feedback diverged slightly. The consensus groups' task in the peer-review activity was to formulate written feedback and in order to do so, the pupils needed to assess their peers' writing and reach some kind of agreement. The purpose of the oral interaction was therefore to express ideas and negotiate with the group members (cf. Mercer, 2000; Neumann & McDonough, 2015).

This chapter and the previous one have presented results connected to my first research question: *How do pupils respond to the feedback training?* The following chapter includes findings related to the pupils' revision changes. It seeks to answer my second research question: *What types of revision changes do the pupils make?*

## 10 Revision changes

This chapter presents the revision changes made by the pupils when they revised their first draft in each of the four teaching units in this project: *How to write a reply letter* in Study 1, and *How to write a newspaper article*, *How to write a reply letter*, and *How to write an argumentative essay* in Study 2. It responds to Research question 2. The unit of analysis, the revision change, was defined as a visible alteration between a pupil's first and final draft of the texts. This definition entails that the scope of one revision change can vary considerably, from the inclusion of whole paragraphs to the deletion of an apostrophe, for example (Subsection 6.4.2). To facilitate comparisons between the teaching units and different aspects of writing, the qualitative analysis was quantified.

The findings in this chapter are presented in four sections, each pertaining to one of the teaching units (one in Study 1 and three in Study 2). This division makes it possible to draw comparisons related to teaching, feedback training, and the various genres. In order to obtain parallel organisation of the results from Study 1 and 2, the results from Study 1 are summarised and presented with references to the relevant sections from my licentiate thesis (Berggren, 2013). The organisation of the subsections is based on three aspects of writing: *Structure and rhetorical organisation*; *Content and idea development*; *Micro-level aspects of writing*; they are presented in order ranging from the largest to the smallest aspect in terms of number of revision changes in each teaching unit. To highlight the qualitative analysis, examples of revision changes from the pupils' texts are included to illustrate the findings. The last section of this chapter summarises the findings and stresses similarities and differences between the teaching units.

Overall, the pupils in my project mainly performed revision changes affecting the aspects *Content and idea development* and *Micro-level aspects of writing* (Table 10.1). A rather small share of the alterations, about one tenth, were categorised as *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

Table 10.1: Revision changes across aspects

Aspect of writing	Study 1	Study 2	Project
Structure and rhetorical organisation	30 (6%)	74 (10%)	104 (8%)
Content and idea development	268 (54%)	286 (40%)	554 (46%)
Micro-level aspects of writing	197 (40%)	356 (50%)	553 (46%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>495 (100%)</b>	<b>716 (100%)</b>	<b>1211 (100%)</b>

Note: The percentages have been rounded using the Largest remainder method

## 10.1 Revision changes in Study 1

The pupils wrote two drafts of their reply letter in Study 1. The combined number of revision changes from the two classes, 26 pupils, was 495 (Table 10.2). There was considerable variation on the individual level; one pupil only made one alteration, whereas the pupil with the most revision changes made 46.

Table 10.2: Distribution of revision changes in Study 1<sup>a</sup>

Aspect of writing	Number	Type of revision change	Number
Content and idea development	268	Addition	190
		Substitution	51
		Deletion	27
Micro-level aspects of writing	197	Vocabulary	55
		Rearrangement	51
		Grammar	50
		Punctuation	41
Structure and rhetorical organisation	30	Paragraphing	23
		New move	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>495</b>

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Tables 5.3 and 5.9, pp. 60 and 74)

Not surprisingly, most of the revision changes affected the content of the reply letters; the category *Addition*, with the subcategories *Elaboration*, *Clarification*, *New answer*, and *New question*, was by far the largest category of revision changes (Table 10.3). The subcategory *Elaboration*, which included expansion of answers and information introduced in the first draft, counted the highest number of changes among the subcategories.

Table 10.3: Distribution of revision changes in *Content and idea development* in Study 1<sup>a</sup>

Type of revision change	Number
Elaboration (Addition)	114
Substitution	51
Deletion	27
Clarification (Addition)	26
New answer (Addition)	26
New question (Addition)	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Tables 5.4 and 5.10, pp. 64 and 70)

There were also quite a few alterations which concerned the micro-level aspect of writing in Study 1; changes to the micro-level of writing are defined as changes which do not alter the meaning. These revision changes included spelling changes and the substitution of words for equivalents (*Vocabulary*), word order alterations (*Rearrangement*), corrections of grammar mistakes (*Grammar*), and inclusions of commas and full stops (*Punctuation*), among other things (Berggren, 2013, Subsections 5.1.2 and 5.2.2).

Last, there were relatively few changes to *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, but some pupils revised their paragraphing and others included moves which were missing from the first draft.

## 10.2 Revision changes in Teaching unit 1, Study 2

The results presented in this section are from the newspaper articles written by the pupils in Study 2 during their first teaching unit. The total number of revision changes for these pupils was 215; the pupils made between three and 27 changes to their first draft, so there was much variation on individual level.

Table 10.4: Distribution of revision changes in TU1, Study 2

Aspect of writing	Number	Type of revision change	Number
Micro-level aspects of writing	113	Vocabulary	37
		Punctuation	31
		Grammar	27
		Rearrangement	18
Content and idea development	76	Addition	43
		Substitution	26
		Deletion	7
		Font	14
Structure and rhetorical organisation	26	Paragraphing	9
		New move	2
		Reorganisation	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>



The revision changes in this teaching unit mainly affected the category *Micro-level aspects of writing* (Table 10.4). This aspect alone counted for more than half of the alterations. About one third of the revisions altered *Content and idea development*, whereas considerably fewer changes concerned *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

The largest group of aspects, *Micro-level aspects of writing*, involved types of changes categorised as *Vocabulary*, *Punctuation*, *Grammar*, and *Rearrangement*. The category that represented the highest number of alterations within this aspect was *Vocabulary*. Among these changes, the most common operation was related to spelling (RC10<sup>25</sup>). The other revision changes were exchanges of words with similar meanings (RC11).

RC10	in keston colorado was choked when	in <b>keystone Colorado</b> was shocked when (Isak, G5)
RC11	the extraordinary force in the bomb.”	the <b>uncommonly strong destructive</b> force in the bomb.” (Max, FG1)

A frequent change pertaining to *Punctuation* was the inclusion of full stops or commas (RC12), but there were also some examples of more genre-specific alterations, such as removing a full stop at the end of the headline (RC13).

RC12	Ski Resort he says:	Ski Resort, he says: (Ebba, G7)
RC13	Bryan Smith is dead.	Bryan Smith is dead (Elis, FG3)

The category *Grammar* was almost as large as *Punctuation*. It included, for example, alterations of verb tenses (RC14) and changes from nouns to pronouns (RC15), and vice versa.

RC14	The prosecutor said they have loads of evidence	The prosecutor <b>says</b> they have loads of evidence (Liam, FG1)
RC15	Martin is now okay	<b>He</b> is now okay (Gustav, FG1)

The last category pertaining to *Micro-level aspects of writing* is *Rearrangement*. This type of changes involved alterations of wordings which did not affect the meaning, as illustrated in RC16 and RC17.

RC16	the robbers had money problem. All	the robbers had <b>problem with money</b> . All (Emmy, FG3)
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<sup>25</sup> The abbreviation RC denotes examples of revision changes. The changes are presented in two columns: excerpt from the first draft, followed by the equivalent excerpt from the second draft with the change in bold type.

RC17 Tuesday the 5th by a bomb explosion.

Tuesday the 5th by **an exploding bomb.** (Max, FG1)

All sixteen pupils made revision changes which affected the micro-level of writing. It is worth noting that one of the pupils, Isak, alone performed more than half of the 40 revision changes at the level of vocabulary, such as corrections of spelling.

The second largest aspect of revision changes in the newspaper articles was *Content and idea development*. This aspect included changes that affected the reported story and the information provided in the newspaper articles. This aspect has three categories: *Addition*, *Substitution*, and *Deletion*. Not surprisingly, most of the revision changes in this aspect were additions. They could be further divided into two subcategories: *Elaborations*, which is a generic subcategory and *New information*, which is genre-specific in the sense that these additions specifically dealt with the inclusion of new information related to the news item. The majority of the additions were elaborations, that is revision changes which added more detailed information to content included in the first draft (RC18).

RC18 A lot of cars were damaged from the snow sliding all the way from the mountain down to the parkinglot,

A lot of cars were damaged from the snow **crashing in to them.** **They were almost completely destroyed by the force the snow had gathered from** sliding all the way from the mountain down to the parkinglot. (Mohamed, G4)

RC19 Sydney, Australia.

Sydney, Australia. **Targeted cat survived.** (Max, FG1)

RC20 *the girls were in the ambulance.*

*the girls were taken out of it.*  
**Photograph: James Humphrey**  
(Leia, G6)

About one third of the changes also entailed that new information was added to some part of the newspaper article. Due to the genre, which to a certain extent builds on the iteration of facts, “new information” in this case can mean that something mentioned elsewhere in the text also was referred to in another part of the article after the revision of the first draft. This type of revision change is illustrated in RC19 where Max added “Targeted cat survived” to the headline. In the first draft, this piece of information was stated in the subheadline “...bomb explosion that seems to have been targeted against her cat”, and now the cat, that is the victim, was also mentioned in the headline. Another example of new information from this teaching unit was the insertion of the name of the photographer in the caption (RC20).

Adding new information could also entail introducing a new witness to the accident on which the article reported. The use of witnesses to give the story more credibility and perspective was one of the criteria on the list produced jointly by the teacher and the pupils, and some of the pupils included more witnesses to their text during the revision. In RC21, the rather impersonal “Police” was identified as “Jack Rekker, police commissioner” who was quoted in the final draft of the text.

RC21	Police are apologizing for the lack of information and says that they will give us more information after this situation has ended.	<b>The police quickly responded and said. "We are sorry for the lack of information, and we are currently sending out informers to calm down the neighbours" says Jack Rekker, police commissioner.</b> (Albin, FG2)
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Apart from additions, the aspect *Content and idea development* contained substitutions and deletions. The former implies that information was altered in a way that affected the meaning. These types of alterations represented a relatively large part of the revision changes. An example of a substitution was the change of the duration of a car chase (RC22). A deletion entailed that part of the information was removed, as illustrated in RC23.

RC22	which resulted in a 30 minutes long car chase	which resulted in a <b>10</b> minutes long car chase (Albin, FG2)
RC23	the slope. <b>Sort of at least.</b> Andrew wilson	But there was on person left in the slope. Andrew wilson (Mohamed, G4)

As can be expected, there was large variation on individual level. One pupil, Filip, did not perform any changes affecting the content; Gustav, on the other hand, made nine changes, mainly elaborations.

*Structure and rhetorical organisation* was the smallest aspect of revision changes in the newspaper articles. A closer look at this aspect showed that mainly the font size and paragraphing were changed. Different font sizes can be considered a distinctive feature of newspaper articles and it was mentioned in the classroom discussion about criteria. This criterion was not included in the written list of criteria used by the pupils when writing and reviewing, but it was still picked up by some of the consensus groups. This type of revision change included both changing the text into a larger size and changing between normal and bold type; they were executed in different parts of the newspaper article, such as the headline (RC24) and the main text (RC25).

RC24	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unacceptable ski crash</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unacceptable ski crash</b><sup>26</sup> (Oscar, FG2)</p>
------	--	--

RC25	<p>Ted Lidity, 25, was the offer</p>	<p>Ted Lidity, 25, was the offer (Oscar, FG2)</p>
------	--------------------------------------	---

Changes belonging to the category *Paragraphing* entailed both the insertion (RC26) and the extraction (RC27) of paragraph breaks.

RC26	<p>100 km/hour, one of them who saw</p>	<p>100 km/hour. // One of them who saw (Elis, FG3)</p>
RC27	<p>Their he got help and they called the ambulance. // Martin is now okay</p>	<p>to taken the hospital. He is now okay (Gustav, FG1)</p>

The two remaining categories, *New move* and *Reorganisation*, only comprised two and one alterations, respectively.

Across the class, most of the pupils only completed a few changes pertaining to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* and some pupils did not change anything. One exception was Lotta, who made revision changes affecting several categories: *Paragraphing*, *Font*, and *New move*.

### 10.3 Revision changes in Teaching unit 2, Study 2

During the second teaching unit, the genre in focus was the reply letter, following a similar lesson plan as in Study 1. This time the pupils in Study 2 made more changes than they did when revising their newspaper articles; all in all, they carried out 249 alterations to the first draft of their reply letter. Most of these revision changes affected the aspect *Content and idea development*, followed by *Micro-level aspects of writing* (Table 10.5). Similarly to TU1, few of the alterations concerned *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

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<sup>26</sup> Due to the nature of this type of revision change, these examples (RC10 and RC11) are not formatted the same way as the other examples. However, the headline illustrated in RC10 has been made somewhat smaller for practical reasons. The original font size was 36.

Table 10.5: Distribution of revision changes in TU2, Study 2

Aspect of writing		Number	Type of revision change		Number
Content and idea development		133	Addition		94
			Substitution		25
			Deletion		14
Micro-level aspects of writing		95	Grammar		28
			Punctuation		28
			Rearrangement		20
			Vocabulary		19
Structure and rhetorical organisation		21	Paragraphing		15
			New move		6
			Reorganisation		0
	Total	249		Total	249

Individual variation was considerable; the number of revision changes for single pupils ranged from three to 34. The largest aspect, *Content and idea development*, comprised several categories and subcategories (Table 10.6). Like in the case of the newspaper articles, there are three categories: *Addition*, *Substitution*, and *Deletion*. To further specify the alterations, *Addition* was divided into the following subcategories: the generic *Elaboration* and the genre-specific *New answer*, *New question*, and *Clarification*.

Table 10.6: Distribution of revision changes in *Content and idea development* in TU2, Study 2

Type of revision change	Number
Elaboration (Addition)	45
Substitution	25
New answer (Addition)	24
New question (Addition)	21
Deletion	14
Clarification (Addition)	4
Total	133

The largest subcategory in *Addition* was *Elaboration*. These elaborations added information to topics already mentioned in the first draft, for example specifying what was meant by “nice” weather (RC28).

RC28    and nice. Many Swedes,

and nice (up to about 30 degrees Celsius, which is like 86 F). Many Swedes, (Noel, G4 )

Many revision changes also entailed that the pupils included new answers or new questions. An important communicative purpose of a reply letter is to respond to the questions in the received letter (in this case the writing prompt) and as opposed to the subcategory *Elaborations*, these additions involved novel information. For instance, the new answers responded to the questions

about US, “So we wonder what you know about life in the US” (RC29) and about the future, “Finally, what are your plans for the future?” (RC30), in the letter from the American teenagers. As apparent in the examples, the revision changes pertaining to this subcategory were rather extensive compared to other alterations.

- |      |                                       |   |
|------|---------------------------------------|---|
| RC29 | the weather. // I would rely like the | the weather. // [...] <b>My knowledge of the US is very limited, I know that what most people think is wrong but I wouldn't be able to tell them what it's like to live in the US. I know how your school system is built up and I know that a lot of people are poor. I also know that you have a problem with overweight but I don't think it's quite as big as media makes you think. [...] // I would really (Max, FG1)</b> |
| RC30 | beautiful. // So to end               | beautiful. // <b>I don't really know what I want to be in the future. Right know I just want go out of school with good grades, and come in to a good “gymnasium”, which is pretty much high school, and later, maybe be something politic. What're your goals for the future? // So to end (Lotta, G6)</b>   |

One of the criteria for the reply letter was to “Ask own questions” (Appendix J). Most of the new questions in the second drafts mimicked the ones posed by the American teenagers, like future plans and what people talk about (RC31), but some of the pupils also came up with their own queries (RC32).

- |      |                            |   |
|------|----------------------------|---|
| RC31 | TV series / I really hopes | TV series // [...] [...] // [...] <b>Do you have any plans for the future? And what do people talk about in the US? It would be fun if you could write back and tell me. // I really hopes (Isak, G5)</b> |
| RC32 | [-]                        | <b>What do you do in the summer in Ohio? / Easter is coming up soon, how do you celebrate it? / And for the last question which restaurant is your favourite</b>  |

## Burger king or McDonalds? (Gustav, FG1)

The last subcategory of *Addition, Clarification*, only contained four instances of alterations. All changes made by the pupils in Study 2 concerned school, like an explanation of “gymnasium” (RC33).

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| RC33 | you have the choice of going to a “gymnasium” for another three years. After the | you have the choice of going to a “gymnasium” <b>which closely resembles your high school for another three years.</b> After “gymnasiet” (Max, FG1) |
|------|--|---|

The two remaining categories of *Content and idea development* involved substitutions which altered the meaning (RC34) and deletions (RC35).

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| RC34 | I don’t have any big plans. Of course I want a happy life. That’s all.   | <b>I am planning on graduating and then maybe start working or maybe go to a university.</b><br>(Gustav, FG1) |
| RC35 | but it’s really not. <b>I think the teen ages are very interested in computer games and the TV.</b><br>Like I said | but it’s really not. // Like I said<br>(Emmy, FG3)  |

The second largest aspect among the revision changes of the reply letters in Study 2 was *Micro-level aspects of writing*. The categories of *Grammar* and *Punctuation* comprised the top two types of revision changes. In *Grammar*, alterations involving verbs were common, for instance relating to agreement (RC36). One of the pupils, Lotta, worked on her use of apostrophes in several places in her text (RC37).

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| RC36 | that videogames are most popular thing | that videogames <b>is</b> most popular thing (Filip, G4) |
| RC37 | the best restaurant’s and foods.       | the best <b>restaurants</b> and foods.<br>(Lotta, G6)    |

Quite a few of the alterations in *Punctuation* were inclusions of exclamation marks (RC38). According to the class’ list of criteria, this punctuation mark was important in reply letters to American teenagers: “Exclamation marks - some to show you’re happy” (Appendix J). To insert commas was also relatively frequent (RC39). A change in word order which did not affect the content is an example of a *Rearrangement* (RC40).

RC38	Kind regards	Kind regards! (Liam, FG1)
RC39	any other country we like sports	any other country, we like sports (Filip, G4)
RC40	In Stockholm, about a million people live, depending on how you count.	<b>About a million people live in Stockholm</b> , depending on how you count. (Noel, G4)

The changes pertaining to *Vocabulary* mainly concerned spelling-related operations, for example the inclusion of a hyphen (RC41). *Vocabulary* was the smallest category of *Micro-level aspects of writing* in this teaching unit.

RC41	and easterholiday which also lasts about a week.	and <b>easter-holiday</b> which also lasts about a week. (Elis, FG3)
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As in TU1, the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* involved the least number of revision changes. The category *Paragraphing* primarily consisted of insertions of paragraph breaks in the reply letter (RC42), and one pupil, Elis, carried out most of them. *New move* encompassed new parts both at the end of the letter, the “outro” (RC43) and at the beginning of the text, the “intro” (RC44). There were no instances of alterations pertaining to the category *Reorganisation*.

RC42	I want in my life! The young people	I want in my life! // The young people (Elis, FG3)
RC43	in between. // Greetings	in between. // [...] // <b>I hope my information could help you with your project, maybe I could get some help from you too!</b> // Greetings (Henrik, G6)
RC44	my school. // I’m going	my school. // <b>I’m a fifteen year old girl and I live in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm. I like riding and music, especially playing music, and I love to read.</b> // i go (Ebba, G7)



# 10.4 Revision changes in Teaching unit 3, Study 2

The third and final teaching unit during the term that Study 2 took place revolved around writing argumentative essays. The pupils performed a total of 252 revision changes to their first drafts. Again, individual variation was high; the number of alterations that each pupil undertook ranged from two to 40. Changes that affected *Micro-level aspects of writing* were by far the most common, encompassing close to six out of ten alterations (Table 10.7). This aspect was followed by *Content and idea development* and similar to other teaching units in this project, the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* counted the lowest number of revision changes.

Table 10.7: Distribution of revision changes in TU3, Study 2

Aspect of writing		Number	Type of revision change		Number
Micro-level aspects of writing		148	Grammar		77
			Vocabulary		30
			Punctuation		27
			Rearrangement		14
Content and idea development		77	Addition		39
			Substitution		31
			Deletion		7
Structure and rhetorical organisation		27	Transition signal		16
			Paragraphing		4
			Font		3
			Reorganisation		3
			New move		1
	Total	252		Total	252

A closer look at the largest aspect, *Micro-level aspects of writing*, showed that most of the alterations involved revising contractions (RC45, RC46). However, only six of the sixteen pupils contributed to this high number and four of them, Filip, Ebba, Max, and Emmy, each made seven to fourteen alterations. Other changes in this category affected verb forms and tenses, and some of the pupils also inserted apostrophes to indicate possessive forms (RC47).

RC45	That's unacceptable.	That <b>is</b> unacceptable. (Ebba, G7)
RC46	when it's a double standard it's even worse!	when it <b>is</b> a double standard it is even worse! (Filip, G4)
RC47	half of the criminals body and then	half of the <b>criminals'</b> bodies and then (Elis, FG3)

In the second largest category, *Vocabulary*, there were two types of alterations; either the pupils changed a word for an equivalent (RC48) or they modified the spelling (RC49).

RC48	we should remove the death penalty	we should <b>abolish</b> the death penalty (Max, FG1)
RC49	the murder knows what	the <b>murderer</b> knows what (Ebba, G7)

Pertaining to the aspect of micro-level changes, the pupils also made alterations involving punctuation marks. Quite a few pupils inserted commas in their sentences, for example after transition signals (RC50). Other changes involved shortening sentences by the introduction of full stops (RC51). There were also isolated instances of alterations involving other punctuation marks, like parentheses and hyphens.

RC50	To conclude death penalty is wrong	To conclude, death penalty is wrong (Lotta, G6)
RC51	I don't think so, I think that everyone	I don't think so. I think that everyone (Isak, G5)

The smallest category in *Micro-level aspects of writing* in TU3 was *Rearrangements*, for example changes to the word order which did not affect the meaning (RC52).

RC52	like to think. There have been more than 11 cases of miss carriage of justice in Sweden the last ten years,	like to think. <b>In Sweden there have been more than than 11 cases of miss carriage of justice during the last ten years</b> (Max, FG1)
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The aspect which involved the second largest number of revision changes was *Content and idea organisation*. Like previous teaching units, the category *Addition* comprised most of the alterations, this time closely followed by *Substitution*. There were very few new additions in terms of information to the first draft; *Elaboration* which expanded information included in the first draft outnumbered the genre-specific category *New argument*. Some of the elaborations were rather short and provided more detailed information (RC53), whereas others developed an argument, for example by providing rhetorical questions (RC54).

RC53	his massive slaughter. He only	his massive slaughter <b>in Norway</b> . He only (Gustav, FG1)
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RC54 let them go. //

let them go. **Is that reasonable? Do we want someone who has murdered to have a chance of getting away from punishment whilst someone who stole a car can be sentenced to many years in prison? Is this justice?** // (Max, FG1)

The subcategory *New argument* only included five revision changes, but these were all quite substantial and formed new paragraphs in the final drafts of the argumentative essays (RC55).

RC55 them instead. // In other words

them instead. // **Some people claim that it is too expensive to keep people in prison, and it would be much cheaper to just execute them, but I do not agree with them. First of all it has been shown that it is cheaper to have people in prison than sitting in a death row. And secondly, it is an extremely weak argument to say that you should execute people just because you are not willing to pay money for their time in prison. / It is basically like saying: I don't want to pay a little bit of more taxes, so I think we should kill the people in prison instead.** // In other words (Mohamed, G4)

*Substitutions*, that is alterations to the content which affect the meaning, was also a rather large category (RC56). One of the pupils, Emmy, contributed to about one third of these changes when she consistently changed the gender of the criminal from “he” to a gender-neutral pronoun or noun (RC57). Finally, the pupils engaged in very few deletions (RC58).

RC56 Compare that to giving them a lethal injection or the firing squad. It takes about 10 seconds and then they're out of the world.

Compare being in jail to giving them a lethal injection or the firing squad that takes about **5-10** seconds and then they're out of the world. (Henrik, G6)

RC57 if your brother clearly killed someone

even if your **sibling** clearly killed someone (Emmy, FG3)

RC58	everybody deserves a second chance. <b>Who are we to decide when someone got to leave this world?</b> //	everybody deserves a second chance! // (Elis, FG3)
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Like in the previous teaching units, few changes affected *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. The genre-specific category of *Transition signals* involved the majority of these alterations. For example, the pupils inserted transition signals at the beginning of sentences (RC59) or made exchanges (RC60).

RC59	I strongly believe that	<b>First of all</b> I strongly believe that (Ebba, G7)
RC60	And why risk that we execute	<b>Also</b> why risk that we execute (Filip, G4)

The other categories pertaining to *Structure and rhetorical organisation* counted few instances. The alterations affected paragraphing (RC61), the font used in the headline (from normal to bold, RC62), and reorganisation by moving part of the text from the introduction to the conclusion (RC63). One pupil, Henrik, added a concluding paragraph, a new move, to his second draft (RC64).

RC61	people is wrong./ As the great	people is wrong.// As the great (Liam, FG1)
RC62	Why we should ban death penalties	<b>Why we should ban death penalties</b> (Mohamed, G4)
RC63	The death penalty is something I honestly think is stupid and ignorant. <b>As Cassandra Clare wrote “Do not seek revenge and call it justice”.</b> What do we really [Introduction]	[Conclusion] and that revenge is right. I don’t think so. <b>As Cassandra Clare wrote “Do not seek revenge and call it justice”.</b> (Ebba, G7)
RC64	[-]	<b>In conclusion, I don’t understand why the government uses death penalty as punishment when there are many other ways of avoiding it and still punish the criminal. It still don’t make any sense why they murder people to show murdering is wrong, there is no logic behind that punishment, just some old</b>

**tradition back in earlier stages  
that has kept going and no one  
have never realized what they're  
actually doing to humans of their  
own kind. (Henrik, G6)**

## 10.5 Summary and commentary

The analysis of the pupils' revision changes in response to my second research question, *What types of revision changes do the pupils make?* showed both some similarities and some differences between the teaching units. The number of revision changes performed by the sixteen pupils in Study 2 ranged from 215 to 252 in the three teaching units, whereas the corresponding number from Study 1 was 495 changes for 26 pupils in the only teaching unit. This means that the average number of alterations per teaching unit was lower for the pupils in Study 2 than in Study 1; however, in both studies there was considerable variation on the individual level. The pupils in Study 1 were used to writing several drafts of the same text; thus, they had practiced revising texts in English before, whereas the pupils in Study 2 were more used to correcting their texts at the micro-level after having received feedback from their teacher.

Overall, changes affecting the aspects of *Content and idea development* and the *Micro-level aspects of writing* were equally large, each representing close to half of the total number of revision changes. The remaining alterations, less than 10%, pertained to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. A closer look at Study 1 and Study 2, respectively, revealed that the pupils in Study 1 generally performed more alterations concerning *Content and idea development* than *Micro-level aspects of writing*, whereas the corresponding order was the opposite in Study 2. However, since the design of the two studies was different it is more relevant to draw comparisons between the teaching units.

In the reply letters, the genre used in both Study 1 and in TU2, Study 2, revision changes to the aspect *Content and idea development* were the most frequent. Comparably, *Micro-level aspects of writing* counted the highest number of revision changes in TU1, the newspaper articles, and in TU3, the argumentative essays. Changes affecting *Structure and rhetorical organisation* were relatively few in all four teaching units.

