

ACTION RESEARCH ON FEEDBACK ON EAP WRITING: TEACHER-STUDENT ORAL CONFERENCING IN A HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT IN TURKEY

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Introduction

Burns (2010) highlights the growing popularity of action research (AR) projects worldwide, and the value to ELT practitioners of AR outcomes. Studies into the effects of feedback on EFL/ESL writing are well documented, in particular in articles by Ferris (1997 & 1999) and at book length by Hyland and Hyland (2006). In contrast, while few accounts of AR projects looking at the effects of feedback on such writing seem to appear in the research literature, even fewer involving AR or any other research method appear to have looked at the effects on EFL/ESL writing of perhaps the most interactive method of feedback, that of teacher-student oral conferencing (conferencing). Oft-cited examples of research into the latter include Goldstein and Conrad (1990) and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997). Commenting on conferencing, Hyland and Hyland (2006: 186) conclude that: 'Given how few studies have been carried out, little is known about the relationship between teacher and student discourse and teacher feedback in conferences and student revision.' The study this paper outlines sought to address this imbalance.

Background

The five-year qualitative AR study outlined below was carried out in Turkey in Izmir Yüksek Teknoloji Enstitüsü (IYTE) in a higher education preparatory year English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing context. It involved two AR teams, consisting mainly of Turkish teachers of writing. In terms of outcomes and findings, I believe these may be of relevance and use to teacher development, teachers of writing and those involved in AR not only in a Turkish context but worldwide.

An action research framework

Burns (2005) points out that while variations of Lewin's original concept of AR (1946) have been proposed, the best known is the model by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) which consists of a cycle of plan - act - observe - reflect, although she points out how critics such as Elliot (1991) believe Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) over-

represent action research 'as a series of fixed and predictable steps.' Believing it to offer more flexibility within an AR approach, this study implemented Burns' contrasting and more detailed framework of what she terms 'interrelated experiences'. This appears below in Box 1. This article outlines stages: 1 – 8 of an AR study based on the framework.

Burns' (2005) suggested framework for AR:
 1 exploring → 2 identifying → 3 planning → 4 data collecting → 5 analysing / reflecting → 6 hypothesising / speculating → 7 intervening → 8 observing → 9 reporting → 10 writing → 11 presenting

Box 1.

The study

The study investigated the benefits to student writers of feedback on their work, in particular individual oral feedback. It encompassed one complete AR cycle with two main stages. Each stage involved differing groups of participants who were colleagues at IYTE. Although I refer to a 'framework' and describe what happened at various points, it would perhaps be more accurate to view these phases as a series of overlapping interrelated experiences.

Exploring and Identifying

I initially made audio-recordings of group and follow-up individual interviews with six current teachers of writing at IYTE in order to locate patterns regarding the provision of feedback on writing there. My analysis of the transcripts revealed how error-correction and teacher written comments predominated. It was, however, also revealed that, although used by only two of the six teachers at the group interview, conferencing with students about their essays, either on an ad hoc basis during the lesson or in an office following it, appeared to be both mutually appreciated and highly valued.

Following research related reading in Hyland and Hyland (2006), and noticing the paucity of work carried out on conferencing and follow-up revisions, I decided to make the focus of the study

an investigation into the relationship between the discourse of conferencing and its effects on student follow-up drafts.

Planning and data collection

For stage one conferencing the AR team consisted of three Turkish teachers of writing: SB (female), OE and NK (both male). I was, at this point, working from the outside, helping set up and make audio-recordings of each teacher conferencing with two students they had selected from their writing classes. I then wrote up and analysed the resulting six transcripts.

Analysing and reflecting

The key finding in this study in terms of AR is how the overall analysis stage of Burns (2005) suggested framework would appear to consist of several mini-cycles of analysis (MCAs). I noted how examples of MCAs began during the initial analysis of Stage One data, and were evident from then until the end. It is noticeable that the outcome of one MCA appears to feed into the next and, due to the cyclical nature of this analysis stage, as the study progressed the AR team were able to streamline the approach to analysis in order to probe deeper into the conferencing data.

I believed that a means of suitable analysis and coding of the transcripts could be achieved by working on the model outlined by Boyatzis (1998). It enabled us to adapt his continuum of typical – superior worker characteristics to identify what we believed were the following twelve desirable features or conferencing:

Providing a background / overview
Limiting the number of points to deal with
Helpful conference discourse markers
Encouraging self-correction
Providing praise and mitigating comments
Providing helpful examples
Suitable pronoun choice
Negotiation in the L1
Pausing to encourage interaction
Questioning to increase interaction
Clear instructions for follow-up drafts
Analysing follow-up drafts

Table 1: Desirable conferencing features

Hypothesising and speculating

Once again, indicating the interrelated nature of phases of the framework adopted for this study, further analysis took place when planning how to proceed based on MCA One, the initial analysis. This further analysis was, however, analysis as

reflection rather than as action, and at the same time formed part one of a second MCA.

