University of Leicester

MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL

Thesis

"It's like you have to be nice right?" Students' positively phrased comments in a native and non-native online peer response exchange and their role in creating a working relationship

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Abstract

Peer response is a common way of improving students' writing, both with native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers of English (NNS). However, very little research has investigated the dynamics of NS and NNS students giving peer response to each other, despite the fact that this is an increasingly common situation. This study explores the dynamics of such a relationship; in particular, the role positively phrased comments play in creating a successful work environment. Two groups of university students, one NS in the USA and one NNS based in Sweden, were connected via a wiki, in order to give peer response on each other's texts. In this study, the comments made on the texts have been categorised to ascertain the number of positively phrased comments and the NNS students completed a questionnaire on their reflections on the exchange. Positively phrased comments included two categories: positive evaluation comments (comments that contained praise alone) and suggestions (comments made to improve the text phrased in a positive way using, for example, hedging). Four NNS students were interviewed on their reasons for the comments they gave and impressions of the comments they received.

The results of the comment categorisation showed that the vast majority (just over 70%) of the comments made by both NS and NNS students were positively phrased. The largest percentage of NS comments was suggestions (42%). The largest percentage of NNS comments was positive evaluation comments (40%). However, the number of positive evaluation comments made by both groups dropped from the first assignment to the second. There was also variation between the comments made by the four students interviewed. For example, the more confident writer gave mostly alteration comments (one word / phrase

replacements to the existing text) and the least confident writer gave mostly positive evaluation comments.

The questionnaire showed that the NNS students were unused to giving peer response and felt more comfortable giving comments to students who were as similar to themselves as possible in terms of country and subject studied. The interviews revealed a number of reasons behind the positive comments made, including wanting to praise the text, following teacher instructions and feeling unsure what to say due to unfamiliarity with content and structure and uncertainty about language. Reactions to the positive comments received were that these comments were appreciated, particularly from native speakers. However, when the comments were predominantly positive evaluation comments, the NNS students expressed disappointment and frustration.

The study concludes that positively phrased comments have a useful role to play in this environment but that it is helpful if the majority of comments in a text include suggestions. The study also shows that the nature of comments can change over time as the relationship develops and that individual students can approach the peer response in very different ways, depending on their own writing background and level of confidence. Consequences of these findings are the way peer response is trained and discussed in the classroom, prior to and during the peer response.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

To my husband, Rikard and my children, Sebastian and Hanna: for love, laughter and patience!

Table of Contents

Figures and tables

Chapter 1 Introduction

Peer response, or peer review, is increasingly used and accepted as a tool in the writing process at all levels, from primary school to academic journals. Peer response is defined by Liu and Hansen as:

> The use of learners as sources of information, and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing (Liu and Hansen, 2002: 1 cited in Hansen and Liu, 2005:31).

Much research has been carried out into the effects of peer response both for native (NS) and non-native (NNS) speakers of English, overwhelmingly supporting its benefits, including providing students with a wider audience for their work, providing them with extra feedback for their writing, exposing them to a range of writing styles and giving them experience in providing feedback which has also been argued to be beneficial for their writing (Berg, 1999; Paulus, 1999; Tsui and Ng, 2000; Hansen and Liu, 2005; Rollinson, 2005; Hyland and Hyland, 2006; Liu and Carless, 2006; Miao et al, 2006; Lundstrom and Baker, 2009; Li et al, 2010). From a teacher's perspective, it has been argued that in addition to the aforementioned benefits, it can increase the quality of writing assignments and lighten the marking load (Patchan et al, 2009).

In the field of technical writing, peer response is seen as particularly important since collaborative writing and peer response is common in the workplace for engineers and technicians (Nelson, 2000). However, many question marks remain on the most useful strategies in providing peer response in order for writers to improve their text. This is particularly the case within NNS peer response, especially in multicultural groups, where complicating factors can be differing levels of language proficiency (Hyland and Hyland, 2006), diverse cultural expectations (Carson and Nelson, 1996) and different writing processes (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). These factors have been investigated from various

perspectives. For example, studies have looked into peer response online versus face-to-face (Liu and Sadler, 2003), peer response between students from different cultures (Carson and Nelson, 1996), and peer response comments compared to teacher comments (Patchan et al, 2009).

However, little research has looked into what happens when NS and NNS writers provide each other with feedback, despite the fact that this is an increasingly common situation, both at the university and in the workplace. The studies that have been done (Zhu, 2001; Anderson, et al, 2010) have focused on categorising the number and type of comments students give to one another in online feedback or investigated turntaking in face-to-face feedback. Very few studies, however, have investigated the reasons behind the comments given i.e. how students negotiate this environment despite the fact that this is a relatively complex environment where issues of cultural background, language proficiency and teaching background become even more prominent. In particular, there is a lack of studies investigating positive comments and the role they can play in building relationships in this type of complex environment. One of the few studies investigating positive comments (Guardado and Shi, 2007) uses ESL students rather than a mixed NNS / NS environment.

1.1 Background to the study

This study focuses on peer response between a multicultural, multilingual group of students based at a technical university in Sweden (NNS) and a monolingual group of students based in the United States (NS). These students were taking optional communication courses which were held on campus in the spring of 2014. In Sweden, the course was called English for Engineers where the aims were to enable students to reach an academic level of English proficiency and to prepare them to use English in a professional setting. In the US, the course was Technical Communication where the aims were to help native speakers of English who had written primarily or exclusively in academic genres to develop the knowledge and skills required to work effectively in the workplace. More information about the participants can be

found in section 3.1.

1.2 Purpose and research questions

This thesis aims to provide a clearer understanding of the strategies students employ when giving peer response in a multicultural, monolingual, online environment. In particular, this thesis focuses on how students build positive relationships through the comments that they make and the reactions to these comments. The three key research questions are:

1. What percentage of the comments made in the peer response exchange are positively phrased?

2. Why do the NNS students make positively phrased comments?

3. How do the NNS students react to the positively phrased comments that they receive?

As can be seen, the NNS students are focused on in this study. Since I work with NNS students, their perspective was more interesting for me. Pragmatically, because these are my students, it was also easier to conduct interviews and collect data from them. Since the study focuses on the students' reasons and reactions for the comments, I have not assessed the quality or validity of the text comments from a teacher perspective nor have I checked whether students made the recommended revisions in their texts. Finally, I have not compared the student comments made in the exchange with those made in the classroom, since the exchange was the focus in this study, though the students were asked to reflect on some of the differences between feedback from these two groups.

1.3 Structure of thesis

In chapter 2, a literature review describes different aspects of peer response including online versus face-to-face, intercultural communication and politeness. Chapter 3 describes the methodology including the data gathered and the participants involved in the study. Chapter 4 analyses the data including the comments made, results of the questionnaire and the interview comments. Chapter 5 discusses the study, including limitations and implications and chapter 6 provides the conclusions and key findings.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter will discuss peer response, in particular the benefits for students; some of the issues involved such as online and intercultural communication; and the role of politeness in this environment.

2.1 History and benefits of peer response

Peer response as a classroom activity dates back to the 1970s (Hansen and Liu, 2005) when the idea of collaborative learning came to the forefront. This theory proposes that "learning is a socially constructed activity that takes place through communication with peers" (Hansen and Liu, 2005:31). This connects to sociocultural theory, based on Vygotsky and his idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (1978), which stresses the importance in cognitive development of working with a more experienced individual, a process known as scaffolding (Hansen and Liu, 2005; Villamil and Guerrero, 2006). Peer response was also seen as a necessary component in process writing which also became popular at around this time.

Within NS writing education, research clearly shows that peer response is beneficial for the writer. Early studies such as Bruffee (1978), Graner (1987) and Sager (1973) supported the idea that students who take part in peer response become better writers. Sager (1973) for example, carried out a study where students evaluated the work of other students using a rubric and concluded that these writers became better judges of writing and received improved grades for their own writing. Similar studies with regards to peer evaluation have been carried out more recently by Ertmer et al (2007), Patchan et al (2009), and Li et al (2010). These studies showed that students can provide comments which are as useful as the teacher's and that the process helped to achieve higher understanding of both the material and the writing process.

Some other benefits that have been pointed out have been that peer response gives students a wider audience for their work and provides them with extra feedback for their writing as well

as exposing them to a range of writing styles, giving them new perspectives on the writing process and providing better group cohesion (Lundstrom and Baker, 2009; Hansen and Liu 2005). There are similarly clear benefits for the reviewer. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) showed that in a control group, students who only gave peer feedback made more significant improvements in writing than students who only received peer feedback. A similar study done by Graner (1987) showed that reviewers improved at the same rate as students participating in traditional peer response.

Within the field of NNS writing education, the situation is more complex. Whilst the benefits listed above still apply, there are a range of factors that can complicate peer response such as language proficiency, diverse cultural expectations, new teacher-learner experiences and different writing processes (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). Studies of student preference show that ESL students value teacher feedback more than peer feedback (Hyland and Hyland, 2006) and that teacher feedback can improve grammatical errors more than peer feedback (Zhang, 1995). Carson and Nelson (1996) found that Chinese students were reluctant to make critical comments, which they attributed to the fact that the students placed group harmony above the goal of helping the writer. Other issues to do with peer response are that it can take time, which can be crucial in classes and cultures focused on examination targets (Miao et al, 2006) and it can be seen to challenge the teacher's authority, particularly in more traditional teaching environments (Miao et al, 2006).

However, the general consensus is that peer response is beneficial in the NNS environment, as long as certain conditions are met, including training (Berg, 1999), allowing time (Rollinson, 2005) and combining both teacher and peer response (Paulus, 1999). Rollinson (2005) found for example that amongst his college-level students, 80% of the comments they received from peers were considered valid. Mendonca and Johnson (1994) found that 53% of revisions made were incorporations of peer comments. Paulus (1999) found that when students received both teacher and peer response, the changes they made were more meaning-level changes. Berg

(1999) also concluded that teacher and peer comments can complement one another since they can focus on different areas. In response to Carson and Nelson's comments on Chinese students, Miao et al's study (2006) in a Chinese university environment concluded that there was a role for peer feedback and Tsui and Ng (2000) also working with peer response with Chinese students highlighted four benefits, which were having a sense of audience; raising learners' awareness of strengths and weaknesses; encouraging collaborative learning; and fostering ownership of text.

To summarise, research shows that peer response, both in the NS and NNS environment, has been shown to be beneficial both for the student writer and responder. However, in the NNS environment, the situation is more complex and thus it is even more important to train the students and make it clear what the expectations are of the process.

2.2 Process of peer response

As already discussed in 2.1, it is even more important in the NNS environment that training in the process takes place (Berg, 1999). Hansen and Liu (2005:32-36) suggest some principles for this which they divide into before, during and after the peer response. Before peer response, they have the following recommendations:

1. Plan when peer response should be introduced in the writing process

2. Decide when to incorporate teacher's comments in the writing process

3. Discuss students' prior experiences with peer response and group work

4. Create a comfortable environment for students to establish peer trust

5. Select the mode of peer response

6. Create purposeful and appropriate peer response sheets for a given task, genre, and purpose

7. Model the peer response process

8. Give students enough time to become familiar with peer response procedures

9. Let students decide on grouping and group rules

10. Discuss strategies for turn-taking

11. Provide students with linguistic strategies

12. Instruct students in how to ask the right questions

13. Set up a mock peer response activity

Though the list may seem fairly long, some of these recommendations are quickly implemented, and others have a positive impact on other skill areas such as critical reading, speaking and listening. Hansen and Liu (2005) note that peer response can take place at different stages in the writing process and not necessarily when a draft has been written (point 1). Students can for example discuss ideas for a text together. They also suggest that the teacher and peer comment on different drafts so that there is less of a risk that the teacher's comments undermine the peer comments (point 2).

A peer response sheet, as suggested in point 6, can have different formats depending on the goal of the peer response. It can consist of prompts for areas that should be commented on or it might be the rubric for grading the assignment, raising awareness of the expectations of the assignment. This rubric can also be negotiated with the students. Students can be encouraged to ask their own questions to their peers on issues that particularly concern them with their writing.

As concerns modelling the peer response process (point 7), Hansen and Liu (2005) suggest working through the same text together as a class so that students can discuss their comments and agree as a group on how to improve the text. The teacher can also provide an insight into his / her own writing and the revision process that has taken place. Hansen and Liu (2005) further encourage being clear about the rules, for example, how much time each part of the process should take and how turntaking should take place.

Finally, as concerns linguistic strategies (points 11 and 12), Hansen and Liu (2005) suggest a discussion of appropriate and inappropriate language and suggestions to increase awareness of audience and the effect a comment can have. A comment like "this is wrong" can induce hostility for example whereas this can be modified to "I'm not sure if this is right". A question can also be added, such as "Can you explain this?"

During the peer response, Hansen and Liu (2005) recommend that students are encouraged to discuss the various peer comments and that student and group progress is monitored to ensure that the students are on track. After the peer response, they recommend that students list all of their comments and indicate whether they will revise based on each comment and why in order to make sure the students understand and process the comments and also to hold students accountable for the comments they make. They also suggest linking peer response to other classroom activities such as journals, grading rubrics and self-or peer assessment. Finally they suggest regrouping students to read each other's final drafts and discussing the peer response activity as a whole.

In terms of size of peer group, Rollinson (2005) recommends that ideally three to four students should work together and that it is important to discuss beforehand the writer's freedom to reject comments.

These recommendations are focused on the students meeting in person and conducting peer response face-to-face. One important and growing area of research however, is what happens when peer response takes place online. The following section will summarise some of the key findings in the area of online feedback.

2.3 Peer response online

A number of studies have investigated the differences between peer response face-to-face (F2F) or online (DiGiovanni and Nagaswami, 2001; Liu and Sadler, 2003; Guardado and Shi, 2007; Ho and Savignon, 2007; Kessler, 2009; Chang, 2012; AbuSeileek and Abualsha'r,

2014). These studies distinguish between two types of peer response, synchronous and asynchronous. The former allows instant feedback, such as chat, messaging, and Skype (Liu and Sadler, 2003). The latter could be in the form of, for example, wikis, blogs, emails and GoogleDrive where there is time delay between posting and receiving comments. These are all examples of Web 2.0 tools which encourage a collaborative way of working, unlike Web 1.0 which was more about delivering information one way e.g. in webpages (Guth and Thomas, 2010).

A number of studies have indicated that asynchronous feedback is preferable to synchronous feedback (Liu and Sadler, 2003; Ho and Savignon,2007) who argue that the ideal scenario is asynchronous feedback followed by face-to-face feedback where possible. This gives students time to reflect. Online peer review also tends to produce different kinds of comments; several studies have shown that there are more local comments i.e. comments on language and form in online feedback than global comments i.e. comments on content and structure (Liu and Sadler, 2003;Tuzi,2004).

Another issue with choice of tool is how visible the information is to the whole group. If email is used for example, the information is only shared between the individuals involved. If a wiki is used, the information is shared by the whole group and that can also have an influence on the students' attitudes to what they post (Kessler, 2009) The effectiveness can also depend on students' opinions of the medium used, for example they might be reluctant to use technologies they feel are outdated (Thorne, 2003) or that are not user friendly (Rogerson –Revell, 2007).

A key aspect of collaboration online is that it enables contact with other cultures, so called telecollaboration (Guth and Helm, 2010; O'Dowd 2006) or Globally Networked Learning Environments (GNLEs) (Starke-Meyerring and Wilson, 2008) where at least two groups in different locations communicate monolingually, bilingually or multilingually via the internet.

This was the case with our exchange where two groups, one in Sweden and one in the US, were linked on a Wiki and provided asynchronous peer response to each other in English. The following section will investigate further some of the issues connected to intercultural communication.

2.4 Intercultural communication and peer response

Intercultural communication has been identified as one of the three key aspects in telecollaboration, the others being peer review and computer mediated communication (Guth and Helm,2010). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) argue that there has been a growing recognition of the importance of integrating intercultural capabilities into language learning in our globalised society. Language learning is not only about communicating meaning, but to "understand the practice of meaning making itself" (Kramsch, 2006:51). To this end, Byram (1997) put together requirements for intercultural communicative competence where the goal is no longer near-native speakers but rather intercultural speakers who are able " to see and manage the relationships between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings ….and those of their interlocutors" (1997:12). However, as Downey et al point out, "it is increasingly difficult, and, indeed, problematic to characterize people as members of different cultures" (2006: 108).

In terms of teaching intercultural competence in the classroom and dealing with this ambiguity, Guest (2002) suggests that the learner be an active participant in culture learning rather than acting as a detached observer. This is particularly relevant for engineering students where interaction with other cultures is part of working life (Jansen, 2004).

There are many projects where students in one country connect with students in another (see Thorne, 2003; O'Dowd, 2006; Starke –Meyerring and Wilson, 2008) but few where students give each other peer response via telecollaboration and even fewer where NS students are linked up with NNS students. However, this is likely to be a professional reality that many

graduates will experience, engineers in particular. Nelson (2000) argues that since engineering professionals spend at least 40% of their time writing and almost all sometimes write as members of a team, learning to write collaboratively and to critique each other's writing is an important part of learning to work as an engineer. Research investigating the dynamics when NS and NNS speakers provide peer response can also provide an interesting insight into the practices of these two groups since there are different peer response practices at work. Kern et al (2004) argue that as online communication is increasingly used as a pedagogical tool, there is likely to be an increase in the number of NS and NNS speakers involved in exchange projects and comment:

> Studies of linguistic interaction will likely need to account for a host of independent variables: the instructor's role as mediator, facilitator, or teacher; cross-cultural differences in communicative purpose and rhetorical structure; institutional convergence or divergence on defining course goals; and the affective responses of students involved in online language learning projects. (2004:248)

This project aims to examine the latter i.e. the affective responses of students. As mentioned in the introduction, earlier studies involving NS and NNS speakers have counted the types of comments made (Zhu, 2001; Ware and O'Dowd, 2008; Anderson et al, 2010). The results of Anderson et al (2010) in an earlier study of this exchange showed for example that NS speakers made many more comments than the NNS speakers and that both groups focused more on revision oriented comments. The majority of the NNS speakers' comments were global comments whereas the majority of the NS speakers' comments were local comments. Zhu (2001) looked at face-to-face peer response in an NS /NNS university classroom and found that the NNS speakers took fewer turns in providing feedback concluding that they were disadvantaged when giving feedback to NS speakers. Ware and O'Dowd (2008), looking at American and Spanish students giving each other feedback on English and Spanish respectively, comment that students in both groups wanted to focus on form i.e. language but lacked the metalinguistic tools to do this, particularly the American students. All three articles

comment on the importance of training the students in peer response beforehand and all the articles speculate on the reasons behind the comments made by the NNS speakers, which this study is now investigating.

Before moving onto a description of the study however, there is one final aspect which could influence both students' choice of comment and way of phrasing the comment and that is the issue of politeness. The following section will investigate some of the key aspects of politeness in relation to intercultural communication and peer response.

2.5 Peer response and politeness

Politeness as a pragmatic strategy has been discussed widely and a number of models have been produced to describe the process of politeness. This section will focus on one of the most common models, Brown and Levinson (1987), and how this can be useful in investigating peer response. The first issue, however, is defining politeness. As Fraser points out: "while the existence of politeness or the lack thereof is not in question, a common understanding of the concept and how to account for it is certainly problematic" (1990: 219) We tend to recognise politeness or the lack of it, but "no sentence is inherently polite or impolite. We often take certain expressions to be impolite, but it is not the expressions themselves but the conditions under which they are used that determine the judgement of politeness" (Fraser and Nolan, 1981:96). This is particularly the case in intercultural communication, where actions can be judged differently depending on cultural background. For example, Kuchuk (2012) discusses students' reactions to not receiving peer response on a text. Some students assume that they have not received feedback because the peer responder is trying to be polite i.e. that the text was so badly written they are not commenting in order not to hurt the writer's feelings. Other students assume that the peer responder is being impolite, for example, being lazy and not doing as they should. As mentioned previously, several studies have suggested that both Chinese and Japanese avoid giving critical feedback

as a way to maintain group harmony (Carson and Nelson, 1996; Jiang, 2003; Guardado and Shi, 2007).

There are a number of approaches to provide an account of politeness. Some key ones, described in Fraser (1990) are:

- Social-norm view - that people know what is expected of them
- Conversational-maxim view (Leech, 1983) – that there are many different conditions for politeness
- Face-saving view (Brown and Levinson, 1987)
- Conversational contract (Fraser, 1990) - that people do what the situation requires.

In this thesis, Brown and Levinson's model (1987) will be focused on since this is arguably the most influential and several articles have used this model in an analysis of peer response. They argue that politeness is one strong reason for not following Grice's maxims (1975) in communication. These maxims are as follows:

Maxim of quality: speak the truth, be sincere

Maxim of quantity: do not say more or less than necessary

Maxim of relevance: be relevant

Maxim of Manner: avoid ambiguity and obscurity

Brown and Levinson argue that these maxims are not followed when there is "the desire to give some attention to face" (1987:95). They particularly focus on Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) which they define as "acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and /or the speaker" (1987:65). Johnson defines peer response as an FTA since "students are required to point out areas that could be improved in a classmate's paper" (1989: 71).