There was also some variation within the three aspects of writing in the teaching units. *Structure and rhetorical organisation* had three generic categories: *Paragraphing*, *New move*, and *Reorganisation*. Among these categories, *Paragraphing* was the largest in all teaching units. Very few pupils included new moves when they revised and even fewer reorganised their texts. Indeed, in Study 1 and TU2, Study 2, where the pupils wrote reply letters, they

did not complete any revision changes pertaining to *Reorganisation*. Attention to text organisation in revision can be referred to as optional transformations (Allal, 2000).

In addition to these three generic categories, the analysis of revision changes in the newspaper articles and the argumentative essay involved the genre-specific categories *Font* (both genres) and *Transition signal* (the argumentative essay). In fact, *Font* was the largest category of this aspect in the newspaper articles and revision changes categorised as *Transition signals* were the most common in the argumentative essays.

The aspect *Content and idea development* also had three generic categories which were placed in the same order of frequency in all teaching units: *Addition*, *Substitution*, and last *Deletion*. Not surprisingly, additions were by far the most common operation among the revision changes; this category also contained a number of subcategories. The generic subcategory *Elaboration* was the largest in three of the teaching units: Study 1, and TU1 and TU3 in Study 2. In addition, there were revision changes which entailed that new information was added to the text. These alterations received genre-specific labels: *New answer* and *New question* in the reply letters; *New information* in the newspaper article; and *New argument* in the argumentative essay. In the newspapers, about one third of the additions involved new information, and in the argumentative essays only five of the 39 additions meant that new arguments were included.

In TU2, Study 2, where the pupils wrote reply letters, the number of revision changes which added new information was equal to the number of elaborations. In the corresponding teaching unit in Study 1, the number of new answers and new questions was lower, about one quarter of the additions. However, there was another genre-specific subcategory of *Addition* for the reply letters: *Clarifications*. The pupils in Study 2 added very few clarifications to their first drafts, whereas the pupils in Study 1 made more. The function and thus the implementation of clarifications of Swedish words were explained and worded differently in the criteria lists for the reply letters in Study 1 and Study 2, respectively (Appendices I and J). Similarly, the influence of criteria on performance has received some attention in other studies (cf. DiPardo & Freedman, 1998; Ferris, 2003; F. Hyland, 2000; N-F. Liu & Hansen, 2002).

*Content and idea development* also included the categories *Substitutions* and *Deletions*. As can be expected, there were very few deletions across the teaching units. The number of substitutions varied between the genres; there were relatively few in the reply letters which dealt with school and the pupils' own life. In the newspaper articles, which relied on fictitious accidents, about one third of the revision changes affecting the content were substitutions. The ratio was even higher in the argumentative essays but in this case one single pupil made many changes.

The third aspect that was used to analyse the revision changes, *Micro-level aspects of writing*, was further divided into four categories that were the same for all genres: *Vocabulary*, *Grammar*, *Punctuation*, and *Rearrangement*. In TU1 and TU3, Study 2, revision changes affecting this aspect of writing outnumbered the two other aspects. Most of the changes in this aspect concerned what can be referred to as editing (Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004) or conventional transformations (Allal, 2000).

These differences between the teaching units, or more exactly between the genres, are noteworthy. Previous studies on writing and revising have identified various approaches to revision related to proficiency and experience (e.g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Lai, 1986; Porte, 1996; Roca de Larios et al., 2008; Sommers, 1980; van Gelderen, 1997); however, there is little in the literature regarding the rapport between revisions and genres.

Since the analysis of the revision changes emanated from a genre perspective which also permeated the writing instruction in the teaching units, it is relevant to study the revision changes from this angle: for example, the attention to both macro- and micro-level aspects of writing in genre-based writing instruction (GBWI) (K. Hyland, 2016; Ferris, 2011) and the complex interplay between the intended reader and the actual reader (cf. Furneaux et al., 2007; Holmberg, 2010; Lundgren, 2013; Whitney et al., 2011). Previous experience of writing instruction can also affect the outcome (cf. Barkaoui, 2007; Chenoweth, 1987; Firkins et al., 2007; Porte, 1997).

Even if the teaching units roughly followed the same lesson plan, there were some differences related to the organisation. The pre-writing stage where the teacher and the pupils analysed sample texts comprised of two lessons in Study 1 and TU1 in Study 2 and of one lesson in TU2 and TU3. Moreover, the pupils in Study 2 had the opportunity to plan their writing of the newspaper article and the argumentative essay at home.

Allocation of time for writing also varied. In all teaching units, the pupils had two lessons à 60 minutes to complete their texts according to plan. In reality, this time varied at the individual level. Problems with the computers, for example the login, affected some pupils' writing time and others felt that they did not have enough time to finish their texts. This condition was especially tangible in Study 1 where a number of pupils expressed that they had not had time to finish their first draft. Task setting, including collaborative pre-writing activities and individual distribution of time during writing, has bearing on students' writing (cf. Lindgren et al., 2008; Porto, 2001; Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003; Walker & Pérez Ríu, 2008).

The next chapter (11) responds to my third research question *What do pupils learn about writing in terms of structure and rhetorical organisation; content and idea development; and micro-level aspects of writing from giving feedback?* by linking the revision changes presented here to the peer-review activity. It also presents the pupils' perceptions of learning from giving feedback.

# 11 Links between revision changes and peer review

The overarching aim of my project is to explore pupils’ learning about writing from giving feedback, which corresponds to my third research question. The operationalisation of learning from giving feedback is a link between a revision change and the content in one of the reviewed texts and/or a feedback comment. The previous section presented the pupils’ revision changes to provide an overall picture of the alterations the pupils made to the first draft of their texts; the results in this chapter are based on the analysis of these revision changes and possible links to the peer-review activity. Since my RQ concerns *what* pupils learn, the links between revision changes and the peer-review activity are also related to the three aspects of writing used to categorise the alterations in the previous chapter (10). Each section presents the results ranging from the aspect with the highest ratio of links to the aspect with the lowest ratio. Pupils’ perceptions of learning from giving feedback as self-reported in questionnaires (Subsection 6.3.2.2) are also included.

Table 11.1: Revision changes and links to peer review in the project

Aspect of writing	Study 1 (links/ revision changes)	Study 2 (links/ revision changes)	Project (links/ revision changes)
Structure and rhetorical organisation	25/30	54/74	79/104
Content and idea development	133/268	126/286	259/554
Micro-level aspects of writing	89/197	160/356	249/553
Total	247/495	340/716	587/1211

As shown in Table 11.1, almost half of the revision changes in the project, 48%, could be linked to the peer-review activity and thus constituted signs of learning from giving feedback. The highest proportion of links in both studies pertained to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* (83% in Study 1 and 73% in Study 2). In the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing* 45% of the revision changes were linked to the peer-review activity in both studies, whereas the percentage of links in *Content and idea development* was somewhat higher in Study 1 than in Study 2.



## 11.1 Study 1

The pupils in Study 1 primarily made revision changes affecting the *Content and idea development* in their reply letters (Section 10.1). This aspect was followed by *Micro-level aspects of writing* and *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. This section outlines the pupils' learning from giving feedback both by linking their revision changes to the peer-review activity and by presenting the pupils' own perceptions. The results are summarised from the corresponding sections of my licentiate thesis (Berggren, 2013).

### 11.1.1 Links between revision changes and peer review

Half of the revision changes that the pupils in Study 1 made to the first draft of their reply letters could be linked to the peer-review activity (Table 11.2). Even though the number of revision changes affecting the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* were few, most of them could be linked to the peer reviewing. These links concerned both changes to paragraphing and changes including the insertion of a new move.

Table 11.2: Links between revision changes and peer review in Study 1<sup>a</sup>

Aspect of writing	Links/ revision changes (pupils) <sup>b</sup>	Type of revision change	Links/ revision changes
Structure and rhetorical organisation	25/30 (16)	Paragraphing	18/23
		New move	7/7
Content and idea development	133/268 (23)	Addition	114/190
		Substitution	15/42
		Deletion	3/36
Micro-level aspects of writing	89/197 (19)	Grammar	29/50
		Vocabulary	22/55
		Punctuation	20/41
		Rearrangement	18/51
<b>Total</b>	<b>247/495</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>247/495</b>

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Tables 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.12, and 5.13)

<sup>b</sup> Apart from the number of links in relation to revision changes, this column shows the number of pupils who contributed to the links (the number in brackets)

Almost all pupils made changes to the aspect *Content and idea development*. Most links could be traced to the inclusion of new answers and new questions for the recipients; in many cases, these additions were inspired by similar answers or questions in the peer-reviewed reply letters. Many of the elaborations of the content in the first draft were also influenced by the peer-review activity.

Revision changes affecting micro-level aspects of writing counted a relatively high number of links to the peer-review activity, but this aspect was

still the smallest one in this study. These links were mainly to rather generic feedback comments recommending the writer to check the grammar and spelling (Berggren, 2013, Subsections 5.1.2 and 5.2.2).

### 11.1.2 Pupils' perceptions of learning

After the last lesson of the teaching unit in Study 1, the pupils filled in a questionnaire about their own learning from giving feedback. Their responses were grouped, and the themes are presented in Table 11.3.

Table 11.3: Pupils' perceptions of learning from peer review in Study 1

Questionnaire item	Responses
What did you learn about organisation/structure?	paragraphing (11), nothing/not much (8), organisation (6), genre (2), develop ideas for coherence (1), no answer (1)
What did you learn about content?	no answer (8), nothing/not much (6), good ideas (3), elaboration (3), reply to questions (2), include personal information (2), assess (1), don't repeat information (1), genre (1), it's important (1), ask questions (1), fun to read (1), be polite (1)
What did you learn about vocabulary?	nothing/not much (10), some words (9), spelling (3), no answer (2), variation (2), register (1)
What did you learn about grammar?	nothing/not much (11), no answer (5), spot mistakes (4), punctuation (2), s/v agreement (2), it's important (1), better grammar (1)

<sup>a</sup> Based on Berggren (2013, Table 5.14, p. 84)

The most common response related to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* was paragraphing. A similar number of pupils reported that they had not learnt anything. The overall organisation of a reply letter was also mentioned by several pupils.

In terms of content, there were many different answers, but more than half of the pupils responded "nothing" or left the item blank. A small group of pupils mentioned being inspired by peers' content and others highlighted elaborations.

In the two items pertaining to *Micro-level aspects of writing*, grammar and vocabulary, most pupils believed that they had not learnt anything from reading and commenting on peers' reply letters. Spelling was emphasised by three pupils, and in relation to grammar, some pupils mentioned proofreading (Berggren, 2013, Section 5.3).

# 11.2 Teaching unit 1, Study 2

The first teaching unit in Study 2 concerned the writing of newspaper articles, based on examples from the online version of *The Guardian*. Judging by the revision changes, the pupils mainly attended to the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing*, followed by *Content and idea development* and *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. In the following subsections, these alterations are linked to reading and commenting on peers’ texts as well as the pupils’ self-reports.

## 11.2.1 Links between revision changes and peer review

During the penultimate lesson, the pupils reviewed two of their peers’ newspaper articles in consensus groups. The smallest aspect in terms of revision changes to the second draft of the newspaper article, *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, boasted the most links to the peer-review activity (Table 11.4).

Table 11.4: Links between revision changes and peer review in TU1, Study 2

Aspect of writing		Links/ revision changes (pupils) <sup>a</sup>	Type of revision change		Links/ revision changes
Structure and rhetorical organisation		22/26 (12)	Font		11/14
			Paragraphing		9/9
			Move		2/2
			Reorganisation		0/1
Micro-level aspects of writing		56/113 (15)	Vocabulary		13/37
			Punctuation		14/31
			Grammar		20/27
			Rearrangement		9/18
Content and idea development		35/76 (12)	Addition		26/43
			Substitution		8/26
			Deletion		1/7
	Total	113/215		Total	113/215

<sup>a</sup> Apart from the number of links in relation to revision changes, this column shows the number of pupils who contributed to the links (the number in brackets)

Indeed, in the two categories *Paragraphing* and *New move* all the changes could be related to feedback comments, both about strengths and weaknesses (LC4)<sup>27</sup>. The two instances of alterations to the category *New move* involved the inclusion of a caption, seemingly inspired by the reviewed articles (LR4)<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> LC = Link to feedback comment.  
<sup>28</sup> LR = Link to reading. All LCs and LRs are presented in three columns: First draft-Final draft-Link to feedback (LC) or content (LR). The revision change is in bold type.

LC4	Their he got help and they called the ambulance. // Martin is now okay	to taken the hospital. He is now okay (Gustav)	You could have made shorter paragraphs to make the text easier to read. Good short paragraphs. Easy to read. (FG1)
LR4	-	<b>Two hours after the accident.</b> <b>Photograph: Paul Collins</b> (Lotta)	Taken on the evening after the crash. (G6) Photograph: Chris Ledder for Skiwallpaper.com

This category also included changes of the font, and there were links to comments about the importance of “contrast” in a text to highlight the organisation (LC5); some of the links could be directly connected to the content of the peer-reviewed newspaper articles, such as the use of capital letters in a headline (LR5) and italics in the subheadline (LR6).

LC5	Yesterday on the ”Fis World Championship”	Yesterday on the ”Fis World Championship” (Oscar)	You should have used some different text sizes to make better contrast in the text. Really good contrast on the whole text. (FG2)
LR5	24 year old chased	<b>24 YEAR OLD CHASED</b> (Lotta)	POLICE CHASE CAUSES
LR6	Yeasterday Liam Jacobson	<i>Yesterday Liam Jacobson</i> (Isak)	<i>Yesterday morning a car lost control</i>

The single alteration pertaining to the category *Reorganisation* could not be linked to the peer-review activity. Overall, there were many links relating to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation*. The links were to both feedback comments and the content of the newspaper articles written by peers.

As presented earlier (Section 10.2), revision changes affecting micro-level aspects of writing were the most common in TU1. About half of these alterations could be linked to the peer-review activity, mainly through feedback comments (Table 11.4). The comments relating to micro-level aspects of writing included both generic feedback (FC43) and more specific comments involving formative information like explanations and solutions (FC44).

FC43	Good and correct grammar and spelling
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- FC44 It has very long sentences. For example the third sentence of the main text is 7 lines without a single comma, which can be a bit tiring for the reader's eye. It could be split up using commas and dots.

Many of the alterations pertained to the category *Vocabulary*. However, only a small number of these revision changes could be linked to peer reviewing. As mentioned previously (Section 10.2), one of the pupils, Isak, carried out most of these changes and there were no links between his alterations and the reviewed texts or feedback comments from his consensus group. The links to feedback in this category were predominantly to generic comments about spelling (LC6), style, and “professional language” (LC7). There were only two links to content in the reviewed newspaper articles. LR7 displays an example where Elis changed “4” to “four” like it was in one of the newspaper articles his group read.

LC6	middle of his way upp something	middle of his way <b>up</b> , something (Mohamed)	Good and correct grammar and spelling. Some spelling mistakes (including in the title). (G4)
LC7	something very bad happened,	something very <b>unfortunate</b> happened, (Mohamed)	Professional language, used good words and sounded like a real newspaper article. (G4)
LR7	with the age of 4 and six years old	with the age of <b>four</b> and six years old (Elis)	The twelve and nine year old boys said

Another category related to micro-level aspects of writing is *Punctuation*. The links in this category were mainly connections to feedback comments about sentence length (LC8) or the use of quotation marks when witnesses or experts were being quoted (LC9). Again, there were very few links directly to the reviewed texts, but Elis seemed to have noted that the headline should not include a full stop (LR8).

LC8	searching they finally found Teresa shaking and suffering	searching they found Teresa. She was heavily shaking and suffering (Henrik)	good sentences (G6)
LC9	felt the same:” I just woke up	have felt the same: / ”I just woke up (Albin)	Quotes (“ “). (FG2)

LR8	Bryan Smith is dead.	Bryan Smith is dead (Elis)	Fight between parents led to murder
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The category *Grammar* involved a relatively high number of links. The many links can probably be explained by the fact that most comments about grammar were generic; accordingly, they could be linked to almost any change to grammatical forms or structures in the texts. An example of a more specific comment which triggered Elis to replace the name of the driver, Bryan Smith, to pronouns is presented in LC10. The name “Kevin Russelfield” was being used repeatedly in the reviewed newspaper article; similarly, Elis’ first draft mentioned the name “Bryan Smith” several times. In the second draft, Elis exchanged this proper name for pronouns. Like in the categories of *Vocabulary* and *Punctuation*, links directly to content were rare. One of the revision changes involving a change of tense could be linked to a similar expression in one of the reviewed texts, since both instances related to what a person mentioned in an interview (LR9).

LC10	on the road same time as Bryan Smith, Smith was driving	on the road same time as <b>him, he</b> was driving (Elis)	You wrote Kevin Russelfield, 19 to many times. It was enough with one. (FG3)
LR9	The prosecutor said they have loads of evidence	The prosecutor <b>says</b> they have loads of evidence (Liam)	He also says that any interviews with

The last category pertaining to the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing is Rearrangements*. The revision changes in this category could have been triggered by comments about “good sentences” (LC11), but also about how to write a good headline (LC12), for example. One instance of a link to content in a reviewed newspaper article is presented in LR10; Emmy changed her way of reporting time by deleting “a clock” from her first draft.

LC11	After 15 minutes of not showing up the parents	After 15 minutes, she still hadn’t showed up. The parents (Henrik)	good sentences (G6)
LC12	Birmingham man falls five floors from apartment window whilst being chased by aggressive dog.	Birmingham man <b>gets chased by aggressive dog and falls four floors out of apartment window</b> (Noel)	The article has a catchy and compressed headline. Good, compact headline, although generic. (G4)

LR10	Yesterday at 7 <b>a clock</b> three robbers robbed	Yesterday at 7 three robbers robbed (Emmy)	The police arrived at 10:45 and by the time
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To summarise, the links to revision changes affecting micro-level aspects of writing were predominantly links to generic feedback comments. There were very few examples of links to more specific comments or the content in the reviewed newspaper articles.

Within the aspect of *Content and idea organisation*, nearly half of the revision changes could be linked to the peer-review activity; there was some variation between the categories and, not surprisingly, the category *Addition* involved the highest number of changes. Almost all the revision changes which entailed the inclusion of new information could be linked to the peer-review activity through content or feedback comments. Some of the comments were rather generic, for instance pointing generally to the importance of providing information that the readers would expect (LC13), whereas others more specifically pinpointed certain features of the texts as sources of additional information in the newspaper articles (LC14). The links to content corresponded to feedback comments about the same feature, for example the specification of one of the five W's: *when* (LC15/LR11).

LC13	the black market. But they never had enough evidence	the black market. <b>He jumped out of school to start repairing cars, but ended up stealing the client's cars instead.</b> But the police never had enough evidence (Liam)	You could have made the text more informative to stop the readers thirst of information. (FG1)
LC14	injuries." // It appears	injuries." // <b>"I was so surprised when I heard the explosion I didn't know what to do.", says the mother in the family living next doors, the one who found the 95year old. "I called the police as soon as I came back to my mind but the picture of Emily stuck in my head."</b> // It appears (Max)	The interviews where really good and interesting. They fit in the text and made you understand the text better. (FG1)

LC15/ LR11	to a friend Jessica	to her mother <b>on June 7 th</b> Jessica (Lotta)	had all the “W’s” (G6) theatre in Southampton the 19 of July.
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Another subcategory of *Additions* is *Elaborations*. Here, half of the revision changes could be related to feedback comments, mainly concerning the importance of the five W’s (LC16) and information in general. However, some links pertained to comments highlighting details more specifically or relating information to a specific part of the newspaper article (LC17). Only one of the revision changes in this subcategory could be directly linked to content: the inclusion of a name in the headline (LR12).

LC16	pist. “The avalanche seemed	slope. // <b>“One of them fell over and the snow started sliding down the mountain and began growing in size.</b> The avalanche seemed (Mohamed)	Not very many details. (G4)
LC17	drove off the road, the driver	drove off the road <b>in Miami</b> , the driver (Leia)	The beggining of the sub-headline was really good because it included three of the five “W’s”. The sub-headline included a bit more of information. (G6)
LR12	the car-theft crashes the stolen car	the car-theft, <b>James Cutrine</b> , crashes the stolen car (Liam)	Parents to the five years old Katie passed away

The other two categories of *Content and idea organisation*, *Substitution* and *Deletion*, counted few links. For example, substitutions of words which caused different meanings could be linked to comments about word choices (LC18) and about the importance of including the five W’s (LC19). The latter was also linked to similar info in one of the reviewed texts: a specification of the date on which the accident occurred (LR13). The only occurrence of a deletion linked to peer reviewing could have been triggered by the idea of using professional language (LC20).

LC18	there was no sight of the robbers anywhere.	there was no <b>sign</b> of the robbers anywhere. (Emmy)	Insead of writing “half-sleeping” you
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			could've write "about to sleep". (FG3)
LC19/ LR13	Earlier today four masked robbers made	<b>On the morning of the 15th of July</b> , four masked robbers made (Albin)	All 5 W's. Usage of the five "W". (FG2) on the side of the road 15th of June.
LC20	the slope. <b>Sort of at least.</b> Andrew wilson	But there was on person left in the slope. Andrew Wilson (Mohamed)	Professional language, used good words and sounded like a real newspaper article. (G4)

To conclude, links between the revision changes related to the aspect *Content and idea organisation* and the peer-review activity, primarily involved subcategories within *Additions*, especially *New information*.

### 11.2.2 Pupils' perceptions of learning

In the questionnaires handed out after the last lesson of the TU1, the pupils were asked to report on what they had learnt from the peer-review activity. In terms of *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, they mentioned the importance of the overall structure for clarity (PR11)<sup>29</sup> and more specifically certain moves and their functions (PR12).

PR11 That the organisation is important to make a good article. If it is not there the text becomes woolly (Simon).

PR12 I learnt that the headline needed to be catchy and that the sub-headline needed to contain lots of information but not be too long (Gustav)

Mentioned in PR12 is another feature related to the structure which some pupils reported: the length of the moves and the whole text. Two pupils also took up the lack of columns in the newspaper articles (PR13). To organise the text in columns is characteristic for paper versions of newspapers, but the articles employed as sample texts in this unit were from the online issue of *The Guardian* which uses a different structure. Indeed, Henrik organised his article in columns and one of the other pupils used the software *Publisher* to structure his text in the more traditional form.

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<sup>29</sup> PR= Pupil response. The questionnaires were answered in Swedish, and I have translated the responses to English.

PR13 I thought it was a little weird with the paragraphs, that it wasn't columns like it usually is. Little wrong information. We should learn the official (Henrik)

In terms of learning, many pupils agreed that information was important as part of the content and also reported specific features, such as the 5 Ws and interviews (PR14).

PR14 It should be informative and respond to "The five W's". Ideally with a quote. (Liam)

Concerning content in the questionnaire, some pupils also mentioned the importance of communication and clarity in relation to the reader (PR15 and PR16). Three of the pupils did not think that they had learnt anything regarding content from the peer-review activity.

PR15 You may need to explain some parts you thought were obvious because you knew how it was even if it was unclearly placed (Max)

PR16 I also tried to get it to be more informative but also easier to read (Mohamed)

In the section about language-related learning, pupils reported that word choices needed to be appropriate (PR17). Another rather frequent response was the importance of proofreading the text (PR18).

PR17 It is important to use formal words that belong to the text. No slang. (Emmy)

PR18 That you need to check spelling and grammar carefully (Filip)

Four of the sixteen pupils reported that they had not learnt anything about language from reviewing peers' newspaper articles.

# 11.3 Teaching unit 2, Study 2

This teaching unit mimicked the one in Study 2 as they both concerned the reply letter. While revising, the pupils focused primarily on changes affecting *Content and idea development*. The second largest aspect was *Micro-level aspects of writing* and the smallest one was *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

## 11.3.1 Links between revision changes and peer review

The aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* was the smallest in terms of revision changes but had the highest proportion of links (Table 11.5). This aspect was followed by *Micro-level aspects of writing* where a majority of the revision changes could be linked to peer reviewing. *Content and idea development* had the least number of links.

Table 11.5: Links between revision changes and peer review in TU2, Study 2

Aspect of writing		Links/ revision changes (pupils) <sup>a</sup>	Type of revision change		Links/ revision changes
Structure and rhetorical organisation		16/21 (8)	Paragraphing		10/15
			New move		6/6
			Reorganisation		0
Micro-level aspects of writing		51/95 (12)	Grammar		21/28
			Punctuation		11/28
			Rearrangement		6/20
			Vocabulary		13/19
Content and idea development		61/133 (15)	Addition		58/94
			Substitution		2/25
			Deletion		1/14
	Total	128/249		Total	128/249

<sup>a</sup> Apart from the number of links in relation to revision changes, this column shows the number of pupils who contributed to the links (the number in brackets)

All revision changes regarding *New move* could be connected to content (LR14) or, in one of the cases, a comment about the signing off (LC21).

LR14	to Sweden. //	[...] <b>// So I hope you got as much information as possible. I would really like to see the results of this project when you are done! If you have any more</b>	I would rely like the see the finished project if you could send me a copy of it. I'm hope that the information that I gave was helpful
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questions, e-mail me  
again. // (Lotta)

LC21	-	<b>Best regards / Marcus Isaksson</b> (Albin)	You should also add something to the sign off. (FG2)
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Changes affecting paragraphing also seemed to have been highly influenced by peers' texts and the peer-review activity. For instance, the feedback comments linked to these alterations highlighted good use of paragraphing (LC22) or suggested that the questions be put in a separate paragraph (LC23).

LC22	11 years old. // I like to play	11 years old. I like to play (Leia)	you've got new subjects on every paragraphs. (G6)
LC23	the food in US comes to Sweden! Do you think that	the food in US comes to Sweden one day <b>so I can taste it!</b> // Do you think (Elis)	She could have put the questions in other paragraphs. (FG3)

The second largest aspect in terms of links between revision changes and the peer-review activity was *Micro-level aspects of writing*. Three quarters of the alterations affecting the category *Grammar* could be linked to peer reviewing through the feedback comments; however, as has been mentioned previously, the generic nature of the comments contributed to this relatively high number of links (LC24). One comment which specified the problem, repetition of a contraction, could be linked to a similar issue in Henrik's first draft (LC25).

LC24	basketball with other schools	basketball <b>agianst</b> other schools (Elis)	She could've thought about the grammar and some spelling issues. (FG2)
LC25	I'm usually <b>am</b> gaming.	I'm usually gaming. (Henrik)	Only small mistakes in your text. In the second paragraph you wrote "don't" two times instead of one. (G6)

The category *Vocabulary* also involved quite a few links, most of which were based on generic comments about spelling (LC26). One of the alterations seemed related to a comment about "adapted language", where Liam changed "u" to "you", which is more suitable in a letter to people you do not know

(LC27). Some of the revision changes could also be connected to words in the reviewed text, for example the spelling of the American teenagers' country (LR15).

LC26	any after-school activities and the	any <b>afterschool</b> activities and the (Emmy)	She could've thought about the grammar and some spelling issues. (FG2)
LC27	except u all speak the same	except <b>you</b> all speak the same (Liam)	The text has a adapted language because of it being personal and easily understandable. (FG1)
LR15	for you there in USA.	for you there in <b>US</b> ? (Albin)	the US (FG2)

As mentioned previously (Section 10.3), exclamation marks were involved in many of the alterations in the category *Punctuation* and this mark was also reflected in the feedback and, consequently, the links (LC28). There were also some instances where pupils seemed to have mimicked the use of exclamation marks, for example in the signing off (LR16/LC29).