Reflection at this point concerned speculating on the outcome of the three current AR team members being provided by me with a list of features resulting from the first stage of conferencing. The formation of such teacher self knowledge as the twelve desirable conferencing features contrasts with the more simplistic knowledge transmission model, discussed in Mann (2005).

The next phase of this study noted initially which of the above features the AR team in Stage Two conferencing were able to implement. The description of each feature was adapted. Table 2 lists in order the five most dominant features that were implemented.

Error correction
Teacher-questioning
Praise
Instructions for revision
Discourse markers

Table 2: Dominant features located

Intervening

The intervention at this point required adapting Burns’ framework, and at the same time functioned as a continuation of MCA Two. Due to unforeseen circumstances, a new AR team had to be formed. While adaptation of Burns (2005) involved further planning and data collection within the intervention phase, it was noticeable how MCA Two also built upon the previous MCA. The second MCA firstly concerned analysis as reflection on data in order to decide how to proceed in this study, and led to adapting the framework of Burns (2005). To an extent, MCA Two and Three may belong to the same mini-cycle, and indicate how the borders of such MCAs may not be clearly defined.

NK and OE withdrew from the study without notice, both intending to complete their own doctoral studies. Their leaving meant only SB remained from the original AR team. At this juncture, I decided to alter my role from an outside facilitator to that of inside joint data-generator, feeling this was more in the spirit of AR. Following my invitation, EG, a less-experienced female colleague, agreed to participate in the study. It thus proceeded once more with a team of three, although this time with two Turkish females and myself. There was thus a vast alteration in power relationships.

According to Burns (2005), following the hypothesising / speculating stage above, there should then follow a stage involving intervening and, later, observing. It indicated that the stages suggested by Burns (2005), rather than being clearly observable events, in fact function as interrelated experiences. This point is reflected in this study, in that in order to intervene and observe what happened when points arising from both analysis and hypothesising concerning future conferencing were implemented, it was firstly necessary to re-implement a previous stage, that of planning / data collection. This is another indication of how, rather than moving in clear stages the section headings tend to indicate, the AR model in Burns (2005) is instead a cyclical process of interrelated practices. In fact, it would appear that in the case of this study the intervening and observing would then, prior to the reporting, writing and presenting stages, be followed by further analysing / reflecting. The adaptation of the order reflects the point made by Burns (2005: 59) who suggests that processes experienced by action researchers are ‘best viewed as necessarily adaptive to the educational situations and circumstances of the participants.’

Successful conferencing features

The study then shifted towards locating what were felt to be successful conferencing features in relation to outcomes on follow-up drafts. We noted how locating points dealt with by the teacher in the conference aided our analysis. As a result, we were able to describe the treatment by the teacher of each point in two categories we had noted. These appear below in Table 3.

Category one	Points were noted on the pre-conference draft and dealt with successfully, in that the student was able to utilise them to make suitable improvements in the follow-up draft.
Category two	Points were noted on the pre-conference draft and dealt with less successfully, in that the student was unable to utilise them to make suitable improvements in the follow-up draft.

Table 3: Categories of 'success'

Analysis of data generated in Stage Two enabled us to note how limitations concerning the language levels of students with whom to conduct conferences may be partially overcome by using the L1, while providing students with an annotated copy might also assist. Other aims of the teacher

should be to encourage discussion in order to elicit possible courses of action the student might take.

Observing: MCAs Three and Four

Following conferencing by each member with a further two students, we now had transcripts from six more conferences to analyse, along with first and second drafts. Dealing with the first of our six conferences, the aim of this stage of analysis of the intervention was firstly to observe the degree of implementation of, and secondly, the effect of the twelve desirable features on the follow-up draft. Measuring the degree of implementation proved to be an extremely time-consuming third MCA. For the remainder of the study, the research focus was upon on how alterations in follow-up drafts were related to the conference discourse.

This third MCA noted how team members had been able to implement five of the twelve desirable features of conferencing noted in MCA One. The second part of this MCA, which I have labelled MCA Four, illustrates how it may be necessary for the main focus of an AR study to shift, and enabled us to note categories of ‘success’ when dealing with points in the conference.