Brown and Levinson identify three types of politeness: positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record politeness. Positive politeness is an expression of solidarity to address the receiver's positive face, defined as the need to be accepted by others. Positive politeness strategies can, for example, involve compliments. Johnson (1992:55) argues that praising a paper counts as complimenting the addressee because it attributes credit to the addressee of the paper. She comments that compliments are generally very formulaic, and follow three main patterns as shown in table 1:

Table 1: Patterns of compliments (Manes and Wolfson, 1981 cited in Johnson 1992:52)

Pattern	Example
1) Noun Phrase is/ looks (really) Adjective	That shirt is so nice
2) I (really) like / love Noun Phrase	I love your hair
3) Pronoun is (really) (a) Adjective Noun Phrase	This was really a great meal

In the case of peer response, these patterns could be used to express approval of the text.

Negative politeness is an expression of restraint oriented to the receiver's negative face, defined as "a person's claim to freedom of action and freedom from interference, imposition and constraint" (Johnson 1989: 18). In peer response, this could involve criticising the text using strategies such as hedging where the criticism is softened through the use of, for example, modals (see section 4.2). Finally, off-record politeness can be equated with giving a hint, for example rummaging through a bag to indicate a lost book rather than confronting someone and asking where it is.

Three factors which are important in determining the level of politeness which a speaker will use to address the receiver are power, distance and rank of imposition (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The most obvious manifestation of power is rank or legitimate power i.e. in a teacher /

student relationship, the teacher has the power. However, there are other types of power such as expert power (one person having knowledge that the other lacks) and coercive power (that one person has control over negative outcomes that the other wants to avoid e.g. banker and robber) (Spencer-Oatey, 2008:35). Distance can include the following components: social similarity / difference, frequency of contact, length of acquaintance, familiarity and sense of like-mindedness (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Finally, rank of imposition refers to the nature of the FTA, whether it is asking for the salt to be passed or whether it is a much bigger favour which will affect the language used.

Various studies have examined the role of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory in peer response. Johnson (1989) found that there was evidence of both positive and negative politeness strategies in written peer response. Johnson and Yang (1990) compared NS and advanced NNS speaker politeness strategies in peer response and found that while both groups produced equally effective reviews, the NNS made more explicit references to power factors and expressed deference, apologising, for example, for their lack of knowledge in certain areas.

Effective peer response has also been discussed by Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) who identify three possible stances for students to take when providing peer response: an interpretive stance, where students impose their own ideas about the topic onto the text; a prescriptive stance where students expect the text to follow a certain form and a collaborative stance where the student tries to see the text through the writer's eyes. They found that the majority of the students adopted the prescriptive stance i.e. focused on form and correctness, possibly because this is the kind of feedback they have received from their teachers whereas a collaborative stance would encourage dialogue about the text. They conclude that "establishing collaborative peer-review sessions within collaborative classroom settings is one

way of ensuring that students become actively involved in making meaning, not just receiving meaning" (1992:249).

One way of creating a dialogue about a text is to use the negative politeness strategies discussed by Johnson (1989). For example, using a hedging in a comment by adding "I think" or a question mark can open a discussion more effectively than statements.

2.6 Key aspects concerning this study

This chapter has discussed the potential of peer response in the classroom, both for NS and NNS speakers, but also highlighted some of the issues which can affect peer response, particularly for NNS. This includes language proficiency, cultural issues, previous experience of feedback, and online versus face-to-face feedback. This chapter has also highlighted the fact that few studies have investigated the dynamics of NS and NNS speakers giving feedback to each other, particularly concerning students' own impressions of the comments they make and receive. Finally, this chapter has discussed the issue of politeness and the role it plays in peer response. The following chapter describes how this study was carried out in order to investigate these issues.

Chapter 3 Methods

This chapter is divided into two parts. First, the pedagogical design of the peer response is described and the participants involved in the exchange, with a focus on the NNS students, to provide the context for this study. Secondly, the data investigation is described.

To investigate the positively phrased comments made in an NS / NNS peer response environment, three sets of data were collected and analysed. In order to respond to the first research question "What percentage of the comments made in the peer response exchange are positive or positively phrased?", all the comments that the students in the Swedish group made and received from the American group were categorised. These categories are described below in section 3.4. In order to respond to the second and third questions "Why do NNS students make these kinds of comments?" and "How do NNS students react to the positive comments that they receive?", most of the students in the group in Sweden filled in a questionnaire to give an overall picture of their attitudes (section 3.5) and four students were interviewed in detail (section 3.6). Since the study focuses on students' attitudes and reflections on peer response, the interview and comment data was the main focus, therefore this is primarily a qualitative study, though having three sets of data from the students provided triangulation meaning better validity and reliability (Dörnyei,2007; Riazi-Candlin, 2014). The questionnaire and the interview questions can be found in appendices A and B.

3.1 Participants in the study

As mentioned in section 1.1, the exchange consisted of two groups, one based in Sweden and one based in the United States. The group in Sweden were my students and the focus of this study. This was a group of 28 non-native speakers of English with an English level of at least B2 (CEFR). Of the 28 students, 11 nationalities were represented, the majority coming from Germany (6), Sweden (4), France (4) Taiwan (4) and Austria (4) then single students from Singapore, Iran, Brazil, Spain, Czech Republic and Japan. Most of these students were on

17

short term exchanges in Sweden, such as the Erasmus exchange where they were in Sweden for six months although some were also studying towards Master degrees in Sweden. Most of the students (80%) were in the fourth or fifth year of their studies and had written Bachelor's theses. The other 20% were third year students. All students were studying engineering, the majority coming from mechanical and civil engineering, though nine different engineering disciplines were represented in the group.

The group in the US consisted of 17 students who were all native speakers of English. They were studying a range of subjects but the key subjects represented were environmental studies (7 students), English (5 students) and chemistry (2 students). Most of the students were fourth year students (9 students) and the others were third year (3 students), second year (4 students) and first year (1 student) which means that in the American system, they had yet to complete their Bachelor's.

Four students volunteered to be interviewed from the group of 28 non-native speakers of English in the class. I present them individually here since they will be discussed individually in the results section. Pseudonyms have been used to ensure anonymity in accordance with the ethics agreement. Three European students were interviewed and one Brazilian student.

Philipp is a fifth year Austrian Master's student of mechanical engineering who was spending six months at the Swedish university as part of the Erasmus program. German is his first language and he describes himself as a strong writer in the interview ("I think I'm quite good in writing in German and also writing in English"). This opinion was also reflected in his results on the English course where he achieved top grades in all assignments, both oral and written.

Anna is a fourth year Austrian Master's student of engineering who is also spending six months at the Swedish university as part of the Erasmus program. She has less confidence in

her writing than Philipp ("at school at home I don't really write in English and here it was actually my first really technical text here in this class so I really get to know that when I really think about how I write it and it's really not that bad as I have thought for myself"), she has not practised writing in English much but received strong grades on the course for her writing assignments.

Marta is a fifth year Spanish student of chemical engineering who is also spending six months at the Swedish university as part of the Erasmus program. She has little confidence in her writing ("I don't think my comments are really important to the (American university's) students I think they help me more than I help them") and struggled with the writing assignments, being asked to rewrite the assignments several times in order to pass the course.

David is a fifth year Brazilian student of mechanical engineering. He passed all the written assignments on the course with the minimum pass grade.

3.2 Pedagogical design

The peer response exchange involved the students on each course sharing the first drafts of some of their texts with each other using an open access wiki called Wikispaces for giving and receiving peer response. They also gave and received feedback face-to-face with members of their own classes and received feedback from the teachers. Two learning outcomes of the exchange were that the students should be able to select comments that would be most helpful to the writer and that the students should be able to present comments to help the writer make effective revisions. Peer response was an obligatory element in both courses.

Table 2 shows the written assignments the students in Sweden exchanged with the American students which have been focused on in this study (but not all the written assignments done in the courses).

Table 2: Written tasks focused on in this study

Students in Sweden	Students in the USA
Short essay: literature review on a topic (individual)	First draft of proposal to client for a feasibility study (group)
First draft of a proposal (pairs)	First draft of feasibility report addressed to client (group)

The assignments chosen for the exchange were ones that corresponded most closely to assignments in the American course (though the assignments were not designed with this in mind).

The students in the exchange uploaded their documents online on an open access wiki called Wikispaces in the form of Word or Pdf documents. A student or a pair of students would upload the first draft of their document under their name on the appropriate page on Wikispaces and the student responders would upload their commented versions underneath.

Since many of the NNS students had not done peer response before, the students received input on peer response (see section 2.2) including a discussion of the reasons behind using peer response as a tool in writing. When giving feedback to the NS students, the students worked in groups and discussed their comments together before writing and uploading the comments. The students were encouraged to focus on content and structure. Strategies for providing feedback were discussed such as starting with positive comments, asking questions about the text and providing suggestions using phrases like "in my opinion" in order to respect the writer's work. Writers were made aware of the fact that any decision to revise the text was their own i.e. that they should only use the comments that worked for them.

3.3 Ethical concerns

There were a number of ethical issues in this study. Firstly, since I was studying my own students, it was important that they did not feel that the study and the assessment of the course were connected in any way. Secondly, it was important that they were aware that their

information would be used anonymously and that they could withdraw from the study at any point. Finally, it should be clear what their information would be used for. Since I was using the comments from the American students, it was also important to get their permission to do this. This was arranged by the American professor.

In order to address these points, a consent sheet was drafted (see appendix D) which every student was asked to read and sign. This consent sheet explained the purpose of the study and that they would be anonymous and could withdraw at any point. The students were asked to tick the boxes they agreed to i.e. whether their comments could be used, whether they would participate in the questionnaire and if they were willing to take part in an interview. The consent sheet was given directly to a colleague of mine so that I was not aware, while teaching the course, who had agreed to take part and who had not. I sent the link to the questionnaire to all the students but did not know who had completed the questionnaire until after the course was finished.

Since my colleague received the consent sheets, she sent me a list of those who had volunteered for the interview once the grades were decided. I then analysed the questionnaires and arranged interview times with those students.

3.4 Research data: Text comments

The text comments that the students at the Swedish university made and received were gathered and analysed in order to ascertain what types of comments the students made and received. This resulted in a database of 86 documents, 21 response documents from the students in Sweden to the American students and 65 documents from the American students. There were more response texts from the American students since they gave feedback individually whereas the students in Sweden gave feedback in groups.

3.4.1 Comments analysis

Each comment, both in-text and end-text, was categorised according to table 3 below to see the percentage of positive comments made. These categories are adapted from Liu and Sadler (2003) which have been used in other research articles categorizing peer comments (Zhu, 2001; Wang, 2013; Bradley, in press). The two main areas are revision oriented (RO) and non-revision oriented (NRO) i.e. whether a comment is designed to produce a change or not. Liu and Sadler (2003) also differentiate between global and local comments but this was not important for my purposes and therefore not used here. The initial four types which Liu and Sadler identified, suggestion, evaluation, alteration and clarification, have been retained but I have chosen to divide evaluation comments into positive and negative to reflect the focus of this thesis. I have also added encouragement as a category in order to be able to code all the text comments made. The categories and examples of them are shown in the table below. In each case, the type of comment is given with an example from a student text.

Table 3: Categories used in coding written text feedback (RO=revision oriented, NRO = non revision oriented)

Type of comment	RO or NRO	Example of comment
Suggestion	RO	You should replace the 'we' with 'student team' or equivalent
Positive evaluation	NRO	The introduction is great.
Negative evaluation	RO	The meaning of the sentence is unclear
Alteration	RO	Whether (directed at a word which is wrongly spelt)
Clarification	RO	Citizens of?
Clarification	NRO	We highlighted some things that seemed strange to us
Encouragement	NRO	Best of luck with your proposal.

As can be seen in table 3, there is some apparent overlap in these areas of categorisation. For example, the example for suggestion and alteration can be said to have the same function which is that the writer should change a word in their text. The only difference is that the alteration is directive (only the replacement is provided with no comment) whereas the

suggestion uses hedging, in this case a modal verb, to soften the instruction. This was a useful distinction in this thesis when analysing politeness strategies. Similarly, a negative evaluation comment can be said to have the same purpose as the suggestion though the key difference here is that the negative evaluation comment implies that the writer should make a change to their text and the suggestion makes this more explicit.

The difference between the two clarification categories is connected to local and global text issues. The revision oriented clarification comment was a request for the writer to explain a term they had used whereas the non-revision oriented clarification comment was an explanation of how they had carried out the process of the peer response (a category which Liu and Sadler did not use). Finally, Liu and Sadler's (2003) categorisation has been extended by adding the encouragement category for comments like "good luck" which were not covered by the positive evaluation.

Text comments were classified sentence by sentence rather than classifying one whole comment (which could vary from a one word response to a paragraph). This meant that a text comment like:

> Interesting. I would like to see specific examples of industries that have tried to use this without success.

would be classified as two separate items. The first is a positive evaluation comment and the second is a suggestion. This was intended to give a more accurate picture of the range of comments given although some sentences could be very long and then a decision needed to be taken as to which category the sentence predominantly belonged to.

The comments made and received by the interviewees were further analysed for positive and negative politeness strategies. As regards positive politeness, the three categories in Table 1 (section 2.5) were used. As regards negative politeness strategies, an analysis of the types of hedging was done.

3.5 Research data: Questionnaire

All the students at the Swedish university were asked to fill in a questionnaire (see appendix A). This was seen as necessary for a number of reasons. Firstly, the participants' background information was important in order to create a clear picture of their cultural background and previous experience of peer response. This information was collected partly to select interview candidates with a range of backgrounds. In reality, since four students volunteered for the interviews, the questionnaires were not used for this purpose. Secondly, the questionnaire was used to provide an overall picture of the students' attitudes to giving and receiving comments which was used to focus the interview questions. For example, the students were asked to compare their experiences of peer response with the American students to those with the other students in the class in Sweden. Therefore, this questionnaire provided both factual information and attitudinal information (Dörnyei, 2007:102).

3.5.1 Questionnaire design and distribution

Since a questionnaire is particularly suited for quantitative, statistical analysis, closed-ended items were predominantly used though open questions were used to obtain factual information such as where the subject was born. Dörnyei (2007:105) points out that long and detailed personal accounts are better achieved through interviews which are also a part of this study. It was also important to keep the questionnaire short to encourage student response and because longer answers were possible in the interview. To get attitudinal information, Likert scales were used ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire can be seen in appendix A.

In forming the questions, the following guidelines were used (Dörnyei, 2007:108). Items were kept short and simple (under 20 words) and were written in simple sentences. Simple and natural language was used and ambiguous words avoided. Negative constructions, double-barrelled questions and items that were likely to be answered the same by everybody were

avoided. The questionnaire was five pages long, starting with questions on the exchange and ending on more personal information to encourage students to fill it in (Dörnyei: 2007).

Before the questionnaire was sent to the students, a pilot study was done where the questionnaire was sent to several colleagues in order to test the effectiveness of the questions. Feedback from this pilot study meant that I changed some of the wording in the cultural background section. For example, in questions 27-29 where I ask about language ability, I refer to "first language" and "language you feel comfortable using" rather than "native language" which can be more problematic to answer. I also introduced more closed answer questions than before.

The questionnaire was written online with a system at my university used for course evaluations. This meant that it was easier to administer in terms of sending the link to the students and the data was easier to collate. However, I asked the students to fill in the questionnaire in class. This was to ensure a better answer rate and to be able to answer potential questions.

Since the answers were intended to be used partly to select interview candidates, the results of the questionnaire were sent to a colleague to make the selection based on my instructions, which in fact was not needed. This was to ensure that the students did not feel that there would be any advantage or disadvantage to their grades if they took part in the study.

3.5.2 Questionnaire analysis

For the purposes of this study where the focus lies on the text comments and the interviews, the questionnaire data was used to provide extra information and a full statistical analysis was not carried out.

3.6 Research data: Interviews

Interviews with the students in Sweden were an important source of data in this study (see appendix B for questions). They were carried out to provide a fuller picture of the students' attitudes to the comments in the exchange, in particular how useful the comments were for their writing. One very useful possibility in the interview was the chance to discuss comments that students had chosen not to make in order to create a good working relationship.

3.6.1 Interview design

The interviews were semi-structured and focused on the comments made and received in the student's documents. Four students volunteered for the interviews (see profiles in 3.1). The interviews took place one week after the course finished while the information was still topical. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The interview consisted of two sections; the first focused on comments that the student had made and the second focused on comments that the student had received (see appendix B for questions).

It was therefore necessary to have the relevant commented documents at the interview. These were the literature review and the proposal that the students at the Swedish university had written and received comments on and the proposal and the feasibility study that the American students had written and the students in Sweden had commented on. The student was asked to discuss each comment in turn, commenting on the reason behind that comment and why it was phrased in the way it was.

The interviews provided key information since they provided insight into the students' reactions behind the comments on the paper. However, there are clearly limitations with this approach as well. Under the terms of the ethical consent agreement, the only students who could be interviewed were those who volunteered. The students' motivation for volunteering can be questioned however. The likelihood is that these were students who felt they had something to say about the exchange i.e. that they had found it a positive experience and they

were therefore happy to discuss it and look at their comments. Therefore the information could contain a bias. However, as discussed by Block (2000) and others, one key issue with interviews as a research method is reliability and therefore the questionnaire data was useful here to check the interviewees' answers with the group as a whole. A second limitation is that the interviewee is likely to want to please the interviewer, especially as in this case I was their teacher. To minimise this issue, a script of questions was prepared so that the interviews would be as similar as possible (Dörnyei, 2007) and the students received their grades before the interviews took place. A third limitation was the fact that the students might not remember comments or the reasons for them. The interviews were therefore carried out the week after the end of the course which was the earliest time this was possible.

3.6.2 Interview analysis

The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim using Jefferson's transcription system (1972) (see appendix C for transcriptions). Each transcription was then coded sentence by sentence to identify themes in the interviews (Saldana, 2011). These themes were compared across the interviews and colour coded in order to identify the themes focused on by all interviewees. Each interview comment was matched to the equivalent written comment to check both the themes and the comment categorisation (shown in appendix E). This comparison resulted in a new coding of the text comments.

Chapter 4 Results

This chapter will start by presenting the results of the comment categorisation (see section 3.1) to ascertain how many comments were designed to promote a positive relationship. I will then proceed to examining the reasons and attitudes behind the comments as demonstrated in the questionnaires and the interviews that were carried out (research questions 2 and 3). This follows the same order as the research questions which are:

1. What percentage of the comments made in the peer response exchange are positively phrased?

2. Why do the NNS students make positively phrased kinds of comments?

3. How do the NNS students react to the positively phrased comments that they receive?

This study aims to give a clearer picture of student strategies in this situation in order to help students working in this type of environment. Since these factors can vary quite dramatically from student to student, this result section will focus on the individual student (see profiles in 3.4) as well as presenting a more general picture.

4.1 Given and received peer review comments for the group

As discussed in 3.4, the comments that the students made were classified as suggestion (RO), positive evaluation (NRO), negative evaluation (RO), alteration (RO), clarification (RO), clarification (NRO) and encouragement (NRO). The comments from both the NS and the NNS students were counted according to the process described in 3.4. In tables 4 and 5 below, the results for the NS and NNS students are shown.

Table 4: Results of comment categorisation for NNS texts (reviewed by the NS students) showing the number of comments for each category

NNS texts	Suggestion RO	Positive Evaluation NRO	Negative Evaluation RO	Alteration RO	Clarification RO	Clarification NRO	Encourage NRO	Total
NNS text 1: Lit review (27 texts)	187	172	30	54	25	9	0	477
%	39%	36%	6%	11%	5%	2%	0%	
NNS text 2: Proposal (38 texts)	244	118	36	70	44	12	20	544
%	49%	22%	7%	13%	8%	2%	4%	
Total 65 texts	431	301	66	124	69	21	20	1032
Average 16 comments per text	42%	29%	6%	12%	7%	2%	2%	

Table 5: Results of comment categorisation for NS texts (reviewed by the NNS students) showing the number of comments for each category

NS texts	Suggestion RO	Positive Evaluation NRO	Negative Evaluation RO	Alteration RO	Clarification RO	Clarification NRO	Encourage NRO	Total
NS text 1:Proposal (9 texts)	42	81	13	11	7	5	0	159
%	26%	51%	8%	7%	4%	3%	0%	
NS text 2: Feasibility report (12 texts)	59	45	16	15	8	11	3	157
%	38%	29%	10%	9%	5%	7%	2%	
Total 21 texts	101	126	29	26	15	16	3	316
Average 15 comments per text	32%	40%	9%	8%	8%	5%	1%	

Before a discussion of the comments which were positive or positively phrased (research question 1), there are a few interesting points to note. The first is that although the American students clearly made many more comments than the students in Sweden (1032 compared to 316), the average number of comments per text was almost the same, that is 16 comments on average per text for the NS students and 15 comments per text for the NNS. The difference in total comments can be explained by the writing processes in each group, i.e. that the

American students produced individual feedback whereas the students in Sweden often gave feedback in groups of 2 or 3. The number of comments per document was also very even on both sides, ranging from around 5 to 35 comments per draft, with the majority of students providing between 10-20 comments per draft. However, the American drafts were longer than the drafts in Sweden, approximately 1250 words per draft for the American students compared to approximately 900 words per draft for the students in Sweden meaning that whereas the NS students made approximately 1 comment per 60 words, the NNS students made 1 comment per 83 words. This is similar to the findings of Anderson et al (2010) and Bradley (in press) though the difference in this case was not as dramatic.