LC28	someone outside Sweden. I find your project	someone outside Sweden! I find your project (Ebba)	You could have used some more exclamation marks to show them that you are happy You just have exclamation marks more times then in the end, to show them your happy. (G7)
LR16/ LC29	Kind regards	Kind regards! (Liam)	Best wishes Fred!! We think that you should include more exclamation marks (FG1)

The final category of *Micro-level aspects of writing, Rearrangement*, counted links to one fourth of its revision changes. Noel contributed greatly to this number with four of the six links, all involving the same feedback comment about sentence structure (LC30).

LC30	In Stockholm, about a million people live, depending on how you count.	<b>About a million people live in Stockholm,</b> depending on how you count. (Noel)	Some sentences had an incorrect structure, such as “so to signing of”. (G4)
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Nearly half of the alterations affecting *Content and idea development* could be linked to the peer-review activity, either via the feedback comments or by comparison of the changes to the content in the reviewed letters. Similar to TU1 and the newspaper articles, almost all links involved alterations pertaining to the category *Addition*, specifically the two genre-specific subcategories *New answer* and *New question*. These categories involved adding new information in the form of either answers to questions posed by the American teenagers in the writing prompt or questions to be answered by the same teenagers in a potential future letter in response.

In terms of feedback, the revision changes in *Content and idea development* could be linked to comments referring to peers who had answered most of the questions in the writing prompt (LC31) and to peers who had missed some of them (LC32). Furthermore, responses in classmates’ letters inspired quite a few of the new answers as well, which could be expected since the pupils were supposed to answer the same questions (LR17).

LC31	the schools. // I hope this	<b>the schools. // I think there are three main things that young people do on their spare time when they are not busy with homework. And those three things are: playing sports, playing instruments and playing videogames. I would imagine that young people in your country are up to these things as well, but if there is something else that a lot of people in your country do on their spare time, please tell me in your reply letter.</b> // [...] I hope this (Mohamed)	You answered a lot of questions and write about what Swedish kids do in their spare time. (G4)
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LC32	floor ball. // Media gives	floor ball. // <b>Swedish people talk about what they are interested in, so you can't really tell what an overall swede talk and think about, everyone is different, and in Sweden we find it very important that everybody are allowed to be themselves.</b> // Media gives (Ebba)	You answered most of the questions, though you missed what you know about life in the US, your plans for the future and what young people are interested in. (G7)
LR17	talk about. // And for	talk about. // <b>I think the biggest miss conception about US is that everybody is fat. I don't think that exactly everybody is fat but that a lot of people are, and that results in a small problem in the US. This is a problem in Sweden to but not in such a big extent. Do you in the US have any miss conceptions about Sweden?</b> // And for (Oscar)	but of course I have heard Americans are fat and I know not everyone is but some are

To pose questions back to the American teenagers was one of the items on the joint criteria list (Appendix J). All the revision changes in the subcategory *New questions* could be linked to the peer-review activity, either to feedback comments (LC33) or the combination of feedback and content (LC34/LR18). Worth mentioning is that another source for inspiration for the new questions was apparently also the writing prompt and the questions from the American teenagers.

LC33	Swedish schools. / Our grading	Swedish schools. / <b>Are you guys in any school activities or teams?</b> // Our grading (Lotta)	You don't ask any questions at all and asking back questions. (G6)
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LC34/ LR18	TV series / I really hopes	TV series // [...] [...] // [...] <b>Do you have any plans for the future? And what do people talk about in the US? It would be fun if you could write back and tell me.</b> // I really hopes (Isak)	and she asks a lot of questions. (G5) and what do you talk about? What are your plans and goals?
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Another subcategory of *Addition* is *Clarifications*. There were few clarifications among the revision changes, but all four of them could be linked to reading and commenting on peers' texts. Ebba made several changes to the information about the Swedish school, for example mentioning different levels (LC35). The last subcategory of *Addition* is *Elaborations*. Again, both feedback and content could be linked to some of the alterations, even though most of the alterations did not seem to be related to the peer-review activity (LC36/LR19).

LC35	In my school the students are between 13-15 years old.	<b>"X Grundskola" is a "Högstadieskola" that means</b> that the students are between 13 and 15 years old. (Ebba)	We really liked your description about the swedish school (G7)
LC36/ LR19	I'm 14 years old, soon 15.	<b>My name is Emelie and I'm 14 years old,</b> soon 15. (Leia)	The intro was great because you shortly told us about yourself and you show that your interested in helping them. The intro was really good cause you wrote that you're happy that they wrote and stuff. (G6) my name is Lucas My name is Markus

The final two categories in *Content and idea development*, *Substitution* and *Deletion*, had very few links to the peer-review activity. The only possible example of a deletion linked to feedback was the omission of a question about teachers (LC37). Both instances of links to substitutions were inspired by content in the peer-reviewed reply letters, like what to do after having finished compulsory school (LR20).



LC37	a lot of homework's <b>and is your teachers mean?</b> What's your	a lot of homework's? What's your (Emmy)	Good questions. (FG3)
LR20	isn't mandatory. You quit school between the ages of 16 to ~22. //	isn't mandatory. <b>If you choose 'gymnasium' if you get good grades you can continue to high school or a university.</b> (Henrik)	After the gymnasium some people choose to go to a "högskola" where you study for a few years

Similarly to TU1, about half of the revision changes could be linked to the peer-review activity, and the order of the aspects in terms of ratio of links were the same: *Structure and organisation*, *Micro-level aspects of writing*, and *Content and idea organisation*. Another likeness was that new information in both the newspaper article and the reply letter seemed to have been inspired by peers' texts; there were more links in the reply letters than in the newspaper articles though.

### 11.3.2 Pupils' perceptions of learning

In the post-teaching-unit questionnaires in TU2, some of the pupils reported learning about certain moves in the reply letters in terms of organisation. However, the replies seldom mentioned the function of the moves (PR19).

PR19 I needed to ask more questions (Albin)

A couple of pupils self-reported learning about paragraphing, but the most common answer was that the pupils did not think that they had learnt anything about structure from peer reviewing. It is noteworthy that two of the pupils attributed this lack of learning to the quality of the reviewed reply letters (PR20).

PR20 Not much because the letters I read had a very good structure so there wasn't that much to benefit from (Max)

In terms of content, many pupils reported learning related to the reader(s) or their own reading experience from peer review (PR21 and PR22).

PR21 try not to complicate things so the reader could understand easily  
(Oscar)

PR22 To be objective otherwise the texts will be as weirdly written as theirs  
(Simon)

It was also clear that some of the pupils borrowed ideas from their peers' texts to elaborate or clarify their own reply letters (PR23 and PR24).

PR23 I remembered that I should've mentioned what school I go to somewhere when I read one of them. So I wrote that in the beginning. (Emmy)

PR24 I was reminded of the importance of fully describing what a *gymnasie*<sup>30</sup> is (Max)

Half of the pupils self-reported not learning anything about micro-level aspects of writing from reviewing their peers' texts. The others reported things such as style (PR25), accuracy, and proofreading. Like in a previous example, PR20, one pupil related her lack of learning to the high quality of this aspect in the reviewed text (PR26).

PR25 It didn't have to be that correct but still no swearwords.. (Lotta)

PR26 The ones we read were pretty good at words and grammar so I didn't learn that much there. (Ebba)

## 11.4 Teaching unit 3, Study 2

The genre that the pupils worked with in the last teaching unit in Study 2 was the argumentative essay. As presented previously (Section 10.4), revision changes that affected micro-level aspects of writing were by far the most common, with twice as many instances as the second largest aspect *Content and idea development*. Following the trend in all other teaching units, rather few of the alterations affected *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

### 11.4.1 Links between revision changes and peer review

Compared to the first two teaching units in Study 2, there were fewer links overall in the argumentative essays in TU3. *Structure and rhetorical organisation* contained the highest ratio of connections to peer review, followed by *Content and idea development*, and last *Micro-level aspects of writing* (Table 11.6).

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<sup>30</sup> *gymnasie* (sic) is the Swedish equivalent to upper secondary school

Table 11.6: Links between revision changes and peer review in TU3, Study 2

Aspect of writing		Links/ revision changes (pupils) <sup>a</sup>	Type of revision change		Links/ revision changes
Structure and rhetorical organisation		16/27 (9)	Transition signal		13/16
			Paragraphing		0/4
			Font		1/3
			Reorganisation		1/3
			New move		1/1
Content and idea development		30/77 (12)	Addition		16/39
			Substitution		13/31
			Deletion		1/7
Micro-level aspects of writing		53/148 (9)	Grammar		47/77
			Vocabulary		5/30
			Punctuation		1/27
			Rearrangement		0/14
	Total	109/252		Total	109/252

<sup>a</sup> Apart from the number of links in relation to revision changes, this column shows the number of pupils who contributed to the links (the number in brackets)

Revision changes affecting *Structure and rhetorical organisation* had a relatively high proportion of links, especially the category *Transition signals*. These alterations were mainly linked to feedback comments about text organisation (LC38), but a couple of them could also be connected directly to the use of transition signals in the reviewed essay (LR21).

LC38	I strongly believe that	<b>First of all</b> I strongly believe that (Ebba)	Good phrases when you organize and introduce your opinion, exampels and arguments. (G7)
LR21	To conclude I would like to add	<b>Finally</b> I would like to add (Emmy)	Finally, murderers are a great threat for society,

There were no links in the category *Paragraphing* and only one each in the remaining three categories, *Font* (LC39), *Reorganisation* (LC40), and *New move* (LC41), respectively.

LC39	Killing the killer isn't easy	Killing the killer is not easy (font) (Max)	Larger and bold font in the title (FG1)
LC40	ignorant. As Cassandra Clare wrote "Do not seek revenge and call it justice". What do	ignorant. What do > think so. As Cassandra Clare wrote "Do not seek revenge and call	The conclusion, if you add some argues from every paragraph before it would be a better conclusion of

it justice". (concl)  
(Ebba)

your text, it could be  
even better if you  
don't add a new  
argument in the  
ending. (G7)

LC41 -

**In conclusion, I don't understand why the government uses death penalty as punishment when there are many other ways of avoiding it and still punish the criminal. It still don't make any sense why they murder people to show murdering is wrong, there is no logic behind that punishment, just some old tradition back in earlier stages that has kept going and no one have never realized what they're actually doing to humans of their own kind**  
(Henrik)

In the conclusion when you wrote about looking back at our time, it was really catchy and it ended the debate strong. The death penalty is an old way of trying to save society from something you are scared of. (G6)

In *Content and idea organisation*, there were few revision changes which involved the inclusion of a new argument; however, four of the five alterations seemed inspired by similar ideas in the reviewed essay (LR22). In a couple of instances, there was also a link to feedback pointing to relevant features (LC42).

LR22 death penalty.  
//Firstly of all

death penalty. // **We all know that killing the murderer won't bring the victim back to life, but we always try our best to do the job. For example if you have done something bad to your best friend, then you would probably**

it won't bring the victims back...

do everything you  
can to compensate it.  
It is the same here,  
we can't bring the  
victim alive but we  
try to help those who  
have suffered as  
much as we can.  
//Firstly of all (Albin)

LC42    them instead. // In  
          other words

them instead. // **Some  
people claim that it is  
too expensive to keep  
people in prison, and  
it would be much  
cheaper to just  
execute them, but I  
do not agree with  
them. First of all it  
has been shown that  
it is cheaper to have  
people in prison than  
sitting in a death row.  
And secondly, it is an  
extremely weak  
argument to say that  
you should execute  
people just because  
you are not willing to  
pay money for their  
time in prison. / It is  
basically like saying:  
I don't want to pay a  
little bit of more  
taxes, so I think we  
should kill the people  
in prison instead.** // In  
other words  
(Mohamed)

In some sentences you  
agreed with the  
opposing team (people  
against death  
penalties) which made  
your opinion seem a  
bit weak. If you would  
have showed some  
cons instead your text  
would have been more  
convincing. (G4)

The rest of the additions belong to the subcategory *Elaboration* and about one third of them could be linked to the peer-review activity, almost exclusively through feedback comments. These comments pointed to content in specific moves in the argumentative essay, for example the conclusion (LC43), or emphasised the importance of supporting pros and refuting cons (LC44).

LC43	isn't. And why risk	is not. <b>And what does a dead man or woman help, it does not bring the victim back to life.</b> Also why risk (Filip)	The conclusion was not very strong. You did bring up a con, but you didn't rebut it in a very strong way, it was a bit too humble, and maybe you should have ended your text with a stronger argument. (G4)
LC44	the "lethal" injection, they can't even be put in prison. You	"lethal" injection. <b>The criminals have already been punished and</b> they can't even be put in prison. You (Max)	You could also support and justify your pros more so your opinion gets clearer. (FG1)

Another category pertaining to the aspect *Content and idea development* is *Substitution*. There were more links in this category than in the previous teaching units, TU1 and TU2; however, most of them were related to Emmy's alteration of the male criminal to a gender-neutral person or "it" (LC45). Another example is Noel who changed the content of his conclusion, supposedly in order to make the final point stronger (LC46). In *Deletion*, there was only one link; a comment which prompted the removal of "etc" in the hook which potentially could make it clearer (LC47).

LC45	then the criminal himself. When the criminal	then the criminal <b>itself</b> . When the criminal (Emmy)	Try not to use genders like you did in the first paragraph... (FG3)
LC46	their position. I am quite content with how many countries have abolished the death penalty, especially in Europe, but I'm almost scared by how common it still is. It doesn't have to be this way.	their position. <b>The death penalty doesn't have to exist, and the world needs to think again. Killing people for killing people shouldn't be a thing. The death penalty has to die.</b> (Noel)	The conclusion was not very strong. You did bring up a con, but you didn't rebut it in a very strong way, it was a bit too humble, and maybe you should have ended your text with a stronger argument. (G4)
LC47	as well because of murdering <b>etc.</b> ? That'll just	as well because of murdering? That'll just (Elis)	We liked the hook (FG3)

The aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing* counted the smallest proportion of links. As mentioned in relation to the revision changes, a small group of

pupils contributed in large to the alterations relating to grammar and for three of them, Filip, Ebba, and Max, the changes could also be linked to feedback about language use in the peer-reviewed text (LC48, LC49). As regards links related to the content of peers' argumentative essays, there were only a few of them; for example, the exchange of "persons" to "people", which was used repeatedly in the reviewed text (LR23).

LC48	I think it's better to keep a man	I think <b>it is</b> better to keep a man (Filip)	There were some sentences that were abit unclear with some spelling errors and grammatical errors, you could have proof read sometimes or asked a friend for help (G4)
LC49	wrongdoing, but all aren't. And as	wrongdoing, but all <b>are not</b> . And as (Ebba)	You had a formal language but not to formal Good grammar. (G7)
LR23	just give these persons a chance	just give these <b>people</b> a chance (Leia)	( <i>people</i> mentioned in several instances)

The other three categories in *Micro-level aspects of writing*, *Vocabulary*, *Punctuation*, and *Rearrangement*, contained very few links. Henrik changed some words in his essay related to a comment about the use of language deemed too informal and also the use of "punishment" in the reviewed text (LC50/LR24). In *Punctuation* there was one single link, where Lotta changed the grave accent to an apostrophe, which was the sign consistently used in the reviewed essay (LR25). There were no links in the category *Rearrangements*.

LC50/ LR24	but the other ways are really bad too,	but the other <b>punishments</b> are bad <b>aswell</b> , (Henrik)	You may have been to personal in the first paragraph when you wrote... (G6) been given your punishment. But even in
LR25	to decide who`s going to live	to decide who's going to live (Lotta)	(consistent use of ' in the reviewed text)

In TU3, approximately four out of ten revision changes could be linked to the peer-review activity. It was especially changes to the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* and the genre-specific category *Transition signals* that

seemed to be inspired by reading and commenting on peers' texts. Links to *Grammar* in *Micro-level aspects of writing* were mainly attributed to generic feedback comments. In *Addition*, there were mostly connections in *Elaborations*.

### 11.4.2 Pupils' perceptions of learning

The most common organisational features that the pupils reported having learnt about from peer reviewing were the structure (PR27) and the function of certain moves (PR28). A couple of pupils also mentioned paragraphing while two did not learn anything.

PR27     In the beginning you should start big and end small and the opposite for the end of the text. (Lotta)

PR28     Clear introduction so that the reader understands directly. (Ebba)

In terms of content, many pupils mentioned learning about arguments (PR29). Very few pupils reported not learning anything; one of them was Gustav who specifically seemed to have been looking for inspiration in his peers' essays without success (PR30).

PR29     You should take the "opponents'" argument and contradict (Victor)

PR30     I didn't find any new argument or something like that from them (Gustav)

Similarly to TU1 and TU2, learning about language was reported in general terms: proofreading and vocabulary style. Two pupils explicitly reported the use of contractions (PR31). The most common answer implied that the pupil had not learnt anything (PR32).

PR31     No abbreviations (Don't, it's)" (Ebba)

PR32     The text I got was almost perfect regarding words and grammar so I didn't really learn anything (Henrik)

## 11.5 Summary and commentary

In total, my project involved four teaching units: 1) *How to write a reply letter* (Study 1), 2) *How to write a newspaper article*, 3) *How to write a reply letter*, and 4) *How to write an argumentative essay* (Study 2). All units followed a similar lesson plan, with the peer-review activity in consensus groups during the penultimate lesson. The relationship between the peer review and the



revision changes that the pupils' made to their first draft constituted the core of my project and is directly related to the overarching research question *What do pupils learn about writing from giving feedback?* and to my third research question: *What do pupils learn about writing in terms of structure and rhetorical organisation; content and idea development; and micro-level aspects of writing from giving feedback?* The analysis of the links was complemented with the pupils' perceptions about learning from peer reviewing.

### 11.5.1 Links between revision changes and peer review

The comparison of the links between the revision changes and the peer-review activity, which is the operationalisation of learning in my project, showed some variation. Overall, there were fewer links in TU3 in Study 2, the argumentative essay, than in the preceding units, including the one in Study 1. In all four teaching units, the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* had the highest proportion of links. In TU1 and TU2, Study 2, *Micro-level aspects of writing* was the second largest aspect in terms of links, whereas *Content and idea development* had the equivalent position in Study 1 and in TU3, Study 2. However, the difference to the aspect with the lowest ratio of links was rather small in all teaching units in Study 2. In Study 1, on the other hand, there were considerably fewer links to *Micro-level aspects of writing* than to *Content and idea development*.

The aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* contained relatively few revision changes across the teaching units but had a high proportion of links (cf. Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2005; Tsui & Ng, 2000). In fact, all alterations in the category *New move* could be connected to the peer-review activity. Most of these inclusions of new moves occurred in the two teaching units dealing with reply letters and mainly involved endings and signing offs (cf. Lindgren et al., 2008, about time). Revision changes affecting paragraphing also had a high number of links in all teaching units, except for TU3 where the pupils wrote argumentative essays. The criteria lists for all genres involved paragraphs, but for the argumentative essay the pupils had the opportunity to prepare their writing before class (cf. Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Roca de Larios et al., 2008). In this teaching unit, there were also very few feedback comments about the paragraphs. *Reorganisation*, which was another generic category in *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, only counted one link overall.

Most of the revision changes affecting the font in the newspaper articles could be linked to the peer-review activity. In this genre, the various parts of the articles, such as the headline and the caption, can be distinguished through different type sizes, which was raised as a criterion in some of the consensus groups (cf. DiPardo & Freedman, 1998; Ferris, 2003; F. Hyland, 2000; J. Liu

& Hansen, 2002). In the argumentative essay, the three changes to the font occurred in the headline and there was only one link.

Another genre-specific category in my project was *Transition signal* in the argumentative essay. Words and phrases used to structure information were introduced to the pupils in the pre-teaching unit activities and during the production of the essays the pupils had access to a list of transition signals. Most of the alterations affecting transition signals could be linked to the peer-review activity, both to feedback comments and to the use of these words and phrases in the reviewed texts.

The aspect *Content and idea development* had fewer links overall than *Structure and rhetorical organisation*; around half of the revision changes in Study 1, TU1, and TU2 could be linked to the peer-review activity, whereas the corresponding proportion in TU3 was somewhat smaller. There were many more revision changes in the reply letters and a small majority of these alterations could be linked to the peer-review activity. There were three categories in this aspect: *Addition*, *Substitution*, and *Deletion*. Most of the links pertained to *Addition*. This category also had a number of subcategories. *Elaboration* was generic and between one third and half of the revision changes in this subcategory could be linked to the peer-review activity. The higher ratio was found in Study 1 and in TU1, Study 2.

Furthermore, all texts involved subcategories which were genre-specific and related to the addition of new material. In the reply letters, these included *Clarification*, *New answer*, and *New question*. In Study 1, about half of the clarifications could be linked to the peer-review activity; in TU2, Study 2, there were very few revision changes which involved clarifications, but all of them were connected to giving feedback. Most of the alterations which regarded new answers and new questions in the reply letters could be linked to peer reviewing. In relation to the reply letters, it was particularly evident that the pupils borrowed ideas from their peers' texts (cf. M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005; Porte, 1996; Tsui & Ng, 2000). The number of links could be attributed not only to feedback comments, but also directly to content in the peer-reviewed letters. This inspiration from content was not as common in relation to the other two teaching units and genres (cf. Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003; Walker & Pérez Ríu, 2008; Yu, 2019). The pupils had the opportunity to prepare their writing of the newspaper article and the argumentative essay outside class, by filling in writing templates.

Similarly to *New answer* and *New question* in the reply letters, the genre-specific subcategory *New information* in the newspaper articles counted a high number of links to feedback comments as did the few revision changes entailing *New argument* in the argumentative essay. The two remaining categories of revision changes pertaining to *Content and idea development*, *Substitution*, and *Deletion*, had a rather low number of links overall.

The proportion of connections between revision changes affecting the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing* and the peer-review activity varied

across the teaching units (cf. Allal, 2000; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980). There were links to about half of the changes in Study 1, TU1 and TU2, whereas the corresponding ratio in TU3 was approximately one third. Most of the feedback comments regarding micro-level aspects of writing were rather generic; many of them encouraged the writer to “check” spelling and grammar, for example. A possible influence on these comments and the subsequent revision changes is the pupils’ access to the spelling and grammar checker in *Word* (cf. Göteborgs universitet, 2014).

*Vocabulary*, *Grammar*, *Punctuation*, and *Rearrangement* are the generic categories in *Micro-level aspect of writing*. Most links across the teaching units pertained to *Grammar* but the order of the other categories varied. There were no genre-specific categories or subcategories in this aspect, but some of the variation could be related to the genre features as depicted in the criteria lists or the feedback comments.

Most of the revision changes in the two teaching units about the reply letter were changes of spelling and grammar linked to feedback comments about proofreading or “checking” the text. There were considerably more links in *Grammar* and *Vocabulary* in TU2, Study 2, than in Study 1 though, which indicates that the pupils’ previous experience of writing and feedback differed (cf. Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; Furneaux et al., 2007; Lundgren, 2013; Porte, 1996, 1997; Victori, 1999). *Punctuation* was the category which seemed to involve some genre-specific items; the length of sentences was mentioned in both teaching units and could be linked to inclusions of full stops. In Study 1, quotation marks were deemed important for the clarifications of Swedish terms and places. These marks were also included in the criteria list for TU2, but they were not clearly related to clarifications in the class discussions. Instead, the criteria list in TU2 stressed another punctuation mark “Exclamation marks - some to show you’re happy” (Criteria list, TU2, Study 2), which was mentioned in feedback comments linked to revision changes. About one third of the alterations in *Rearrangements* could be linked to the peer-review activity in both Study 1 and TU2.

In the newspaper articles, TU1 in Study 2, there were few items related to micro-level aspects of writing in the criteria list and consequently few links which could be considered genre-specific. In *Vocabulary*, some words were exchanged for more formal ones with equivalent meanings: “no slang” (Criteria list, TU1, Study 2); there were also some instances of exchanges of proper names for pronouns to avoid repetition as noted in peer-reviewed newspaper articles. However, there were not that many links overall in this category compared to the other categories.

There were fewer links concerning *Micro-level aspect of writing* in TU3, the argumentative essay, than in the other teaching units. The vast majority of the links could be found in *Grammar*, where especially turning contractions into non-contracted forms to conform to the more formal requirements of this genre was a common revision change.

The part of the peer-review activity to which the links were drawn did not include the oral interaction, since data regarding the oral mode only was collected in three focus groups in Study 2. As mentioned previously (Chapter 9), a rather large share of the topic episodes did not result in written feedback. Out of curiosity, I included the topic episodes in an additional analysis of links in the focus groups. The proportion of links between the peer review and the revision changes was then approximately 75%, which is considerably higher than the average 50% presented in this chapter. On account of this discrepancy, there are good reasons to consider the mode of feedback provision (cf. Chang, 2015; Chen, 2010; Kamimura, 2006; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005, 2016; Rahimi, 2013; Suzuki, 2009).

### 11.5.2 Pupils' perceptions of learning

As a complement to the text analysis of links between revision changes and the peer-review activity, the pupils' self-reports regarding perceived learning from giving feedback in relation to the three aspects were analysed. Concerning *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, the pupils in Study 2 highlighted the moves and the overall organisation across the genres (cf. Bronia, 2005; Johns, 1997, 2011). Some of the pupils in Study 1 also mentioned the structure, but paragraphing was the most common response from their teaching unit about reply letters. A noteworthy distinction between the responses grouped as moves in Study 2 was that the pupils seemed to relate the moves to their functions in the newspaper article and the argumentative essay, but not in the reply letter. There were also more pupils who self-reported learning nothing or left the item blank in the questionnaires about the reply letters in both Study 1 and TU2.

In terms of *Content and idea development*, a small majority of the pupils in Study 1 left no answer or replied "nothing". In Study 2, the pupils reported learning about communication and the reader from the peer-reviewed reply letters. To elaborate and clarify content were also part of the responses. Self-reports from the other two genres primarily emphasised the function of the content: to provide information in the newspaper articles and to bring forth arguments in the argumentative essay.

Blank responses or responses indicating that they did not learn anything about *Micro-level aspects of writing* were fairly frequent across the teaching units, but particularly in the two teaching units involving reply letters. Proofreading was also a rather common answer, and in Study 1, some pupils mentioned learning certain words (cf. Min, 2005).

A comparison of the pupils' perceptions of learning and the analysis of the links between the changes they made to their first drafts and the peer-review activity showed some agreement concerning *Structure and rhetorical organisation* and *Content and idea development*. The high number of links to changes affecting the former aspect corresponded to the pupils' self-reports,

as did the focus on the function of the content in the text. It is noteworthy that some of the pupils in Study 2 stressed communication and the readers of the reply letters in relation to content (cf. Berg, 1999b; M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000).

In the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing*, a small majority of the revision changes could be linked to the peer-review activity. Many of the pupils, however, did not believe that they learnt anything. Instead of mentioning particular items, the second most common response was proofreading (cf. Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006).

This chapter concludes the presentation of the results, including the implementation of the four teaching units. The next chapter (12) is the Discussion. It begins with discussions with reference to my three research questions. Next follows a section which discusses the findings from a pedagogical perspective. The last section reflects on methodological choices and validity.