The reflection on the analysis provided more refined categories of conferencing features and resulted in another set of categories in which to place action taken by teacher and student during and after the conference. It was further noted how mini-cycles tend to occur within the overall analysis, and how on several occasions the three strands along which this study worked tend to be interrelated, i.e. how AR on conferencing data analysis resulted in teacher development and teacher knowledge in the form of more informed conferencing.

Observing and analysing: MCA Five

Having established twelve desirable conferencing features and two conference categories, analysis continued in a more focused manner, but with each member firstly carrying out an independent analysis of each set of conferencing data prior to collaborating to agree on matters. The outcome of this was MCA Five, which concerned the team working individually on the second set of conferencing data with analytical tools such as conferencing categories. This analysis reflects a complete contrast to MCA one, during which I assisted three teachers with analysing only the particular conference they were involved in. MCA five thus represents an increased degree of collaboration, reflecting perhaps the increased interest the study was providing now that its emphasis had changed.

The outcome of this MCA was a realisation that we needed further refinements to our analysis, i.e. action that involved adapting our tools for analysis. It also became clear during MCA Five that identifying and tabulating points raised and relationships to follow-up drafts was not an easy process. In this regard it is important to point out how, in accordance with qualitative studies and working within the constructivist paradigm, the relationship may not be observed as merely cause-effect. At this point I believed it might assist with the study if, as a team, we firstly identified points indicated by the teacher for discussion in the conference, then located and agreed on sections of the transcript within which each point was covered. This is indicated in Table 4 below:

Draft 1 Point	Turn(s)	Feature(s)	Draft 2	Category
6: 'increase the quantity of penalties'	50-68	L1	'introduce stricter penalties'	One

Table 4: Refinements in analytical tools

Observing and analysing: MCA Six

Moving onto the third set of conference data resulted in MCA Six. At this point SB requested to withdraw from the study due to an excessive workload, leaving EG and myself to work on the remaining three sets of conference data. The outcome was the location of four dominant conferencing features, which appeared to lead to what we felt were successful alterations on student follow-up drafts. These were: overall evaluation; negotiation in the L1; discourse markers; eliciting.

Conferences Four to Six: MCA Seven

With the tools for our analysis complete by this stage, EG and I were able to analyse the remaining conference in the same manner, resulting in a final MCA. By now, the degree of collaboration was such that we were able to analyse together what had until now been done separately, and on an individual basis.

The analysis of the fourth of our six sets of Stage Two conferencing data was the first part of an MCA that also covered conferences five and six. The MCA and resulting refinements led the AR team to the point where our development was complete in terms of establishing our research tools and the use of the same model was applied to conferences four, five and six. Refinements

resulting from the cycle of MCAs illustrate how in this study AR on conferencing data led to teacher development in the form of the creation of teacher knowledge and, again in a cyclical manner, better conferencing techniques.

Continuing our analysis, we noted how each point, as a result of conferencing, had been dealt with by the student in the follow-up draft. Table 4 outlines how we located specific features of conferencing that appeared to result in success in terms of improvements in the student's follow-up draft. Based on analyses of conferences three to six, table 5 indicates what were designated as successful conferencing features.

Features dominant in conference three:	Features dominant in conference four:	Features dominant in conference five:	Features dominant in conference six:
Overall evaluation	Instruction to revise	Eliciting	Questioning
L1 negotiation	Eliciting	Questioning	Eliciting
Discourse markers		Teacher correction	Teacher correction
Eliciting			

Table 5: Dominant / successful conferencing features

Significance

With its focus on what happens in the writing conference and its relationship with the revision process, this study adds significantly, perhaps, to research into conferencing. It identifies relationships between what the team felt were desirable conferencing features and what they felt were successful alterations made on follow-up essay drafts. In doing this, the study responds to the comment made by Hyland and Hyland (2006: 96) in the introduction above on the effects of oral response. The study also responds to studies investigated by Goldstein and Conrad (1990), which also looked at the role of discourse in conferencing. Perhaps, more importantly, this study reiterates their conclusion that, concerning the features used and moves implemented, "[...] the type of verbal interaction taking place in the conference has an influence on the type of subsequent revision."

Summary of key features of conferencing

It may be the case, as this study suggests, that certain features of conferencing that both AR teams identified are more likely to lead to what we felt were successful alterations in follow-up drafts. These are outlined in Table 6.

Clear instructions for follow-up drafts
Eliciting
Questioning
Correcting

Table 6: Key features of conferencing

Our data suggests also that the use of the L1 to implement any or all of these features is advisable. A key implication of the study is that by adopting such features teachers of writing would be better equipped to conference with students on their work with respect to them making successful alterations on their follow-up drafts.