In terms of comments designed to promote a positive relationship, two categories are significant here. The first category is that of positive evaluation (NRO) (see tables 4 and 5). These were comments such as "The introduction is great" which only contained positive feedback and did not require the reader to revise the text in any way. What is interesting to note is that this was the largest category of comments made by the students in Sweden (40%) and the second largest category for the American students (28%) i.e. for both groups, these comments formed a major part of the feedback. It is also interesting to note how this changed from one text to the next. For the NS students, 36% of their comments made to the NNS students' first texts (the literature reviews) were positive evaluation comments compared to 22% for the second text they reviewed (the proposals). For the NNS students, 51% of their comments made to the NS students' first texts (the proposals) were positive evaluation comments compared to 29% for the second text they reviewed (the feasibility studies). In both cases, this is a significant change and in both cases, suggestions were the largest group of comments for the second text. This change might suggest that as students become more familiar with one another and the process, they also feel more comfortable with being more critical. This will be discussed further in the interview data.

The other category that seems designed to promote a positive relationship is that of suggestions. This is where the student uses some form of hedging to suggest a change rather than simply giving the replacement, which is labelled here as an alteration (e.g. suggestion "you should replace the "we" with "student team" or equivalent" compared to alteration "whether" in correcting spelling). The suggestion is often phrased as a sentence whereas the alteration is often phrased as a single word or phrase containing the correction (in one document, this was achieved through track changes). Tables 4 and 5 shows that this was a significant category for both groups, 42% of comments for the NS speakers (the largest category) compared to 12% alterations and 32% for the NNS speakers (the second largest category) compared to 8% alterations. The students made suggestions in a number of ways, including the use of modals, providing rationales for their comments, using question marks, using verbs such as "I believe" and using modifying adjectives like "a little" "slightly". This is discussed further in the following section.

4.2 Politeness strategies used in commenting on the texts

The largest categories of comments made and received by the interviewees as for the group were positive evaluation comments and suggestions, both requiring politeness strategies. These differ between the NS and NNS students, particularly as concerns negative politeness strategies.

The positive evaluation comments made in both NS and NNS texts most commonly consisted of an adjective, adjective+ noun or adjective + noun + phrase (i.e. none of the categories given in table 1, section 2.5). For example, one commonly used adjective was "good" which could either appear alone or with a noun "good objectives" or a phrase "Good job using a figure to support your findings".

The second most common structure for positive evaluation comments was the first given in Table 1, that is NounPhrase is/looks (really) Adjective. As mentioned above, the most

common adjective used was "good" (over 50% of adjectives used by NNS and about 25% of NS). Examples given in the texts are "This opening is great!" and "The introduction at the beginning is really good". This is similar to the findings of Johnson (1992) when analysing peer response comments. As shown in the latter example, it was also common in the peer response comments to intensify the adjective, often with the use of "really" or "very". The American students displayed a wider range of adjectives, frequently using "strong" "nice" "great" and "clear" for example. It was very rare for the students to use the adjective completely on its own e.g. "good"; they usually followed the adjective with another sentence specifying what they thought was good e.g. "Short but very good, it summarizes your proposal in a few words".

The NNS used the second pattern (I (really) like /love NounPhrase) described in table 1 as much as the first, particularly with the verb "like". About 15% of the compliments made by the NNS included this structure, for example, "we really like the graph" and "we like your idea". This was much less frequent in the NS speaker texts (2 examples).

The third pattern (Pronoun is (really) (a) Adjective NounPhrase) was rarely used by either group.

Negative politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987: 131) were used in the suggestions to tone down their suggestions such as not presuming or assuming and not coercing. One way of not presuming was hedging, defined by Hyland (1996:251) as "any linguistic means used to indicate either (a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth of a proposition, or (b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically". Hedging was carried out in different ways by both groups of students. The most common strategies from the NNS interviewed were using question marks (e.g. "Why I and not we?"); using adverbs like "perhaps" and "maybe" (e.g. "Maybe you could explain what the colors and x mean") and using verbs like believe, hope and think (e.g. "We think that you should put this at the end.") They also used

strategies like the use of modals (could, might); putting it from their own viewpoint (e.g. "we don't know survey monkey") and adding phrases of uncertainty (e.g. "we are not sure but is there a comma missing?"). This latter comment was made by Anna who explains her group's thinking as follows:

> That's something we really thought about it quite a lot because like I said it's their mother tongue they know that probably better than we and so we really thought should we write something down or not but then we decided yeah but maybe with a question it doesn't mean it's it's do not have to be right what we say but it could be[1]

It is clear from her comment that a lot of discussion took place within the group before making this comment on what can be seen to be a fairly minor point in the text they were reviewing.

The most common hedging strategies used by the NS students were using modals such as "could" and "might" (approximately 50% of suggestions) and to a lesser extent using question marks and using modifying adjectives like "a little" and "slightly". For example, one student commented "This paragraph becomes a little "wordy" here" and another comments "there is some grammar usage that could be altered slightly". These were ways to minimize the imposition and imply that the amount of revision needed was small, thereby reducing the Face Threatening Act (FTA) (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Johnson noted similar features of the peer response texts she analysed in terms of both positive and negative politeness. She describes the balance as a way "to sugarcoat the pill by creating a solidarity framework " (1989:85).

4.3 Results of questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to provide an overall picture of the students' attitudes to giving and receiving comments (research questions 2 and 3). Twenty-one of the twenty-eight NNS students completed the questionnaire (see appendix A for the full questionnaire) and the

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[1] All quotations from the student interviews are written verbatim and have not been corrected in any way

results are shown in table 6 below. The NS students did not complete the questionnaire since

the NNS students were focused on in this study.

Table 6: Responses to the questionnaire

	Agree strongly		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Disagree strongly	
3. It was challenging for me to give comments to students at my own university on their written work.	0	0%	9	43%	6	29%	6	29%	0	0%
4. It was challenging for me to give comments to students at the other university on their written work.	3	14%	12	57%	3	14%	3	14%	0	0%
5. It is easier for me to provide comments to students I know well.	4	19%	8	38%	2	9%	7	33%	0	0%
6. It is easier for me to provide comments to students who are proficient in English.	2	9%	4	19%	8	38%	4	19%	3	14%
7. It is easier for me to provide comments to students studying in a similar discipline to myself.	5	23%	12	57%	2	9%	2	9%	0	0%
8. It is easier for me to provide comments to students from the same country as myself.	6	28%	7	33%	4	19%	3	14%	1	4%
9. It is easier for me to provide comments when I can provide them face-to-face rather than in writing.	2	9%	4	19%	5	23%	10	47%	0	0%
11. I felt that I made longer comments to the other university students than to students at my own university	0	0%	1	4%	6	29%	13	61%	1	4%
12. I felt that I needed to explain my comments more to the other university students than to students at my own university.	0	0%	3	14%	9	43%	8	38%	1	4%

13. I felt that I needed to be more polite to the other university students than to students at my own university	1	4%	6	29%	3	14%	9	43%	2	9%
14. Comments on my drafts from the teacher were useful in improving my texts.	18	86%	3	14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
15. Comments on my drafts from the students at my own university were useful in improving my texts.	2	9%	11	52%	8	38%	0	0%	0	0%
16. Comments on my drafts from the students at the other university were useful in improving my texts.	7	33%	9	43%	5	23%	0	0%	0	0%
18. The exchange was an interesting part of the course.	1	4%	11	52%	7	33%	2	9%	0	0%
19. The exchange was a useful part of the course in terms of my development as a writer.	1	4%	8	38%	10	47%	2	9%	0	0%
20. The exchange should be included as part of future courses.	3	14%	9	43%	8	38%	1	4%	0	0%

Questions 3 to 13 concerned giving comments and questions 14 to 16 concerned receiving comments. Questions 18 to 20 were more general concerning the exchange as a whole. As regards giving comments, it is clear that this group of students thought it was easiest to give comments to students at their own university (questions 3 and 4), to students that they knew well (question 5), to students in a similar discipline (question 7) and to students from the same country (question 8) i.e. it was easier to provide feedback to students who were mostly likely to be similar to themselves. This agrees with the findings by Carson and Nelson (1996) who argue that peer response is easiest within homogenous groups. Nearly half disagreed that it was easier to provide comments face-to-face than in writing (question 9) and did not feel that they provided longer comments to the NS students than to students in their own class. Finally, the majority did not agree that they felt a need to be more polite to the students at the other university (question 13).

As regards receiving comments, an overwhelming number found the teacher's comments most useful (cf Hyland and Hyland, 2006) (question 14). 75% of respondents found the NS students' comments useful or very useful (question 16) compared to 61% for the NNS students' comments (question 15). However, although the exchange was seen as interesting (question 18), students were not convinced that it contributed to their development as a writer (question 19).

4.4 Interview comments

Four NNS students were interviewed at the Swedish university, Philipp, Anna, Marta and David (see 3.1 for participant description). All four of these students volunteered for these interviews in accordance with the ethical consent form. In the questionnaire, all four students commented that they had no or little previous experience of peer responding, which was typical of the group as a whole.

The proportion of the different types of text comments given and received by the four students interviewed is shown below in tables 7 and 8. First, the totals are shown for the comments they received from the NS students in the USA and second, the totals are shown for the comments they made to the students in the USA.

Table 7: Results of comment categorisation for the four interviewed NNS students (NS comments on NNS texts)

Name	Suggestion RO	Evaluation Positive NRO	Evaluation Negative RO	Alteration RO	Clarification RO	Clarification NRO	Encourage NRO	Total
Philipp	25	15	2	2	0	1	5	50
Anna	19	23	1	4	1	0	1	49
Marta	16	4	7	22	3	1	6	59
David	20	10	2	0	0	0	0	43
Totals	80	52	12	28	4	2	12	190
%	39%	31%	6%	14%	2%	1%	6%	

Table 8: Results of comment categorisation for the four interviewed NNS students (NNS comments on NS texts)

Name	Suggestion RO	Evaluation Positive NRO	Evaluation Negative RO	Alteration RO	Clarification RO	Clarification NRO	Encourage NRO	Total
Philipp	13	5	6	15	1	2	0	42
Anna	11	9	2	0	2	0	0	24
Marta	15	33	3	0	0	1	0	52
David	7	10	1	0	3	0	0	21
Totals	46	57	12	15	6	3	0	139
%	33%	41%	9%	11%	4%	2%	0%	

As can be seen, the totals represented here were very similar proportionally to the class as a whole (see tables 4 and 5), suggesting that these four students provided a fairly typical example. The largest category of comments from the NS students were suggestions (39% for these four students compared to 42% for the class as a whole) and the largest category of comments from the NNS students were positive evaluations (41% for these four students compared to 40% for the class as a whole). The other categories were also similar except for fewer clarification RO comments (these are typically questions asked about a concept in the text e.g. "citizens of?").

However, between individual students more dramatic differences can be seen. For example, Marta received many more alteration comments than any other student here (the largest category of comments she receives) and received fewer positive evaluation comments. When giving comments, Marta provided many more positive evaluation comments than the other students. Philipp was the only student interviewed who makes alteration comments, which was the largest category of comments he made.

In the profiles below, the reasons behind these figures are explored through the interviews.

4.4.1 Philipp's reflections

In the questionnaire Philipp commented that he had had little experience of peer response before but disagreed that it was challenging to give comments to students in Sweden although he was neutral about responding to the American students. He stated that it was easier to provide comments to students from the same discipline and the same country. He responded that all comments were useful for improving his text, from the teacher, students in Sweden and American students, though the teacher's comments were most useful.

Of the comments he gave, the majority (36%) were alterations followed by suggestions (31%) He was the only student interviewed who made alteration comments. He commented that he and his partner tried to keep "a balance between positive and some critical feedback" although he only made 5 positive evaluation comments out of 42. He appreciated the length of the American comments and commented that "I think I was a bit lazy but it's quite nice they write such long feedback we just wrote the small comments". Initially he felt that responding to native speakers of English would be "impossible" (his words) but when he saw their texts he commented "while it was going on I felt like I could really help them also because there were a lot of word mistakes and sentence structure". He was surprised at some of the mistakes a native speaker could make (confusing "whether" and "weather" for example) but felt it was easier to comment on local issues like vocabulary and sentence structure than global issues such as the structure of the text. In making comments on local issues, he felt he was helped a lot by his partner who he said was widely read in English.

Of the comments he received, the vast majority were suggestions (50%) followed by positive evaluation comments (30%). He noted several times that the comments were positive and that the response strategy the reviewers used was to start with positive feedback and then discuss issues to be improved ("it's written very professionally"). He appreciated the fact that he received positive comments ("good to hear that from a native speaker") but adds "it's nice to read this but maybe not too helpful".

He noted that they provided structural comments on his text which were useful and commented that he made a lot of changes to his text, especially when the peer comments coincided with the teacher feedback on the text. However, he felt that there were cultural differences in presenting an argument in that the Americans were more focused on building strong arguments whereas he commented that "I'm more into writing objective than trying to keep things always positive". In other words, his focus was not to be positive but to provide clear objective comments.

4.4.2 Anna's reflections

In the questionnaire, Anna commented that she had no experience of peer responding before and thought it was challenging to give comments to students in the course and even more challenging to give comments to students at the other university. One reason for this could be that she felt that it was more challenging to give comments to students who are proficient in English. She answered that it was easier to provide comments to students within the same discipline and easier to provide comments face to face. She commented that both the teacher comments and comments from the American students were useful in improving her text but less so the comments from the students in Sweden.

Of the comments she gave, the majority (46%) were suggestions followed by positive evaluation comments (38%). She also commented that she tried to be positive ("Yeah we wanted to sound nice of course") and she described their strategies for doing this including using question marks rather than making statements; giving explanations and adding smileys. She expressed reservations about commenting on language ("it's every time the same with grammar mistakes that you're not really sure is it really right because that's their mother tongue they should know it"). Her main comments focused on design issues to do with the texts.

Of the comments she received, the majority (47%) were positive evaluation comments followed by suggestions (39%). She noticed and appreciated that the American students

provided a balance of comments ("what they really did is to write both of the things about our text as well to comment parts of the text that were really good … that's actually really nice") but when one of her texts received only positive comments, she commented "it's really nice that they give so many positive feedback but you want something …I can change …. so yeah it's not really useful". She also noticed strategies the American students used to make comments more positive ("they really did a good job in make a negative comment positive"). In other words, she appreciated a suggestion made in a positive way but was critical when comments were only positive.

4.4.3 Marta's reflections
In the questionnaire Marta commented that she had no experience of peer response before and thought it was challenging to provide peer response both to the students in her own group and the other university. She felt though that it was easier to give comments to students who were proficient in English, in a similar discipline and from the same country, even though she was the only student of chemical engineering and the only student from Spain on the course. She felt that all the comments she received – from the teacher, from the NNS students and the NS students, were useful in improving her texts.

Of the comments she gave, the majority (63%) were positive evaluation comments followed by suggestions (29%) and of the four students, she made by far the most text comments (a total of 52 comments). In the interview, she described her strategy in making comments. She modelled her peer response on the response the American students provided ("so then when I saw the correction of (American university's) then I can decide how to write on my way") and she also checked the instructions the students received for their assignment from their professor ("so I read this what want the teacher and then just compare with the student questionnaires"). She also thought about the instructions on peer response provided in class and understood that every paragraph should have a comment (though this was not part of the instructions) and used this as one of the reasons for her relatively high number of positive

comments ("you told us that we should write each paragraph so sometimes you don't have anything to say so just say good sometimes"). She discussed her comments with a classmate before adding them to the text ("it's like you have your opinion I have my opinion it's never contradictory you want write this write this and I think this we wrote the both"). She also discussed her increased awareness of the audience of the text she was writing ("you have to think about your audience here in this course I can think more about the audience it was not in my mind before this course"). Despite the large number of positive comments she made, when she was asked if she thought their proposal was a good one, she answered "the idea was really weak" and "is not feasible for me" which never became apparent in the comments she made.

Of the comments she received, the majority (37%) were alteration comments, which were one / two word corrections of language errors, many more than any other student. The second largest group of comments (27%) were suggestions and she received few positive evaluation comments (4 out of 59 comments made) though it should also be noted that Marta received the highest number of encouraging comments given (e.g. "I hope these corrections help! Best of luck with your proposal."), presumably as a result of the large number of alteration comments. She was positive about the comments she received ("I'm really satisfied with this") and attributed the brevity of the comments to lack of time from her responders ("I think they don't have too much time to write… I'm a student so I have the same problem"). She also noted ways that the American students made their comments more polite (although the majority of the comments she received were very direct). She commented "Yeah they are really polite because they write like "might" or "maybe" or you know for me I mean when I receive this it's like yeah they don't attack". She appreciated getting feedback from different people ("if you can exchange with different students you can receive the information in different spheres"). She stated that she often made changes to her text when the student comments matched the teacher comments.

4.4.4 David's reflections

In the questionnaire David commented that he had little experience of peer response before the exchange but did not think it was challenging to provide comments to students from his group or the other group. He answered that it was easier to comment on students from the same discipline, the same country, that were proficient in English and that he knew well. He thought that the teacher's comments were useful in improving his writing but was neutral as whether this was the case with peer feedback.

Of the comments he gave, the majority (48%) were positive evaluation comments followed by suggestions (33%). In the interview, he summed up the type of comments made "I think we make two types of comments the comments to change and the comments to magnify the parts that was really good in the text". In terms of making positive comments, there were two key motivations "we think you must be kind" and this was partly because of the fact that "we don't know them". Of all the students interviewed, David emphasised that personal contact is important and that it was a clear advantage to him that he knew the students in the class at the Swedish university. When commenting on his classmates, he stated "if it's a friend of us we can make more severe comments".

In the suggestions that he and his classmates made to the American students, he remarked that many suggestions were to do with not understanding the context described. For example, the students wrote about a restaurant and David was unclear whether the restaurant was eat-in or take-away which would most likely be obvious to the American students reading. When they wanted to make a comment on language, David remarked that they added a question mark (which he refers to as an exclamation point) "because sometimes we find a mistake but we thought they are from USA so they must know much better than us English so we put here put a comma here but with the exclamation point because we don't know if it is really correct". This is the same explanation provided by Anna.

Of the comments he received, the majority were positive evaluation comments (49%) followed by suggestions (47%). He described these comments in general as being "really helpful" and appreciated that he received feedback and had a chance to revise before uploading his text on the course platform to be graded. He particularly appreciated the comments he received on his language errors in the literature review. However, for the proposal he felt that "they didn't suggest anything almost anything". He did not agree with some of the suggestions made "we don't know if they really read all the text because it was written". However, he interpreted the fact that he did not receive so many suggestions on the proposal as proof that "they say our text it was really good I think".

4.5 General findings from the interviews

There are certain trends revealed in the interviews which it seems are likely to apply to the group as a whole, since they are issues that most of the students interviewed bring up, regardless of their level, background and interests. In this section, I will focus on the students' uncertainty in making comments; student strategy in giving comments; student reasons for making positively phrased comments and finally student reactions to positive comments.

4.5.1 NNS students' uncertainty in giving comments

The students interviewed give some insight into the NNS students' issues in giving comments to NS students. When peer response was discussed and carried out in class, the three main areas were content, structure and language. The NNS students were encouraged to focus on content and structure since they would receive language feedback from the teacher.

When it came to giving feedback to the American students, the NNS students had issues with language, unfamiliarity with the content, issues in understanding the structure, cultural issues, the stage the draft was at and the time given, depending on their own level of proficiency. As regards language for example, Marta commented "I have a little problem with the grammar on my own so for me it is difficult to say here you have an error".

Familiarity with the content was also an issue, both in terms of what the NS students were writing about and what the requirements for the task were. The NS students were writing a proposal and feasibility study to help an organisation near or on campus to improve some aspect of their workplace. It was difficult for the NNS students to understand this context at times since some of the issues worked with were very location specific. Philipp commented "I think it's not so easy to comment on things you have no background on it".

Structure could also be problematic in that it was felt it took more time to understand the structure. Philipp commented for example that "I think it's really hard to give comments on the structure of the whole text because then you have to really put a lot of time and effort to read the whole text a few times"

Time was felt generally to be in short supply. The students were given class time to comment (and could complete at home) but they wanted to complete the comments in class time while they had their classmates there with them since they often gave their response in groups. It was also not felt to be worth spending the time sometimes since they were dealing with a first draft and the structure would change. David comments that "Because this was the first draft so I think they didn't put so much effort into the structure".

4.5.2 Experience and strategies in giving peer response

One issue in providing feedback to the NS students was that of previous experience of peer response. In the questionnaire 85 % of the students answered that they had no or very little experience of peer response. That number increased to 99% when asked if they had experience of peer response online. This was also the case for the four students interviewed about the exchange. Marta comments "I'm not get used to make comments from other people so I'm not really critical in that kind of things". In the States however, the students were used to providing peer response from previous courses. In a personal communication with the

American students' professor, in answer to the question "how much experience of peer review do the American students have?" the reply was:

"Overall, plenty. Almost all will have had substantial experience in high school, middle school, and even elementary school. At (name of university), peer review is in some classes in most majors."[2]

In the interviews, the students provided some insight into strategies used in giving peer response comments. One strategy was that of using the comments they had received from the teacher or from the American students as a guideline to how this should be done. Marta commented for example "First I received one comments so then I was sure that the comments I should write should be similar". She also commented "a lot of these comments I did it after your comments about my proposal I think so then I can compare".