## 12 Discussion

My results show that pupils can learn about writing from giving feedback. More specifically, text structure and organisation can benefit from pupils' reading and commenting on peers' texts. The content of writing is also affected; for example, the pupils in my project borrowed new ideas and facts or elaborated their own ideas after having commented on peers' texts. Due to the generic nature of the feedback comments denoting micro-level aspects of writing, it is difficult to specify learning in terms of grammar and vocabulary. The pupils themselves mentioned learning how to spot mistakes as an outcome, rather than specific grammatical features and words. In their role as peer reviewers, the pupils were able to identify problems and provide formative information. There was considerable variation at the level of group and between the teaching units though.

This chapter discusses the findings against the background of previous research and the teaching, which was designed as an intervention with a genre-based perspective. Generally, the discussion draws on the differences found between the two studies, the teaching units, the genres, and the consensus and focus groups. The first three sections (12.1–12.3) correspond to my three research questions. These sections are followed by Pedagogical reflections (Section 12.4). In this section, I discuss the findings from a pedagogical perspective by focusing on the role of genre pedagogy, feedback training, criteria, and the pupils. Methodological reflections (Section 12.5) conclude this chapter.

### 12.1 Pupils' response to feedback training

My first research question deals with the pupils' response to the feedback training included in the teaching units: *How do pupils respond to the feedback training?* The second or third lesson in each of the teaching units in my project specifically involved activities focusing on peer feedback provision; however, seeing that the understanding of learning objectives and criteria is considered a prerequisite for peer review (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018; Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013), feedback training in a more general sense occurred throughout the teaching units. There are two subquestions to this research question:

- a. How do pupils construe the task and learning objectives?

- b. To what extent do pupils include formative information in their peer feedback?

### 12.1.1 Pupils' construal of the task and use of criteria

How pupils construe the writing task and use the criteria go hand in hand. In my project, the task was linked to the syllabus for English at the beginning of each teaching unit, whereas the criteria were developed in class together with the pupils. The pupils were asked to report what they perceived as the learning objectives of the unit in a questionnaire distributed after the last lesson. It is likely that the pupils' understanding of these objectives were connected to the direct references to the syllabus, but also to the content of the teaching. The objectives and the task are considered collective in relation to this research question (1a). The pupils' perception of learning as presented in relation to research question 3 is primarily associated with the individual learning outcome.

The pupils in my project highlighted several perceived learning objectives in the questionnaires:

- 1) improving writing in general;
- 2) writing a specific genre;
- 3) writing various texts;
- 4) adapting writing to recipients; and
- 5) providing feedback.

These objectives partly echoed those explicitly mentioned by the teachers during the introductions of the teaching units: write a reply letter (Study 1 and TU2, Study 2); write a newspaper article (TU1, Study 2); and write an argumentative essay (TU3, Study 2). In class, the teachers linked these objectives to the long-term aims in the syllabus for English: to "express themselves and communicate in [...] writing" and to "adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts" (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 35). These aims are broad and do not specify genres; they can, however, be associated with genre-based pedagogy (K. Hyland, 2004; Martin, 2009; J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Not surprisingly, the general objective to improve writing was predominant in the responses from the pupils in Study 1, whereas the pupils in Study 2, who wrote several texts, tended to emphasise the genre. Moreover, some of the pupils in Study 2 perceived writing different kinds of texts as some sort of overarching objective.

The pupils who self-reported that a learning objective was to be able to adapt texts for various recipients and purposes probably recognised this from the aims in the syllabus; however, these responses only occurred in the class in Study 2 after the second and third teaching units. This timing suggests that the repeated contact with texts presented as different genres influenced and broadened the pupils' perception of learning to write. Indeed, the teacher in

Study 2 drew some comparisons between genre features, such as the informal and formal language use in the reply letter and the newspaper article, respectively.

It is relevant to discuss these findings in light of the difference between genre learning and genre awareness in genre-based pedagogy (Johns, 2011). All the pupils in my project were taught how to write certain genres and it was from this perspective that the teaching units were planned. Noticing that texts can be compared on the basis of variation related to social and communicative purposes could be interpreted as emerging genre awareness. The research design in Study 2, which involved three teaching units with various genres, rendered it possible for the pupils to identify text comparison as a learning objective and outcome. This additional objective was also provided for by the teacher, who drew comparisons between the genres and in all teaching units repeated the importance of purpose, context, and recipient.

A shared understanding of learning objectives is often said to constitute the starting point for successful peer- and self-review in the classroom (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2005; Nicol et al., 2014). Being able to reiterate the objectives presented by the teacher or described in the syllabus does not equal “understanding”. Self-reports can indicate what the pupils perceived as being foregrounded in the teaching units; I especially take note of the fact that most pupils mentioned writing a certain genre and, in some instances, also pointed out specific parts of texts as perceived learning objectives.

In addition to the objectives related to the writing task, some pupils suggested that learning how to provide feedback was an intended learning outcome. This idea was not explicitly mentioned by the teachers when introducing the teaching units, but since feedback training and feedback provision were included in the lesson plan it is not surprising that giving feedback was perceived as a learning objective. In his theory of formative assessment, Sadler stresses the importance of students’ developing “evaluative expertise” (2009, p. 49) and in order to do so “some of what the teacher brings to the assessment act must itself become part of the curriculum for the student” (Sadler, 1998, p. 82).

In fact, the general part of the Swedish curriculum states that “[t]he goal for the school is that each pupil [...] develops the ability to assess their own results and relate these and the assessments of others to their own achievements and circumstances” (Skolverket, 2018b, p. 16). However, this ability is not generic. Being able to assess requires subject matter knowledge so practice need to be part of teaching in all subjects. The verb “relate” in the curriculum can be interpreted as the ability to communicate the assessment, that is feedback provision. There is consensus that feedback training is essential for effective peer review (e.g. Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Hu, 2005; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005; Rahimi, 2013), and the next subsection (12.1.2) covers the result of the training in my project. A last remark in relation to the pupils’



mentioning feedback provision as a learning objective is that this view could affect the pupils' motivation positively.

The learning objectives of a teaching unit may be good to know for the pupils, but it is unlikely that they help the pupils achieve them *per se*: "Although curriculum standards provide an image of what students are expected to learn, they do not give a sense of how the students should go about the learning process" (Earl, 2013, p. 90). In my project, sample texts of reply letters, newspaper articles, and argumentative essays were discussed in class, and the main points were summarised in joint criteria lists. This procedure is in line with the first strategy on Black & Wiliam's list of strategies for the implementation of formative assessment in the classroom "[c]larifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success" (2009, p. 8). The pupils self-reported finding the criteria useful and using the criteria lists both during and after writing their own texts. It is likely that the pupils' involvement in the production of the criteria contributed to this usefulness. Similar procedures are suggested by Bearman and Ajjawi stating that pupils should "'see with' criteria, not 'see through' them" (2018, p. 7). The pupils' participation resulted in a mix of official and "student-friendly" language in the lists (cf. Wiliam, 2011, p. 62).

Similar procedures are seldom reported in studies on peer feedback in writing. In the study on student-derived criteria in L1 disciplinary writing by Orsmond et al. (2000), students produced their own marking criteria for a poster task. The criteria were developed "in the presence of the assessing tutor" (2000, p. 26), but it is unclear to what extent this tutor was involved or what this "presence" entailed. In Brijandi & Hadidi Tamjid (2012), the students partly contributed to the construction of a scoring rubric.

As regards criteria use in my project, the pupils reported using the criteria with a dual purpose: as guidelines during writing and as checklists after writing. Some pupils also mentioned that they had based part of the writing on their own ideas, disregarding the criteria. The criteria were also applied during the peer-review activity. The oral interaction data from the three focus groups in Study 2 showed that the criteria lists were employed to organise the peer-review activity and to check their feedback comments towards the end of class.

In addition to the self-reported usefulness of the criteria, cross-referencing the written peer feedback with the criteria for each genre showed that most comments were task-relevant in the sense that they adhered to the criteria. This task-relevance suggested that the validity of the comments was high, which has been a concern voiced by students in other studies (e.g. Hu, 2005; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). Previous studies have reported that student involvement in assessment activities can increase the understanding of the criteria (Althausser & Darnall, 2001; Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011; Nicol et al., 2014), and the application of criteria for peer review can be considered a sign of understanding.

Interestingly, two additional criteria emerged during the peer review. These two criteria, the font size in the newspaper articles and the argumentative essays and the credibility of the reported accidents in the newspaper articles, were not included in the joint criteria lists; however, they were applied by some groups of pupils in their peer review. These instances show that the pupils were not limited to the written criteria lists but were able to apply their own understanding and knowledge of the genres in their peer review. It could therefore be argued that the criteria discussions and lists served as the “springboard[s] for discussion” suggested by Lockhart and Ng (1995, p. 648) rather than being perceived as restraining (cf. F. Hyland, 2000; Orsmond et al., 2000; Torrance, 2007).

Another pertinent point emanating from this result concerns the choice of sample texts in genre-based writing instruction. For example, Holmberg (2010) depicts some potential problems in relation to the writer and the reader when a “real-world” genre meets the constraints and expectations related to school tasks; in my project, the credibility of the made-up accidents emerged as a relevant criterion when the pupils were faced with a school version of the newspaper article.

This subsection has focused on how the pupils construed the written tasks and how they reported using the criteria in their individual writing process. The criteria and their presentation also played important roles in relation to the peer feedback produced by the consensus groups. The following subsection deals with the second part of my first research question.

### 12.1.2 Formative information in the peer feedback

The second part of my first research question refers to the formative information in the peer feedback. Formative information was defined as suggestions and explanations, in line with Min’s model of peer feedback (2005). The analysis showed variation between the teaching units and between the consensus groups in the number of feedback comments, the ratio of comments denoting strengths and weaknesses, as well as the inclusion of formative information. The written peer feedback focused primarily on strengths in all teaching units, especially in Study 1 and the first teaching unit in Study 2; in the other teaching units in Study 2, the number of comments about strengths and weaknesses was close to equal. As regards the comments about problems, most of them were categorised as Step 2 in all teaching units, except for the last one, TU3 in Study 2, where Step 4 outweighed the other steps. Step 3, an identified problem and an explanation, was a small category in all teaching units.

The classes engaged with peer feedback for the first time as participants in my project. The pupils in Study 2 received recurrent practice on feedback provision since the intervention stretched over three teaching units, but the feedback training was still relatively brief due to time constraints and practical

considerations. Other studies have reported extensive training spread out over a long period of time (Hu, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009) and involving, for instance, individual coaching (Min, 2005). Most of the research with lengthy training was carried out in writing classes at university where the researchers often doubled as teachers. This set-up suggests that courses could have been designed with additional time to be able to accommodate the peer feedback component and the research perspective. These types of adjustments are not possible with younger learners in compulsory school. The classes in my project had a total of 120 minutes scheduled for English each week, and the syllabus involves more skills than writing. Similarly, other studies on peer feedback carried out with secondary-level L2 learners comprised rather limited time for feedback training (M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000).

In terms of peer feedback training, teacher modelling seems to be the most frequent activity (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005, Rahimi, 2013), sometimes paired with group training (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Rahimi, 2013). The activities directly aimed at feedback training in my project included teacher modelling and group practice in Study 1, and TU1 and TU2 in Study 2. In TU3, the pupils evaluated feedback discussions and comments which were staged and performed by the teacher and the researcher instead of producing their own comments in conjunction with the teacher. This practice had points in common with the “feedback on feedback” which was found efficient in the study by M-K. Lee, where the pupils engaged with so-called “intra-feedback” with their peers (2015).

This change in my project was a result of some pupils’ responses in the questionnaire distributed after their work with reply letters in TU2. Even though most pupils expressed that they found the work with the newspaper articles and the reply letters good and instructive, some of them also expressed that it was a bit monotonous and asked for variation. In classroom research, it is vital to consider the pupils’ goals and keep the design flexible (Dörnyei, 2007); thus, the teacher and I decided to vary the feedback training slightly. Similar concerns were raised by W. Wang (2014) suggesting that “peer feedback practice need[s] to be revitalized at latter stages of its implementation” (p. 92). From a pedagogical perspective, this change did not really alter the focus of the feedback training; emphasis was still placed on the importance of including explanations and suggestions, and the pre-produced feedback examples were based on a sample text that the pupils read and discussed in class. This unplanned change, however, meant that the pupils in Study 2 were engaged in different activities intended to train them for peer review.

It is not possible to draw any comparisons as to the effectiveness of the two combinations of feedback training that the pupils in Study 2 received; however, it is likely that the variation as regards the activities provided the pupils with new insights seeing that they were both producers and reviewers of feedback (M-K. Lee, 2015). Both Berg (1999b) and Hu (2005) highlight

the importance of different activities to address the complexity of peer feedback. Moreover, since some of the pupils in Study 2 had expressed that they wanted a change from the procedure used in TU1 and TU2, this modification of the lesson plan could have kept their motivation up and prevented dullness (W. Wang, 2014).

There is some indication that that the recurrent feedback training resulted in better feedback from a formative perspective. For instance, there were proportionally slightly more comments identifying problems in TU2 and TU3, Study 2, than in the first teaching unit in the same study and the only teaching unit in Study 1. Furthermore, there was a very high proportion of feedback comments including both explanations and suggestions, Step 4, in TU3. Another explanation for this increase of formative information in the comments could be that the training was different in this teaching unit, as reported in a previous paragraph.

As regards commenting on strengths rather than weaknesses as the pupils in both studies did in their first attempt at giving feedback, it is possible that this focus was a sign of insecurity. Some studies on peer feedback have indicated that students rely less on feedback from peers due to doubts of their peers' linguistic knowledge (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). Similarly, the feedback providers may not trust their own ability to pinpoint weaknesses and therefore prefer to highlight strengths. Interestingly, the master students in Yu's case study (2019) turned to external sources to compensate for their insecurities when providing peer feedback. The experimental study by Alshuraidah and Storch (2019) suggested that joint feedback provision "encouraged the students to engage more critically with their peers' texts" (p. 8).

Feedback training in my project was interlinked with the teaching of subject matter. Feedback provision entails subject matter knowledge, but few studies have described how writing instruction and feedback training can be combined. One exception is the experimental study by Stanley (1992) reporting that students who received lengthier training produced more comments and were more specific in the feedback than their peers who were subjected to less training. The extensive training in this case involved activities focusing on the genre and communicative purpose of the text; in other words, the notion of feedback training was extended to include the writing instruction *per se*, similar to my project.

The subject matter in my project was writing in one genre (Study 1) or three genres (Study 2), which makes genre another potential influence on the quality of the feedback in terms of formative information. Each genre has its own characteristics, expressed through the criteria which emphasised certain parts of the written product, such as the rhetorical organisation and specific micro-level aspects of writing. It is, for example, possible that the high ratio of feedback comments labelled Step 4 in TU3 can be attributed to the relative complexity of the argumentative essay (Schleppegrell, 2004).

There were also more feedback comments which involved explanations, Step 3, or explanations and suggestions, Step 4, in TU1, Study 2 (the newspaper article) than in any of the two teaching units with reply letters. Whereas the reply letter treated well-known topics and a register that the pupils were likely to be familiar with, the newspaper article was more formal and relied on the pupils' reporting of a fictitious accident. Perhaps certain genres encourage more elaborated feedback, for example explanations, to be deemed helpful by the peer reviewers. Similarly, W. Wang (2014) highlights the importance of topical knowledge for successful peer feedback.

It is also worth mentioning that the two teaching units involving the same genre, the reply letter in Study 1 and Study 2, portrayed some differences in terms of feedback from the consensus groups. The higher ratio of comments on strengths than on weaknesses in Study 1 has already been reported; furthermore, there were more comments on Step 3 and 4 combined in Study 2. These differences could be attributed to the cumulative effect of the additional feedback training in Study 2 as discussed earlier in this subsection; pupils who are more confident in their ability to provide feedback are probably more likely to pinpoint weaknesses in their peers' writing.

The criteria lists, together with the feedback forms, constituted the pupils' guidance during the peer-review activity and were also the connection to subject matter. The purpose of this guidance was to help the pupils give relevant and valid feedback. Most feedback comments provided by the pupils in my project could be connected to the criteria and were thus deemed task-relevant and valid. In comparison with other types of more detailed and elaborated guidance, such as guiding questions (Chen, 2010; Yang et al., 2006) and error coding schemes (Chang, 2015), the criteria lists in my project were relatively simple; they summarised the features identified in the sample texts as discussed in class. Seeing that the peer feedback was relevant for the task, it can be concluded that the criteria lists served their purpose as "memory-joggers", helping the pupils stay on track while acting as peer reviewers. The validity of the comments in terms of "correctness" related to the identification of problems lies outside the scope of this project, as does the reliability of the comments (cf. Stobart, 2012).

The relatively scant written guidance in my project was intended to trigger discussions and open up for interpretation, in line with N-F. Liu and Carless' definition of peer feedback as a "communication process through which learners enter into dialogue related to performance and standards" (2006, p. 280). As shown by the analysis of the oral peer interaction in the focus groups in Study 2, many of the topic episodes comprised exchanges of opinions complemented by arguments and examples from the reviewed texts. However, one group, FG1, interpreted the format of the criteria as a checklist during TU2. Instead of engaging in discussion about the quality of the text, their approach involved checking if the criterion was present in the text rather than met in terms of appropriateness and quality: "let's just do a checking list again

then” (Liam, FG1). This less successful approach to peer review stresses the importance of feedback training which involves focus on the task and on the use of criteria (cf. Chen, 2010; Diab, 2011; DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; J. Liu & Hansen, 2002; Min, 2005; Stanley, 1992; Yang et al., 2006).

The peer-review activity in consensus groups involved the oral as well as the written mode and far from all discussions resulted in written feedback. To be able to draw comparisons between the modes, the oral topic episodes (Subsection 6.4.1.2) were analysed using the same categories as the written feedback. The majority of the episodes involved both explanations and suggestions. In other words, the oral peer interaction included more formative information than the corresponding written feedback comments. The main difference between the formative information in the oral and the written mode was found in the explanations. The utterances labelled explanations in the oral peer interaction had a dual function; they served to explain the nature of the problem in line with Min’s categorisation of feedback (2005) and they also served as arguments when the pupils assessed their classmates’ texts in order to formulate the joint written feedback. Hence, these explanations could function as justifications of the pupils’ ideas and be intended to support an opinion or an argument rather than provide formative information to the writer. This distinction can be compared to reflective and non-reflective episodes in student collaboration (Higgins, Flower, & Petraglia, 1992), where a reflective episode involves “explicit evaluation, consideration of alternatives, or justification” (Neumann & McDonough, 2015, p. 88).

The use of the written and/or oral mode for peer feedback has been discussed in several studies as has the use of L1 or L2 for feedback provision (e.g. Berg, 1999b; Chang, 2015; M-K. Lee, 2015; Min, 2005, 2016; Rahimi, 2013; Suzuki, 2009). Based on my results, it seems as if the oral mode supports better feedback both in terms of formative information and in terms of the notion of feedback as communication (cf. N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006). Seeing that there was no feedback receiver, the written part of the peer-review activity in consensus groups could be considered redundant. On the other hand, having to jointly write down comments could have helped the pupils stay focused on the task.

FG2 consistently had a structured approach to the peer-review activity; they worked together to formulate the written feedback, often in direct relation to the oral discussion about the criterion in question. Consequently, they had a relatively high ratio of topic episodes resulting in written feedback: almost seven out of ten. FG1, on the other hand, had a much smaller number of topic episodes linked to the written feedback: the equivalence of four out of ten. They partly employed a “check-list approach” to the peer-review activity, and overall their conversations were unstructured in the sense that they jumped between topics. They also spent quite some time talking about other things than the texts. Similarly to FG1, FG3 placed more emphasis on the oral

interaction than on the written feedback. Slightly more than half of the topic episodes from this group was transferred to the written feedback.

The comparison of the oral and written mode, that is the topic episodes and the written comments, also revealed some interesting behaviours that can shed light on pupils as peer reviewers. As mentioned, a rather large number of episodes did not result in written feedback. Interestingly, the pupils sometimes deliberately chose not to address written feedback to the fictitious peer receiver; for example, the pupils sometimes related the problem to the instructions or organisation of the writing task or technical issues rather than the actual text, which means that the problem was not related to the written task as such. In these cases, the pupils' discussions signalled an audience awareness in relation to their peers, that is the feedback receivers. Chang (2015) highlights the importance of the "reviewers' awareness of the reviewees' needs" in peer review (p. 3), which is related to the reviewers' stance towards the task of peer reviewing (cf. Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004, about the continuum between being a reader and a commentator in peer feedback). Gao et al. (2019) also raised the issue of attending to relevant problems in peer review. Similarly, M-K. Lee promotes the use of "intra-feedback" to raise the quality of peer feedback in relation to the receivers (2015, p. 2).

Conversely, the lack of an authentic receiver of the feedback could have affected the written part of the peer-review activity. The pupils knew that the writer of the reviewed text was not going to receive the written comments. Indeed, there were some instances which could be interpreted as if the pupils viewed themselves as the receiver, in the sense that they connected the peer review to their own writing. Therefore, confusion in terms of the receiver of the written feedback—in this project the fictitious peer, the teachers, the researcher, or the pupils themselves—could have affected the relationship between the oral topic episodes and the written feedback. This uncertainty was grounded in the research design; normally, there is a feedback receiver, but since the aim of my project was to explore learning from giving feedback, the reciprocity of feedback was omitted.

In relation to design and contextual constraints, the limited time allotted for the peer-review activity could have affected the written outcome; in some cases, the focus groups separated the oral discussion from the formulation of feedback comments, which resulted in little time for writing. The teacher helped the pupils keep track of time, and the pupils themselves were also aware of the limited time while reviewing texts. Indeed, FG2 explicitly expressed that lack of time affected their work, by including the following comments in one of the feedback forms: "[t]he things we don't mention about your work means that we think it's good" and "We did need a bit more time" (TU2, FG2).

As shown above, the oral topic episodes contained more explanations than their written counterparts. Metalinguage can be important if peer feedback is considered communication involving justifications and explanations of the

nature of the problem (Min, 2005). The genre-inspired teaching included linguistic terms denoting the moves in the texts, and the pupils seemed to have picked up this terminology. In terms of micro-level aspects of writing though, teaching was less elaborated. The feedback simply referred to “grammar” or “spelling” when mentioning problems concerning this aspect. Some technical vocabulary, such as direct and indirect speech, was briefly covered by the teacher in Study 2, but these structures were not further elaborated. The lack of metalanguage is possibly a smaller issue in oral peer interaction than in written comments. During the peer-review activity, the pupils could, for example, point at specific places in the texts and negotiate joint understanding to overcome lack of words.

## 12.2 Pupils’ revision changes

In line with previous studies that used the revision change as a unit of analysis (e.g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Lindgren et al., 2008; Sommers, 1980; Stevenson et al., 2006; Victori, 1999), the changes made by the pupils in my project were categorised depending on the aspect of writing affected by the alteration. In Studies 1 and 2 together, most revision changes concerned the macro-level of writing, which corresponds to the aspects *Structure and rhetorical organisation* and *Content and idea development* in my project. The difference between the number of macro- and micro-level changes was small; indeed, the aspect *Micro-level aspects of writing* was equally large to *Content and idea development* and together they represented more than 90% of the alterations.

In this section, the pupils’ revision changes are discussed primarily in relation to studies which have used the revision change as a unit of analysis to investigate fluency and differences between inexperienced and experienced writers. The pupils’ changes were also used to explore learning from giving feedback in my project; those results are discussed in the subsequent section (12.3).

Macro-level revision is considered a trait of more proficient and more experienced L1 and L2 writers (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Hall, 1997; Porte, 1996; Roca de Larios et al., 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003; Sommers, 1981; Stevenson et al., 2006; van Gelderen, 1997). The pupils in my project were relatively proficient for their age group in Sweden, but not on par with the university students in most studies on L2 writing and revision (e.g. Porte, 1996; Victori, 1999). Considering the pupils’ age and proficiency level, it is noteworthy that the total number of macro-level revisions in my project was higher than the number of micro-level revisions. Lower proficiency can inhibit fluency in writing, since learners tend to pay much attention to form-focused revision (Lindgren et al., 2008; Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008; Stevenson et al., 2006).



Findings in studies with younger learners by Lindgren et al. (2008) and Stevenson et al. (2006) indicate that macro-level revision is also related to perception of writing quality. The high ratio of alterations to the structure and the content of the texts in my project could therefore indicate that the pupils perceived that these types of changes improved the quality of their texts more than other types of changes.

As shown in previous studies, experienced and inexperienced L1 and L2 writers' perceptions of revision differ (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Porte, 1996, 1997; Sommers, 1980; Victori, 1999). Although the pupils in my project could not be considered experienced writers, they obviously had some previous experience of writing. Similarly to the experienced professional writers in Sommers who considered "the incongruities between intention and execution" while revising (1980, p. 385), it is likely that the pupils looked for a "dissonance" in their texts compared to their perception of a text of better quality.

Regarding student writers, text quality and revision are likely coloured by what the students believe that the teacher will appreciate (Barkaoui, 2007; Chenoweth, 1987; Porte, 1997). Indeed, the pupils in Study 1 and Study 2 had different experiences of revision as part of previous EFL writing instruction; the pupils in Study 1 usually wrote multiple drafts of their texts, while the pupils in Study 2 often corrected a first draft at the micro-level of writing, based on teacher feedback. A comparison between the revisions in Study 1 and Study 2 showed different patterns for revision changes overall. In Study 1, macro-level revision constituted 60% of the total number of revision changes; the corresponding percentage in Study 2 was 50. The difference is rather small though and it is relevant to highlight that even in Study 2, the ratio of macro-level revision changes was high compared to many other studies.

Comparable interpretations have been forwarded in studies contrasting learners' L1 and L2 writing; despite differences in proficiency, there are similarities between revisions in both languages (Hall, 1990; Stevenson et al., 2006). These similarities could be attributed to the transfer of writing skills, which in turn can be linked to previous writing experience. Lindgren et al. (2008) discuss that learners' linguistic experience, which corresponds to the number of years studying a language, affects macro-level revision more than L1 or L2. Similarly, a Dutch study with younger pupils (Stevenson et al., 2006) showed that changes affecting the macro-level of writing could be linked to pupils' lack of writing experience rather than L1 or L2. Roca de Larios et al. (2006) and Hall (1990) also discuss the development of a so-called multidimensional view of writing with experience.

It is thus possible that the pupils in my project had a general idea of text quality and writing in mind when revising, an idea likely to have been developed through their years of schooling in both L1 and L2. This perception could explain the high number of macro-level revision despite their age. Unfortunately, this project did not collect information about previous writing

instruction in neither Swedish nor English. Attention to macro- and micro-level aspects in instruction could depend on the purpose of the writing activity. For instance, it is probable that at writing-to-learn-language perspective foregrounds syntax and vocabulary, while a learning-to-write perspective focuses the text as an entity (cf. Hirvela et al., 2016). Pupils' experience of the purpose of writing in school can also include writing-to-learn-content, which further complicates the notion of writing in education.

The differences between the teaching units in my project suggest that genre is a possible influence on revision changes; the reply letter and the newspaper article triggered more macro-level revisions, whereas the revisions to the argumentative essay were more focused on grammar and spelling. This idea is supported by the fact that the distribution of revision changes in the reply letters (Study 1 and TU2, Study 2) was close to identical across the studies. Slightly more than half of the alterations affected *Content and idea development*, about four out of ten alterations concerned *Micro-level aspects of writing*, and in both studies there were relatively few alterations at the level of *Structure and rhetorical organisation*.

Various texts have been used in research on revisions in writing (e.g. Porte, 1996; Sommers, 1980; van Gelderen, 1997; Victori, 1999), but little attention has been given to the influence of genre on revision changes. In Sommers (1980), for example, the informants wrote three different genres, but in the results no distinction is made between them. This disregard could be due to the cognitive nature of the studies, as well as the fact that many of them were carried out within a process-oriented approach to writing, where the writer rather than the text as such was highlighted. Stevenson et al. (2006), whose young informants wrote argumentative essays, remark that “the results are not necessarily generalizable to other text types” (p. 225), thus acknowledging the potential influence of genre on revision. Porte (1996) observed some differences in revision patterns at the individual level between the discourse types “personal expression” and “argument” used in his study (p. 109); however, interviews indicated that the topic of the essay, rather than discourse type, affected revision as some students said that they were “better able to identify with the subject matter of some assignments and, therefore, felt more incentive (sic) to interact more profoundly with their texts” (Porte, 1996, p. 111). This interaction was not necessarily positive in terms of text quality as the engagement caused them to hurriedly jot down ideas on paper.

The revision changes that the pupils made to their first drafts constituted one of the main units of analysis in my project. These alterations indicate what aspects of their texts the pupils attended to during revision. As such, they are interesting “by themselves” as in this section, but they are also highly significant as indicators of the potential benefits of peer review. The following section discusses findings related to my third research question concerning pupils' learning about writing from giving feedback.

## 12.3 Pupils' learning about writing from giving feedback

As pointed out in a recent review of peer assessment and L2 writing, few studies have explored the impact of peer feedback on various aspects of writing (Yu & Lee, 2016). The intervention in my project was designed within the framework of genre-based writing instruction (GBWI) and with an ESP perspective; these starting points entailed a focus on both macro- and micro-level aspects of writing. More specifically, my third research question focuses on learning from giving feedback related to three aspects of writing: *Structure and rhetorical organisation*; *Content and idea development*; and *Micro-level aspects of writing*. This section is organised around these three aspects.

In a way, all the revision changes that the pupils in my project made can be considered self-initiated (cf. Paulus, 1999; Yang et al., 2006), since they did not receive any comments from teachers or peers before revising. From a pedagogical perspective, this notion of self- or other-initiated alterations (Paulus, 1999) seems to disregard the influence of instruction, which I believe underlies many of the decisions made by the pupils while revising. The instruction that the pupils received, including the teaching material, thus plays an important role in the discussion of my results.

### 12.3.1 Learning about structure and rhetorical organisation

Overall, the pupils made few revision changes affecting the structure and rhetorical organisation of their texts (Chapter 10); at the same time, this aspect of writing had many links to the peer-review activity, which indicates that the changes were influenced by the work in the consensus groups. In the category *New move*, which collected changes where the pupils incorporated a new functional part in their texts, all the alterations could be linked to the peer-review activity via the written comments or information in the reviewed texts. In addition, the changes affecting paragraphing were essentially stimulated by peer review, as was *Transition signals*, a genre-specific category pertaining to TU3 in Study 2, the argumentative essay. Another genre-specific category, *Font*, emerged in some of the consensus groups when the newspaper article and the argumentative essay were discussed. Most of the changes affecting the font could also be linked to the peer-review activity, which indicates that this activity strengthened the pupils' understanding of the criteria (cf. Althausen & Darnell, 2001; Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011; Nicol et al., 2014). A small number of changes were categorised as *Reorganisations*; only one of these alterations seemed to be influenced by peer review.

This result mirrors the significant gains reported in Lundstrom and Baker's study (2009) where especially the students labelled "beginners" improved the global aspects of their text after having given feedback. Judging by the rubric used to assess the students' pre- and post-tests, these global aspects at large

described what I would characterise as structure and organisation. Similar to the beginner students in Lundstrom and Baker (2009), the pupils in my project were inexperienced as peer reviewers. It is possible that the first encounters with this kind of activity have a special impact on learners' writing and then especially the perception of writing as more than language display; as one of the students in Min's study reports: "I realized that the most important thing of composing is ideas and organization, not vocabulary or grammar" (2005, p. 301). Comparably, the secondary-level pupils in Tsui & Ng (2000) self-reported high agreement with the questionnaire item "Reading my classmates' compositions helped me to improve the organization of my composition" (p. 155). Theoretically, this eye-opener could portray the difference between learning-to-write and writing-to-learn-language (Hirvela et al., 2016).

This new experience could explain why there were fewer links between the revision changes pertaining to this aspect in TU3, Study 2, than in the previous teaching units for the same class; the pupils used peer review for the third time during the same term in the argumentative essays, so the novelty of experiencing peers' text as a reader and a reviewer could have faded. Interestingly, almost all the links in this aspect in TU3 belonged to the genre-specific category *Transition signals*, which was "new" in relation to previous teaching units and genres.

The novelty seems to encompass more than the peer review. It appears as if the use of peer review in L2 writing classes encourages teachers to highlight the importance of global aspects of writing, at least in the guidelines distributed to the students (Berg, 1999b; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Kamimura, 2006; Paulus, 1999); this is true also for my project, in which the genre-inspired teaching and the criteria lists clearly underscored text structure and rhetorical organisation (Appendices I, J, N, and Q). A study on text structure in Swedish upper secondary school showed that the pupils' progression was low; it was suggested that teaching of structure as a genre-specific feature was ineffective (Apelgren & Holmberg, 2018). It is possible that the implementation of peer review can enhance both teaching and learning about writing in this aspect.

To corroborate this result, it is worth mentioning that many of the pupils in my project also self-reported paragraphing and structuring of the texts as personal learning outcomes. This attention to rhetorical organisation is especially salient seeing that the pupils in my project were rather inexperienced as L2 writers. Changes affecting the aspect *Structure and rhetorical organisation* occurred at the levels of text and paragraph, which reportedly are levels neglected by less proficient L2 writers. Cognitive studies have shown that less proficient language users place a lot of effort on the formulation of their ideas (Lindgren et al., 2008; Roca de Larios et al., 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003; Stevenson et al., 2006); therefore, their main attention while writing tends to lie at the level of word or sentence. Attending to global aspects while revising increases text quality which can explain why beginners'

writing benefits more from giving feedback; it is “easier” to improve a text that is not as developed at the global level initially (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

It is noteworthy that many of the inclusions of new moves in the reply letters were moves found at the end of the letter, which could imply that the pupils finished their texts rather than revised them<sup>31</sup> (cf. Lindgren & Stevenson, 2013). To compensate for low fluency due to lack of general proficiency, a study by Lindgren et al. (2008) with Swedish pupils the same age as the pupils in my project suggests the provision of extra writing time. This extra time could, for example, make up for the extra strain on formulation associated with L2 writing (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Lindgren et al., 2008; Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008). Writing multiple drafts as in my project obviously entails more time to write a text.

Within the context of my project though, time plays a secondary role. It is more relevant to note that all the revision changes resulting in new moves could be linked to peer reviewing. If time should be considered, the fact that the pupils used their limited time to revise global aspects of writing distinguishes them from students in other studies, who mainly edited their texts (Allal, 2000; van Gelderen, 1997; Victori, 1999).

While there were many links between the revision changes and the peer-review activity, it is also notable that there were relatively few revision changes affecting this aspect of writing overall. The task setting, where the pupils were given the opportunity to prepare two of the genres, the newspaper article and the argumentative essay, before class could have contributed to the few revision changes. Especially the writing template used for the argumentative essay stressed the structure of the text (Appendix S), and the writing preparation for the newspaper article (Appendix O) is also likely to have helped the pupils organise their ideas before writing. At the same time, my classroom observations showed that far from all pupils had embraced this opportunity to plan their writing. Cognitive models of writing highlight planning as one of the key processes of writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hayes, 2012), and this preparation is often linked to success in writing and to more successful writers (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007; Sommers, 1980; Victori, 1999). For example, lack of planning entails that more time needs to be devoted to the generation of ideas and revision during the (limited) writing time (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Victori, 1999), which especially affects L2 writers.

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<sup>31</sup> Please note that the pupils in Study 1 who reported that they had not finished their first draft were excluded from the project, which could have affected this result (Subsection 6.1.2.1).

### 12.3.2 Learning about content and idea development

Between one third and half of the revision changes in each of the teaching units in Study 1 and Study 2 affected the aspect *Content and idea development*. About half of these alterations could be linked to the peer-review activity, except for in TU3, where there were fewer links. In line with the influential taxonomy for revision changes by Faigley & Witte (1981), so-called meaning-changing revisions are highlighted as especially important; they signal writers' understanding of the communicative aspect of writing and are often connected to audience awareness. Together with text structure and organisation, content constitutes the global or macro-level of writing (Berg, 1999b; M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000).

Focus on the content can be attributed to writers' attempts to avoid miscommunication and to improve the text's readability (M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000). In my project, the pupils especially paid attention to content and idea development in the reply letter, judging by the number of revision changes affecting this aspect. The reply letter was "content-driven" in the sense that the purpose was to provide responses to questions posed by American teenagers, so content was important for task completion (M-K. Lee, 2015). Similarly, it has been suggested that consideration of content is related to genre (M-K. Lee, 2015; Porte, 1996); the responses in the reply letter were based on the pupils' own life and thus easily accessible, which corresponds to Porte's noticing that there were more meaning-based revisions in some students' "'personal expression' assignments" (1996, p. 112).

Not surprisingly, *Addition* was the largest category of revision changes within the aspect *Content and idea development*. This category was further divided into a number of generic and genre-specific subcategories. All three texts had genre-specific subcategories which involved the inclusion of new ideas and all of them counted a high number of links to the peer-review activity: *New answers* and *New questions* in the reply letter; *New information* in the newspaper article; and *New argument* in the argumentative essay. The high number of links to these types of revision changes clearly signals that acting as a peer reviewer can trigger new ideas and inspiration. Similarly, the secondary-level pupils in Tsui & Ng's study self-reported high agreement with the questionnaire item "Reading my classmates' compositions gave me more ideas" (2000, p. 155).

It was also in relation to *Addition* that there were quite a few links not only between the changes and feedback comments, but also between the changes and the content of the reviewed texts. These connections were especially salient in the reply letters. As mentioned previously in this subsection, genre and task completion affect focus on content (M-K. Lee, 2015; Porte, 1996); in their reply letters, the pupils were to respond to the same questions from four American teenagers which means that the content of the letters was similar. Moreover, the questions revolved around topics familiar and common for the

pupils, such as school and teenage life. These similarities facilitated borrowings from peers' letters.

The nature of the other genres and the way in which those tasks were introduced provided other conditions. Although the newspaper articles were based on a limited choice of photographs, the accidents on which the texts reported were made up by the pupils. This condition meant that it was unlikely that the pupils would borrow ideas from their peers. In the argumentative essay, however, the pupils wrote about the same topic, the death penalty. The pupils had also read the same texts about this topic prior to writing. Writing about the same topic implies that it would be possible to borrow inspiration like in the reply letters, but this was not the case in the argumentative essays. In fact, there were rather few additions made to the first drafts of this genre, except for elaborations of the arguments in the first draft to support and justify pros and cons. This teaching unit, TU3 in Study 2, was preceded by the reading of texts about the death penalty and debates about the topic, which turned the essay into an integrated writing task (cf. Apelgren & Holmberg, 2018). It is therefore likely that the arguments as such were similar across the class already in the first drafts. Pre-writing activities and time for planning are important to consider from a pedagogical perspective (cf. Roca de Larios et al., 2006, 2008; Schoonen et al., 2003; Walker & Pérez Rúa, 2008).

Another genre-specific subcategory in *Addition* was *Clarifications* in the reply letter. The purpose of the clarifications, as expressed during the formulation of the criteria lists, was to avoid miscommunication and explain Swedish sites, such as Gröna Lund and Kaknästornet (cf. M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000). In TU2, Study 2, there were only two pupils who made this kind of revision changes, but in all four instances these pupils' alterations could be linked to reading and commenting on peers' reply letters. In Study 1, there were more revision changes but a lower ratio of links. It is possible that these differences were due to the way the function of clarifications was exemplified in the two studies. In Study 1, this function was described in the criteria lists by "Use quotations marks " " where necessary" (Appendix I, Class A) and "Give good explanations" (Appendix I, Class B). The corresponding criterion in Study 2 was "Translate Swedish/Descriptions", which was perhaps not as clear and functional as in Study 1. Min (2005) has highlighted the importance of clear peer feedback guidance to avoid misinterpretation.

*Additions* also included the generic category *Elaborations*. In Study 1 and in TU1, Study 2, around half of the revision changes were labelled as elaborations, whereas there were fewer instances in TU2 and in TU3, respectively. Min describes how peer review can help students "focus their ideas" (2005, p. 302) which I believe can be achieved by the elaboration of some of the ideas introduced in the first drafts.

Again, the reply letters can be used to elucidate variations between the studies in regards to this category. There were differences between the

teaching units involving the reply letter in Study 1 and Study 2; more than half of the elaborations in Study 1 could be linked to peer review, while the corresponding ratio in TU2, Study 2, was about one third. I would have assumed that the pupils borrowed more from their peers in this type of text based on the same content. Instead, the number of links in the subcategory *Elaborations* in Study 2 was higher in the newspaper articles, which were based on an accident that each pupil came up with. Perhaps the pupils in Study 2 considered the clarity of the information provided in the genre newspaper article more important than in the reply letters.

Apart from additions, revision changes affecting the aspect *Content and idea development* were categorised as *Substitutions* or *Deletions*. There were more deletions in the reply letters than in the other two genres, but hardly any of these alterations could be linked to reading and commenting on peers' letters. The category *Substitutions* is noteworthy since these revision changes indicate that the content was altered. The highest proportion of links was found in the argumentative essay, but nearly all changes belonged to the same pupil, so in relative terms, this was a minor category. About one third of the substitutions in Study 1 and TU1, Study 2, could be linked to peer reviewing. The parallel proportion in TU2, Study 2, was only two out of 25, which is somewhat surprising considering the genre, the reply letter, and the much higher ratio in Study 1. At the same time, the lack of substitutions does not equal that the pupils did not consider this type of change. Berg (1999b) discusses that peer review provides the students with alternatives; however, this broadened perspective does not necessarily entail that they do decide to change their own text.

The pupils' perceptions of learning about content differed between my two studies. The most common response to the corresponding questionnaire item in Study 1 was "nothing". In Study 2, the answers varied between the teaching units and were related to the various genres. In the reply letter, TU2, the pupils highlighted learning about communication and the reader; these foci could have been triggered by the question-response form of this genre. M-K. Lee (2015) showed that peer response turned pupils' attention to the readability of the texts, as they envisaged one of their peers as readers, and comments along the same lines are reported by Tsui & Ng (2000). The four American teenagers who addressed the pupils in the writing prompt *Hi Ohio!* and who were also the recipients of the reply letter the pupils wrote represented a well-defined audience. That the pupils in Study 1 did not acknowledge the readers in their responses could be due to the fact that the reply letter was their first (and only) exposure to the notion of audience (cf. Johns, 1997, on genre learning and genre awareness).

In terms of content in the newspaper articles and the argumentative essay, the pupils self-reported learning about the importance of information and arguments, respectively. These responses underscore the function of the content in the genres: to provide information (the newspaper article) and to



form arguments (the argumentative essay), which can be considered signs of genre awareness. In TU3, some of the pupils also mentioned learning about the topic of the essay, the death penalty. They read a couple of texts about this topic prior to the teaching unit (Section 7.4), so it is not odd that it was perceived as one of the learning objectives and, thus, a possible learning outcome. Indeed, knowledge about the subject is a prerequisite to be able to construct an academic argument (McGrath, Berggren & Mežek, 2016).

### 12.3.3 Learning about micro-level aspects of writing

In three of the teaching units, revision changes at the macro-level of writing outnumbered micro-level revision changes and about half of these changes affecting grammar and spelling could be linked to the peer-review activity. In the last teaching unit, TU3 in Study 2 (the argumentative essay), there were more micro-level revision changes than global ones, but only around one third of them were linked to the peer-review activity. Overall, most of the links pertained to the category *Grammar*, where many feedback comments were generic, for example asking the writer to “check” the grammar.

Seeing that my analysis of learning from giving feedback largely depended on links to the feedback comments, it is pertinent to start at this end. The general nature of the feedback relating to micro-level aspects of writing entailed that many comments were paired with revision changes. A comment like “Furthermore, the text had some grammatical errors” (FC38, Subsection 9.4.1) could be connected to practically all alterations affecting grammar. In line with learning as operationalised in my project, a first impression would indicate that the pupils learnt a lot about certain grammatical features. This impression does not last though; these comments contained so-called “rubber stamp advice” (Min, 2005, p. 304) and encouraged proofreading rather than the fixing of specific problems.

Indeed, when asked about learning about grammar and vocabulary, a common response from the pupils was proofreading and correcting their texts. These self-reports, paired with the feedback comments urging writers to “check” their grammar and spelling, indicated that performing alterations to the micro-level aspects was associated with the identification of mistakes in their own texts. This improvement of the ability to self-assess, that is spotting strengths and weaknesses in their own texts, seemed especially salient in relation to so-called conventional revision (Allal, 2000). Similarly, other studies have highlighted that peer review can lead to transferrable skills pertaining to proofreading (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2005; Nicol et al., 2014; Rahimi, 2013; Tsui & Ng, 2000). It is unclear though, both in my project and other studies, if this transferrable skill involved making correct alterations. Revision changes affecting grammar and vocabulary can be correct or incorrect. Similar distinctions are obviously also pertinent regarding macro-level revision, but the leeway is greater.

Revision changes affecting spelling and grammar could also have been prompted by the use of the spelling and grammar checker in *Word*, which offers visual guidance by underlining potential mistakes. This detail does not exclude that the feedback comments also played a role in the alterations. In fact, a survey reporting on pupils' use of the checker while writing indicated that most pupils could correct spelling mistakes but found it harder to fix grammatical problems (Göteborgs universitet, 2014).

In Study 2, there were more revision changes affecting micro-level aspects of writing overall and also a high ratio of links to this aspect in two of the teaching units. Some studies have linked pupils' attention to grammar and spelling to their experience of the teacher as the reader and assessor of their texts (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009; Furneaux et al., 2007; Lundgren, 2013; Porte, 1996, 1997; Victori, 1999). In these cases, the students perceived that the teacher favoured accuracy, based on their previous school experience of L1 and L2 writing. There is a possibility that these numbers reflect the pupils' idea of text quality since the pupils in Study 2 were used to feedback focusing on error correction; indeed, in the first teaching unit, several pupils expressed that the notion of "revision" was unclear. The pupils in Study 2 also picked up some more specific advice about style and punctuation.

Apart from general proofreading skills, there was a couple of criteria that seemed to spark more precise revision changes. For example, some of the changes in the newspaper articles and the argumentative essays were probably intended to better suit the formal style of the genres, as expressed in the criteria lists (Appendices N and Q). The specific punctuation marks mentioned in the criteria lists, such as the quotation mark in interviews in newspaper articles (Appendix N) and the exclamation marks in reply letters in Study 2 (Appendix J), also seemed to have been adopted by the pupils. In line with what has been discussed in relation to the other aspects (Subsections 12.3.1 and 12.3.2), these changes with links to the peer-review activity can signal emerging genre awareness (Johns, 2011).

Compared to the learning of macro-level aspects of writing, learning about micro-level aspects of writing from peer review could be considered less specific. Indeed, little teaching time was devoted to connecting lexico-grammatical choices to the genres; the teaching the pupils met as part of the intervention in my project emphasised macro- rather than micro-level aspects of writing. As apparent in the criteria lists, the items described under the heading "language" were broad and rather vague; among other things, the lists urged the pupils to consider length of sentences, to vary vocabulary, and to use informal, personal, and/or correct language. Similarly, the secondary-level pupils in Tsui & Ng's study rated the item "Reading my classmates' compositions helped me to improve the language (including grammar and vocabulary) of my composition" lower than the corresponding items referring to organisation and content (2000, p. 155). It is unlikely that pupils learn new

grammar simply by being told to use “direct/indirect speech” (criteria list, newspaper article), for instance; it demands another type of teaching.

## 12.4 Pedagogical reflections

The previous sections of the Discussion emanated from my three research questions. It is apparent that the instruction, including the peer-review activity, influenced the pupils as peer reviewers, the revision changes, and, ultimately, their learning about writing from giving feedback. Following the educational orientation of my project, this is a connect-the-dots section, where the dots have been introduced in Sections 12.1, 12.2, and 12.3. These pedagogical reflections aim to draw together the results in light of the intervention, that is the design and implementation of the teaching units in my project. As such, this section can be considered formative in the sense that it evaluates teaching and considers potential improvements based on the elicited evidence (cf. Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018). To delimit teaching in relation to my project, these pedagogical reflections will examine genre pedagogy, subject matter, and feedback training. In addition, two features will be emphasised, since I find them especially salient in discussing peer review as a learning-oriented activity and L2 writing: the role of criteria and the role of pupils. These two features are related to agency, which is also considered in relation to teaching.

Within the framework of formative assessment, it is essential that the teacher and the students together link teaching to learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018). In order to do so, the starting point needs to be the subject and the subject matter. This project revolved around L2 writing, theoretically defined as a cognitive process and a situated activity (Polio & Friedman, 2016). In practice, genre-based pedagogies provided a representation of L2 writing as shaped by purpose, context, and recipients (K. Hyland, 2016). Furthermore, sample texts and classroom discussions concretised how these concepts were linked to linguistic choices.

### 12.4.1 The role of genre pedagogy

The lesson design which entailed pupil involvement in the formulation of criteria proved useful to achieve a shared understanding of learning objectives. Apart from the learning objectives directly communicated in the plans distributed to the pupils, some pupils inferred from teaching that being able to provide feedback was a goal. Furthermore, a number of pupils in Study 2 connected the teaching units to each other by recognising that genre learning could entail transferrable skills, that is lead to genre awareness.

Similarly, it has been suggested that students need to work with various genres to discern similarities and differences (Bronia, 2005; Johns, 1997). From a pedagogical perspective, Johns specifically suggested working with

writing portfolios, since they are “uniquely suited to expose students to a variety of genres” (1997, p. 131). Working with three teaching units during one term and following comparable lesson plans inspired by genre-based writing instruction, as in Study 2, induced a similar response with the pupils.

This finding is essential from a teaching and learning perspective. The awareness that some pupils voiced was made possible by the genre-inspired teaching and the teacher’s repetition of the key concepts. More text-based approaches to genre teaching and learning, such as the Sydney School, do not necessarily offer this possibility (Johns, 2011). In this regard, I would also like to address the difference between so-called model texts and the sample texts employed in my studies. As described by Martin (2009), a “popularization of genre” was developed alongside the theorisation of SFL (p. 14). This adaptation of SFL to school included the use of model texts in the teaching/learning cycle (Rothery, 1996). Inspired by genre analysis as employed in ESP (Bronia, 2005; Swales, 1990), my intervention used sample texts instead.

These sample texts were either written by other pupils or were, in the case of the newspaper articles, authentic texts from *The Guardian*. In Study 1 and TU1 and TU2, Study 2, two different texts were used for genre analysis. The use of two texts was intended to show the pupils that there could be some variation within the same genre (cf. Myskow & Gordon, 2010; Whitney et al., 2011), and the texts provided an idea about the standards of the written task. The sample texts were not only intended to portray a genre; they also served as material in the feedback training (cf. Stanley, 1992). To fulfil this dual purpose, it was deemed important that the texts involved both strengths and weaknesses (cf. Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011). Research on how students transfer knowledge from genre-analysis tasks into their own writing is scant (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011). The combination of genre analysis and criteria as used in formative assessment practice seemed to function as a link between the analysis and the pupils’ texts. This link could be further strengthened by the inclusion of exercises and tasks aimed at developing specific features of genre writing. As pointed out by Apelgren and Holmberg (2018), GBWI and other explicit writing pedagogies provide little guidance as regards how the pupils can develop their writing skills.

Genre pedagogy provided a useful framework for my intervention. This foundation ensured that the teaching units were comparable, even if the genres differed. Genre pedagogy also constituted a link to sociocultural theories. Peer review as an oral activity is an example of the use of language to think together (Littleton & Mercer, 2013), similar to what Swain refers to as collaborative dialogue (2000).

Some of the activities included in the intervention were not “genre-inspired” but are still important to reflect on from a pedagogical perspective in relation to peer review.

### 12.4.2 The role of feedback training

Needless to say, feedback training is important (Berg, 1999a, 1999b; Min, 2005). Compared to other studies (Diab, 2011; Hu, 2005; Hu & Lam, 2010; M-K. Lee, 2015; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009), the training in my studies was relatively short, one lesson only in each teaching unit. Feedback training in my project should be viewed as more than this one lesson though; from an instructional and formative perspective, knowledge about the genre is essential for good feedback provision (cf. Berg, 1999b) which extends the training to include the entire teaching unit (cf. Stanley, 1992). Consequently, part of the role of feedback training was to contribute to the teaching of writing in various genres. As feedback providers, the pupils were able to identify problems and, in many cases, suggest solutions. Explanations proved more difficult and this was possibly due to previous lack of experience talking about linguistic phenomena.

The organisation of the peer-review activity was challenging for the pupils. In hindsight, it is fair to say that the researcher's intentions and the pupils' execution did not converge (cf. Dörnyei, 2007; Section 6.1). As a result of the exploratory approach and my interest in studying agency, the feedback forms entailed rather little guidance (cf. Berg, 1999b; Diab, 2011; Kamimura, 2006; Yang et al., 2006). According to oral and written instructions, the pupils were told to pay attention to strengths and weaknesses on one hand and to the criteria list on the other hand. Judging by the task approaches observed in the focus groups, this dual attention lead to a separation of the peer review into an oral and a written activity. The pupils discussed the texts orally, sometimes in the order of the criteria on the list and sometimes in random order, and then later attempted to summarise good features and problems in the written forms. As a consequence, the oral part of the peer review involved more topics and more formative information. Another issue, caused by my research question, was that the formulation of written feedback without a real receiver was inauthentic.

This design contributed to a number of interesting insights into peer review and learning from giving feedback. From a pedagogical perspective though, this activity needs some reconsideration. If the purpose of a future peer-review activity primarily is to benefit the peer reviewers, it would perhaps be wise to consider dropping the written part and focus solely on an oral discussion of strengths and weaknesses. The oral mode seems to be preferred, especially in contexts where the students' proficiency is rather high (cf. Berg, 1999b; M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). More guidance in relation to writing and genre could also be worth trying (cf. Min, 2005). The fictitious writer and feedback receiver in my project was introduced to acknowledge the reciprocity of feedback. Against the background of my findings, it is unclear whether a real receiver would improve the learning potential for the provider. Even so, it seems essential to keep the idea of peer review in a consensus

group; experimental studies have shown that the reviewing part of reading texts promotes better learning about writing (Y. H. Cho & Cho, 2011; Moore & MacArthur, 2012). In designing beneficial peer-review activities, inspiration can also be found in studies on collaborative writing (e.g. Neumann & McDonough, 2015; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012) and collaborative revision (Memari Hanjani, 2016).