As mentioned earlier, one reason for the NNS students providing fewer comments was because they worked in groups. This also provided a sense of security in being able to discuss their impressions with each other. Marta provided some insight into the process here: "when I'm with pair with (name of student) it's like you have your opinion I have my opinion it's never contradictory you want write this write this and I think this we wrote the both". She explained that when she worked with the other student they had their opinions, discussed these and then wrote the feedback together. David similarly explained that "First we read the texts and then we had a discussion then we just comment". This process gave them the chance to check their own responses to the text as one way of giving them confidence in the peer response process. The process was also time consuming, however, as discussed in the last section.

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[2] Email correspondence with Professor Paul Anderson, 1 July 2014

4.5.3 Reasons for giving positively phrased comments from NNS students

As shown in 4.1, the NNS students gave a proportionally large number of positive evaluation comments to the NS students. The second largest group of text comments made was suggestions which also involved phrasing in a more polite way. In the interview, a number of reasons were given for this. Firstly and most obviously, they thought the NS students wrote well and they wanted to show that. David remarked that "you should not just write something to change on the text ". Secondly, positive comments were a way of creating a positive relationship, particularly since they did not know these students. Marta commented that "I think because we don't have contact with the (American university) students you're more nice with these people than the people here ". Thirdly, they tried to follow the teacher instructions, which had encouraged them to provide positive comments and to have a balance of comments in their texts. Finally, they made a positive comment when they had nothing else to say about the text.

In terms of content comments, they talked about the fact that they were not familiar with the requirements for the American assignments and did not know them so well, which meant that they were more careful in their comments. They were also careful in providing language comments since they were responding to native speakers, and students who they did not know very well. Anna commented "It's a little bit difficult because it's their mother tongue".

4.5.4 Reactions to positively phrased comments received from NS students

The largest group of comments made by the NS students were suggestions (42%) followed by positive evaluation comments (29%). The NNS students were positive on the whole to receiving these comments, especially from native speakers. Philipp commented for example that "Of course good to hear that from a native speaker is nice". However, in texts which were dominated by positive comments this was not seen as helpful and students expressed disappointment in not receiving comments which could help them improve their texts. Anna's comment "it's really nice that they give so many positive feedback but you want something

that they can criticise" summed up the general feeling. Both Philipp and Anna were suspicious of the positive comments although they are strong writers and thought the responders had left out information to be kind or because they had not given enough time to the response. Philipp commented that "[I]t's nice but they could have been more critical I don't sure maybe this is really her opinion that it was so perfect but I don't really think so". Philipp related this to a cultural issue – that Americans were more positive in general and commented "I think there's also some cultural differences between giving feedback I think for me it seems they're more positive" and Anna comments "she hadn't the time to to really think about it". Only David assumed that the dominance of positive evaluation comments means that he had written a good text "because in this text we worked a lot so we send to there it was like almost everything had changed everything corrected so we like the comments because they say our text it was really good".

Chapter 5 Discussion of results, implications, limitations and further work

5.1 Discussion of results

Peer response between NS and NNS students can be complex. Issues of cultural background, language proficiency and teaching background become even more prominent in this environment when a relatively homogenous group (the NS students in this study) are connected to a relatively heterogeneous group (the NNS students). The NNS students surveyed felt it was easier to give feedback to students from the same background in terms of country and discipline and some studies (Carson and Nelson, 2006) also corroborate this as an easier way of working. Further complications were the fact that the students in the exchange did not know each other very well; that they were communicating asynchronously online and that they were working with different projects i.e. they were not familiar with the content of each other's assignments.

If Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) is applied to this situation and peer response is categorised as a Face Threatening Act, it can be seen that there are a number of issues in this peer response environment concerning power, distance and rank of imposition. At first glance, it appears that, although both groups are students, it is the NS students who control the power balance. They are working in their first language and they have much more experience of giving peer response. However, the NNS students were more experienced writers within the university, since the majority (80%) were in their fourth or fifth year of study and had completed their Bachelor's theses whereas the NS students were mainly second or fourth year students. Since few of the students in the different groups were within the same disciplines, they also held the power balance there, in that they had more content knowledge on the topic they were writing on than their peer responders. In terms of distance, there was no previous acquaintance and no contact before the course or outside of the course. This imbalance in the relationship meant that part of the peer response process involved creating a positive relationship.

5.1.1 Proportion of positively phrased comments

The vast majority of the comments made from both the NS and NNS were positive evaluation comments (comments praising the text) and positively phrased suggestions; the NS giving a total of 71% positively phrased comments and the NNS giving a total of 72% positively phrased comments. The NS gave mostly suggestions (42%) and the NNS gave mostly positive evaluation comments (40%). This compares to the data from Guardado and Shi (2007) who also examine positive comments in peer response online though just for ESL students, and similarly found that positive comments dominated in the feedback.

These types of comments used both positive and negative politeness strategies such as praising the writing and hedging when providing a suggestion. These strategies are similar for both NS and NNS students, for example in praising, both groups use "good" though the NS students use a wider variety of adjectives such as "strong", "nice", "great" and "clear". More differences are displayed in the negative politeness strategies. The NNS students tended to use question marks; adverbs like "perhaps" and "maybe"; and verbs such as "believe", "hope" and "think". The NS students used modals such as "could" and "might" to a greater extent. In both cases though, the hedging was used to "sugarcoat the pill" (Johnson, 1989) rather than to strengthen the suggestion, for example, modals like "must" were not used.

Interestingly, the majority of positive evaluation comments were made after the first assignment. For the NNS students, the number of positive evaluation comments they made from the first to the second assignment dropped from 52% to 27% and for the NS students, from 36% to 22% suggesting that once the relationship had been created, it was easier to be more critical. It could also be that they were more familiar with each other's work on the second round and therefore it was easier to recommend changes to the texts.

Although the results are fairly similar for the group as a whole, the figures for individual students vary more dramatically. For example, the NNS student who identified himself as a confident writer, Philipp, made the most alteration comments (that is direct changes with no

hedging) of all the NNS students. The NNS student who was one of the least certain of her writing abilities, Marta, provided by far the largest number of positive evaluation comments in the NNS group and received the largest number of alteration comments.

5.1.2 The reasons for the NNS students' positively phrased comments

As mentioned above, the majority of the NNS students' comments were positive evaluation comments and the second largest group were suggestions. There were positive reasons for this but also reasons concerning following teacher instructions and the students' own limitations. Positive reasons given in the interview included wanting to praise the writer for their good work; wanting to provide a balance of both positive and critical comments and wanting to create a good relationship. Some also commented that this was a requirement from the teacher that they should make positive comments and therefore they followed instructions.

As regards limitations, students commented that they felt unsure about the content, structure and language required in their partner's text; therefore, they made positive comments or no comments when they were not sure what to say. In terms of content, this was unfamiliar to them, sometimes because of the cultural references; therefore, they were unsure if an aspect was generally unclear or just unclear to them. In terms of language, they were often wary of commenting on the language in a NS text and when they did, they were usually careful in how to phrase their comment. In terms of structure, they were unclear if the text structure would change since it was a first draft and also felt that it took more time to make structural comments. Time was generally felt to be a short supply since they made their comments in groups in class after discussion with one another. Finally, they had little or no previous experience of peer response, as shown in the questionnaire, and therefore used the NS comments and teacher comments as models for what to do.

When Marta was asked if she thought her peer group had written a strong proposal, since she gave it so many positive evaluation comments, she commented that it was "weak" and "not

feasible" which were ideas she never expressed anywhere in her feedback, presumably due to her lack of confidence in her writing abilities.

5.1.3 The NNS students' reactions to the positively phrased comments

The NNS students interviewed were happy to receive positive evaluation comments and suggestions, especially from NS students of English, but reacted when the feedback was dominated by positive evaluation comments. One of the students interviewed, David, who generally received lower grades for his writing on the course, felt that this was a sign that he had produced good work but two of the students, Philipp and Anna who both received top grades for their writing, felt that their peer responders had left critical information out and wished they had received more suggestions to work with in their writing. They attributed the number of positive evaluation comments to cultural differences or the peer responders not taking time over the response. For example, Philipp comments that the American students are generally more positive and Anna speculates over the time taken. In Guardado and Shi's study (2007) where the ESL students had Japanese backgrounds and limited English proficiency, the reasons given for the positive comments are cultural issues, i.e. students avoiding conflict, or lack of language proficiency.

5.2 Implications of the study

A key contribution of this study is the focus on NS and NNS peer response online and the role positive feedback plays in building a relationship between two groups with different competencies and no previous contact with each other. Though some studies recommend a combination of online and face-to-face feedback (Liu and Sadler, 2003; Guardado and Shi, 2007; Ho and Savignon, 2007), in an exchange such as this one, face-to-face contact is not possible. Creating a positive relationship online becomes then even more important.

One consequence of this is the teaching of peer response in the classroom. As mentioned in section 2.2, training for peer response is crucial for it to work successfully (Berg, 1999). This study shows that since peer response can take many forms, training needs to take this into

consideration. A peer response activity taking place in the classroom face-to-face with students from the same country who know each other will require different sorts of comments from a multicultural online peer response exchange. In the latter case, students need more time in order to create a relationship and need to be encouraged to explain their comments in greater detail when there is little possibility to discuss them. In particular, the role of positive comments in creating a relationship can be discussed in the classroom, which is an important part of intercultural competence.

Another implication is the individual student in this process. This study has shown that students make and interpret comments differently depending on many factors including their language level, writing level, confidence and previous experience. A discussion of this with students would be useful as well as enabling students to work with different individuals to broaden the types of comments they receive.

A final implication of this study is the possible implications for the workplace. Though a classroom-based task cannot be directly compared to a work task, it could be useful to reflect on the role positive comments can play when groups from different countries need to work on a collaborative task together.

5.3 Limitations and further work

In order to make more concrete recommendations concerning the implications of this study, more work is needed. In terms of this study, one key step would be to interview the NS students involved in the exchange with the same questions to be able to compare their interpretations of the comments with the NNS interpretations. Another key step would be to have the categorisation of the comments and the interview coding checked by others to verify my interpretation of them.

 This is also a small study involving 45 university students and it would be interesting to extend the study to see if similar results were shown. Since Guardado and Shi (2007) show

similar results for the ESL classroom with students of lower language proficiency, it could be interesting to do a similar investigation in the workplace for example or compare the positive feedback given face-to-face to that given online. A next step could also be to try to observe the effects of the positively phrased comments on the text drafts and whether they show more improvement than other drafts.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This study has investigated the process of NS and NNS university engineering students giving and receiving peer response to one another online, focusing on the NNS perspective. This scenario is interesting for a number of reasons in our globalised society. Firstly, it is a reflection of the multicultural university where increasingly, particularly at Master's level, the student population can contain students from many different countries. Secondly, it is a reflection of the workplace where companies can have subsidiaries in various different countries. Due to this, the practice of working together online has become a norm in many companies. Thirdly, it is a reflection of engineering practice where writing often happens collaboratively and feedback is common practice.

This thesis aimed to provide a clearer understanding of the strategies students employ when giving peer response in a multicultural, monolingual, online environment. In particular, this thesis focused on the comments used to promote a positive relationship and the apparent success of these comments. Key findings are that positively phrased comments play an important role in forming relationships in these environments but that the majority should not only be positively phrased but also contain concrete suggestions in order to fulfil the purpose and expectations of peer response. This thesis also shows that the nature of the comments can change over time as the peer response relationship develops. Finally, there are differences in the ways individuals approach peer response based on confidence, previous experience and level. There are therefore consequences in the way that peer response is taught in the classroom to prepare students for the particular environment they will be working in.

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CHALMERS

KURSUTVÄRDERINGAR

Chalmers Elon Exchange spring 2014

Contact for this evaluation is <u>Becky Bergman»</u>.

Your answer is anonymous. Your computer's ip address will however be saved to prevent abuse.

Questionnaire on Chalmers Elon exchange 2014

This questionnaire is part of a research project looking at intercultural communication in online writing platforms. This questionnaire should take no more than 20 minutes to complete and will be used as a basis for the interviews. Please note the following:

-your answers will only be read by the researchers in the project
-the answers to the questionnaires will be deleted when the research project
is finished. Your time and effort is much appreciated!

Experience of peer response

This section aims to find out more about your previous experience of peer response

1. Did you have experience before this course of giving peer response on other students' texts face-to-face?

    Yes, a lot

    Yes, some

    Not very much

    None at all

2. Did you have experience before this course of giving peer response on other students' texts online?

    Yes, a lot

    Yes, some

    Not very much

    None at all

Giving comments

This section is designed to get your impressions of giving comments. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

3. It was difficult for me to give comments to students at my own university on their written work.

Agree strongly
Agree
Neutral
 Disagree
Disagree strongly

4. It was difficult for me to give comments to students at the other university on their written work.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

5. It is easier for me to provide comments to students I know well.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

 Disagree

Disagree strongly

6. It is easier for me to provide comments to students who are proficient in English.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

 Disagree

Disagree strongly

7. It is easier for me to provide comments to students studying in a similar discipline to myself.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

8. It is easier for me to provide comments to students from the same country as myself.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

9. It is easier for me to provide comments when I can provide them face-to-face rather than in writing.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

10. What factors not mentioned in questions 3-9 make it easier for you to provide comments?

11. I felt that I made longer comments to the other university students than to students at my own university.

Agree strongly

Agree

 Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

12. I felt that I needed to explain my comments more to the other university students than to students at my own university.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

13. I felt that I needed to be more polite to the other university students than to students at my own university.

Agree strongly

Agree

 Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

Receiving comments

This section is designed to get your impressions of receiving comments. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

14. Comments on my drafts from the teacher were useful in improving my texts.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

15. Comments on my drafts from the students at my own university were useful in improving my texts.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

16. Comments on my drafts from the students at the other university were useful in improving my texts.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

17. It would be helpful if you could comment on what made the comments in qus.14-16 more useful.

General questions on the exchange

This section is designed to get your impression of the exchange as a whole. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

18. The exchange was an interesting part of the course.
Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

19. The exchange was a useful part of the course in terms of my development as a writer.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

20. The exchange should be included as part of future courses.

Agree strongly

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Disagree strongly

Your cultural background

This section is designed to get a clearer picture of your cultural background.

21. Which year of university studies are you in?

First

Second

Third

Fourth

Fifth

22. What is your major / what discipline are you studying?

23. In which country were you born?

24. In which country have you spent the most time?

25. How many countries outside your home country have you spent at least one month in?

0

1
2
3 or more

**26. How many countries have you
visited outside of your home country?**

0
1
2-5
6 or more

27. Which language(s) did you grow up speaking at home?

**28. Is English your first
language?**

Yes
No

**29. Excluding your first language, how many languages do you feel comfortable
using for everyday purposes (e.g. reading the newspaper, having a chat?)**

0
1
2
3 or more

30. What is your name?

Your answers will be anonymous in the research study. We just need your name to
be able to connect questionnaire responses to possible interview responses.

Thank you!

Thank you for your cooperation. Your input is essential to this research project and
is much appreciated. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, you are
welcome to contact Linda Bradley if you are a Chalmers student
(bradley@chalmers.se) or Becky Bergman (becky@chalmers.se).

Interview Questions 2014

PART 1 – ABOUT COMMENTS MADE TO THE (AMERICAN UNIVERSITY) STUDENTS

1. Please tell me your thoughts about the exchange with the (American university) students.

2. Please tell me how you decided what to comment on.

3. Let's look at specific comments you made.

If the comment included a suggestion

    a. Why did you pick this point to comment on?

    b. Why did you choose to phrase this point in the way that you did?

Optional: If the answer involves a comment on politeness:

    c. Why did you feel that this was a polite way to phrase it?

If the comment did not include a suggestion

    a. Why did you make this comment?

    b. Why did you phrase it this way?

Optional: If the answer involves a comment on politeness

    c. Why did you feel that this was a polite way to phrase it?

4. Did you comment on every point where you thought improvement could be made?
    a. If not, what kinds of comments did you omit?

    b. Why did you omit them?

Optional: If the answer involves a comment on politeness

    c.   Why did you feel that this was polite?

5. In what ways, if any, did you approach commenting on the (American university) drafts differently than you approached commenting on your (Swedish university) classmates' drafts?

    a.   Were there differences due to cultural differences?

    b.   Were there differences because you were using the Internet rather than meeting face to face?

    c.   Were there differences because you didn't have the same level of acquaintance with your partner (at the American university) as with your (Swedish university) classmates?

Optional: If any of these answers involve a comment on politeness:

    d.   Please say more about why you feel this was polite.

(Swedish university) / (American university) Research Project

Interview Questions 2014

PART 2 – RESPONSES TO COMMENTS MADE BY (AMERICAN UNIVERSITY) STUDENTS

1. Please describe your overall thoughts about the comments you received from the (American university) students.

2. Let's look at the specific comments you received.

If the comment included a suggestion, did you or your team make a change as a result?

    a.   If yes, what was it (if you remember)?

      b. If no, why not?

If the comment did not include a suggestion, how did you feel about it?

3. Did these comments provide the kind of feedback you hoped for? Please explain.

4. Do you have any other thoughts about the comments you received on this paper?

5. Overall, did the comments by the (American university) students differ from those by your (Swedish university) classmates?

- Were there differences due to cultural differences?

- Were there differences because you were using the Internet rather than meeting face to face?

- Were there differences because you didn't have the same level of acquaintance with your (American university) partners as with your (Swedish university) classmates?

6. What did you learn about peer reviewing from the (American university) students' comments?

7. What did you learn about your own writing from the (American university) students' comments?

8. What suggestions do you have for me about improving this exchange in the future?

Jefferson's transcription system (1972)

(   ) Stretches of talk that transcriber is uncertain about because the words were hard to hear or understand

(words) Transcriber is not certain that those were the words spoken, but is making an informed guess

(( )) Transcriber's descriptions of talk or behaviour such as ((laughter))

[ ] Overlapping talk – two participants are speaking at the same time

(.) short pause

(3.0) Pause of 3.0 seconds in the talk being transcribed

? Rising intonation at end of phrase

. "Sentence-final" type of falling intonation at end of phrase

! Intonation of surprise or forcefulness at end of phrase

Interviewee 1: Philipp (Austrian)

Interviewer:	OK, ermm so the first question is just your thoughts your thoughts about the exchange
Interviewee:	yeah I think it was an interesting experience it's good connecting with students from really another part of the world erm it's it's maybe because at the mid term course evaluation meeting I think you mentioned that the whole project is also about um um getting to know other culture and that stuff and I expected it more when you introduced it in the beginning that it's really about finding mistakes and things and maybe it would also be nice to mention this also at the beginning of the course
Interviewer:	Mmm true yeah when you had to comment on their texts how did you decide what to comment on?
Interviewee:	At first I thought it would be impossible for me to give comments on English speaking people but while it was going on I felt like I could really help them also because there were a lot of word mistakes and sentence structure I think I'm quite good in writing in German and also writing in English then and er and I think that really helps I thought they would be really perfect texts from the English people but it was not the case it was quite easy to go through it it's also good to give comments I think I'm not sure how they appreciated it
Interviewer:	I'm sure they did did you get any particular comments? ( ) I've printed out the comments that you made, you made them with different people erm this one is the I have the proposal and the feasibility study like I see here you wrote this one with Christoph and this one you wrote with Branko I think it's BB anyway I think it's Branko if we could maybe start with the proposal and I would like you just to work through the comments that you made there and say why you made why did you pick that thing to make a

	comment on and why did you phrase it in this way that's the first comment there I think
Interviewee:	I think that's a very positive comment it's structure in general
Interviewer:	But why did you make the comment?
Interviewee:	Why yeah because we thought it's really a good structure we always had erm I think at the first I don't know if I should mention that now ((Becky nods)) with the first few things with the CV and that stuff most of the comments were about the structure and that it's very different between American group and I felt it was not so helpful then because maybe it was interesting to know it but er maybe we should have known it before there's such big differences because most of the comments were just about the structure and you shouldn't put the photo and stuff I don't know if it's necessary to say here but I think the writing text it's more similar with the American style it's more to the idea of scientific work
Interviewer:	Do you remember why you phrased the comments in the way that you did?
Interviewee:	Just the words that I used? [mm] Just as you mentioned in the course that we should be really positive and not too hard with negative things [mm] because you never know how they will react when you give comments I think that's very important ( )
Interviewer: 6:49	Shall we go onto the next comment? The same question with the next comment. Why did you pick this to make a comment on?
Interviewee:	Yeah this is the description about the authors about them I think we are used to write things more formal I'm not really used to that kind of introduction Emily has had extensive experience I would write it in a more general way, not that personal ((reading)) I would never say we in a scientific paper we did something just the authors ( ) things about sentence structure just a repetition of two words [mm] the other things are mostly about this "we" something that really didn't fit in our mind that you would write something like this I've never done such a feasibility study I would never write it (3.0) definitely use this a lot lot of word repetitions all the sentences started with "we" it's also something we learned in school really early to not start the sentence always with the same "I" reorganise sentences to have some different start (3.0) that was about the same thing
Interviewer: 10:23	In this text did you comment on every point where you could make a comment or did you leave out any comments.
Interviewee:	Quite a time I'm not sure any more I think it's not so easy to comment on things you have no background on it we had to we needed some time to get into the topic because no one of us have the background we commented more on for us obvious things more on the words not so much on structure more on the words not so much sentence structure
Interviewer: 11:36	You mean more content you didn't ask maybe ask so much about some things to do with the content?
Interviewee:	Because yeah it wasn't so I remember it wasn't so easy to really er what they were writing about was not so familiar so we didn't know what structure should be used and more general about the content so we have focused more on for us obvious things
Interviewer: 12:20	Great can we move on to the feasibility study this was you making comments with Christoph I'm going to ask you very very similar questions looking at the specific comments that you made why you did you make that comment
Interviewee:	I think this text for us it was more clear what they were working on this one so we already got some background at the beginning it was quite helpful they wrote a short description very general what they were working on cos mostly with an abstract if you're not in that field it's quite hard that was quite helpful to get the general idea what they were writing about and then you can start reading the text that was why we just said it was an interesting topic because we knew what they were writing about then ( ) as I said

	before the obvious things first there was some conclusion about ((looking at paper)) the text addressed who they were writing to they used different words and that was one of the hardest things for us because they didn't really use commas and they were normally quite long sentences and it was really hard to follow [right] I normally use a lot of commas because it makes the sentence more readable
Interviewer: 15:01	Why did you phrase this comment the way that you did?
Interviewee:	I think we just wanted to say the things we mentioned but also like I said before in a nice way so it was a balance between positive and some critical feedback
Interviewer: 15.44	Maybe we can go on to the next comment? The same question why did you pick this point to comment on?
Interviewee:	I think this was something Christoph mentioned he thought this was ((laughs)) I don't really know this phrasing I don't comment on things I'm not really sure about I believe that the American people are better in phrasing in formality things in English (3.0) this was a double use of words (3.0) just a small mistake I think there and their
Interviewer: 17:00	That was using the same word twice was it?
Interviewee:	There and their ((pointing to text)) this was one of the things that I thought yeah ((laughs)) that's really strange if this is my mother tongue I remember that the formulations were also sometimes confusing sometimes we really worked hard on getting the content of the sentences what they really wanted to say a very long sentence we wrote that we don't understand the sentence this was what we mentioned before with the commas it was hard to follow the sentence (3.0) singular plural ( ) we also mentioned that it was not really sometimes they were talking about plural things and then singular like the farmer then they said "they" and it's not clear who they are talking to (3.0) this is a comment from Christoph as well because he's reading a lot of books in English and he's more common with formality in English he has a very broad vocabulary also singular plural things long sentences no commas ( ) this was also something what Christoph mentioned (2.0) long sentence strange ( ) this was also weather and whether
Interviewer: 20.29	It's confusing for native speakers as well
Interviewee:	Yeah really I was really surprised about some mistakes ( ) I think this was only the first draft but we also mentioned I think they worked in groups of 2 and think they just put together two parts they made separately and they used different fonts in two parts ( )
Interviewer: 21:40	And again looking at the comments that you made why did you choose to phrase them in the way that you did
Interviewee:	I think they were maybe short comments and not very I would say it's not really positive or negative the things that we mentioned just get the word it's just how we feel [mm]we should I think that's the way how we would accept comments from others not writing long sentences on one small part just picking out the things I thought that's useful to them
Interviewer: 22.50	Did you comment on every point where you thought they could improve their text do you think?
Interviewee:	I think as I said before mostly in the really obvious things like wording and sentence structure and not really about the structure of the whole text I think it was mostly on the wording (3.0) cos I think it's really hard to give comments on the structure of the whole text because then you have to really put a lot of time and effort to read the whole text a few times ( ) to really be able to say this is not good situated there you should put it here
Interviewer: 24.21	So in what ways if any did you approach commenting on the (American university) texts differently to how you commented on the other (Swedish university) student texts
Interviewee:	Yeah the difference was I think I normally focus on the obvious things but if I know the background like it was in the groups I think when we had energy topics in my groups I

	have quite a lot of background information when I read something, good structure or something's wrong then I can also comment on that it's much easier
Interviewer: 25.23	Thank you and then we're going to oh sorry no just thinking about the difference between the (American university)and the (Swedish university) students were there any differences due to cultural differences between commenting on the (American university)students and the (Swedish university) students
Interviewee:	As I said it depends much on what you are commenting on [on the content] yeah like with the CVs I think it's really difficult if you see for example a CV and it looks completely different from the things what you've learned for ten years now and er just to and the moment it's just very confusing so they 've put a lot put a lot of things different
Interviewer: 26.22	Right were there any differences because you were commenting on the internet rather than commenting face to face with the (Swedish university) students you could see them but with the (American university)students you were putting things on Wikispaces
Interviewee:	You mean me giving comments yeah I think of course it's easier to give feedback face to face
Interviewer: 26.43	Why is that?
Interviewee:	People can ask if they don't understand and here they can't really ask what we said I think it's yeah it also depends on who's giving comments
Interviewer: 27.10	Were there differences between the (American university) and (Swedish university) because of how well you knew them do you think? Ermm was it you didn't know the (American university) students as well as the (Swedish university) students did that make a difference do you think?
Interviewee:	I think not really big difference because I also met the people here for the first time it's just easier when you have a person sitting next to you giving comments [right] I think we intended to do the Skype but we didn't manage it to do this but it would be a nice idea at least to see them once it's quite difficult to do it that would make it much easier I think not only see a picture and small description but to see how they look like and how they are
Interviewer: 28.39	Hmm that was the first part of the interview and we're going to move on to the comments you received now from the (American university)students first of all what are your general comments about the comments you got from the (American university)students
Interviewee:	Very positive they I'm not sure if everyone did it like this but these two girls they really put a lot of time into making the comments proposal it was more than a page I think that they wrote so it was very helpful and I think they focused more on the structure things than on wording
Interviewer: 29.39	So we're going to take a look at some of the specific comments and I found that one on your literature review ((looking at paper)) and again very similar comments when you look at the comments you got erm what did you think when you saw these comments if you could start with the top comment maybe how did you react to this comment
Interviewee:	Very positive statement at the beginning your topic is very interesting always good to start with and then they commented on different types of the text
Interviewer: 31.03	If we take the next section the introduction comments what is the purpose of the comments here do they suggest things that you should do or are they positive comments
Interviewee:	The first one is very positive your introduction is clear it's good to state some figures (10.0)I think they start with the very positive things and then things ( ) it's a very pedagogical way to give feedback I don't know if they learned it always start with the positive things ( )
Interviewer: 32.23	If we start with the first positive comment then how did you feel about it when you saw it?
Interviewee:	(3.0)I thought it's really nice comment because it seems they really thought about the text (2.0) so I think for them it's easier to to because it's their mother tongue to get the whole

	idea of the text for me it was sometimes difficult to get the idea of the text it was difficult to get an overview of the text because there was a lot of phrases and words I wasn't used to for them it was easier
Interviewer:	When they make a suggestion there in the introduction did you make a change as a result of the suggestion? Do you remember?
Interviewee:	I think so
Interviewer: 33.45	Do you remember what you did?
Interviewee:	((laughs)) I think I changed it in some way but I'm not sure not exactly the same way mentioned or proposed here but I thought about it
Interviewer: 34.28	Moving down to the next set of comments on the main body there so same question how did you react to these comments
Interviewee:	(5.0) I think it's written very professionally I think I always did feedback as it is I just think about the things they mentioned here
Interviewer: 35.25	Would you say most of these comments are positive comments or comments that make a suggestion?
Interviewee:	More suggestions more about the structure (4.0) I think there's also maybe a small difference between America and Europe [in what way?] because they are always intending on making this a strong argument reformulate this (3.0) have to write it more yeah they mention that I state too much negative things and I should support my idea more but I think that's not really for a literature review maybe more for a proposal if you want to sell something but for a literature review it should be more objective I read a lot of background information and
Interviewer: 37.04	So did you make any changes as a result of these comments do you remember
Interviewee:	I'm not sure about that I think not really because I thought I'm more into writing objective than trying to keep things always positive
Interviewer: 37.36	OK same thing with the next set of comments then
Interviewee:	It's the same they think I need more arguments to for being positive about hydropower I think my purpose of the text was to also mention some negative aspects (3.0) yeah there is one thing that I could change because it's more on the that was really useful about the grammar usage because of the words of "good" "very" and "obviously" they said I shouldn't use these words in a professional text and I was not aware of this ( ) that's the last statement is also quite positive I think it says it's very well written but I can also take into account their comments for making ( ), it's nice quite long
Interviewer: 39.24	Would you say these comments provided the kind of feedback you were hoping for
Interviewee:	Yeah I think so ((looking at paper)) I think they were just they didn't mention anything about the wording but I think if there would have been any problems they would have mentioned it and the rest of things were things you don't really learn in school about paragraphing and using words in professional text and also about the structure and how the text should flow it was an interesting subject view on the text not only on the words
Interviewer: 40.53	Do you have any other thoughts about this text about these comments
Interviewee:	(5.0) no
Interviewer:	Your proposal then and er you had two sets of comments there and er maybe it's easier to start with that text and you can see your own proposal as well so again looking at the comments you received first what kind of comment is it is it positive is it a suggestion would you say is it something else and then what did you do as a result of that comment?
Interviewee:	For each? Yeah I think it's a suggestion but in a very positive way like I may break down

	this sentence then it's more like what we did on their text just writing the correction there (3.0) everyone's talking about giving more power ((reading)) I was not really sure what they mean with this (3.0) it's a mix of small comments on the structure and also small mistakes in words where I just write the correction [mm] it was interesting that this comment on structure were very similar to the ones Carina gave us so at first we erm there was no red line within the text just a mention to really important things at the very end we should be more concise (5.0) yeah yeah ((pointing at paper)) this was also quite helpful that we should explain the pictures and the graphs (3,0) yeah because if you're really into a topic you don't realise that others can't see anything out of these graphs for us it's really obvious it always depends which audience you're writing to I wasn't sure if (3.0) positive with good explanations very short [mm] also about the graph ( ) space between the ( ) explain it more in detail our idea [mmhm] I think they spilt it up the comments I think from here this is erm
Interviewer: 46.05	Mhm can I just ask if you made any changes as a result of the comments you got there?
Interviewee:	We did a lot of changes. I think that was very I mean at the same time we talked to Carina so we really quite restructured the text at least the introduction part it was really similar things they mentioned quite obvious for us that it's not maybe good enough yet
Interviewer: 46.46	Looking at these comments do they provide the kind of feedback you were hoping for?
Interviewee:	It's really helpful ( ) for me it was always fascinating that they also commented on the structure I don't know if they have connection to this topic but I think it's very hard to comment on the structure I think it's quite I was always surprised they could give comments on the structure cos I couldn't really do that
Interviewer:	So the final text here NEW FILM this is the second half of the proposal
Interviewee:	Yes there's a small introduction at the beginning where she says that she loves skiing and that's an important thing for her (2.0) and she mentions that she started from page 5 so for the second half, they split it up (3.0) it's a very general positive comment where she says you use great writing techniques and concise statements
Interviewer:	How did you feel about that?
Interviewee:	Of course good to hear that from a native speaker is nice (6.0) this is mostly positive (2.0) just one small suggestion
Interviewer:	And how did you feel about that?
Interviewee:	OK she mentions that we could make the conclusion stronger yes of course it was quite ( ) I think it's always difficult if the comments are too positive because then you don't really know I think there's always something to improve with a text so it's nice to read this but maybe not too helpful
Interviewer: 3.08	So did these comments provide the kind of feedback you'd hoped for?
Interviewee:	It's nice but they could have been more critical I don't sure maybe this is really her opinion that it was so perfect but I don't really think so
Interviewer:	So overall looking at the comments from the (American university)students, were they different from the kinds of comments you got from the other (Swedish university) students
Interviewee:	I think they were more in detail they seemed to put a lot of effort in it I think there's also some cultural differences between giving feedback I think for me it seems they're more positive maybe they're always mentioning a lot of positive things I just mention the points that maybe could be changed also I think if something is something is good I don't comment on everything I think.
Interviewer:	Do you think there are any differences because you're getting their comments by internet

	rather than meeting them face to face
Interviewee:	Yes I think so
Interviewer:	In what way?
Interviewee:	Yeah I think it's easier when you can talk to someone but it's not really possible and this was also very helpful
Interviewer:	Was there a difference because you didn't know them in the same way as you knew the (Swedish university) students
Interviewee:	Not really (3.0) as I said I also didn't really know these people before
Interviewer:	What do you think you learned about peer reviewing from the (American university) student comments?
Interviewee:	Also taking into account or trying to give comments on the structure as they did but it's er quite challenging and (3.0) I think I was a bit lazy but it's quite nice they write such long feedback we just wrote the small comments
Interviewer:	Erm what did you learn about your own writing if anything from the (American university) students comments?
Interviewee:	As they mostly gave very positive feedback I thought that my writing was quite good but I was not really sure about that because it seemed they generally were mostly positive about things and also yeah about things I mentioned about structural things and also words in a professional text it was small things but quite helpful to hear it from a person speaking English
Interviewer:	So the final question do you have any suggestions for me for improving this exchange in the future?
Interviewee:	As we said in the evaluation the balance is in the beginning there were a lot of small things to comment on a lot of different things the first term was quite busy there were so many deadlines and you always had to upload a lot of things every week and in the second term it wasn't really a lot of work apart from that I think it's a really nice idea and I think it's a lot of work to organise this
Interviewer:	Yes ((laughing))
Interviewee:	I'm not sure if most people appreciate it but I think it's nice of you
Interviewer:	Thank you and that's the end of the interview.

Interviewee 2: Anna (Austrian)

Interviewer:	OK that's off erm yeah the interview is in two parts and it takes about an hour in total and the first part is looking at the comments you made to the (American university) students and the second part is looking at the comments you got from the (American university)students and some thoughts about that erm but before we get into the texts if you just could tell me your thoughts about the exchange with the (American university)students in general
Interviewee:	Honestly in the first time it was so busy it was really additional work and so we really not spend so much time in giving the feedbacks to the (American university)guys because there were other classes and this class was really busy and it was actually more writing down and not really look again and I think in the CV you will see this in my text but yeah but otherwise but actually it's **r**eally nice if you have someone whose mother tongue is English because I recognise before it's every time when I give the text to someone who speaks the same language with me but maybe is better in English they really change the complete text really completely because I think they want to put it in their own language because they maybe not so used to a different type of English and when I give it to someone who really speaks that language from childhood on they mostly change only a

	few things not everything so that's really nice because here the others were like me maybe better in English maybe worse but it's not their mother tongue so it's they all wanted to change it to their own language and because of this it was nice that you have had the people in the USA who didn't really want to change everything but just wanted to get better that was a nice thing
Interviewer: 2.42	In general when you were looking at the (American university)texts erm how did you decide what to comment on
Interviewee:	It's a little bit difficult because it's their mother tongue so really the grammar things it's really should I do this it's maybe ahh I don't know but first with the CVs and with the advertisement this letter it's (every time it's different) that's of course it was difficult and you read before what they have done and they basically wrote you can put this there and this there like they wanted to change our CVs to their design and I really didn't want to do this so I basically compared the two styles and wanted to explain them why we do it like this but I didn't criticise and with the proposal first thought it was quite short they only had two of these pages but it was good one of the (American university)students was studying English and she was really in to writing and she wrote both the texts and the only really big thing we changed is that we in the end we get to know that only one of the three girls wrote the text because she wrote I and then with my students and maybe something you can change but otherwise the text was really good we really couldn't change one big thing in the topic and in grammar it was only few things it wasn't really something to criticise
Interviewer: 5.04	I've got the texts here and we can take a closer look this is the proposal then and you commented on the same people I think both in the proposal and in the feasibility study ok so I'd like you just to go through the comments that you made here and my first question is why did you choose that point to make a comment and my second question is why did you write the comment in this way what were you thinking when you phrased the comment in this way so if we start with your first comment yup
Interviewee:	It's what I said we not really get why they started with "I" because they were more than one at first they were I think three That was the first comment and it was a question mark because we didn't know why they did this(…) I think (…) I don't know why I did this with the page break maybe look at it later erm yeah because it was the other side of the text but I think it was only with the different word versions and not really something then there are 2 lines between them so it's really only design things actually and then the next they didn't have any lines between the graphic and the text yeah we not get what's this task graphic should mean what's the blue colour and the green colour we only ask if they can explain it more basically yeah that's again that only one girl Mackenzie wrote it the others I don't know that they should change it maybe ( )yeah there was one grammar mistake with the however we really thought a lot if you have to put a comma there after however
Interviewer: 8:26	Usually you do [but it's not necessary] I think your suggestion is a good idea (..) usually you do as you say normally you put a comma after however
Interviewee:	That's something we really thought about it quite a lot because like I said it's their mother tongue they know that probably better than we and so we really thought should we write something down or not but then we decided yeah but maybe with a question it doesn't mean it's it's do not have to be right what we say but it could be it's every time the same with grammar mistakes that you're not really sure is it really right because that's their mother tongue they should know it and so it's really write with a question and yeah maybe look into it again and no that's wrong and yeah and that's the last comment was again only it was a few lines and we looked at the design (…) yeah and after the text we wrote that we really liked it and that it was very easy to read we meant it so I cannot see anything more about it like I said it was a really good first draft actually this proposal it was only a few design things I think you said we shouldn't

	really look into it because it was a really early stage of the proposal but it still was really good so we told them some of these things because there was nothing else
Interviewer: 10.55	Right the next text you commented on was the feasibility study the same questions again why did you choose these points to comment on and why did you phrase things the way you did
Interviewee	Yeah this time it was with the two French guys and so we read them together and discussed it and we know about the topic before out of the first proposal [right] but they didn't and so we know about all the introduction we not really get what's the purpose of their erm proposal
Interviewer:	The study?
Interviewee	Yeah and that it was basically maybe it was too difficult to read but it was unclear for us
Interviewer:	Are you saying it was clearer for you than it was for the 2 French guys
Interviewee	Yeah of course cause we know about the topic and they know nothing about it so after the introduction we have to explain them what's the purpose of this paper was and the topic (…) yup again they wrote we met with David ( ) so we give them a notice that we learnt that we not allowed to use "we" I actually don't even remember if it was in German or English alltsa I know in German that we are not really allowed to use it but I don't know if you have this in English as well but it was the only notice but I think they in these texts it's ok with "we met with David ( )" because they really met they could say "the authors met with David () but that sounds maybe strange it depends yeah and they had survey monkey and we didn't know what it was then we asked them to explain it yeah and that basically was it so we only wrote that it looks correct and yeah it was only 2 pages so it was quite short and there was not really something to criticize only a few small things
Interviewer: 14:10	Anything about the way you phrased the comments there anything you thought about with your phrasing?
Interviewee	Yeah we wanted to sound nice of course so it's every time more in yeah we would do it like this ( ) so it's basically we thought or I thought I tried to make it as positive as possible yeah like I said with the question marks with grammar things and here it was also we tried so and we tried to explain what we mean cos if you only write one sentence or only one word then you not really get what's the problem and yeah with smileys we did a few we put a few into it only let it look a little bit more positive than it was
Interviewer: 15.23	Erm was there any difference between giving comments to the (American university) students and giving comments to the (Swedish university) students do you think?
Interviewee	Of course with the (Swedish university)students you can they are sitting one metre away from you so you really can talk with them maybe explain what you mean with it easier yeah I think it actually was maybe more difficult with the (Swedish university)students because there were more bad grammar mistakes and I have for example the problem that some words were similar in German and in English but completely different er sound similar but they are different for example page in German Seite so I always say side and that's completely different and when they do this it's really difficult to it takes more effort to understand the text when you read a text from the (Swedish university)students yeah than from the English speaking students
Interviewer: 16:40	Right do you think there are any differences due to cultural differences?
Interviewee	What do you mean?
	Erm if you think about making comments to the (Swedish university)students vs making comments to the (American university)students were there any differences in the way you phrased your comments because of culture
Interviewee	Not really actually
Interviewer: 17:12	Um do you think there were any differences because here you're using the internet and with the (Swedish university)students you're meeting them face to face