Last, the writing of multiple drafts was a bearing principle of my intervention, as the revision changes represented the formative action taken as a result of learning from giving feedback. Especially in Study 2, however, it was apparent that many pupils were not familiar with the notion of revision or the writing of several drafts. Pedagogically, this observation would probably lead to the inclusion of revision training in future writing instruction by teachers adopting a formative view on teaching. Similar to the divergent aims discussed above (cf. Dörnyei, 2007), revision training as proposed by Barkaoui (2007) and Porte (1996) would have affected the validity of my analysis.

### 12.4.3 The role of criteria

Comparable to the deconstruction stage in the teaching/learning cycle (Rothery, 1996), the teachers in Study 1 and Study 2 guided their pupils through an analysis of the sample texts, focusing primarily on structure, content, and language. These teacher-led discussions resulted in a list of criteria for each genre. It is common to describe quality with criteria in formative assessment, where the criteria can be used during the process or with the product (Wiliam, 2011). When formative assessment practices are criticised for reducing and simplifying subject knowledge, bullet point lists of criteria are often targeted (Marshall, 2004; Torrance, 2007).

In relation to my project, it is therefore relevant to connect these lists to the classroom work with the sample texts, which contributed to the pupils' interpretation of the criteria (Min, 2005; Sadler, 1989, 2009). As shown by the results (Chapter 8), the pupils found the criteria useful in their own writing, and the criteria were also applied in the peer-review activity; these findings indicate that the combination of sample texts, scaffolded discussions, and summaries in bullet points was successful. Contrary to the students in Orsmond et al. (2000) who were not "stretched in their thinking" (p. 33) during the construction of criteria, it is likely that the material and the teacher guidance helped developing the pupils' ideas. The criterion "Exclamation marks - some to show you're happy" (Appendix J) sparks extra interest. It can be questioned whether the function of an exclamation mark in a reply letter is to "show you're happy". In regards to the sample reply letters though, this explanation in student-friendly language (cf. Gyllander Torkildsen & Erickson, 2016; Wiliam, 2011) seemed to be meaningful for the pupils. Theoretically, criteria could be considered material mediating the learning

from giving feedback (Lund, 2008) and thus reflect potential development. This purpose presupposes that the pupils can “see with” the criteria (Bearman & Ajjawi, 2018, p. 7).

All teaching, including the one in my project, mirrors what is considered relevant knowledge in a context (cf. Lund, 2008; Pettersson, 2015). Apart from the critique regarding impact on the subject knowledge, criteria have also been questioned in regard to their steering function that can counteract students’ autonomy and agency. In order to reach a shared understanding of collective learning objectives (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018), teacher involvement is a prerequisite in educational contexts; conformity to the aims as described in the syllabus is a requirement in school. Wiliam admits that “this [the co-construction of success criteria] is not a democratic process” and describes how “[t]he teacher uses his own subject knowledge to shape the discussion” (2011, p. 65). This is true for my project as well; the discussion was shaped by the choice of sample texts and by the teachers’ scaffolding and response to the pupils’ suggestions. In addition, the explicitness of the genre-based writing instruction framed the production of the joint criteria lists (K. Hyland, 2004; 2016) and shaped the subject matter.

This “shared understanding” could also be a sign of compliance (DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; F. Hyland, 2000; J. Liu & Hansen, 2002) or what Ferris refers to as “teacher appropriation” in relation to teacher feedback (2003, p. 131). This obedience can be related to the notion of agency and the role of pupils as agents in the classroom. A sign of pupil agency in my project was the emergence of new criteria during peer review. In some of the consensus groups, the pupils discussed the function of font size and the credibility of the made-up accidents in the newspaper article. Both examples involve relevant features of the genre. Instead of regarding these additions as “disobedience” in relation to the jointly produced criteria list, this act could be attributed to the pupils’ acting as agents. They extended their part in the development of criteria to their involvement in peer review. Other studies have also stressed the potential of peer review to promote student autonomy (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006; Zhao, 2010).

#### 12.4.4 The role of the pupils

Some previous studies on peer assessment and L2 writing have compared teacher and peer feedback and thus associated the role of the peer reviewer with the role of the teacher (Matsuno, 2009; Paulus, 1999; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Yang et al., 2006). My project regarded peer feedback as a formative activity within the framework of assessment as learning which means that the pupils’ role differs from the teachers’ role. Rijlaarsdam et al. (2004) introduce the distinction between being the reader and the commentator in peer review. The reader in this case is the subjective peer, whereas the commentator

represents the objective reviewer. Within the genre-based pedagogy of my studies, the reader could also be intended audience of a text (Hyland, 2016).

In school contexts, this reader-in-the-text is constantly challenged by the actual reader (Holmberg, 2010; Lundgren, 2013; Palmér, 2013; Thompson & Thetela, 1995; Whitney et al., 2011). In peer review, it is thus essential to consider the difference between being a reader and a commentator (Rijlaarsdam et al., 2014). It has been reported that seeing the peer as a potential reader of the text could raise students' motivation (Tsui & Ng, 2000); however, a reader's text approach is subjective which clashes with the notion of the objective commentator. The genre-based pedagogy and the joint production of criteria in my project seem to have counteracted this subjectivity, by introducing the "real-world" reader.

The new criterion "credibility of accident" which emerged during the peer-review activity indicated that the pupils read the articles from the perspective of the intended "real-world" audience: readers of *The Guardian*. In relation to a reader-oriented perspective on writing and an interactionist approach to teaching writing, K. Hyland (2016) suggests that teaching involves developing "writing tasks which encourages students to see their texts through another's eyes, and so anticipate reader's needs" (p. 159). It seems as if peer review can realise this aim in the classroom (K. Cho & MacArthur, 2011). Similarly, Berg (1999b) refers to peer review as an opportunity to "read a text through the eyes of someone else" (p. 232), that is taking on the role of the reader-in-the-text.

It is, however, impossible not to regard the teacher as the reader of the text in educational contexts. The notion of a context other than school was difficult to convey, as shown in Study 2 (Sections 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4) and in studies on L1 writing (Firkins et al., 2007; Myskow & Gordon, 2010; Norberg, 2015; Whitney et al., 2011). Contrary to students in other studies who explicitly referred to the teacher as their reader (Furneaux et al., 2007; Porte, 1996, 1997; Sengupta, 1998, 2000), there is little indication that this was the case in my project. On the other hand, the intervention and the data collection did not include teacher feedback and grading of the texts. It is possible that the pupils' attitude and take on the reader would have been different under other circumstances.

Apart from the role of intended reader and commentator attributed to the pupils' acting as peer reviewers, their role as agents is also relevant in relation to peer feedback. As mentioned in the subsection on criteria (12.4.3), some of the pupils introduced their own criteria which can be considered a sign of agency as in "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). This act of agency was probably made possible by the involvement of pupils in the creation of criteria lists and the autonomy offered in the peer-review activity. Gyllander Torkildsen and Erickson (2016) discuss the importance of preconditions from a learner perspective in conjunction with agency. One of the preconditions they mention is the use of "student-friendly language" in the communication of learning objectives, learning outcomes and



feedback (Gyllander Torkildsen & Erickson, 2016, p.153); the inclusion of pupils in the genre analysis and the activity of peer reviewing meets this requirement.

## 12.5 Methodological reflections

This section on methodological reflections revolves around the notion of validity in relation to choices made during my research process. More specifically, the ecological validity of my research design is discussed, as well as the group versus the individual in the presentation of my results. The operationalisation of learning in conjunction with the analysis and categorisation of revision changes affects the representation of the *what*, that is what the pupils learn and the demarcation of subject matter or content. In other words, these methodological choices are important to consider in view of my overarching research question *What do pupils learn about writing from giving feedback?*

In terms of validity, this project especially underscored ecological validity (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015). This emphasis was grounded in the aim to contribute to the field of language education in both practice and theory. Ecological validity is sometimes discussed as a threat to internal validity (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015); in relation to classroom research, I would prefer not to treat them as antagonists but rather as different sides of the same coin. For instance, this project's purposive sampling of intact classes entailed high ecological validity, but external and internal attrition affected these "intact" classes and, thus, both ecological and internal validity. My project did not involve an analysis of the attrition, but it is possible that the pupils who opted out of the studies had lower proficiency compared to their peers and/or felt insecure in relation to their abilities in English. Similarly, the pupils who were excluded from Study 1 due to incomplete first drafts could have been less proficient than their peers. In Study 2, internal attrition was due mainly to absence during one or more of the lessons including the peer-review activity.

Apart from having a possible effect on the distribution of proficiency, the attrition also lowered the number of participants in my project. A total of 43 pupils in three classes corresponds to half the regular class size in most Swedish lower secondary classrooms. At the same time, it is important to remember that attrition did not affect the teaching. All pupils attended class as regular during the intervention, and the pupils who were excluded from the studies due to parameters set by the research design were unaware of their exclusion. This condition strengthens the ecological validity; despite the fact that teaching during these weeks was an intervention, the pupils were first and foremost pupils and not informants (cf. Dörnyei, 2007).

Nevertheless, this project presented results at the level of group despite the relatively low numbers of participants and the variation observed both

between consensus groups (RQ1) and between individuals in revision (RQ2 and RQ3). Focusing on the group level when the groups are rather small entails a risk that one single participant greatly influences the results. This risk became a reality in my project and was duly commented on in the Result chapters where relevant. One way of avoiding this problem would be to focus on the individual level instead. In fact, an early version of the results from Study 1 did highlight the individual, aiming to discern certain patterns. It soon became clear though that this way of presenting my findings was far from unproblematic. Among other things, the teaching and learning perspective which formed the basis of my project was partly obscured by the focus on the pupil—the learner. An individual's learning is dependent on several personal factors and it is not possible to single out one pupil's contribution to teaching. I believe that it is the teaching and learning perspective of my studies which best justifies presenting results at group level; teaching is the interaction between teacher, subject matter, and student, and this interaction forms a whole that I have intended to depict. This belief also fed into the decision to quantify the findings from the qualitative analysis.

The main focus of this project was to study pupils' learning from giving feedback. In terms of validity, the operationalisation of learning is important to discuss. A revision change to the pupils' first written draft that could be linked to the peer-review activity represented learning in my project. This operationalisation did not consider the retention or transfer of learning. It did, however, facilitate the examination of learning as a direct result of peer feedback provision, and this way of relating a change in performance to learning can be attributed to sociocultural theories of learning. In addition, it also corresponds to the everyday usage of the term *learning* in school. This operationalisation was therefore deemed relevant against the theoretical underpinning of my project as well as the educational context.

Linking the pupils' revision changes to the peer review in consensus groups was a novel approach to study learning from giving feedback. Compared to self-reports as used in many previous studies (e.g. Min, 2005) or the focus on improvement assessed using rubrics (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009), my analysis rendered possible a more detailed exploration. Instead of treating peer feedback as a general activity, my project described "giving peer feedback" in relation to the written comments produced by each consensus group. By linking these comments to each group member's revision changes, learning from this activity could be defined more precisely and contribute to answering my research question. This link could be considered "high-inference" (cf. Long, 1980), since it builds on the assumption that there is a connection between a group activity and individual performance. Still, I believe this is a better instrument than self-reports and quantitative measures when the intention is to investigate the content of learning, the *what*. This link also highlights the importance of action for feedback to function as feedback (cf. Ramaprasad, 1983).

As regards the *what* of learning, it was to a high degree defined in relation to the genre-based writing instruction and the idea that purpose, context, and recipient shape the style and organisation of the genre. The application of the same instrument for analysis in the two studies ensured validity through partial replication (Cumming, 2012) and made the studies comparable. The analysis involved the division of revision changes into three aspects: *Structure and rhetorical organisation*, *Content and idea development*, and *Micro-level aspects of writing*. It seems obvious that a study on teaching and learning defines learning in relation to the teaching—what was taught and, thus, made possible to learn. On the other hand, this definition could be criticised for disregarding the pupils' previous experience of writing which naturally affects their learning through their personal contextualisation of the teaching. This experience would be very difficult to pinpoint; it is, however, included in the discussion where the teaching that constituted the intervention in my project failed to explicate the results.

Classroom research is impossible to generalise or replicate in a traditional sense, just like one lesson in school never can be recreated or copied. The particularities that impede transferability are the same contingencies that make teaching teaching. As proposed by Larsson (2009) “generalization through context similarity” (p. 28) is an alternative approach to this issue. This approach includes the research consumer as an agent in creating “generalisability” by comparing contexts.

As Loewen and Plonsky state “no study is perfect” (2015, p. 200), but it is essential to strive for high validity and at the same time acknowledge potential threats or weak spots. It is also important to acknowledge that validity is not a general concept; it needs to be adapted to the purpose, aim, and context of a research study. This section has discussed some of the methodological choices in my project and their effect on the validity, especially pertaining to sampling, the operationalisation of learning, and the delimitation of the content of learning.

## 13 Conclusion

My project investigated peer review in L2 writing in lower secondary EFL classrooms in Sweden. The overarching research question *What do pupils learn about writing by giving feedback?* focused on potential benefits for the peer reviewer, that is the feedback provider. The purpose was to contribute to the field of language education, both in theory and in practice. Thus, a pronounced aim was to bring genre teaching and learning together by the classroom implementation of formative assessment and specifically peer feedback. By doing so, my project also concerned pupils' agency in teaching, learning, and assessment.

### 13.1 My contributions

Studies investigating peer assessment and feedback in L1 and L2 writing are plentiful, but in terms of learning, most of them have looked at the receiver of the peer feedback. By designing teaching units involving peer review as a learning-oriented activity, my project investigated the learning potential of reading, discussing, and commenting on peers' texts. Thus, it linked formative assessment theory to collaborative learning, by regarding the peer-review activity as group work and a learning opportunity for the group of peer reviewers.

In terms of filling gaps in research, my project concerned younger learners in compulsory school. As pointed out by Matsuda and De Pew (2002), a plausible reason for the small number of studies with young L2 writers is that researchers tend to conduct studies in their own context. This is true also for this project. My background as an English teacher in lower secondary school helped me gain access to classrooms, plan an intervention rooted in both practice and theory, and interpret the findings.

An important contribution to research on L2 writing and peer feedback is the focus on the *what* question—what pupils learn about writing from giving feedback. Studies involving peer-assessment activities sometimes tend to turn the assessment as such into the students' learning objective by, for instance, comparing teachers' and students' assessments (e.g. W. Cheng & Warren, 2005; Matsuno, 2009; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Suzuki, 2009). It is relevant to discuss the reliability and validity of student assessments, but in terms of teaching, I believe that subject matter syllabuses and learning objectives

should be foregrounded. This is also the reason I framed my project within the notion of assessment *as* learning, as defined by Earl (2013) and Chong (2018). The assessment, which in my project formed part of the peer review in consensus groups and the individual revision, was intended to develop pupils' learning of subject matter rather than assessment skills. This intention corresponds with the validity claim of a formative assessment—to advance learning (cf. Stobart, 2012).

My results showed that global aspects of writing, in my project defined as structure and rhetorical organisation and content and idea development, seemed to benefit the most from the pupils' partaking in peer review. In terms of micro-level aspects of writing, such as spelling and grammar, learning was mainly related to increased ability to proofread, that is spotting and fixing weaknesses. On the whole, these findings coincided with results from other studies, but they are still prominent seeing that the pupils in my project were younger than the university students in most previous studies. My project did not involve an assessment of the changes or of the texts in terms of quality, but an underlying assumption was that global-level revision improves text quality more than changes at the micro-level of writing. My analysis, in which revision changes were categorised and linked to the peer-review activity, rendered possible a detailed description of learning and also facilitated drawing connections to teaching. This way of categorising and linking revision changes to peer review was novel and developed in Study 1.

The definition of a good text was based on a genre perspective of writing, which influenced the learning and the pupils' perceptions of writing various texts. In line with common formative assessment practice, criteria were used to clarify learning objectives and to depict quality in writing. The co-construction of the criteria lists entailed that formative assessment strategies (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2018) were linked to subject matter pedagogy; the main purpose of the activity was to familiarise the pupils with the writing of certain genres in English, and the activity itself was inspired by techniques used in formative assessment practice and genre-based writing instruction. The joint formulation also meant that the pupils were able to discuss and contribute to the content of teaching and learning, an inclusion that stresses the relationship between the three angles of the didactic triangle: teacher, subject matter, and pupil.

It is noteworthy that some groups of pupils extended this possibility to the peer-review activity; new criteria emerged as the consensus groups read and commented on peers' texts. This was an important development which illustrated the pupils' taking on the role as agents in teaching and learning. It was the formative perspective of peer feedback in my project that enabled the pupils to act (cf. Ahearn's definition of agency as "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act", 2001, p. 112). Research studies and interventions that define peer assessment and feedback as activities with summative purposes or that compare teacher and peer feedback tend not promote student

agency. On the contrary, deviation from teacher assessments in these contexts can be considered problematic.

The project was situated within the field of language education, foregrounding the pedagogical perspective and the link between teaching and learning. The pedagogical perspective was noticeable in the descriptions of the classroom, which underscored the practical orientation of my project. These parts were also essential for the inclusion of language teachers as recipients of this project; descriptions of the context, in this case the lesson design and implementation, are pillars in the “generalization through context similarity” proposed by Larsson (2009, p. 28) as part of a “pluralist view” of generalisation and transfer. The format of this dissertation—the monograph—provided the opportunity to paint a complex picture of the EFL classroom compared to other, more limited, formats.

Descriptions of the teaching, that is what actually happened in the classroom meeting between teacher, subject matter, and pupils is important to make sense of the findings, both from a theoretical and a practical perspective. One thing all teachers know for certain is that pupils do not (always) learn what they are taught; thus, teaching needs to be problematised. For this reason, it is important to highlight teaching in pedagogical studies. Furthermore, teachers in primary and secondary school turning to research to inform their teaching often draw a blank. Generalising from findings in studies with university students is problematic; contextual conditions differ on a number of accounts which influence pedagogical decisions and outcomes. For instance, the syllabus for English in school is focused on the development of general language proficiency, unlike many university courses which focus solely on (disciplinary) writing. English is also one of many subjects taught concurrently in school and lesson time is limited. Contextual differences exist between schools at the same level; it is therefore important to develop a variety of studies with similar research objects in different settings.

Pupil involvement in teaching brings about changes. Apart from affecting the relationship between the teacher and the pupils, these changes can also encompass the pupil-pupil rapport and the subject matter. This development calls for a certain level of pupil autonomy and this autonomy in turn presupposes that the pupils are advanced as agents in the classroom practice.

## 13.2 Limitations

This project involved a relatively small number of participants, so the results describing learning from giving feedback should be considered tentative vis-à-vis pupils in general. In addition, the pupils’ general proficiency of English was high, which should be considered in relation to both teaching and learning as described in my project. Even though the project aspired to achieve ecological validity, some parts of the intervention could be questioned based

on this aspiration. For instance, the peer as a receiver of feedback was non-existent which made the peer review inauthentic and having a plan from which you cannot deviate is also inauthentic from a teaching perspective. The discussion about learning from giving feedback partly relied on the assumption that a certain type of revision change improves text quality. Even if this assumption is research-based, it is general and probably not applicable to all alterations at a certain level of writing.

I also consider the lack of a theoretical discussion of learning a limitation. Many of the studies cited in this thesis draw connections between peer feedback and metacognition and self-regulation, for instance, and the notion of a joint ZPD would be relevant to highlight. This project relied more on the theoretical underpinnings of L2 writing and formative assessment.

### 13.3 Future directions

Research is always work in progress; it is never complete. In relation to my results, I suggest a number of future directions which depart from three main ideas: continuing to fill identified research gaps; exploring peer review as collective problem-solving; and connecting formative assessment to subject matter pedagogy through teacher-researcher collaboration.

L2 writing in primary and secondary school deserves more attention. My project has started filling some of the gaps, but more pieces are needed to complete the puzzle. In educational contexts, it is for instance natural that the question *what* pupils learn is related to *how* they learn and *how much* they learn. There is a seed to the *how* in my project since the outcomes are discussed in light of teaching, but only teaching in broad terms. It could be pertinent to move from the teaching unit to a lesson or an activity to be able to study the particularities. In terms of *how much*, an assumption in my project was that global-level revision improves a text, but this was not studied empirically.

Peer review in my project was mainly represented by written feedback comments. It was clear though that the oral peer interaction about peers' texts involved a more complex approach to reading and commenting on peers' texts. In line with N-F. Liu and Carless definition of peer feedback as involving communication and dialogue (2006), further insights into the oral interaction of consensus groups are needed. The exclusion of the writer or feedback receiver from the discussion entails that peer review could be viewed as collaborative problem-solving. From a theoretical perspective, the notions of co-construction of knowledge (cf. Mercer, 2000) or of a shared ZPD (cf. Fernández et al., 2001; Lund, 2008) could elucidate learning from giving feedback as oral interaction.

There are relatively few studies that apply a subject matter pedagogical perspective on formative assessment practices and techniques. The first aspect

of formative assessment, “[c]larifying learning intentions and success criteria” (Black & Wiliam, 2009) clearly connects formative assessment to subject matter, but this connection tends to be downplayed for the benefit of studying the technique as such. This reduction of formative assessment to a tool box in both research and practice implies that the “formation” has been neglected (Hirsh & Lindberg, 2015). Successful formation, in turn, demands distinct learning objectives and an attention to teaching. Future studies could, for instance, employ iterative designs to test and evaluate peer feedback techniques in connection with a range of learning objectives. Apart from the use of different techniques, these designs could include the study of various modes (written, oral, computer), languages (L1 and L2), and potential benefits for providers as well as receivers. Involving teachers as co-researchers would strengthen the link to language pedagogy and ensure that the selected learning objectives are relevant.

### 13.4 Concluding remarks

This thesis stemmed from concerned talks with colleagues about pupil involvement in language teaching. What can pupils contribute with that trained and experienced teachers cannot offer? What I have seen conducting my studies is that inviting pupils to partake in activities traditionally reserved for teachers changes the notion of teaching; peer review not only implies activating pupils as instructional resources for each other but also for the teacher.

Subject knowledge is shaped and broadened through conversations between teachers and pupils, and learning is influenced and promoted by peer interaction. Accordingly, pupil involvement does not entail having teenagers act as teachers or deciding the course of instruction; it is an encouragement to advance the idea of teaching. Teaching still involves teachers and pupils, but their roles are evolving through dialogue and exchange of ideas.

The importance of dialogue in teaching has been forwarded by many influential educationalists. One idea that especially springs to mind is that genuine dialogue demands different views to progress and to promote learning. These differences take shape in my thesis as teachers and pupils negotiate subject matter and criteria and as pupils discuss strengths and weaknesses in their peers’ texts.

This thesis itself can also be considered a dialogue. I have been in a constant conversation with the data and the text as the project progressed, and hopefully this work can be an opener to a dialogue with fellow teachers and researchers.



# Sammanfattning på svenska

## Kapitel 1. Introduktion

Föreliggande avhandling tar avstamp i frågor om klassrumsbedömning som har varit ett omdebatterat ämne de senaste åren. Det är viktigt att lyfta bedömningsfrågor i relation till undervisning eftersom bedömning är ”ett av de system genom vilket utbildningen signalerar vilken kunskap som är viktig” (Forsberg & Lindberg, 2010, s. 8). Summativa och formativa bedömningar beskrivs ibland som motpoler, medan andra menar att det i själva verket rör sig om samma process men med olika syften (Harlen, 2012; Taras, 2005). Här nämner man ofta bedömning *av* lärande och bedömning *för* lärande. Mitt projekt handlar om bedömning *som* lärande, som kan förstås som en del av bedömning för lärande. I bedömning som lärande ligger fokus på eleven som en länk mellan bedömning och lärande (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013) och mitt projekt handlar mer specifikt om kamratrespons<sup>32</sup>.

Projektets syfte är att bidra till forskning om andraspråksskrivande och kamratrespons genom att fokusera på en åldersgrupp som är underrepresenterad i tidigare studier och projektet bygger delvis på min licentiatavhandling (Berggren, 2013). Projektet består av två studier som omfattar interventioner i årskurs åtta. Elevernas lärandemål är att kunna skriva en text (Studie 1) eller flera texter (Studie 2) på engelska. I avhandlingen bidrar både teori och praktik till att problematisera och utforska undervisning, bedömning och lärande. Den övergripande forskningsfrågan är *Vad kan elever lära sig om skrivande på engelska genom att ge återkoppling?*

## Kapitel 2. Bakgrund och svensk kontext

Svenska ungdomar är generellt bra på engelska, mycket beroende på användningen av engelska på fritiden, men det finns stora skillnader inom gruppen. Både nationella och internationella studier visar dock att elevernas skriftliga förmåga är lägre än de receptiva förmågorna och tal (SIRIS, 2018; Skolverket, 2012b). Det är därför relevant att fokusera det här projektet på just skrivande. Kursplanen i engelska genomsyras av ett kommunikativt synsätt på språkundervisning, vilket synliggörs av de långsiktiga målen som uttrycks som förmågor. I relation till mitt projekt är det också viktigt att lyfta fram att läroplanens andra del, 'Övergripande mål och riktlinjer', anger att eleverna ska utveckla sin förmåga till självbedömning (Skolverket, 2018b). De

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<sup>32</sup> Jag väljer att använda *kamratrespons* som en ekvivalent till *peer review* och *peer feedback*.

kompletterande material som Skolverket ger ut innehåller dock ganska lite information om formativ bedömning i stort och kamrat- och självbedömning specifikt.

Att undervisa om och bedöma skrivande är en utmaning både i svensk- och engelskundervisningen. Det finns en viss spänning mellan process- och genreorienterade perspektiv på skrivande och det leder bland annat till att progressionen uteblir (Apelgren & Holmberg, 2018; Norberg Brorsson, 2007; Palmér, 2013). Mitt projekt utgår från att eleverna ska utveckla förmågorna att kommunicera i skrift och att anpassa språket till syfte, mottagare och sammanhang (Skolverket, 2018b). Att ge kamratrespons utgör en lärandeaktivitet i skrivundervisningen.

### **Kapitel 3. Teoretiskt ramverk**

Det teoretiska ramverket i mitt projekt vilar på tre ben: 1) andraspråksskrivande, 2) formativ bedömning och 3) sociokulturella teorier. Ramverkets ben har influerat min forskningsdesign, speciellt interventionen och analyserna. Inom andraspråksskrivande placeras studierna i ett lära-sig-att-skriva perspektiv med fokus på läsaren (K. Hyland, 2016). Detta perspektiv ligger i linje med kommunikativ språkundervisning i stort och mer specifikt också med genrebaserad skrivundervisning som har inspirerat min intervention. Interventionen färgas också av nyckelstrategierna för implementering av formativ bedömning (Black & Wiliam, 2009) och en definition av kamratrespons (*peer feedback*) som en dialog relaterad till prestation och kriterier (N-F. Liu & Carless, 2006). Bedömning som lärande innebär att elever involveras i bedömningsaktiviteter som syftar till att utveckla deras lärande (Chong, 2018; Earl, 2013). Det medför att eleverna anses vara agenter i undervisningen (Ahearn, 2001; Gyllander Torkildsen & Erickson, 2016), både som kamrater och som elever.