Interviewee	Yeah we had maybe more time and we erm we talked about it before and then we write it down what we wanted but with the (Swedish university)students it was mostly in class so there was a limited time maybe and then you had to read the text and then it was more that both give comments to the person and yeah we maybe not really talked before about the comments what we want to give so it was more a work in process giving the comments
Interviewer: 18:01	Do you think there was any difference because you didn't know the (American university) students as well as you knew the (Swedish university) students?
Interviewee	Not really no actually (…) it's you tried to comment something let it sound nice but it's both the same I don't think there's any difference
Interviewer: 18:30	Were there any comments in these texts that you chose not to make you said you talked about the comments beforehand was there anything you chose not to say to them for any reason
Interviewee	I honestly don't remember but I don't think so we maybe talked about it and one thought about it is it maybe a grammar mistake and we maybe looked it up or there are two that know it's not and maybe we didn't comment it but not really no
Interviewer: 19.10	Mmm thank you so we're going to the second part and that's when we look at the comments you got and er, just first of all what did you think about the comments you received from the (American university)
Interviewee	For the first for the literature review it was mostly positive I think it was on one thing they said and the main part only one person and you guys said the same so I changed it and then there was one in the conclusion and they started she started to want to criticise something but then she ends so there was no criticise at all and that was something oh what did she want to say but in the literature review it was mostly positive and in the proposal (….) yeah proposal it was more difficult because I worked with Valerie and we have different writing we write different so it was I write something she write something it was going back to each other quite often and then after time we not really change it because it was yeah and I think you really can read it in our text and ejj actually I don't really remember what they wrote it was in the Easter break when I read it or afterwards (…) what did you write for comments
Interviewer: 21.05	Well we can take a look
Interviewee	Yeah
Interviewer: 21.07	I have the comments here from the American students so [yeah] where shall we start there then maybe? With your proposal? You got two sets of comments there were comments in the text and then there was this one which was about the whole text
Interviewee	Yeah it was with questions we had
	Right yeah this was your first draft yeah so my questions now about these drafts are first of all what kind of comment do you think this is and if they asked you to change something did you change it and if they didn't ask you to change something what did you feel about it
Interviewee	Yeah I think with the with the proposal we actually not really looked into their into their comments so it is more changing the things you guys told us [ok] but not this actually yeah it was difficult because you work in a two and then one thought she looked into it but maybe didn't do it but [right] yeah with the resources and the references we asked them a question and she answered but like I said we you said it was ok but () we did it because we didn't really have references so (..) yeah that's with they to use they we did it actually afterwards we used not he /she for not only one person but [plural] it's the same in German I have these problems in German (…) the next comment about our experience they want that we write more which experience we had mmhmm I get it and not a few weeks ago so yeah we not really looked into it but it's a good comment too with providing your qualifications and experience (….) it's actually only good comments they made

	basically the same comments like you with the "they" but also we had quite a lot of short text short paragraphs put it together to one bit and there's one comment it's helpful that you provide relevant background for readers who maybe not familiar with this RTN system that's I think basically only a comment that we did it right because maybe it sounds like this (…)
Interviewer: 25.43	So you mean you didn't change anything because of this comment? But it seems that you didn't see
Interviewee	We didn't read it before no well I read it I think I really read it but I remember nothing about it actually it was at home and I had completely other things to do at this time yeah
Interviewer: 26.14	That's ok
Interviewee	Yeah that's also what they really did is to write both of the things about our text as well to comment parts of the text that were really good and tell us they are good you shouldn't change anything about it that's actually really nice
Interviewer: 26.37	Can you give an example?
Interviewee	Yeah it was the beginning of our background they write it's helpful that you provide relevant background for readers who may not be familiar with the RTN system so it's not that positive feedback but they told us yeah you shouldn't put the thing out it should stay inside yeah then with our question with he /she then you should use "they" every time we had this he/she she gave us possibility what we can write in this situation that was really nice (…) she might comment us to change a phrase to because it maybe not have the right meaning for what we but that's really nice yeah the problem was that Valerie changed the things what you gave us and maybe she looked into it I don't know and then I changed
Interviewer: 28.37	Right ok you made the first change
Interviewee	She put the first changes in and then I could see what she changed and then I read through it but yeah she also had your paper what your comments [right] and you didn't put it on Pingpong actually so she only had it and then she changed so for me it's difficult to say about it because I didn't have anything to do with it (…) that's a really nice comment it's at the solution and it's was a really short and they comment she comments that maybe it should repeat the benefits for the customers right mmmm a whole sentence about it (…) yup and again with he/she yeah and that's the same with the paragraphs that we should put it in one big paragraph and not that many small we actually did it because it was what you told us so they're actually really good comments yeah and that's two grammar aspects
Interviewer: 30:10	You mentioned earlier that there were positive comments and er what do you feel about that
Interviewee	That they give us positive comments? It's nice first of all you're not so depressed because I don't know in school and when you get a text back and then you have everything red that's really depressing and with positive comments oh that's nice that's really good part of the text then you maybe feel about negative comments a little bit fed up so that's really nice thing to do yeah
Interviewer: 30.57	These were some extra comments on your proposal but maybe you didn't get a chance to look at those either erm what I suggest is that we go on to your literature review it sounded like you mentioned before that you () and you had two sets of comments here from two different people
Interviewee	The same girls actually
Interviewer: 31.17	Right yeah mmm so it's the same question can you take me through comment by comment and er what kind of comment is this if they ask for a change do you remember if you made some kind of change and if they didn't what did you feel about it?

Interviewee	OK the first comment is that I have a strong opening sentence so I change nothing at all in it and it's a positive comment at first "I might suggest expanding it" did I expand it I don't know I think I had a problem there I really had a problem with the with the words so everything with expanding and get a little larger I not really did it because in the first draft there was more than 600 and I had to shorten it [mm] so yeah it's a positive actually it's a nice comment because it's a positive comment but she just says she suggests something to change so it's a negative it's a useful comment in a positive way yeah the end of my introduction with the erm I changed it I changed because I get it from everyone actually that I have to write what's the purpose of this literature review so I did it (.) yeah and she wrote that it's nice that I explained the Moore complex (?) and things about the topic so what is I didn't change yeah but it's funny because they understand it and when we read it in our group one of them is an Austrian girl and has knowledge about it Swedish girl it was maybe because it was really late it was nearly at the end but they were so confused about the topic so the feedbacks from them was not really existing they said well I don't get the topic and everything so yeah I didn't use their comments actually yeah I used you guys and them they were really useful sometimes so ok ((reading under her breath)) then she writes that I write very easy as in it's easy to understand yeah I think it's basically a ( ) every time I try to make it as easy as possible it's maybe too easy sometimes but it's a nice comment so she understands when she writes it's easy this comment really helped me because like I said they didn't get the text at all and she writes that it's easy then it was really maybe only because it was late you had 4 hours class and yeah so this comment was really helpful do not change the complete text but yeah there she writes in the middle that it's a little bit confusing the paragraph and I changed it this part I really changed erm but I don't know if I made it shorter or larger I really think I changed it but I don't know what I did so
Interviewer:	It was a while ago now so
Interviewee	I had so many other things in my mind yeah and there was it "your conclusion is very strong and has a concluding tone and the only thing I" and then there was nothing and it was so frustrating because yeah I think that was the only really big thing she could criticise and she not ended it for me
Interviewer: 36.00	Did you mail her did you ask her
Interviewee	No I didn't I think I was too lazy or don't want to disturb her yeah and I think the other one there were only positive things I remember this the introduction she also says "a great introduction" like the other one but the other one suggests something that to change it and she said it's good
Interviewer: 36.33	And how did you feel about that?
Interviewee	It's nice but it wasn't really helpful I get the comments from both of them and I read through it and I said ok it's really nice that they give so many positive feedback but you want something that they can criticise I can change so yeah it was nice but yeah she didn't even criticise anything I guess if I remember right so yeah it's not really useful then either so the other ((tapping the paper)) was more useful then it was mostly positive alltsa everyone else said yeah yeah the comments were so useful and for me after the literature review yeah there were 2 things I could change and that's ok but otherwise it was nothing yeah
Interviewer: 37.51	Why do you think this person made
Interviewee	She had nothing to criticise or she hadn't the time to to really think about it this takes time yeah yeah I think I get it ((nodding head)) and write a few positive comments it takes less time than the other one put because she really thought how shall I phrase it that she will understand it and it takes time I think it was basically a time thing yeah and because you

	also give me more positive feedback than negative so maybe the text in the first half was really not that bad it's possible
Interviewer:	Mmm
Interviewee	Yeah and they put in the references she said it's a good job having it I think she only wrote this because the others Valerie and the Swedish girl I didn't remember her name sorry they didn't had references in it so it was more oh the others don't have it she has it oh that's nice yeah
Interviewer: 39.43	Thinking about the comments you got here did they give you the kind of feedback you were hoping for
Interviewee	No it was too positive as I said when you really get useful feedbacks and it's really in a negative way at first you get disappointed because oh I have to change so much but on the other hand then you really know what you can change and when you only get positive feedbacks or mostly positive feedbacks then it's ok it's nice but what should I change here so no I was a little disappointed after we had done their feedbacks yeah because everyone else said yeah they get so many useful things yeah but I think they both they give me better feedbacks than the other (American university) people I think they really take their time but for me it was yeah nice but ((laughs))
Interviewer: 40.38	Do you have any other comments about these texts or any other thoughts about the comments?
Interviewee	Of these two they really did a good job in make a negative comment positive yeah so
Interviewer: 40.32	How did they do that?
Interviewee	Like "I think it's a strong opening sentence but I might suggest "so they give yeah it's really nice but maybe it can be a little bit long and here in the middle she writes "the paragraph becomes a little ( ) here so she use little and not I don't get what you want to explain me with these changes so yeah and she suggests how I can change it with the paragraphs
Interviewer: 41.33	Hmm when you think about the comments you got from (American university)compared to the comments from the (Swedish university)students do you think there were any differences due to cultural differences
Interviewee	Mmm (…) not really because I had mostly the comments were yeah from the (American university)students and here it was Austrian German I think I get one comment from one of the Chinese Taiwanese guys it was in the first in the first literature review but otherwise I really get from Swedish and Austrian the cultural changes were smaller especially in how to phrase something how to explain something so not really
Interviewer: 43.00	And then again thinking about the comments that you received from (American university) and (Swedish university) was there any differences because these are via the internet and the other comments were face to face
Interviewee	Yes they made it more positive and they like I said when you talk to someone it's and I don't get what you mean you can explain it and here they had to think about how to write it that she will get it so they make more effort in explaining in the first hand and others say yeah I don't like this and you have the text in front of you and you can show them here I don't get it why you write this it's more complication question answer thing between each other and you also can ask them people from here questions do you like this part and that's not really possible with the (American university)students you can write in the beginning your questions but you maybe not really write everything what you would ask if you met them in person
Interviewer: 44.30	Mmm and what about the fact that you didn't know the (American university) students as well as the (Swedish university)students do you think that made any difference in the kind of comments that you got?
Interviewee	No because most of the (Swedish university)students I also seeing and maybe speaking a

	few words but alltsa I didn't spend so much time with them I think you really have to be friends and to know them how they will react when you phrase something like this then you can maybe more criticise or it's mostly in the thing to be direct you know that the person can handle it and you can say it more directly and don't have to tell them in around so it was basically the same and also the same with Valerie because I don't she's from the same school in ( ) but I don't know her that good so that's basically the same actually
Interviewer: 45.30	What do you think you learnt about peer response from the (American university) students if anything?
Interviewee	It was the first time I made peer response so it was useful to see how they did it for example picked comments only a few really the first time I got response at all when it's maybe I give ok when I give friends to look into it but in class it was really the first time and yeah the peer response thing was nice and from the (American university)students not really actually I think this commenting on the pages especially in such texts is more useful because you really know what I am reading yeah what's the problem in which part of the text is the problem you have the text next to it it could be explained but then the paragraph is quite large you not really know what they are meaning so that's the thing I maybe also learned from the (American university)students and that's the commenting
Interviewer: 47.00	What do you think you learnt about your own writing as a result of the (American university) students' comments?
Interviewee	Ermm (..) that I'm not maybe that bad as I thought because I know my speaking is kind of bad sometimes it was my first draft and I think at school at home I don't really write in English and here it was actually my first really technical text here in this class so I really get to know that when I really think about how I write it and it's really not that bad as I have thought for myself so that was useful ((change of recording to Romina2))
Interviewer: 00.00	My last question then any suggestions for improving this exchange in the future?
Interviewee	Yeah give me more parts in the second term ((laughs)) yeah you really need time and I also heard from because for the class review thing I talked with some guys and everyone said yeah it was only additional work but I think it was really mostly because it was so busy I think so make it a positive thing you need the time and that was a problem because the peer review things were mostly in the first part so it was more oh no I have to give the (American university)students feedback I have no time for that I don't want to so you did not really look into it in a positive way so that's the thing to change
Interviewer: 1.05	Right hmm thank you ((nods)) and that was the end of the interview.

Interviewee 3: Marta (Spain)

Interviewer:	As I said I have your texts here from Wikispaces but before we look at the texts I just wonder what you thought about the exchange?
Interviewee:	The exchange
Interviewer:	With the (American university) students
Interviewee:	Well erm I never tried this before so for me it's really(…) nice I mean because these people speaks really good English so you can be sure that in your free time these things that they told you is gonna be for good you know it's like other teacher and you can trust in the support of the just not the correction about the word or the grammar it's more in the context you can change because for example in the curriculum vitae you can see the different ways that you can prepare this and er this is strange because they are really focused in one thing in the subjects and you know the European people is

	more focused in the other things so then you can be realise that how the world is separately you know so for me I receive a good erm impression of this exchange in my opinion I don't know
Interviewer: 02.05	When you commented on the (American university) students how did you do decide what to say?
Interviewee:	About what?
Interviewer: 02.16	When you made your comments how did you decide on your comments?
Interviewee:	About the first time I saw the comments I mean when they said me some comments?
Interviewer: 02.30	No when you gave them comments
Interviewee	First I received one comments so then I was sure that the comments I should write should be similar I mean I never correct anything so I was thinking ok so now what and I saw the (American university) comments say me in that paragraph maybe I don't understand or the audience is not receiving good the information or something more contextual more thinking about the people who write this and people who receive this so then when I saw the correction of (American university)'s then I can decide how to write on my way [right] in that sense cos if not I just write yeah for me it's ok it's no critical thinking
Interviewer: 03.56	Good now here are the comments that you gave ((taking out the documents)) this one was the proposal wasn't it and the second one was the feasibility study let's see I think ((looking through the papers)) yeah this was the proposal this was the first one that you commented on do you remember this?
Interviewee	Yes yes
Interviewer:	Great so I'd like you to look at the comments that you made and you made these with someone else I think
Interviewee	With Sheng
Interviewer:	With Sheng and if you can just talk me through sentence by sentence and first why did you make this comment and then why did you write this comment in this way so two questions why did you make the comment and why did you make the comment in this way why did you write it in this way
Interviewee	Yeah it's like information in short answers it's because the first time I received my own it was the same document with comments here ((pointing to the right margin of the paper)) so it was simple phrases so the structure is because this erm (4.0) yeah you can say the grammar is good or bad because I have a little problem with the grammar on my own so for me it is difficult to say here you have an error I'm more focused on the structure if I receive good the information my impression and just if the teacher says yeah the (American university)'s teacher at the first time explained the students here you have to explain I don't know your proposal but in a economic way so I read this what want the teacher and then just compare with the student questionnaires so for me the structure was really clear presentation yeah this is me ((pointing to the text)) in the second paragraph it's like yeah you do that really good so think about and next time do again and yeah that's ((laughs)) and here with the paragraph ((nods)) it's like you have to be nice right?
Interviewer: 7.47	Why?
Interviewee	I don't know it's like people want critique when make some comments normally it goes to the negative part so it's good sometimes say yeah this part good and then this part is not so good maybe you can do this maybe you can I'm wrong but ((laughs)) [mm mm]yeah first time positive comment just say maybe here you can write this I don't know ( ) and this is the same because teacher says that you have to explain your

	method and why you should follow this method the positive thing why you want to change this farm
Interviewer: 09.20	Mmm we can go to the next lot of comments on the next page I think
Interviewee	(5.0) [nods] why you wrote this (..) again the structure is good yeah this is like you did well so my comment is just say follow in this way my comment is like you did it really good (5.0) this one I can't remember (5.0) yeah for me this part works for my own purpose for example for the letter more than the proposal [mm] but normally the thing is that if they work good because you told us that we should write each paragraph so sometimes you don't have anything to say so just say good sometimes so (7.0) and here for example ((point to the text))I introduce like I think the audience will be happy they can find this information in your proposal it's like I don't tell you it's bad but you should be more focused on the audience and er I think it's nice to be short with the comments because if you write a lot maybe people is just like "come on" (5.0) maybe you should write this way (5.0) ((laughs)) (5.0) maybe here is more personal is more like objective because I say yeah like this part maybe in the real life it doesn't works but for me at the end it works that's the thing because in your exchange you are receiving or you are answer a student so you don't know if this is correctly good in the real life in a professional situation but you think there is I believe it so I'm not sure if in the real life if I'm going to make some but then I have your answers so then I can compare and it's quite similar so it's not like
Interviewer: 14.40	Sorry what do you mean about my answers?
Interviewee	I mean it's like you have the (American university)'s answers and then you think ok they're students so maybe it's not good this information that they give me but then I have your answers and then I can compare with the other ones and then I can say yeah this is going to work because it's similar it's not any student it's students that they know about this they are I don't know it's not like er 15 young student it's they know about this [right] so ((turns paper)) ( ) (7.0) and this is because ((points at paper)) in my home university about the energy or consumption it is really normal to thinking about the cost not just the material (5.0) I don't know if this is mine or it was the other one you can see at first I write a lot of "nice" "good" then I'm more critical at the end of the paper (5.0)
Interviewer: 16.43	Why do you think that was? Why do you think it starts very positive and then as you say it gets more critical do you think it was their writing or do you think it was your commenting?
Interviewee	Both but more my comments[mm] at first it's like you don't know the other people so you try to be more or maybe it's because this part is easier than the other part then people makes a good writing and then they fail in this part but also because it's your first contact so I'm not sure (5.0) at the end everything is good ((laughs)) [mm] (3.0) yeah good I think this proposal was erm with 5 people here
Interviewer:	5 people writing this?
Interviewee	But this with only Sheng
Interviewer:	OK yeah
Interviewee	Yeah I don't know
Interviewer: 18.17	Yeah as you said erm you have quite a lot of positive comments here did you think that their writing was very good then?
Interviewee	Yeah for the (American university) student?
Interviewer: 18:39	Did you think their proposal was a good proposal?
Interviewee	Ah the context not exactly it's not my genre it's not my I don't know about