Både genrebaserad undervisning och formativ bedömning anses vara explicita och kompletterar varandra bra i relation till min intervention. För att kunna studera elevernas lärande från att ge återkoppling bidrar sociokulturella teorier till en operationalisering som utgår ifrån att lärande synliggörs i ett görande, i det här fallet definierat som de ändringar som eleverna gör i sina texter. Dessa ändringar är revideringar som är synliga i den färdiga texten, så kallade externa revideringar (Rijlaarsdam et al., 2004).

### **Kapitel 4. Tidigare forskning och mina forskningsfrågor**

Tidigare forskning som är relevant för mitt projekt omfattar främst studier som undersöker andraspråksskrivande och kamratbedömning, men också studier om revideringar i relation till språkfärdighet och erfarenhet av skrivande och studier som på olika sätt adresserar skrivandets sociala kontext. Även om flera studier visar på positiva resultat från implementering av kamratbedömning och kamratrespons i skrivundervisning finns det fortfarande en viss osäkerhet hos både lärare och studenter. Om studenter behöver välja mellan att få

återkoppling från lärare eller kamrater väljer de lärare (Chang, 2016), men samtidigt verkar det som om studenter som involveras i kamratrespons utvecklar en tilltro till sig själv och sina kamrater (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). Våldigt få studier har tittat specifikt på potentiella fördelar med att ge kamratrespons, men Lundstrom & Baker (2009) fann att de som gav återkoppling också förbättrade sin egen skriftliga förmåga. Utvecklingen skedde främst i relation till texters makronivå. Studenter självrapporterar också att de får ett läsarperspektiv på sitt skrivande genom att bedöma kamraters skrivande och att de ser att disposition och innehåll är viktigt för en texts kvalitet (Min, 2005). I stort sett alla studier inom fältet framhåller vikten av att studenter får träna innan de ska bedöma och kommentera kamraters texter.

I bakgrunden (Kapitel 2, 3 och 4) framträder några utmaningar och luckor som jag adresserar i mitt projekt. Det finns bara ett fåtal studier med elever som utgår ifrån ett lära-sig-att-skriva perspektiv med läsaren i fokus och/eller testar kamratrespons som en lärandeaktivitet i skrivundervisning, vilket innebär en lucka som behöver fyllas. Kamratrespons i mitt projekt är också definierat som en formativ aktivitet ämnad att öka elevernas lärande om skrivande på engelska, i motsats till flera tidigare studier som behandlar kamratbedömningens summativa roll. Med stöd i den svenska läroplanen som uppmuntrar att eleverna involveras i undervisning och får möjlighet att utveckla olika förmågor kommer jag också att studera eleverna som agenter i klassrummet. Mer specifikt kommer denna avhandling att utgå ifrån följande forskningsfrågor:

1. Hur svarar elever på träning i att ge återkoppling?
  - a. Hur förstår eleverna skrivuppgiften och lärandemålen?
  - b. I vilken utsträckning inkluderar eleverna formativ information i sin återkoppling?
2. Vilka typer av ändringar gör eleverna i sina texter?
3. Vad lär sig elever om skrivande relaterat till disposition, innehåll och skrivandets mikronivå genom att ge återkoppling?

## **Kapitel 5. Terminologi i mitt projekt**

I det här kapitlet presenteras termer och begrepp som har en särskild roll i mitt projekt. Kapitlets natur lämpar sig inte för en sammanfattning, utan läsaren hänvisas istället direkt till kapitlet.

## **Kapitel 6. Metodologi**

Mitt projekt är en klassrumsstudie vilket påverkar designen genom att både mina, dvs forskarens, och elevernas mål ska uppfyllas (Dörnyei, 2007; Nunan, 2005). Att studierna äger rum i klassrum innebär också att designen behöver vara flexibel för att kunna svara mot oförutsedda händelser. För att beskriva projektets metodologi går det också att dra paralleller till fallstudier: projektets syfte är att studera ”lärande från att ge återkoppling” som ett fenomen och

fallet, avgränsningen, utgörs av klassrummet (jfr. Yin, 2009). En annan parallell är att data från flera olika källor samlas in. I mitt projekt rör det sig om kvalitativa data som undervisningsmaterial, texter skrivna av elever, videoinspelningar och enkäter.

De elever som deltog i studierna gick i årskurs åtta på två olika skolor. Urvalet baserades på kriterierna att klassrummet kunde beskrivas som kommunikativt och att läraren var villig att samarbeta med mig och använda undervisningen för min intervention. I Studie 1 deltog 27 elever, medan motsvarande siffra i Studie 2 var sexton elever. Att urvalet bestod av hela klasser var viktigt för projektets ekologiska validitet (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015), vilket också underströks av arbetsområdenas koppling till kursplan och att klassernas ordinarie engelsklärare undervisade. I interventionen ingick ett arbetsområde i Studie 1 och tre i Studie 2, och de genrer som ingick var svarsbrevet, nyhetsartikeln och den argumenterande uppsatsen. Undervisningen byggdes upp kring genre-baserad skrivundervisning (K. Hyland, 2016) och strategier för implementering av formativ bedömning (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

Den insamlade materialet analyserades för att kunna svara på mina forskningsfrågor. I linje med projektets språkdidaktiska inramning tolkades dessutom svaren i relation till undervisningen för att kunna ge en bild av kopplingen mellan undervisning och lärande.

## **Kapitel 7. Implementering av arbetsområdena i Studie 1 och 2**

Detta kapitel beskriver hur arbetsområdena implementerades i studierna. Samtliga arbetsområden följde samma planering, med några skillnader. På grund av tidsbrist genomfördes de två sista områdena i Studie 2 på fem lektioner istället för sex. I det sista arbetsområdet iscensattes också arbetet med kriterier och träning i att ge återkoppling på ett något annorlunda sätt eftersom vissa elever hade uttryckt att det kunde bli tråkigt att göra på samma sätt en tredje gång. Mellan de båda studierna märktes också några skillnader som kan bero på hur undervisning vanligtvis genomfördes i de båda klassrummen. För eleverna och läraren i Studie 2 innebar interventionen en större skillnad från vanlig undervisning eftersom de varken var vana vid att skriva flera utkast av en text eller att undervisningen var så lärarstyrd.

Videoinspelningar av arbetet med att ge återkoppling i tre av grupperna i Studie 2 gjorde det också möjligt att studera hur eleverna tog sig an uppgiften. Det var tydligt att instruktionerna uppfattades som otydliga, speciellt i relation till kriterielistorna. Även om alla grupper gjorde uppgiften, det vill säga formulerade skriftlig återkoppling på sina kamraters texter, utfördes arbetet på olika sätt. Skillnader mellan grupperna rörde hur tiden fördelades mellan muntliga diskussioner och formulering av skriftliga kommentarer och om de fokuserade på det som var bra i texterna eller det som skulle kunna förbättras. En av grupperna tolkade också vid ett av arbetsområdena kriterierna som en checklista och missade då att bedöma kvaliteten på utförandet.

## **Kapitel 8. Förståelse av skrivuppgiften och lärandemålen**

Bedömning som lärande bygger på att eleverna är delaktiga i olika bedömningsaktiviteter som syftar till att öka deras lärande (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Earl, 2013) och det i sin tur förutsätter att mål och kriterier delas av lärare och elever. Min första forskningsfråga tittar på hur eleverna har förstått skrivuppgiften och hur de använde kriterierna. En intressant skillnad mellan studierna är att medan eleverna i Studie 1 beskrev målet som att lära sig att skriva ett svarsbrev, beskrev eleverna i Studie 2 mål som band ihop de olika arbetsområdena. Bland annat nämndes att ett mål var att kunna skriva olika sorters texter och att kunna anpassa språk till olika syften och mottagare.

Kriterierna beskrevs i båda studierna som hjälpsamma och alla elever uppgav att de använt sig av dem under någon fas av sitt skrivande. I stort sett alla kommentarer som eleverna skrev när de gav återkoppling på kamraters texter kunde kopplas till kriterierna och bedömdes därför vara relevanta. En intressant observation var att ett par nya kriterier uppstod vid kamratresponser i arbetsområdet *How to write a newspaper article*; flera grupper diskuterade hur textstorlek används för att organisera innehållet i en nyhetsartikel och huruvida de fabricerade olyckorna var trovärdiga.

## **Kapitel 9. Ge återkoppling**

Eleverna gav återkoppling på sina kamraters texter i grupp, vilket innebar att de gemensamt diskuterade texternas kvalitet och formulerade skriftliga kommentarer. Kommentarererna lyfte både styrkor och svagheter. I analysen identifierades kommentarernas formativa information i form av förklaringar och förslag på förbättringar (cf. Min, 2005). Det var stor variation mellan grupperna vad beträffar antal kommentarer, fokus på styrkor eller svagheter och formativ information. I arbetsområdet *How to write an argumentative essay* i Studie 2 innehöll de flesta kommentarerna både en förklaring och ett förslag.

I Studie 2 ingick en jämförelse mellan de skriftliga kommentarerna och den muntliga interaktionen i tre fokusgrupper. Många av ämnena som diskuterades muntligt resulterade inte i skriftliga kommentarer. Detta gällde speciellt de interaktioner som inte tydligt avslutades i konsensus om textens kvalitet. Det är möjligt att denna diskrepans berodde på tidsbrist och det faktum att det saknades en autentisk mottagare av återkopplingen. I några fall valde eleverna också medvetet att inte formulera en skriftlig kommentar eftersom misstaget ansågs obetydligt eller berodde på själva uppgiftens utformning. Ett annat intressant resultat var att den muntliga interaktionen innehöll mer formativ information än de skriftliga kommentarerna.

## Kapitel 10. Revideringar

Under interventionen skrev eleverna två utkast av varje genre. Det här kapitlet svarar mot min andra forskningsfråga *Vilka typer av ändringar gör eleverna i sina texter?* Överlag fanns det både likheter och skillnader emellan de båda studierna och mellan de olika genrerna. Eleverna i studie 1 var vana att skriva flera utkast och gjorde generellt flera ändringar än eleverna i Studie 2; samtidigt var skillnaderna på individnivå väldigt stora. De allra flesta ändringarna påverkade innehåll och skrivandets mikronivå. Texternas disposition ändrades inte alls i samma utsträckning.

Ett intressant resultat är eleverna i sin revidering av svarsbrevet, som användes i båda studierna, främst fokuserade på brevens innehåll, medan de när de reviderade nyhetsartikeln och den argumenterande uppsatsen främst ändrade grammatik och stavning. Tittar man på den mer nyanserade nivån, kategorierna, så var ändringar som rör styckeindelning den vanligaste inom disposition. Beträffande innehåll var det naturligtvis många tillägg, av vilka de flesta utvecklade idéer som nämnts redan i det första utkastet. På skrivandets mikronivå var ändringarna främst korrigeringar av stavning och grammatik.

## Kapitel 11. Länkar mellan revideringar och kamratrespons

Lärande från att ge återkoppling operationaliserades i mitt projekt som en länk mellan revidering och kamratresponsen i grupp. I projektet som helhet kunde ungefär hälften av revideringarna kopplas till att eleverna hade läst och kommenterat några av sina kamraters texter. Förutom variation på individuell nivå, fanns det också vissa skillnader mellan de tre aspekterna av skrivande som studerades och mellan arbetsområdena.

Även om det var färre ändringar överlag som påverkade textens disposition kunde nästan 80% av dem kopplas samman med kamratresponsen. Dessa länkar rörde bland annat styckeindelning som räknas som en generisk kategori, men också ändringar i de genrespecifika kategorierna typsnitt i nyhetsartikeln och bindeord i den argumenterande uppsatsen hade i hög grad influerats av kamratrespons. Kriteriet typsnitt är intressant eftersom det inte fanns med på kriterielistan, utan dök upp under arbetet i grupperna.

I de två andra aspekterna, som rörde innehåll och grammatik och stavning, låg antalet länkar på runt hälften. I båda arbetsområdena som behandlade svarsbrev kunde i stort sett alla ändringar som innebar att nya frågor eller svar hade inkluderats kopplas till kamratrespons. Ändringar i motsvarande kategorier i nyhetsartikeln (*New information*) och i den argumenterande uppsatsen (*New argument*) kunde också i mycket hög grad länkas till kamratrespons. I svarsbreven var också flera av ändringarna inspirerade direkt av innehåll i de granskade texterna. När det gäller länkar inom aspekten innehåll var de färre i den argumenterande uppsatsen jämfört med de andra arbetsområdena. Samma förhållande fanns i aspekten skrivandets mikronivå. Skillnader kan bero på genrerna och hur de representerades i undervisningen,

men mellan arbetsområdena skilde sig också möjligheter till förberedelser och tid för kamratrespons och skrivande åt.

Länkarna mellan ändringar som påverkade skrivandets mikronivå och kamratrespons påverkades av att många kommentarer beskrev att den fiktiva skribenten skulle kolla grammatik och stavning, snarare än identifierade specifika problem. Den typen av generella kommentarer innebar också ett högt antal länkar, eftersom i stort sett alla ändringar som rörde just dessa kategorier kunde kopplas samman med dem. Mer riktade kommentarer som påverkade antalet länkar i den här aspekten rörde främst kommativering, som citationstecken i svarsbrevet i Studie 1 och utropstecken i svarsbrevet i Studie 2. När eleverna tillfrågades om vad de lärde sig om grammatik och stavning från kamratrespons lyftes förmågan att hitta misstag i sin egen text som ett alternativ bredvid svaret "inget".

I relation till textens disposition lyfte eleverna styckeindelning som något de lärt sig, speciellt i svarsbrevet. I de övriga två arbetsområdena i Studie 2 nämnde några elever hur texternas olika delar relateras till deras funktion. Eleverna i Studie 2 verkade också ha tagit fasta på textens kommunikativa syfte och läsare när de beskrev sitt lärande om innehåll.

## **Kapitel 12. Diskussion**

Diskussionen lyfter upp resultaten från mina forskningsfrågor i relation till tidigare studier och till undervisningen. I relation till frågan angående elevernas uppfattning av lärandemål var det intressant att se att eleverna i Studie 2 speciellt nämnde att texter ska anpassas till syfte och mottagare, vilket kan betyda att de utvecklade en genremedvetenhet (Johns, 2011). Denna medvetenhet kan också tolkas som att eleverna delade målbild med sin lärare, vilket är viktigt i formativa bedömningspraktiker (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Det är troligt att elevernas delaktighet i diskussioner om exempeltexter och kriterier bidrog till att deras mål var i linje med de planerade. Få tidigare studier har rapporterat att elever var med och formulerade kriterier för en uppgift (Orsmond et al., 2000).

Genom att jämföra elevernas skriftliga återkoppling med kriterierna kunde jag konstatera att de flesta av kommentarerna var relevanta eftersom de kunde härledas till specifika kriterier. I tidigare studier har studenter ifrågasatt kamratbedömningens validitet och sina kamraters förmåga att ge bra återkoppling (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). Kritiska röster har uttryckt att kriterier kan begränsa elever (F. Hyland, 2000). En viss begränsning behöver finnas i skolkontexter, men i mitt projekt utvecklades också ett par nya kriterier i elevgrupperna, vilket kan tyda på agens.

I båda studierna fokuserade eleverna främst på att ge återkoppling på texternas styrkor i det första arbetsområdet, vilket kan vara ett uttryck för osäkerhet i relation till deras förmåga att formulera återkoppling (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al., 2006). I det sista arbetsområdet i Studie 2 innehöll nästa alla kommentarer förklaringar och förslag på förbättringar. Det är möjligt att

det är ett resultat av upprepad träning i att ge återkoppling (Berg, 1999b), men det är också möjligt att genren, den argumenterande uppsatsen, ansågs mer komplex (Schleppegrell, 2004), vilket ledde till mer bearbetad återkoppling. Ett annat intressant resultat var att elevernas muntliga interaktion innehöll mer formativ information än de skriftliga kommentarerna, eftersom eleverna behövde exemplifiera och argumentera för sina åsikter (Neumann & McDonough, 2015).

Beträffande elevernas lärande från att ge återkoppling var det i hög utsträckning textens disposition som verkar ha utvecklats. Det är i linje med tidigare studier som lyft fram att eleverna ser texten som en helhet när de agerar läsare och granskare (Min, 2005; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Den genre-baserade undervisningen lyfte också vikten av textens makronivå (Kamimura, 2006; Paulus, 1999). Kognitiva studier har visat att elever tenderar att lägga tid på att formulera text och oftast fokuserar på ord och meningar (Allal, 2000; van Gelderen, 1997). Det verkar som om kamratrespons kan hjälpa dem att lyfta blicken.

När det gäller lärande om texternas innehåll så kunde i stort sett alla ändringar som rörde nytt innehåll kopplas till kamratresponsen. Tidigare studier har också visat att studenter inspireras av sina kamraters texter (M-K. Lee, 2015; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Detta var speciellt uppenbart i svarsbreven där eleverna skrev om samma saker. I svarsbreven fanns också skillnader mellan de båda studierna vilket kan bero på hur kriterierna tolkades (Min, 2005).

I relation till skrivandets mikronivå verkar eleverna främst ha kopplat lärande till en förbättrad förmåga att finna fel i sina egna texter, vilket speglar resultat i andra studier (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Rahimi, 2013). Att eleverna i Studie 2 i högre grad ändrade grammatik och stavning i sina texter kan bero på deras tidigare erfarenhet av skrivande och uppfattningar om lärarens tankar om god kvalitet (Lundgren, 2013).

I avsnittet som behandlar didaktiska reflektioner lyfts fyra olika faktorer som påverkat resultatet och som är relevant för undervisning: 1) genre-baserad skrivundervisning, 2) träning i att ge återkoppling, 3) kriterier, och elevers roll. I relation till undervisning och överförbarhet diskuteras hur kunskapsinnehållet—*How to write a reply letter*, *How to write a newspaper article*, *How to write an argumentative essay*—formas av genreperspektivet och kriterierna. Från ett didaktiskt perspektiv finns det flera skäl att kritiskt granska hur uppgiften att ge återkoppling genomfördes. Här blev en diskrepans mellan forskarens och elevernas mål tydlig (jfr. Dörnyei, 2007). I mitt projekt antogs eleverna ta på sig en objektiv roll som granskare, istället för en roll som en subjektiv läsare (Rijlaarsdam, 2004). Detta syfte verkar ha uppnåtts; när eleverna läste kamraters nyhetsartiklar till exempel, samtalade de om hur dem som läser *The Guardian* skulle uppfatta innehållet (Holmberg, 2010; Lundgren, 2013). De visar också tecken på agens när de utvecklar egna kriterier för sin bedömning (Ahearn, 2001).



### **Kapitel 13. Slutsats**

Mitt projekt ämnade bidra till det språkdidaktiska forskningsfältet genom att undersöka vad elever kan lära sig om skrivande genom att ge återkoppling på kamraters texter. Projektet har medverkat till att belysa elevers skrivande på andraspråk, vilket är ett underforskat område. I studierna lyfts den viktiga frågan om vad eleverna lär sig i relation till ämneskunskap snarare än i relation till bedömning. Resultaten ligger i linje med vad tidigare studier med universitetsstudenter har visat, vilket är ett betydelsefullt bidrag eftersom det pekar på att också högstadiecelever kan dra fördel av att läsa och kommentera kamraters texter. Att involvera eleverna i undervisningen ställer krav på både tydlighet och flexibilitet hos läraren. Förutom att förhållandet mellan lärare och elever förändras, kan också förhållandet mellan eleverna påverkas, liksom ämnesinnehållet och lärandet.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Informed consent, Study 1<sup>33</sup>

Stockholm 2011-05-04

*Till vårdnadshavare med barn i [klasser och skola]*

### **Information om deltagande i forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska, hösttermin 2011**

Jag heter Jessica Berggren och är licentiand i engelska vid Stockholms universitet. Jag går en forskarskola i ämnesdidaktik, med inriktning på praxisnära forskning, vilket innebär att man förlägger forskningen i skolan för att vara närmare den verksamhet man hoppas kunna förbättra med studiens resultat. Forskarskolan finansieras av utbildningsförvaltningen, Stockholm Stad, som del av deras forsknings- och utvecklingsprogram.

Syfte: Studien handlar om hur man kan utveckla elevers skriftliga förmåga och syftet är att undersöka hur ett visst undervisningssätt och innehåll kan bidra till förbättrad skriftlig färdighet. För att samla in data till min undersökning kommer jag att följa några klasser när de arbetar med skriftlig produktion. Samtliga lektioner genomförs av ordinarie lärare i engelska, [lärares namn], och från elevernas perspektiv kommer det att likna den undervisning som de är vana vid.

Deltagande: Att delta i studien är frivilligt och innebär att man tillåter att jag samlar in data i form av de uppgifter och texter som man producerar under arbetsområdet. För kompletterande information kommer eleverna också att svara på en enkät som främst rör deras relation till skolämnet engelska och några av eleverna kommer att intervjuas i grupp vid arbetsområdets slut. [Lärares namn] presentationer kommer att videofilmas med fokus på just henne, och hon kommer att bära en mikrofon för ljudinspelning under lektionerna. Syftet med dessa aktiviteter är att få en så bred grund som möjligt för att undersöka hur och vad eleverna lär sig. Arbetsområdet beräknas ta tre veckor med start i september 2011. Oavsett om man väljer att medverka i studien eller inte, deltar man i undervisningen som vanligt.

Sekretess: Studien följer noga de etiska föreskrifter som gäller för god forskningssed. Allt insamlat material behandlas med största aktsamhet och förvaras på ett säkert sätt. Samtliga medverkande elever och lärare, samt skola,

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<sup>33</sup> The material presented in the appendices have been formatted to comply with the format of this thesis, and to save space. The content, however, has not been altered.

kommer att vara anonyma i efterföljande publikationer och presentationer. Eleverna avidentifieras innan analys påbörjas, vilket innebär att deras namn ersätts med en kod.

Om ni har frågor eller önskar mer information är ni välkomna att kontakta mig på mejl [mejladress] alternativt telefon [telefonnummer].

Medgivande: Genom att kryssa för ”Ja” och skriva under detta dokument ger vårdnadshavare och elev sina medgivanden till att delta i forskarstudie enligt ovanstående beskrivning. Ett ”Nej” innebär att eleven inte deltar i studien.

- ☐ Ja, jag tillåter att mitt barn deltar i ”Forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska”
- ☐ Nej, jag tillåter inte att mitt barn deltar i ”Forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska”

---

Elevens namn

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Klass

---

Elevens underskrift

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Målsmans underskrift

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Målsmans namnförtydligande

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Ort och datum

Inlämnas till lärare i engelska, [lärares namn]

## Appendix B: Informed consent, Study 2

Stockholm 2014-09-29

*Till vårdnadshavare med barn i [klass, skola]*

### **Information om deltagande i forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska, vårtermin 2015**

Jag heter Jessica Berggren och är doktorand i engelska vid Stockholms universitet. Just nu håller jag på med en studie om högstadieelevers skrivande i engelska. Detta brev innehåller information om min studie och vad det innebär att delta. Studiens genomförande på skolan har godkänts av rektor [rektors namn] och klassens engelsklärare [lärares namn].

### **Studiens syfte och genomförande**

Studien handlar om hur man kan utveckla elevers skriftliga förmåga i engelska och syftet är att undersöka hur ett visst undervisningssätt och innehåll kan bidra till förbättrad skriftlig färdighet. För att samla in material till min undersökning kommer jag att följa klassen under en termin, i de arbetsområden där de främst arbetar med att skriva. Samtliga lektioner genomförs av ordinarie lärare i engelska, [lärares namn], och från elevernas perspektiv kommer det att likna den undervisning som de är vana vid.

### **Deltagande**

Att delta i studien är frivilligt och oavsett om du väljer att medverka i studien eller inte, deltar du i undervisningen som vanligt. Att delta i studien innebär att du tillåter att jag samlar in material i form av de uppgifter och texter som du skriver under terminen. För att kunna dokumentera undervisningen kommer jag att använda videokameror och diktafoner för ljudupptagning i klassrummet. I samband med undervisningen kommer eleverna att svara på några enkäter som rör deras relation till skolämnet engelska och engelskundervisningen. Några elever kommer dessutom att intervjuas några gånger under terminen. Syftet med dessa aktiviteter är att få en så bred grund som möjligt för att jag ska kunna undersöka hur och vad eleverna lär sig.

### **Etik och sekretess**

Studien följer noga de etiska föreskrifter som gäller för god forskningssed. Allt insamlat material behandlas med största aktsamhet och förvaras på ett säkert sätt. Materialet kommer bara att användas i forskningssyfte och samtliga medverkande elever och lärare, samt skola, kommer att vara anonyma i de sammanhang där studien presenteras och publiceras. Innan jag börjar arbeta med det insamlade materialet avidentifieras eleverna, vilket innebär att deras namn ersätts med en kod. Studien genomförs i samarbete med klassens engelsklärare, [lärares namn], och inkluderas i ordinarie undervisning.

Om du har frågor eller önskar mer information är du välkommen att kontakta mig på mejl [jessica.berggren@english.su.se](mailto:jessica.berggren@english.su.se)

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08-16 35 93

**Medgivande**

Genom att kryssa för "Ja" och skriva under detta dokument ger vårdnadshavare och elev sina medgivanden till att delta i forskarstudie enligt ovanstående beskrivning. Ett "Nej" innebär att eleven inte deltar i studien.

- ☐ **Ja**, jag tillåter att mitt barn deltar i "Forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska"
- ☐ **Nej**, jag tillåter inte att mitt barn deltar i "Forskarstudie om skriftlig produktion i engelska"

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Elevens namn

---

Klass

---

Elevens underskrift

---

Vårdnadshavares underskrift

---

Vårdnadshavares underskrift

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Vårdnadshavares namnförtydligande

---

Vårdnadshavares namnförtydligande

---

Ort och datum

Inlämnas till lärare i engelska, [lärares namn].

## Appendix C: Feedback forms, Study 1 and Study 2

### Study 1

#### Feedback form

- Read the full text first.
- Comment on the things that are good in the text.
- Do you understand what the writer means with everything in the text? If not, include this in your comments and try to explain why you don't understand.
- Comment on other problems or things that could be improved. Try to be specific and explain why it is a problem. Also, give suggestions on how to solve the problem.
- Remember that the writer has done his or her best. Try to formulate your feedback in a nice way.

### Study 2

#### Feedback form

- Read the whole text
- Look at the criteria list and discuss the text:
  - What are the strengths? What is good? Write comments to the writer on the feedback form. Try to be as specific as possible.
  - Which parts of the text can be improved? What are the problems? Why are these things problematic? How can they be improved? Write comments to the writer on the feedback form. Try to be as specific as possible.
- Remember that the writer has done his or her best. Try to formulate your feedback in a nice way.

## Appendix D: Writing prompt, reply letter, Study 1 and TU2, Study 2

### Write a reply letter

**NB! This is a “test situation”. You are not allowed to ask your friends for help. The time limit is 60 minutes.**

Hi Ohio!

*Students at Montgomery High School in Columbus, Ohio, are doing a project about countries in Europe. Read this letter from the Sweden Project Group and write a letter in reply.*

Dear friends in Sweden,

We're working on a European project and we've discovered that we don't know very much about your country and the way you live. Please write back and tell us. And of course we are curious about YOU—who are you and where are you from?

Our high school has about 1,000 students and we have a great football team, a big band and lots of after-school activities. What about your school? And what about the Swedish school system? Tell us what it's like!