Interviewer:	Not your area
Interviewee	Yeah that's the thing so for me it's not quite feasible a lot of proposals I read is not feasible for me I mean a restaurant project work it was more the idea was really weak [uhm] at least in the proposal maybe the idea is good but when they develop the idea in the proposal it was for me I don't know it's more information more research because these proposals are really in a first stage it's a little bit of information
Interviewer: 19:55	Do you think you commented on every point where you could make a comment or do you feel like you did you choose to miss out any comments?
Interviewee	Erm I don' t think my comments are really important to the (American university) students I think they help me more than I help them ((laughs))
Interviewer: 20.05	Why?
Interviewee	Because ( ) I don't know that's comments are sometimes weak my impression is (..) I'm not get used to make comments from other people so I'm not really critical in that kind of things [mhm] maybe a language student people who study I don't know English or just not languages literature or something like that can be more critical in the writing but for me it's more difficult
Interviewer:	Do you think it's good to be critical?
Interviewee	Yeah ((nods)) no but critical you have to say your arguments not just blablabla I think it's really good mm
Interviewer:	Thank you
Interviewee	You're welcome
Interviewer:	There was one other text and that was the study and I think you commented on that with Sheng
Interviewee	Mhm
Interviewer:	And I have the same question why did you make the comments here and why did you make the comments in this way?
Interviewee	((looking at the paper)) you can see the comments (3.0) yeah the first one here was not clear about ( ) for us because they are doing this for their university so all the (American university) students know about that so was really good because makes me think ok I have to explain the situation at first so only works for me [right] yeah it should be percent where is that? Is it the restaurant or the university yeah and this comment ((pointing at the paper)) you have to think about your audience here in this course I can think more about the audience it was not in my mind before this course so right now I'm more aware about what is that and who received the information (5.0) a lot of these comments I did it after your comments about my proposal I think so then I can compare and I can say yeah if I received this comment I cannot make your proposal like I don't know how to say it like you receive these comments so then I can say about this in your report quite similar so or if not (5.0) mm yeah you can compare with other yeah you have to be aware that if you say something not say it you have to develop a little bit that's all that part is ((looking at paper)) (5.0) it was really clear yeah pictures pictures most of these comments I did it because you give me your comments so sometimes I pick up some comments from you and then about this text I can (5.0) this is a personal things it's like if you make a list it's easier to follow things like the pictures now when I'm with pair with Sheng it's like you have your opinion I have my opinion it's never contradictory you want write this write this and I think this we wrote the both we don't usually er [disagree] es unico one comment he just wrote his comment and then [right] More questions about this?
Interviewer: 27.17	I was thinking about because you also gave comments to students here at (Swedish university) what do you think were some of the differences between giving comments to (American university) students compared to giving comments to (Swedish

	university) students?
Interviewee	I think because we don't have contact with the (American university) students you're more nice with these people than the people here and also here you know who are writing you sometimes it's more difficult say yeah I agree with you I disagree with (American university) people it's more like yeah I trust you I don't know why it's contradictory it's opposite I don't know you why I trust you but it's like that [mhm]
Interviewer:	Do you think there were any differences because of cultural differences?
Interviewee	Mmmm no I don't think it's culture it's just em maybe because they're Americans I don't know most of these people are Americans right? [mm] maybe if they are Chinese or they are Africans or maybe it's different but erm yeah now I changed my mind (culture) yeah probably
Interviewer: 29.14	Why?
Interviewee	About the (idea) I'm not sure I just think that they are so far and they knows about the English so that part on the grammar is no problem ok but they think about this text is the structure the content all the important things they are really professional when they wrote these comments so I can feel that it's good because they wrote in a professional not a professional but like a (child make sense)
Interviewer: 31.00	Was there a difference because you were writing to them via the internet and here you were giving comments face to face
Interviewee	I mean with the (Swedish university) students?
Interviewer:	If you compare comments with the (Swedish university) students to comments to the (American university) students do you think there was any difference because this was face to face ((pointing at the classroom)) but it was via the internet with them?
Interviewee	For me was easier with internet here I remember that I was with the Austrian guy and they should describe and Abdi [Abdikhani] yeah sorry [it's not so easy] and it was nice actually it was more comfortable than I expect it was good but it was no fast it takes more time and it was really short I think maybe more time to comment
Interviewer:	Ok yeah mm
Interviewee	For me it was really short because face to face it usually takes more time explain this
Interviewer: 32.00	Yeah mm the last question on this part was there any difference because you didn't know the (American university) students as well as you knew the (Swedish university)students
Interviewee	Yeah it was a important point because if I don't it's like when you know people for example your family sometimes you can tell them one thing and then with an unknown people you can feel more comfortable you can't I don't know sometimes the problems go on and you can tell more easier than with your family
Interviewer:	It's easier to tell things to strangers than to your family?
Interviewee	Maybe because it's
Interviewer:	You mean it's easier to say things to (American university) students than to (Swedish university)students
Interviewee	Yeah for me (American university)s I mean via internet than face to face
Interviewer: 33.00	Mm the next part is looking at some of the comments that you got but before I take the comments again when you think about the comments that you got from the (American university) students what did you think about them?
Interviewee	Mm about my proposal?
Interviewer:	About the comments that you got in general yeah
Interviewee	I'm really satisfied with this sometimes are really short so I think they don't have too much time to write this week I'm a student so I have the same problem but anyway they are really good for me it helps so it works like nice situation I don't think that I'm going to be perfect in my proposal just for these comments I mean they can help me

	but it's not working 100% for me but anyway it's good I have a positive opinion
Interviewer:	It was generally positive even though not all the comments helped
Interviewee	Yeah
Interviewer: 35.00	Ok you got two lots of comments on your proposal three lots of comments on your proposal there's your proposal there erm so again I'd like you to talk me through your comments that you got from the (American university) students and again what kind of comment is this and if it's a positive comment how did you feel about it and if it's a comment with a suggestion did you make a change in your text because of this
Interviewee	Yeah they are really polite because they write like "might" or "maybe" or you know for me I mean when I receive this it's like yeah they don't attack they are really polite erm so it's positive like might be more attractive to capitalize? ((pointing at paper)) [capitalize yeah] for me can have ok visual thing so maybe in the next proposal I can use this yeah this (3.0) for example was like yeah I know but I don't know how to put that with my information (5.0) I'm not sure if because they understand the content because sometimes different students they are not in the same area as me I don't know if they understand the proposal because they have a little idea about the structure the content but no the I don't know how to explain it's like you understand why I write this so what I pretend to make because I don't know
Interviewer: 37:00	just to make sure I understand you correctly with their comments you're not sure if they understood the proposal
Interviewee	Yeah because in your comments I can say that you give me some feedback like this is not feasible I can't understand anything there's no sense but here just one word and maybe it's relevant yeah but did you understand but if you compare with the other comments are not sometimes like only words I could realise that there was no sense in the paragraph I think sometimes they no understand why write this so (3.0) ((looking at paper)) it's a good comment
Interviewer:	Why's it a good comment?
Interviewee	Because here they told me that I should refer something to explain this so it's like you have to introduce this for me it's no sense this (3.0) sometimes they give you like this is no really correct but you can use blablabla so makes you an idea what way it's like other teacher for you
Interviewer: 40.10	They rephrase something for example
Interviewee	Yeah maybe you have to explain more about chairs for example bla it's not just use my words it's just try to explain other kinds of things
Interviewer:	Right
Interviewee	Sometimes they wrote you like a phrase just to help (3.0) for example in that part she recommend me maybe I should split the paragraph in some little parts and it was true
Interviewer: 41.08	So did you do that
Interviewee	Yeah also you Rebecca or Carin sorry
Interviewer:	I think it was Carina with your proposal yeah
Interviewee	She recommend me to do the same
Interviewer:	Ok
Interviewee	So
Interviewer: 41.41	So do you mean that you got when the comments agreed then you knew it was ok that you should make a change
Interviewee	It's like the first time I saw that your comments and (American university) students' comments were not similar but in the same path I mean yeah the second time I was like yeah I trust you more than the people (5.0) ((looking at paper)) here because the references I never used before so yeah it's maybe I have to follow the correct way to

	write this this more like this comment is not important because you have to your way you have to do that in the internet you can find the way to write the references so it's not like a comment it's not working so just follow this and that's it
Interviewer: 43.22	Did you get the kind of comments you hoped for
Interviewee	Mm ((nods))
Interviewer:	In what way?
Interviewee	About how they works?
Interviewer:	In what way were you happy with the comments?
Interviewee	Oh yeah yeah because I compare with these people and they works in a different way as in (Swedish university)so they are really focusing one part one part some things and you are really focusing other things and then you can mix both and make a great proposal so so for me it was helpful to see the other part and just introduce more information to improve my works
Interviewer:	Mmm
Interviewee	In that sense yeah it was helpful
Interviewer: 44.12	Great you got two more comments on your proposal but maybe we can take just one more set we can take these here perhaps it's the same idea that you just talk through the comments what kind of comment is it and how did you feel or did you do anything about it
Interviewee	Yeah for example here in the first paragraph of the other part they just wrote one thing here I can find different comments and also I can see that this paragraph was really bad so I don't know if with the other one should be more critical and I say yeah maybe their comments are not so good I*m not sure if I can trust in that part
Interviewer:	Mmhm right
Interviewee	But I mean I introduce all these comments into my my proposal
Interviewer:	Ok
Interviewee	(50.00) ((looking at paper)) yeah well the other one I don't know what comments to choose just (5.0) they have different thinkings both of them help me to improve my proposal but I don't know I can see that they don't work together ((laughs)) because the other one give me one feedback different to these feedback
Interviewer:	Ok yeah
Interviewee	So I can see the different parts these people are focus in the not focus but yeah structure visual things and the other one gives me feedback more about the content
Interviewer: 47:00	Right
Interviewee	So I can mix all the information
Interviewer:	Yeah mm
Interviewee	That's good because normally the people have a good way with the grammar content the visual things so if you can exchange with different students you can receive the information in different spheres
Interviewer:	Right yeah yeah
Interviewer:	Do you think it was an advantage to get feedback from different students?
Interviewee:	Yeah
Interviewer:	Do you think it's always an advantage
Interviewee:	Yeah I mean you have to be critical I mean ((change of film)) If you have a lot of information have to choose [mm] if this is good this is bad or maybe not for your proposal it can help you in the next month but maybe not in this paper maybe sometimes a lot of information but 3 feedbacks I think your help I think it's good maybe two students [ok] I think it's good number because with the third one I

	have the same comments in other that I mean they repeat a lot of things so maybe two sometimes three is ok but two feedbacks and your comments I think this enough
Interviewer:	Erm did these comments give you the kind of feedback you were hoping to get?
Interviewee	((laughs)) Well I didn't expect anything it's just because they have your like when you give me you have to make this work and you have to include this this this sometimes I read it once but I'm not aware of the parts [right] how to introduce and then they read the same paper like you have to follow this steps and then they give you the feedback according to this steps and then I can get more ok yeah that's true I didn't follow these steps [ok yeah] because you are really busy just writing so you can open your mind and just say the teachers tell you you have to follow this because it is good your proposal to follow this you have to follow that
Interviewer: 2.05	Mm so the list you're talking about is that a list you're thinking from from these students or from us as teachers
Interviewee	From teachers
Interviewer: 3.00	From the teachers yup yup erm when you think about the comments that you received from the (American university) students and you compare to the comments you got from the (Swedish university)students on your texts do you think there was a difference?
Interviewee	Well with the (Swedish university)students I think it was only once maybe two it was really short for me I can't remember actually really good the (Swedish university)comments so yeah it was different because the time you can say the same but you have to be more quickly in face to face and if you have to read it it's more easier you can spend more time I don't know face to face you lose a lot of time [right] to explain or what do you mean or [right] here it's like ok ((points with her hand)) you have this [mm] and you can finish all the work here maybe you are in the middle of nowhere because you spend a lot of time explaining or in the sense of the comments I think they are really similar yeah all the different countries so you can say your way how do that and maybe he has or she has other way to do that
Interviewer: 5.12	Right when you say another way to do it you mean another way of can you explain what you mean?
Interviewee	Yeah sometimes it's structural sometimes it's in the way that you explain because myself I explain myself really bad because as you told me in one class it's like I use a really large phrases so I have to be more short in my writing and explain more leave more focus in this thing or introduce this more or
Interviewer: 6.00	Mmm just to sum up then what do you think you learnt about peer responding from the contact with the (American university) students
Interviewee	Actually a lot of things but I can tell you like this this this it was helpful because I got realise with this course but also with the peer response how I should be more focused in my work like think about the other people who read this because if you have a work you know the other people it's just wrote information but for you if you have peer response you get realise this work that people is going to read this so how they perceive this information and how to improve to make this more accessible for the understanding for the other people
Interviewer: 7.36	What do you think that you learnt about your own writing from these comments if anything maybe you answered this question already ((laughs))
Interviewee	Erm I don't know maybe they agree with me in the sense that you receive the information and you don't know if it's going to work with the audience [right] so maybe it's helpful for them in that way but the grammar in the structure they have a different things of how to follow I think the Americans are really I don't know how to explain maybe they agree with you sometimes but most of time they thinking I have to follow this this this
Interviewer:	Do you think they made comments on everything they could make comments on in

	your text
Interviewee	No
Interviewer:	Do you think they missed out comments [yeah] For example?
Interviewee	They are yeah you know so they can make some comments that er yeah we are humans I mean it could be but most of time they are really good ((laughs))
Interviewer: 9.30	Last question then do you have any suggestions for making this better this exchange with the (American university) students
Interviewee	Yeah it's not a problem but I think this course for all of us it's more like a light course it's not important for our careers for me it was surprisingly really good because I need to work with these things when I try to explain something more formation how to write it but I think it's a more like they don't have a lot of time to dedicate to sit down and write in this course this proposal spend time with this so the thing is I think it's really good with the peer response so there's no problem I can improve this the problem is just because the course is more like it's not the important course of your career but anyway I think it was really good I can't tell you how improve this
Interviewer:	If I check I understood you you mean this course is not a priority course for you it's not your focus but it was useful to get feedback
Interviewee	The thing is you can spend a lot of time To spend more time on these things but anyway I think it's quickly but that's a good point you're not like again more time if you're in the website you can write your comments really fast for me is really good fast quickly you can receive the information really fast
Interviewer:	Right yeah
Interviewee	Makes easier for the student follow this course
Interviewer 12.26	Because you don't have so much time
Interviewee	Maybe the whole year with this subject and more content
Interviewer 12.40	That would be nice (Swedish university) doesn't like you know usually courses fit into one study period so it's difficult to have a course that goes over 2 study periods to have a course longer than that that would be difficult
Interviewee	I just start the course and then I finish I don't realise about the course it's just pass for me is not important just pass pass
Interviewer 13.20	Do you have any final comments on either getting or receiving comments anything you feel we haven't talked about
Interviewee	Right now I'm not sure I don't think so just tell you that I have positive thinking the first time on the course I didn't expect this course like this I thought English course was more grammar so when I get realise that you can use this in your real life to get a job to get a good proposal it's like in the real life to get a job to get a good proposal it's like you in the real life it's not like in the university you are going to work with this outside so for me it was really really nice to find this in the course
Interviewer	Good that's all my questions. I'll turn this one off.

Interviewee 4: David

Interviewer:	Alright so I should say first that this is going to be in two parts [yes] the interview and the first part will look at the comments that you made to the students at (American university) and the second part will look at the comments they made to you [yes] but the first question then is what are your thoughts about this exchange with the (American university) students?
Interviewee:	The comments between our group and their group?
Interviewer:	The exchange in general
Interviewee:	It was good like when we do our text we can see if our text have a good structure

	because sometimes you write something really technical and then you give it someone that don't know they just read and don't understand nothing so when we give to they and they read and give comments we can see if our structure it's good so I like it because of this you can see if they really understand or not like if your introduction it's good method it's good conclusion it's good they don't correct us in like grammar [yeah] so they just say if it was good or not of course some words they corrected us because they are native in English so it was I liked it it was er something more to help because when I have to delivery the work on Pingpong it's good to have something first to correct us so it was ok like to correct other mistakes
Interviewer: 1:57	Mmm when you were going to comment on the (American university)students can you just tell me how that worked how you decided what to comment on?
Interviewee:	Err you mean in our group or individually?
Interviewer: 2:16	In your group how did you do it?
Interviewee:	First we read the texts and then we had a discussion then we just comment we was I don't think no one it was really hard to correct everyone is really kind the text it's really good we like it everything we correct something but no one like (pushing) to be perfect we don't know them so maybe they cannot like so I think we was we corrected but not so much
Interviewer:	We're going to take a look at some of your specific comments this is the proposal that they wrote and you made some comments
Interviewee:	This is their proposal
Interviewer:	That's their proposal and you made some comments with some other classmates I think (3.0) do you remember who you did this with which classmates?
Interviewee:	I remember I don't remember the names but I remember the faces but it was one of the guys from France the blond one and Urs it was together I remember I remember our three
Interviewer: 4:15	So if we take the first point your first comment there can you tell me why you picked this point to comment on?
Interviewee:	This one is more like a grammar because when we do something like this structure we always put a comma and they put two points so we just put a comma but it was just a grammar correct
Interviewer: 4.52	Why did you phrase it the way you did? I can't see here what you said
Interviewee:	Put a comma here? because sometimes we find a mistake but we thought they are from USA so they must know much better than us English so we put here put a comma here but with the exclamation point because we don't know if it is really correct especially with different countries so there must be like (normal for us) so we put this exclamation point because we think it's that but we don't really know
Interviewer: 5:46	Yeah right and then the next comment why did you pick this point to comment on?
Interviewee:	I mark it because they write all the text Aramark and (the grill) but we don't know the link between this it wasn't explained in the text so we couldn't see if it was the same same company it was different so because it was not really clear for us
Interviewer: 6.22	And why did you write the comment the way that you did?
Interviewee:	((reading)) what's the link between Aramart and grill? To see what it is the correlation between these two companies it was a true story that they were proposing something to ( ) so we didn't know what was the link the correlation between them
Interviewer:	And the next comment why did you choose this point?
Interviewee:	(2.0) The comment 3 we made it because in the introduction they discuss further

	meeting to discuss better the proposal but they put in the introduction before introducing the proposal like the background the objective the goal of the proposal they put in the introduction to discuss but imagine the company they don't know yet what will happen they just move the comments to the end would be better like after you propose everything it would be better we write in this manner we think you must be kind like not just write you should change this every time we write we think that you should will be better
Interviewer:	Why do you think it's better
Interviewee:	Because we don't know which we are working if we working in this manner it will be easier for them because they can't think that we're rude it's really bad their text so in this way they can just as well change it that it's really good the text just er think about this and if they want to change it change it
Interviewer: 9.08	And your next comment why this comment?
Interviewee:	In this part we was again difficult to understand the text we didn't understand if someone went to the restaurant they will eat there or they will pick the food to eat in somewhere we just made the comment to explain this part because maybe for them that are there they already know that that's a restaurant you go there eat or you just pick food but for us who don't have any idea it was just to see if we have to go there to eat or just call and then pick the food [yeah] and the comments we just write that we didn't understand if we should eat the food or just pick up [yup] The next comment it was about the objective of the proposal and we just write that it was good objective clear and precise it was really good we understand clearly the aim
Interviewer: 10.50	Why did you make that comment
Interviewee:	Why? Because it was really easy to understand what was the aim of the proposal and also you should not just write something to change on the text you just write change this change this we also write this part was really good I think it is really good to (list this) because they can see for example the introduction had something to change but their objectives it was really good so maybe in the next proposal some templates to follow (5.0) and this comment we also just say good things that this part it was good the comment 6 that it was good to see they take into account this point of view and I think it was the owner of the restaurant we just like write that they make a really good job in this part we just put in what parts they have to change and what parts is good they just keep it (5.0) they put a good structure easy to read and to understand like the same thing and the comment 7 I don't remember this one ((reading)) this one I really don't remember [ok] is that a problem
Interviewer: 14.06	No no it's not a problem
Interviewee:	So moving on to this one?
Interviewer:	Yeah that would be great yeah
Interviewee:	Er qualifications this part it was really good because they write the many skills of everyone in proposal so we just write it was really good because we can see that everyone in the group is useful so it was a good comment and the other comment it was because they write I in proposal so maybe we have to read everything very carefully to think who is I that is writing so I put put the writer's name and it was (better) to write this and it was a very small detail this is comment 10 conclusion we also write a good paragraph saying that it was really short conclusion but it was really good and it summarise the proposal in a few words so we are just tell good things again (3.0) and the other comment we just make a comment to explain the general that it was really good just to make the small changes but for us it was really clear so I think we make two types of comments the comments to change and the comments to magnify the parts that

	was really good in the text
Interviewer: 16.21	Do you think you commented on every point that you could comment on
Interviewee:	Maybe because so we make the comments but if you take it and you read it 4 times to really catch all the points maybe you can write more things because generally we did it in the school time so we didn't take so much time to do this but maybe if we take more time to read it really carefully we can make more comments
Interviewer:	Ok this was the other you commented on their feasibility report and that was your comments you and Daniel and just to remind you this was their feasibility report here I think this was the report connected to the proposal
Interviewee:	Yes it's in the right order? Yes so
Interviewer: 17:50	So that's what you read and here are your comments that you wrote with Daniel
Interviewee:	Yeah should I read it first or just the comments?
Interviewer:	We could just start with your comments if that's ok and I'm interested in the same questions why did you choose to make these comments
Interviewee:	Let me read
Interviewer:	Yeah sure
Interviewee:	(10.0) yeah we made the comments saying about the text in general that it was really good like the proposal it was really clear you could understand everything and we just propose something to change in introduction because they use like a different number system like 1,2,a,b,. so we proposal just to use one type so just points or just numbers not points and letters so I proposed this changes and we also write that we like it the figures table because it was small titles so it was easier to understand than bigger titles and having to read two lines just for one title we also like this part in our comment it was like it was really good we like it to read and see what they are working because it's nice sometimes to see texts from engineers in different countries because you can see even studying here you are really close ( ) almost half the time so we see that we like it and it was good also because they write a different type of text like not the same area it's different areas but when you read you can understand so it's good
Interviewer: 21.22	Did you comment on every point where you thought improvement could be made
Interviewee:	Because this was the first draft so I think they didn't put so much effort into the structure so we just say about this table of contents because they can't they forgot so we just wrote change it to one type just numbers or just letters it was the first draft so we just see the idea different proposals of what they will reach with this text we just write it was really good it was in the right way to do the text yes
Interviewer: 22.06	In what ways if there are any ways do you think you commented on the (American university)texts in a different way to the way you commented on the (Swedish university) students' texts?
Interviewee:	Maybe here if it's a friend of us we can make more severe comments maybe if they write something and we read we can say we didn't like so you have to change this this and this but there we don't know and we also don't know what type of lectures if it is a really hard lecture and they really did something good or something more basic so we just comment in their text if it's good or not if it's clear but like not to change the principal ideas maybe here you can say that this idea is not so good so then we should take another idea another proposal to write [right] but there maybe we can see that it wasn't a real good proposal but we not the writer have to change because we don't know if they have possibilities to change or not so you just make it comments saying if it was clear to read if it was really easy to understand but not to change yeah a paragraph or a whole line
Interviewer:	Do you think there were differences due to cultural differences