Some more questions that we have are:

What is it like to live in your country? What are young people interested in? What do people talk about and what do they think is important? We think that a lot of people get the wrong impression of our country through TV and other media. So we wonder what you know about life in the US. Finally, what are your plans for the future?

Hope to hear from you soon!

Debbie, Carlos, Said and Tom

*During the following classes some of your classmates are going to read your text. Don't write your name in the letter and avoid information that you believe is too personal.*

- Use Times New Roman, 12 points. (Start > Tecken)
- Spacing 1.5. (Start > Stycke)
- Use the spell and grammar check. (Granska > Språkkontroll> Engelska Storbritannien el. USA)
- Save the document at least every ten minutes.

Please e-mail the document as an attachment to [researcher's e-mail address]

**Appendix E: Sample writing prompt, reply letter, Study 1 and TU2, Study 2**

*These three girls would like your help to plan their school trip to Stockholm. Read the letter and write a letter in reply.*

Dear Swedish friends,

We go to secondary school in London and later this spring we are planning a school trip to Sweden. Among other things we're going to spend three days in Stockholm. We'd like to visit some famous places and perhaps museums, as well as cafés or other places where teenagers hang out. What would you recommend that a tourist see in Stockholm? And where can we meet and talk to people our age? Perhaps we could visit your school? Please write back and tell us.

Our school is in the northwest of London and it is a Catholic school for girls. We've heard that you don't have any schools for boys or girls only in Sweden. What's it like going to a mixed school? Do you wear school uniforms? We wear purple skirts, white blouses, purple ties and grey cardigans. Make up and jewellery are not allowed.

We like sports a lot and practice volleyball three times a week. Are Swedish people interested in sports? Do you have like a "national sport"? Ours is definitely football. Do you practice any sports?

Finally, we'd like you to answer these questions about our country: What do Swedes in general think of Great Britain? What do you know about life in Great Britain and London? Do you watch any British TV-shows? Or listen to British music?

Thank you so much for helping us. We're looking forward to coming to Stockholm and hopefully meet you!

Lots of love!

Keira, Nora & Felicity



## **Appendix F: Sample reply letters, criteria discussion, Study 1 and TU2, Study 2**

Dear friends in London,

I am so glad you wrote to me, and I really hope we can meet when you come to Sweden! In Sweden there's really not very many places where teenagers hang out, besides cafés and the shopping areas. We often go to each other's homes instead, and hang out there!

If you are interested in art and culture, I think you should visit the museum of photographic and "Kaknesstornet" which is a tall tower where you can sometimes eat and look at the beautiful view. Other places I think you should visit is the "old town" which is the oldest part of Stockholm. "Djurgården" is a large green area, with lots of forests, cafés, gardens and places to visit! Some examples are "Skansen" where you can look at all kinds of Swedish animals, and eat Swedish candy. "Gröna Lund", Stockholm's amusement park and "Rosendal" a great garden, with many kinds of flowers and trees and a big café and restaurant. Otherwise you can go to one of the many cafés or go shopping!

My school is called "Flodskolan" and there are both girls and boys studying here, I think it's good that we have mixed schools here in Sweden. We don't wear school uniforms in Sweden, and we are allowed to wear both makeup and jewelry's! I think that it's good, and bad! There is great to be able to wear what you want, but in the same time, some people I think can't afford the "cool" clothes and then feel a lot of pressure. You are very welcome to come visit our school when you visit Stockholm

In Sweden many teenagers have some kind of activity after school, and I think it is mostly different kinds of sports, I don't think we have any national sports, like you do. I don't do any sports for the moment, which is bad, because I would like to have something to do with my time!

I don't think a teenager in Sweden knows very much about Great Britain, apart from what is seen in movies, at least I don't. I listen to lots of music, some from your country, but from other parts of the world too.

I really hope my letter will help you and I hope that you will have a great stay here in Sweden! Please contact me when you are coming so that we can meet!

Best wishes,  
Mirja

Greeting, English friends

Greeting, Keira, Nora and Felicity. I'm going in ``Flodskolan`` we don't wear any school uniforms and we are allowed to wear makeup and jewelry, I don't know how it feels to be in a school where it just are boys or girls but I like the fact that we are mixed, how is it too be in a school where it's just girls?

I would recommend a tourist to go to a Tivoli that are called ``Gröna Lund`` it's a where nice Tivoli with a lot of attractions and on the night they got concerts with a lot of famous stars. I would also recommend the national history museum and the nature museum at the history museum you can learn a bit about Sweden and at the nature museum it's about animals and history and a lot more. And if you would like to learn more about Sweden you can go to ``Skansen `` it's like a zoo but it got old Swedish history to.

I don't really know where you can meet peoples in your own age so I can't really help you with that, sorry. Our national sport would perhaps be soccer. We are changing sport at our sport lessons in the school. I'm training two times in the week and I often have a match in the week. I'm going to start running soon in the morning. I would say that we think that your country has a lot of things to see like for example the eye but your climate is pretty much like ours with the winters and the summers. Infact I have never been in Great Britain, but I would love to know stuff about it. Could you tell that in your next letter? Well I do watch master chef but I think that's all. Do you see a lot of British TV? I don't listen to any British music at all. Can you tell me any British songs that are famous?

I hope that you will have fun.

BYE, BYE

Tyra

## **Appendix G: Sample reply letter, feedback training, Study 1 and TU2, Study 2**

Dear friends

My name is Linda, and I am from Stockholm the capital of Sweden. I am in the 9:th grade in school. Here in Sweden we go to school in nine years after that we go to a gymnasium for three years and last there are highschools. We start school one year later than in your country, but after kindergarden and before school we have something called "Förskolan", and that is an introduction for school, that is a mix of work and play.

As you say, the highschools in USA has about 1000 students, but in Sweden the highschools are much smaller and they don't have any big football teams or bands, but I think we have more sport gymnasiums. The kids go to school and have the sport that they hav chosen. For an exampel if you are going to a soccer gymnasium you will maybe have soccer three times in your day while you only will have a few ordinary lessons every day. Here in sweden almost every school is a kommunal school. Because of all the schools and the free healtcare for children, the taxes are wery high, but it's not so bad because you get so much from it.

I think that the people here are more interested in politics than you are, and a lot of young people are active in political organisations. What I think about life in the US is that you have a very good middleclass but a lot of people are very poor instead, and that you got to have an insurance for every thing because you can't get medical help if you don't have one and are poor. For my dream job I will maybe go to a gymnasium first and then I might join the army and do the "lumpen" that 50% of the 18 years old kids have to do, because after "lumpen" if you stay with the army they can fix you a very good highschool education and then when you leave the army with a good education it will be easy to get a good job

Best,  
Linda

## Appendix H: Genre analysis, reply letter<sup>34</sup>

### 1. Greeting

The purpose is to establish contact and recognise the reader, usually very short. In most texts introduced by *Dear [name of the recipients]/friends*. *Other examples of greetings?*

### 2. Acknowledging the received letter

The purpose of this move is to establish a rapport between the writer and the readers/recipients and also to indicate the objective of this reply letter, e.g. *Thank you for your letter* and *I would love to help you!*

#### a) Presenting oneself

This part includes information about the writer.

### 3. Replying

The purpose of this section is to give the recipients the information they asked for, hence replying to their direct questions. This is the main part of the reply letter, usually containing several paragraphs in order to organise the information.

- **Explanations** to Swedish names because the recipients don't understand Swedish. The use of **quotation marks**.
- Introducing suggestions
- Paragraphing (one paragraph per answer/"theme")

#### b) Asking questions

It consists of direct questions to the readers, such as *I don't understand why you should go to a school with only girls?* or *What about you?*

### 4. Assuring

The function of this move is to assure that the writer's intention is to be helpful and that the given information is useful. For example: *I really hope my letter will help you* and *I am happy to help you*.

### 5. Signing off

The purpose is to indicate that this is the end of the letter; *Best wishes*, *Lots of love*, *Yours truly*. *Recipients – level?*

## Language

- Sentences (see example of a long one in Tyra's text).
- Again, recipients are teenagers so perhaps not too formal. But it's still a school assignment both for you and the British teenagers...
- Grammar and spelling? How important? Is it possible to understand?

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<sup>34</sup>Informal notes from me to the teachers

## Appendix I: Criteria lists, reply letter, Study 1

### Criteria list, class A

Try to keep these things in mind when you write your reply letter:

#### Content and organization

- Greeting
- Acknowledging the writer
- Answer all the questions
- Ending
- Signing off
  
- Give correct facts and answers
- Be specific
- Tell the recipient about yourself
- Ask questions

#### Language

- Think about grammar
- Be polite
- Divide the texts into paragraphs
- Don't repeat too much
- Read through the text before you hand it in
- Don't write too long sentences, use full stops.
- Use quotations marks “ “ where necessary

### Criteria list, class B

Try to keep these things in mind when you write your reply letter:

#### Content and organization

- Greeting
- Introduction/Acknowledging the writer
- Answering/Replying to the questions
- Ending
- Signing off
  
- Think about the organization
- Tell the recipient about yourself
- Ask questions
- Give good explanations

#### Language

- Sentences shouldn't be too long or too short
- Divide the texts into paragraphs
- Check your grammar
- Check your spelling
- Be polite
- Don't repeat yourself, vary the vocabulary

## **Appendix J: Criteria list, reply letter, Study 2**

### **Writing a reply letter Criteria list**

#### Structure

- Greeting
- Intro
- Acknowledgment
- Replying/Suggestions
- Ask own questions
- Outro
- Signing off

#### Language

- Paragraphs - new one for new subject
- Personal language
- Informal - no swearing
- Translate Swedish/Descriptions
- Understandable
- Punctuation
  - “ “
  - Full stops
  - Exclamation marks - some to show you're happy

## Man jailed for driving car on to Brands Hatch circuit during race<sup>35</sup>

Jack Cottle, 22, sentenced to eight months in prison for gatecrashing race in his girlfriend's Volkswagen Polo



Jack Cottle, 22, pleaded guilty to causing a nuisance to the public by driving on to the track while a race was in progress. Photograph: Gareth Fuller/PA

A labourer has been jailed for eight months for driving his girlfriend's Volkswagen Polo on to the Brands Hatch circuit during a race.

Jack Cottle, 22, gatecrashed the Fun Cup endurance race at the track in Kent on 14 June with his girlfriend and a friend in the passenger seats of the car. Maidstone crown court heard that he put the lives of racers at risk after being egged on to drive a full circuit after accessing the track via a pit lane.

[YouTube footage which has been viewed more than 2m times shows Cottle ignoring his girlfriend as she implores him repeatedly to “stop it”.](#)

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<sup>35</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/nov/17/man-jailed-driving-car-brands-hatch-circuit-race> Abridged for teaching purposes.

She then tells him that he is going the wrong way before screaming: “Jack, oh my God!” as she realises he is taking the car on to the track to laughter from his backseat passenger.

Last month Cottle pleaded guilty to “causing a nuisance to the public by driving on to the race track at Brands Hatch whilst an endurance race was in progress”.

At a sentencing hearing on Monday, Judge Martin Joy said Cottle, of Durgates in Wadhurst, East Sussex, had endangered many lives. The judge described Cottle’s actions as premeditated and inexcusable

The court heard that Cottle, his girlfriend and his friend paid £14 each to watch the four-hour race as spectators.

The event involved 26 cars and about 80 participants competing in teams, with almost £250,000 paid to the race organisers in competition fees.

About three and a half hours into the race, Cottle saw an opportunity to get on to the race track, said the judge. “With your girlfriend in the front passenger seat and your other friend in the back filming, you drove your girlfriend’s car on to the track.

“You drove a full circuit and I have seen the films with sound commentary showing your girlfriend was hysterical and screaming and begging you to stop, and also protesting it was her car.”

His girlfriend had to be taken to the on-site medical centre after having a panic attack, while Cottle came off the track laughing, the judge said.

In police interview, Cottle admitted he had not driven on to the track by accident.

Morgan said: “He knew he was going down a pit lane and said, in effect, that he was being egged on.” He also told police: “When do you think you get that opportunity.”

Defence counsel Ailsa Williamson said Cottle “lacks maturity and is easily led”.



## **Miracle' escape for father and girl, 4, as explosion destroys Southampton home<sup>36</sup>**

Pair pulled from the rubble by neighbours and suffer only minor injuries in gas leak, say emergency services



The remains of the house in Shirley, Southampton where a man and his daughter escaped with only minor injuries. Photograph: Hampshire Fire And Rescue Service/PA

A four-year-old girl and her father have survived with only minor injuries after a gas explosion reduced their home to rubble.

Neighbours pulled the 36-year-old man and his daughter from the remains of the building following a loud explosion at the property in Shirley, Southampton, at 1.30am.

A Hampshire fire and rescue service (HFRS) spokesman said they received about a dozen calls alerting them to the incident.

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<sup>36</sup>Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/nov/18/father-girl-4-escape-gas-explosion-southampton-home> Abridged for teaching purposes.

He said: “Crews from St Mary’s and Redbridge arrived to find the two-storey, end-of-terrace property completely collapsed but with the residents thankfully safely out.

“The father and daughter were taken to hospital as a precaution but are not thought to have been seriously injured.”

Station manager Steve Buchanan-Lee said: “The fact both of them escaped relatively unharmed is nothing short of a miracle.

“The explosion appears to have been caused by gas and reduced the whole property to rubble.”

The other houses in the terrace were evacuated as a precaution as the crews, assisted by HFRS’ urban search and rescue team, ensured there was no further collapse of the building.

Engineers from the gas board and Southampton city council were also called to investigate the cause of the explosion.

## 8 people injured in forest fire, Florida USA

**On Tuesday night earlier this week, a national park in north Florida started burning uncontrollably and eight people were injured. The park was located a few miles outside Jacksonville and the environment in and around the forest was extremely damaged. No one was killed or got burns from the fire, but only 30% the new built national park is undamaged.**



A highly dangerous forest fire started in one of Floridas national parks and almost cost the life of eight people.

“The reason to why the fire started is unknown, but it seems like it was planned. Maybe a few teenagers wanted to make a prank that went to long”, says Burt Hummel, chief of Jacksonville s fire brigade.

Eight people, two kids and six adults had the misfortune to be near the park when the fire started and was taken to the hospital a quickly as possible when the ambulances and fire brigades arrived.

The fire started late at night, and in the morning 70% of the park was in flames.

“I have never seen anything like this before, it is truly a miracle that no more people we’re hurt, or the fact the people who was victims of the fire

didn't got any chronic injures, and that they will all recover" Burt Hummel continues.

"There's almost nothing left of the park. The environment is extremely damaged, it will take a long to build it up and a lot of the state money has to be used to repair the damages of the fire", says Rachel Berry, a police man that is a part of the investigation.

## **This is why you shouldn't smoke – especially not here!**

*The famous forest Schwarz Wald in southern Germany got burned down, and the source of the fire was cigarettes.*



The Hampton's were this evening in the Schwarz Wald to celebrate the daughter of the family's 8<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sadly the family's parents were smoking cigarettes, and they were putting out them in the leaves. The big forest got half-burned down.

No one got injured, but many German are pissed off by the British tourists. A riot arose around the cities around the forest. The Germans want to ban the Brits from the national park. The government says that this was an accident, and there's no reason to generalize.

The Hampton's don't want to answer any questions asked by the media, but we know for a fact they're not happy by the results.

Professionals confirm that it will take plus-minus eighty years to recover from the accident. The German government is now banning cigarettes in southern Germany, especially in these woods.

We interviewed a German leading the riot, and we translated the dialogue, "We don't want these Brits around here destroying our community. We want revenge. "

## Appendix M: Genre analysis, newspaper article<sup>37</sup>

- **Headline:**
  - Very brief summary of content. In large letters and bold font.
    - Purpose/Function/Why? To make people read the article.
  - Strong words: 'Miracle' escape; destroys
  - Present tense in the Southampton article (common in headlines for immediate past information).
- **Subheadline/(Introduction/Preamble):**
  - Still a summary, but usually a bit more detailed. Different font, colour and size than the rest of the text.
    - Purpose/Function/Why? To make people read the article, and/or provide enough information to have an idea about what happened without having to read the rest of the article (time issue and selective reading)
- **Picture:**
  - Provides more information than text only.
    - Purpose/Function/Why? Catch readers' interest. More common in digital versions (more space, lots of ink - expensive to print, especially colour)
- **Caption:**
  - Provides information about the picture. Also includes names of photographer.
    - Purpose/Function/Why?
- **Text (structure):**
  - Very short paragraphs (are they paragraphs?), most consist of one sentence only.
    - Purpose/Function/Why? Makes the text easier (and faster?) to read
- **Text (organisation/content):**
  - First paragraph again a summary of what happened (the 5 Ws?)
  - Next, a more detailed account
    - Explosion: Time, father's age (why girl already in the headline? Interest), more precise location
  - Information from people

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<sup>37</sup> Informal notes from me to the teacher

- Explosion: Fire and rescue service spokesman, station manager
      - How is what these people say related? (sometimes as paraphrases "He said"/"she said" and sometimes as quotes, indicated with """)
        - Purpose/Function/Why? Interviewing people adds "life" to the article; quotes are more direct and (perhaps) affect the reader more
      - How are these people introduced?
        - Usually with a title (Spokesperson, Station manager)
    - More information
      - Explosion: Information about surrounding buildings and info about investigation
        - Purpose/Function/Why? Broaden perspective, still lucky that no one was hurt ('miracle'), cause still unknown (expect more news)
  - Language/Linguistic choices
    - Rather formal, no slang, no contractions
    - No spelling or grammar mistakes...
    - Rather simple sentences
      - S-V-O structure (perhaps too complicated?)
    - Quotes introduced by colons : "said: "
    - "say" is used as a reporting verb (rather neutral)

## **Writing a newspaper article**

### **Criteria list**

- headline
  - catchy/dramatic
  - compressed
- sub-headline
  - full sentences
  - summary
- picture with caption
- main text
  - short paragraphs
  - expanding the story (the 5 W's: who, where, when, what, why)
  - interviews (witnesses, subjective, direct/indirect speech)
- language
  - no slang
  - correct



## Appendix O: Writing preparation, newspaper article, TU1, Study 2

My own newspaper article

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. *Pick one of these pictures as a starting point and inspiration for your article*



(retrieved from flickr.com under Creative Commons license)

2. *Describe the accident*
  - *Who:*
  - *Where:*
  - *When:*
  - *What:*
  - *Why:*
3. *Who are you going to interview and cite in the article? Include name and description (for example job or title)*
4. *Try to summarise the article/the accident in one sentence*
5. *Try to think of a good headline*
6. *Anything else that you think can help you write a really good news article*

## **Argumentative essay Criteria list**

### **Structure**

Title - informative and interesting

Introduction

- hook
- general -> specific
- thesis



Body

- pros and cons
- support and justify the pros
- refute the cons
- use examples
  
- structure the text in paragraphs
  - topic sentence
  - supporting sentences
  - concluding sentence

Conclusion

- summary of your arguments
- strong ending – link to intro



### **Language**

- mix of objective and subjective/personal voice
- rhetorical questions
- keep the text concise
- phrases/words to introduce your opinion
- phrases/words to organise your arguments
- phrases/words to introduce examples
- formal language
  - no contractions
  - no slang or colloquialisms
- correct grammar and spelling

**Appendix Q: Sample argumentative essay, criteria discussion, TU3, Study 2**

**Murder breeds murder**

Why do we kill people who kill people to show people that killing people is wrong? The death penalty violates the human rights – the right to a life. I choose to believe that people can change, that people can improve and that people deserves a second chance. Who are we to decide when someone gets to leave this world? Two wrongs do not equal one right. That is why the death penalty should be abolished

The major reason why I am so against death penalty is that there will always be a risk that someone innocent will get killed. There is an outrageous number of people who have been released from death-row because it has been found that they were in fact innocent. Something even more outrageous is the number of people that have been executed and after their death it has been found that they were innocent. That is just unacceptable. Killing innocent people is murder without any doubt. If you support the death penalty and something like that occurs, it will make you responsible for the innocent man or woman's death in my opinion. Do not you deserve to be executed as well then?

The main reason why some countries still allow death penalty is that the government believes that people will be deterred from committing crimes such as murder. That is not true at all, actually statistics has shown that in the states in America without the death penalty has a much lower rate of murder than the states that support it. Another reason why it does not really have a deterrent effect on people is that you kill for reasons that do not make you deterred by any punishment. One of the reasons is people who kill for money or something else that will benefit them greatly. Professional killers do not believe that they will get caught, therefore they will not have to deal with the punishment and the consequences of their actions. Another reason is people who kill by compulsion, in other words people who have some sort of mental disorder that compels you to kill people. These people can obviously not be deterred by the death penalty.

Some people say that it is more expensive to keep a man in prison his whole life than to take his life. That does not necessarily have to be true, keeping someone on death-row can definitely cost a lot of money. Also, saying that it is more expensive to keep someone alive than to let them die is just an extremely weak argument. If we get the chance of helping someone to develop as a better citizen we need to take it, we cannot just give up on people. And honestly, is money really the one thing that will decide if someone will live or die?

To conclude I am convinced that a society that maintains the death penalty will not only have a huge rise in murders, but also will have to live with that they certainly will kill innocent human beings. Death penalty is immoral, inhumane and disgusting, I am ashamed that parts of our modern society kill people who kill people to show people that killing people is wrong. Murder breeds murder. “An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind” – Mahatma Ghandi

## **Appendix R: Sample argumentative essay, feedback training, TU3, Study 2**

### **Stop the execution**

There are a lot of debates about whether or whether not to abolish the death penalty. I myself think it's immoral and unethical to kill a fellow human being. Even the thought of it makes me sick. The death penalty should have been abolished ages ago and I think it's ridiculous that some countries still got it like most parts of Asia and USA. Killing people is not the solution.

For the first I think that it's a greater punishment to let criminals rot in prison than executing them. Killing a prisoner instantly seems to me to be an easy way out for the criminal person. I'd rather be executed than have to stay in prison for a life time. Without death penalty, the prisoners have to live with their guilt for a very long time. And that is the real punishment.

Nothing is ever perfect and in some cases, people have been accused for crimes they didn't commit. This happens very rarely but in some of these cases, the guiltless person gets death penalty and gets executed. This is the highest grade of murder and should be punished, the question is how. You can't really punish the authority, can you?

Death penalty is good and it's a secure way to get rid of the criminals. When a criminal leaves prison, they often make the same crime as they did the last time. For an example, when a person rapes a child they go for prison in maybe eight years. When they after eight years get to leave prison they often make the same crime again. Therefore I think it's a good thing to execute them. Then they won't have the chance to ruin another life.

We spend several billions of dollars on prisoners every year. Why should we care about people who every day makes society a worse place to live in. We could use our money on better things and more important things. Death penalty is a good thing and there is no reason to abolish it. Without death penalty, we'll have to open more prisons and that costs a lot of money.

Death penalty is stupid and it should have been abolished ages ago. We should care about every human being and be as helpful as possible. Instead of putting criminals to sleep, we should rehabilitate them and let them give something back to society. There is more in life than money and I think it's more important to fix someone's crappy life than putting them to death to save money. It is the 21st century for Christ sake. We shouldn't be killing people for things that could have been someone else's fault or even an accident.

**Killing isn't the solution!**

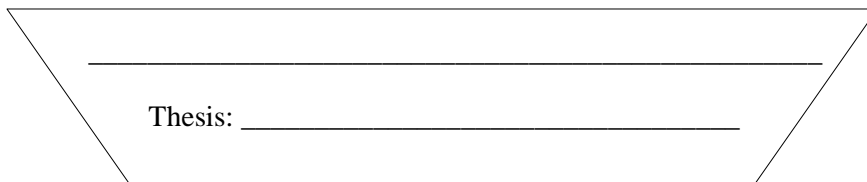
## Appendix S: Writing template, argumentative essay, TU3, Study 2

### How to write an argumentative essay

*Essay template – add key words that will help you write the first draft of your essay on Friday*

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction:



\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

Body paragraphs:

1 Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Support: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

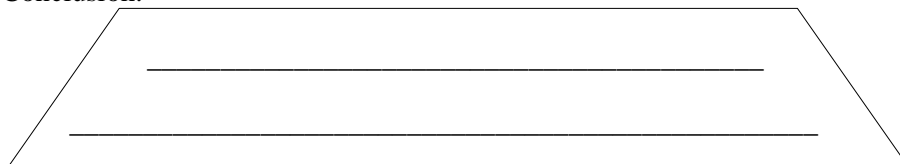
Support: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Support: \_\_\_\_\_

Include more paragraphs if you want/need to

Conclusion:



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix T: Examples of questionnaire items

### Study 1 (distributed after the teaching unit)

Hej!

Frågorna i den här enkäten handlar främst om det arbetsområde som ni har jobbat med i fyra veckor, *How to write a reply letter*. Var snäll och svara så ärligt som möjligt och titta inte på dina kompisars svar. **Din lärare kommer inte att få titta på dina svar.** När jag får era enkäter kommer jag att klippa bort hörnet med ditt namn och i stället skriva ett nummer.

Än en gång, tack för hjälpen!

//Jessica Berggren

Under de två första lektionerna så arbetade ni med att göra en lista med kriterier för hur man skriver ett riktigt bra svarsbrev. Ni läste svarsbrev som andra elever hade skrivit till Keira, Felicity och Nora som bodde i London, och skrev upp kriterier på tavlan.

*Läs frågorna noggrant och skriv så utförliga svar som möjligt. Ge gärna exempel.*

- **Hur använde du kriterierna när du skrev dina egna texter?**

Innan du skrev det andra utkastet av ditt svarsbrev så hade ni två lektioner när ni läste och gav feedback på brev som andra elever hade skrivit till ungdomarna i Ohio. Ni diskuterade ett par brev i grupp och fyllde i *feedbackforms*.

*Läs frågorna noggrant och skriv så utförliga svar som möjligt. Ge gärna exempel.*

- **Vad lärde du dig genom att ge feedback på texterna som andra elever har skrivit?**
  - Organisation/Struktur (*Organization/Structure*)
  - Innehåll (*Content*)
  - Fraser/Utryck (*Phrases/Expressions*)
  - Ord (*Vocabulary*)
  - Grammatik (*Grammar*)
  - Annat

## Study 2 (from the questionnaire distributed after TU 2)

Hej!

Frågorna i den här enkäten handlar främst om det arbetsområde som ni har jobbat med i fyra veckor. Var snäll och svara så ärligt som möjligt och titta inte på dina kompisars svar. **Din lärare kommer inte att få titta på dina svar.** Lämna den ifyllda enkäten till mig när du är färdig.

Tack för hjälpen!

/Jessica Berggren

1. Vad var målet med arbetsområdet? Vad skulle du lära dig?
2. Under de två första lektionerna så arbetade ni med att göra en lista med kriterier. Hur använde du kriterierna när du skrev ditt eget svarsbrev?
3. Innan du skrev den sista versionen av ditt svarsbrev så läste ni två brev skrivna av klasskamrater. Ni diskuterade dem och skrev ner feedback. Vad lärde du dig av det som hjälpte dig när du reviderade ditt eget svarsbrev? Vad lärde du dig om:
  - organisation/struktur (t.ex. *greeting, acknowledgement, ending*)
  - innehåll (*content*)
  - ord och grammatik (*language*)
  - annat