23:50	
Interviewee:	Yes also have this so something like that introduction I have two points we use comma a lot of times we see something that was different but we see large parts of text so we don't know if we have to comment or not because for them maybe it's right and for us not so sometimes we write with an exclamation point write that we think this is not the correct [right] sometimes it's tricky [mm]
Interviewer: 24.30	Do you think there were any differences because you were using the internet to give your comments instead of giving your comments face to face?
Interviewee:	Erm yes internet it's easier maybe you can read through it and write calm and face to face when you read it you have to make comments so maybe through the internet you can constructure better other comments but also maybe face to face it's easier because if you don't understand something you can ask and it can be easier in this way you can read and if you don't understand you have to write but maybe something really easy if you didn't see it first time then face to face it's easier
Interviewer: 25:33	Yeah were there any differences because you didn't know the (American university) students as well as the (Swedish university) students?
Interviewee:	You mean if it was easy here or there?
Interviewer: 25.40	Do you think there were any differences because you knew didn't know the (American university)students as well as the (Swedish university) students [I didn't understand so much] sorry do you think there were any differences in the way that you commented because of how much you knew the students
Interviewee:	Oh yeah there were difference like if I had 2 comments in a proposal from Daniel it would be much easier because I already know him so it will be easier to understand and also if I have to make a very severe comment it would be easier because they would know that we are friends so it's just for help [mm] maybe then they can see the different ways so I think it's difficult to write for people that you don't know because you don't know if it's correct or not or if they like it or not so sometimes it's difficult and because of that in the whole text we write this part it's really good this part not so we try to balance like good comments with the comments they have to change it maybe here if you do this here you just comment the parts they have to change it
Interviewer: 27.11	Yeah right yeah erm that was the end of the first part of the interview and then we're going to go on now to the comments that you got from the American students and before we go into the comments again what general feelings do you have about the comments you got from the Americans
Interviewee:	I got? It was like the first review before the grade so it was really good I changed some things in my text because of them because we have to put in Pingpong in one date so it was good to see our first comment so we then change it and we can improve our text to after upload there the principle part is better in this exchange program is that you can receive a first correction of our text this part I really like it
Interviewer: 28.36	Let's see this is the comments on your literature review so this is while ago you got this
Interviewee:	((looking at paper)) (5.0) (I was correct) this was really helpful I remember er first she said about my introduction because I think there they write in a different way there ((pointing at paper)) because when we write for our thesis we write in the first sentence our (preferring) and they write in the last sentence so she say in the first paragraph that it was a bit difficult to understand but then when she read everything she could understand so I think the way you write there and here in the culture it's different but it was nice to know but then the good thing was that she corrected me on a lot of grammar mistakes grammar or word order so it was good they are English speakers native speakers in English so just from reading through once she already know all the mistakes I had to read really carefully it's easier it's good to see before uploading in Pingpong so we could correct our mistakes to their text so it was really helpful and then they also say good

	things about our text say the things I have to change it and the parts it was really good so she just say it was really clear my text the topic it was good but between this she also barely improve the transition between paragraphs so it was really helpful too and this is a comment it was really good to correct the grammar mistakes before closing
Interviewer: 32.14	You have all these comments here would you say most of these comments are positive comments or most of them are comments with suggestions or is it 50/50
Interviewee:	I think because in this text I have a lot of grammar so I think she write almost all the grammar mistakes so it was big but if we count just the grammar as 1 mistake I think it will be 50/50 but maybe in this paragraph not I think she has to mark changes good things but it was helpful
Interviewer: 33.10	My next question was how did you feel about the comments but I guess you've answered that in some way
Interviewee:	Yeah I feel good because she said my text it was really good it was really clear it was really easy to understand the proposal she also said that even don't know much about the topic she could understand everything so I think like the aim of my proposal it was to write a text that everyone can read and she can read so it was good and I was just making mistakes with the grammar but she correct me on a lot of things so I really like it
Interviewer: 34.06	So it sounds like these comments provided the kinds of comments you were hoping for
Interviewee:	Yeah
Interviewer: 34.20	Ok yeah the next text is your proposal with Daniel and you got some comments on that
Interviewee:	((looking at paper)) (5.0) this comments it's like they didn't suggest anything almost anything the first comment they say it was excellent background so our introduction and problem I think they really like it but we just take the background the second they said we write this proposal has of course a lot more consequence and then we explain the consequence but here they say list the consequence so they clearly address a client in an information manner so we didn't understand because they say list all the consequence and in the next paragraph we list everything and we don't know if they really read all the text because it was written the third comment they say that this this part must be in the conclusion but we also refer this part in conclusion because this paragraph it was er a introduction to this figure so we have to write the good things that we will obtain with this proposal but yeah it was to write in solution so in solution we also brings something we will achieve plus to explain the table so they say to move up here but in the time we think to move it but we prefer to follow our idea to keep it there so we see we have saw their comment but we prefer to leave it and they just suggest just one thing to change in the grammar just one word but we also keep it (2.0) this word we change it I remember that we change some words it was a few grammar mistakes and then they just say that our proposal it was really good and they say like just better good things about our text good structure the problem it was really explained and they also suggest us to provide more specific reasons to the client but it was just a few comments but we could take the first impression that we all had when we did our text
Interviewer: 38.30	Right ((nodding)) did you get the kind of comments that you hoped for
Interviewee:	Yes I think because in this text we worked a lot so we send to there it was like almost everything had changed everything corrected so we like the comments because they say our text it was really good I think but in our first proposal we had a lot of grammar mistakes and they didn't suggest any grammar almost just one if everything's corrected better for us but if you have some problems we would like to see it maybe we can change this this but I hope this is everything correct
Interviewer:	Did you make any changes to your text as a result of these changes?
Interviewee:	No because this comment they say that we should list it but we had listed before so if

	they read the whole phrase because it is everything listed and this part the conclusion I remember we really think about to change it but then if you change it to this part on the solution to the conclusion so the table will just appear in the middle of the text so I think I should keep it in the same way and this word that the proposal that we should change it I don't remember I think we change it by their comments so we change just one of the three comments
Interviewer: *40.40*	((nods)) do you have any other comments about the comments you've got here? Any other thoughts?
Interviewee:	No I like it because I can see like this part that it was really important to the text and they think I should change it and I think a lot so it was good because we read the text again and again and then we can see small mistakes correct and they think our text it was good that it was everything in the right place the structure it was really well structured so it was good
Interviewer: *41.22*	So in general when we looked at these comments that you got from the (American university) students do you think there was a difference between the comments you got from (American university) and the comments you got from (Swedish university)?
Interviewee:	Yeeeess in the comments from (Swedish university) from my friends it was most of time about the not the structure but the ideas but from (American university) it was a part of grammar these mistakes so it was different ways here it was more if the idea it was good if the proposal it was good if the ways to solve the problem it was good and their comments it was more about the structure of the text the grammar and principally if it was well explained or not
Interviewer: *42.33*	Do you think there were any differences because of cultural differences?
Interviewee:	Yes in some parts of the text because they write in one manner and we in another like CVs when we did the CV it was really different our CVs and their CVs but I see it in a good manner because if some day I plan to send my CV to USA something like that I already have a lot of CVs from them saved in my notebook so it was really helpful er (the text is true I see my proposal) or a letter to there I already have some ideas how to do it so I like it
Interviewer:	Do you think there were any differences again between the (Swedish university) comments and the (American university) comments because you were getting comments on the internet instead of meeting them face to face
Interviewee:	With me and the (American university)or with me and the (Swedish university) or both
Interviewer:	If you compare the two
Interviewee:	If I compare the two yeah it'll be different of course internet and face to face face to face with the people from (Swedish university) I think they will suggest other things to change it and I think I don't know it would be almost the same on internet because you don't know so much each other so I think really about the proposal so really severe changes in general talk about the reason on the internet
Interviewer:	Do you think there were any differences between the kind of comments you got from (American university) and (Swedish university) because of how well you knew each other
Interviewee:	Yes I think when you knew someone you just assumed your text it was really good but I have to change this and this and this text but you don't know you specify which parts It's good the parts change this and this and this but really you just say like your text is good and then you just show the mistakes but when you don't know you say a lot of good things to try to balance
Interviewer:	Erm what do you think that you have learnt about peer responding about giving comments from the comments that you have got from (American university)

Interviewee:	I think you learn how to be formal to give comments because when we work in group with our friends you just go there and this is wrong change it I think we are more directly I can learn to be more kind to ask to change something like this part it's really good er reading again I think you should change this and this we learnt how to treat someone in a group that you don't know because when you are between your friends you say you have to change this and this but there we didn't know anyone it was good to improve our English
Interviewer: *47.00*	Erm what did you learn about your own writing from the (American university) students'comments
Interviewee:	I think the bear part it was the word order because sometimes when you are in your country you just translate but the order it's different and then they corrected me in a lot of things in word order so it was good to see just translated you have to think about it
Interviewer:	The last question what suggestions do you have if you have any for me for making this exchange better in the future
Interviewee:	For the exchange between (American university)? Something I would like to do it is the Skype CHANGE OF FILM But it was something that we needed an agreement between the old group some of it wasn't so interesting so we talk we can do this Thursday but no one like really put effort to go there and meet so I think if you plan on doing the class or something like that you already plan everything to just go there and meet and did it because it was something open so they just say we can do this next week and then next week they say no next week will be better if you plan like everyone will meet Thurs at 5 so we have to came if someone don't wanted to came but it's already scheduled people want to just go there and Skype I think it would be nice to see the face and talk with someone that you talk just through emails just suggesting changes like you never have the opportunity to ask it how are you so just make you have to change this this is good it would be good you know at least learn about them so maybe first make the comments have the Skype meeting between the groups would be fine [yeah] like first of all maybe we can have more great comments because we can already know about them [mm true]
Interviewer:	Thank you [that's it already?] that's it yeah
Interviewee:	It went fast the time I hope it was good

Voluntary Consent

This spring you have been part of an exchange between students at (Swedish university) and (American university). I am conducting a research project with the University of Leicester with a special interest in intercultural communication in online writing platforms. **The aim of this project is to improve peer response practices in intercultural communication**. I would be very interested in collecting data from the interaction that you are engaged in on Wikispaces and hope that you would like to be part of this project.

From the data, I would like to prepare research papers that discuss what you do in this exchange. You will be anonymous and any other identifying information will also be changed. You may withdraw from this project at any time. Just let me know if you would like to do so.

You can assist by allowing me to describe and quote from the texts and comments that you post on Wikispaces and Pingpong. I would also like you to fill in a questionnaire and to interview some of you. I would like to use the data from the questionnaires and interviews in my research.

The questionnaire will be used to select candidates for the interviews. The selection of candidates for the interviews will be done by Dr Linda Bradley (bradley@chalmers.se) and the interviews will take place when you have received your grades for the course. The interviews will discuss the comments you gave and received on the exchange and the answers in the questionnaire.

Your participation would be much appreciated and is vital for this research project. I will be glad to answer your questions about this study. Just email me at becky@chalmers.se.

All the best

Becky Bergman

Consent Form
I volunteer to participate in the study of the exchange project in the following ways. Please tick the areas that you agree to:

_____ I give Becky Bergman permission to report on and quote from the texts and comments that I have posted on the Wikispaces and Pingpong platforms.

_____ I give Becky Bergman permission to report on and quote from the texts and comments that I have written in the questionnaire and Linda Bradley permission to read the questionnaire.

_____ I volunteer to participate in an audio-recorded interview about the exchange.

Signature _____ Printed Name _____

Date _____

Appendix E: Comparison of text comments to interview comments (Anna)

Comments given: Gave 11 suggestions (RO)/ 9 positive evaluation (NRO) comments /2 negative evaluation revision (RO) / 0 alteration (RO) / 2 Clarification (RO) / 0 Clarification (NRO) /0 Encouragement (NRO)

Comments received: 19 suggestions (RO) /23 positive evaluation non revision comments (NRO) /1 negative evaluation revision (RO) / 4 alteration (RO) / 1 Clarification (RO) / 0 Clarification (NRO) /1 Encouragement (NRO)

Text comments	Interview comments
Comments given (proposal)	
Why I and not we?	It's what I said we not really get why they started with "I" because they were more than one at first they were I think three That was the first comment and it was a question mark because we didn't know why they did this(…)
Page break- all the bullets (numbers) are on the same page	I think (…) I don't know why I did this with the page break maybe look at it later erm yeah because it was the other side of the text but I think it was only with the different word versions and not really something
Next page?as some kind of head line for the next paragraph – but maybe it's because of our word version	so it's really only design things actually
Now there are two lines between the paragraphs – try to be consistent with the layout	
Maybe you could explain what the colors and x mean;	and then the next they didn't have any lines between the graphic and the text yeah we not get what's this task graphic should mean what's the blue colour and the green colour
We would leave some space between the text and the table We think that you have written the text, Mackenzie ;)	we only ask if they can explain it more basically yeah that's again that only one girl Mackenzie wrote it the others I don't know that they should change it maybe
We are not sure, but is there a comma missing?	yeah there was one grammar mistake with the however we really thought a lot if you have to put a comma there after however That's something we really thought about it quite a lot because like I said it's their mother tongue they know that probably better than we and so we really thought should we write something down or not but then we decided yeah but maybe with a question it doesn't mean it's it's do not have to be right what we say but it could be it's every time the same with grammar mistakes that you're not really sure is it really right because that's their mother tongue they should know it and so it's really write with a question and yeah maybe

	look into it again
Maybe another free line? Because it looks like that the "best" belongs to the conclusion	and that's the last comment was again only it was a few lines and we looked at the design (…)
We like the way it looks (layout) a lot and it was very easy to read through it and to follow your ideas. The introduction at the beginning is really good and helps us to get into the topic. We like your idea writing about such an up to date topic	yeah and after the text we wrote that we really liked it and that it was very easy to read we meant it so I cannot see anything more about it like I said it was a really good first draft actually this proposal it was only a few design things I think you said we shouldn't really look into it because it was a really early stage of the proposal but it still was really good so we told them some of these things because there was nothing else
Comments given (feasibility study)	
Your Introduction is a little bit confusing for us. We had to read it twice to get the idea. Maybe you can write it simpler	Yeah this time it was with the two French guys and so we read them together and discussed it and we know about the topic before out of the first proposal [right] but they didn't and so we know about all the introduction we not really get what's the purpose of their erm proposal

Yeah and that it was basically maybe it was too difficult to read but it was unclear for us

Yeah of course cause we know about the topic and they know nothing about it so after the introduction we have to explain them what's the purpose of this paper was and the topic |
| Once we had to write a feasibility report and we learned, that we are not allowed to use we, but we are not sure how it is in your course. | yup again they wrote we met with David ( ) so we give them a notice that we learnt that we not allowed to use "we" I actually don't even remember if it was in German or English alltsa I know in German that we are not really allowed to use it but I don't know if you have this in English as well but it was the only notice but I think they in these texts it's ok with "we met with David ( )" because they really met they could say "the authors met with David ( ) but that sounds maybe strange it depends |
| We don't know SurveyMonkey. Maybe you can explain it a little bit (if it is not very well known at your university;)) | Yeah and they had survey monkey and we didn't know what it was then we asked them to explain it yeah |
| Till now your report looks great ☺ We are very anxious to the results. We like the idea behind your topic. It is very up-to-date. | and that basically was it so we only wrote that it looks correct and yeah it was only 2 pages so it was quite short and there was not really something to criticize only a few small things

Yeah we wanted to sound nice of course so it's every time more in yeah we would do it like this ( ) so it's basically we thought or I thought I tried to make it as |

	positive as possible yeah like I said with the question marks with grammar things and here it was also we tried so and we tried to explain what we mean cos if you only write one sentence or only one word then you not really get what's the problem and yeah with smileys we did a few we put a few into it only let it look a little bit more positive than it was
Comments received (literature review 1)	
Strong opening sentence! I might suggest expanding though.	For the first for the literature review it was mostly positive I think it was on one thing they said and the main part only one person and you guys said the same so I changed it and then there was one in the conclusion and they started she started to want to criticise something but then she ends so there was no criticise at all and that was something oh what did she want to say but in the literature review it was mostly positive

OK the first comment is that I have a strong opening sentence so I change nothing at all in it and it's a positive comment at first "I might suggest expanding it" did I expand it I don't know I think I had a problem there I really had a problem with the with the words so everything with expanding and get a little larger I not really did it because in the first draft there was more than 600 and I had to shorten it [mm] so yeah it's a positive actually it's a nice comment   because it's a positive comment but she just says she suggests something to change so it's a negative it's a useful comment in a positive way yeah the end of my introduction with the erm I changed it I changed because I get it from everyone actually that I have to write what's the purpose of this literature review so I did it (.)

Of these two they really did a good job in make a negative comment positive yeah so …..Like "I think it's a strong opening sentence but I might suggest "so they give yeah it's really nice but maybe it can be a little bit long |
| It's great that you explain some of the more complex scientific acronyms and techniques. I'm not a science major but I can understand everything you are explaining in this article☺ | but it's funny because they understand it and when we read it in our group one of them is an Austrian girl and has knowledge about it Swedish girl it was maybe because it was really late it was nearly at the end but they were so confused about the topic so the feedbacks from them was not really existing they said well I don't get the topic and everything so yeah I didn't use their comments actually yeah I used you guys and them they were really useful sometimes so ok |

Your writing is very concise and easy to understand. I like how you get right to the point rather than "ramble on."	then she writes that I write very easy as in it's easy to understand yeah I think it's basically a ( ) every time I try to make it as easy as possible it's maybe too easy sometimes but it's a nice comment so she understands when she writes it's easy this comment really helped me because like I said they didn't get the text at all and she writes that it's easy then it was really maybe only because it was late you had 4 hours class and yeah so this comment was really helpful do not change the complete text but yeah
This paragraph becomes a little "wordy" here. You might want to either break up this paragraph into two paragraphs or change the wording to make it more concise.	there she writes in the middle that it's a little bit confusing the paragraph and I changed it this part I really changed erm but I don't know if I made it shorter or larger I really think I changed it but I don't know what I did so

and here in the middle she writes "the paragraph becomes a little ( ) here so she use little and not I don't get what you want to explain me with these changes so yeah and she suggests how I can change it with the paragraphs |
your conclusion is very strong and has a "concluding" tone! The only thing I	there was it "your conclusion is very strong and has a concluding tone and the only thing I" and then there was nothing and it was so frustrating because yeah I think that was the only really big thing she could criticise and she not ended it for me
Comments received (literature review 2)	
This is a great introduction to your literature review.	I think the other one there were only positive things I remember this the introduction she also says "a great introduction" like the other one but the other one suggests something that to change it and she said it's good
Great job introducing things like GNSS.	It's nice but it wasn't really helpful I get the comments from both of them and I read through it and I said ok it's really nice that they give so many positive feedback but you want something that they can criticise I can change so yeah it was nice but yeah she didn't even criticise anything I guess if I remember right so yeah it's not really useful then either so the other ((tapping the paper)) was more useful then it was mostly positive alltsa everyone else said yeah yeah the comments were so useful and for me after the literature review yeah there were 2 things I could change and that's ok but otherwise it was nothing yeah
Just make sure to do this for all terms you talk about in this review.	
Good job including information from you research to add to your ideas.	

This is a good critique of his work.	
This topic sentence includes a good comparison of the readings.	
Nice job subtly adding your opinion.	
Nice powerful conclusion.	
Good job adding your references in this literature review.	Yeah and they put in the references she said it's a good job having it I think she only wrote this because the others Valerie and the Swedish girl I didn't remember her name sorry they didn't had references in it so it was more oh the others don't have it she has it oh that's nice yeah
	She had nothing to criticise or she hadn't the time to to really think about it this takes time yeah yeah I think I get it ((nodding head)) and write a few positive comments it takes less time than the other one put because she really thought how shall I phrase it that she will understand it and it takes time I think it was basically a time thing yeah and because you also give me more positive feedback than negative so maybe the text in the first half was really not that bad it's possible
Comments received (proposal 2)	
Yeah, I think it would be beneficial to include outside resources and references to strengthen the report.	Yeah I think with the with the proposal we actually not really looked into their into their comments so it is more changing the things you guys told us [ok] but not this actually yeah it was difficult because you work in a two and then one thought she looked into it but maybe didn't do it but [right] yeah with the resources and the references we asked them a question and she answered but like I said we you said it was ok but () we did it because we didn't really have references so
It depends on the situation but you can use „they" if you make it clear who you are talking about.	yeah that's with they to use they we did it actually afterwards we used not he /she for not only one person but [plural] it's the same in German I have these problems in German (…)
Providing your qualifications and experiences make your paper must stronger. It makes the viewer want to continue reading because they understand that you will have good feedback and ideas.	the next comment about our experience they want that we write more which experience we had mmhmm I get it and not a few weeks ago so yeah we not really looked into it but it's a good comment too with providing your qualifications and experience
Perhaps expand on how this new system will be benficial for customers. Instead of calling this a „solution," perhaps call it a „recommendation."	
It's helpful that you provide	there's one comment it's helpful that you provide

relevant background for readers who may not be familiar with this RTN system.	relevant background for readers who maybe not familiar with this RTN system that's I think basically only a comment that we did it right because maybe it sounds like this (…)
Instead of short paragraphs, I would suggest condensing this information to create larger paragraphs. This would make the appearance look less lengthy.	but also we had quite a lot of short text short paragraphs put it together to one bit
I would suggest referring to the customer as „they." You can switch back and forth from saying „the customer" and „they" to make it clear to readers.	yup and again with he/she yeah
Use „the customer" here so it isn't confused with the driver.	
Use „they" here (referencing the driver) because you make it clear that you are speaking about the driver and not the customer	
I would say „This means that the RTN can't determine whether the transmitted position is correct....."	
Recommendation	
After this sentence, you may want to repeat how this will benefit the customers.	that's a really nice comment it's at the solution and it's was a really short and they comment she comments that maybe it should repeat the benefits for the customers right mmmm a whole sentence about it
They will be able to insert....	
I would suggest combining this information into longer paragraphs and not starting every sentence with the word „the."	that's the same with the paragraphs that we should put it in one big paragraph and not that many small we actually did it because it was what you told us so they're actually really good comments yeah
On	and that's two grammar aspects
should be implemented	