Discussion

Nunan (1993: 46) states: “[...] it is clear that action research is difficult, problematic, and, in some cases, inconclusive. It consumes a great deal of time, and often strains the goodwill of the teachers involved, as well as those with whom they work.” Aspects of what Nunan was perhaps referring to were clearly evident in this study. For example, a strain in goodwill was perhaps a contributory factor in SB’s departure. That the AR team adopted a means of developing the study, which we later went back on, indicates how AR, rather than being a linear process, can, as Nunan states above (ibid) appear ‘messy.’

Inviting participation

Since inviting participation would appear to be a face-threatening act, this study reflects the necessity for approaching this phase with delicacy, and perhaps re-inviting those who initially show little inclination to participate. Although it may appear to be of value to the study to have participants who are familiar with research, the fact that they may need their own research time, as was the case with NK and OE, may prove problematic.

Departure

Departure from the study tended to consist of three forms. The first was those such as NK and OE, leaving IYTE permanently and thus unable to continue. A second consisted of those like SB, who left the study permanently but remained at IYTE, while a third consisted of those who left for temporary reasons, such as maternity. Of those who took part in the group and / or individual interviews, only two were at IYTE on completion of the study. It is perhaps interesting to note that no-one in the study was at IYTE from its inception to its completion. This study also showed how issues arose when a member requests

to leave the team due to a problem with finding time to devote to data analysis.

Data and involvement

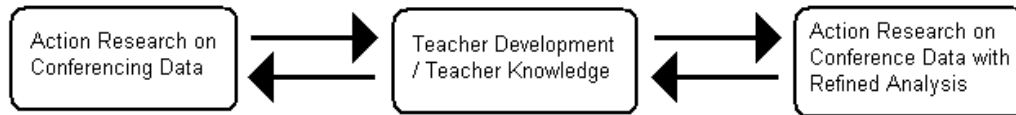
This study also showed how important it is to establish at the start the conditions concerning rights of access to and ownership of data generated, plus as far as is practically possible, what involvement in the study requires. It illustrates how SB, although initially committed, was unable to maintain her involvement, and how she agreed without being asked to do so, to allow the remaining members of the team to use data she had helped to generate. It may, however, have been detrimental to the study had she refused such permission.

Relationships: ethical

Puchner and Smith (2008), writing on the tension between the personal and the professional, outline the ethical issues involved with researching those who are close to you. Although teachers at IYTE involved in this study were friends and colleagues, they were not as close as the researchers in Puchner and Smith (grandfather and daughter respectively) and the subject (grandson and son). Puchner and Smith (2008: 5) point out, though, how “Collaboration also does not eliminate the possibility of manipulation, which is another potential ethical problem that becomes particularly problematic when research participants are close to you,” and how, “The potential for manipulation of those we have power over is always there, and we have to recognise that when the goal of improving practice is intertwined with these selfish motives, the potential is even greater.” As coordinator of EAP writing at IYTE I was EG’s line-manager, and thus it would have been easy for me to manipulate circumstances concerning her involvement in the study. Although I was grateful for her involvement, I took care to ensure she received no preferential treatment concerning, for example, marking end of year exams.

Unforeseen issues

A long-term study will always be susceptible to unforeseen events that may require an immediate or eventual solution. In the case of this study I have identified several events that resulted in a variety of limitations. The relocation of the faculty proved initially to be a set-back. Alterations in teacher timetables were also an issue: although I was originally promised teachers involved would be able to continue with classes within which students were engaging in conferences, this only seemed to apply in the short term.



Box 2: AR, TD / TK and analysis relationship

Tensions may arise between pedagogical practice and research approaches, such as teachers being unavailable to analyse data due to exam marking. Another limitation may concern writing up analytical accounts. It is vital to do so in the correct order, so as not to be influenced in one’s own analysis by previously writing up those of others. There are also limitations to working from transcribed accounts. Since they are often incomplete attempts to capture the speech event, working from transcripts may cause confusion and disagreement. Generating transcripts from the recorded conference has to be seen as a collaborative event involving member-checking by all participants.

Suggestions for further research

Reflecting on this study has led me to note three suggestions for further research concerning the AR approach implemented: Firstly, that although Burns (2005) provided an adequate framework for this particular study which took place in an EAP higher education context and involved teachers in an academic atmosphere consisting of colleagues also involved in research (with perhaps relatively more time than colleagues in High Schools in Turkey), I believe there needs to be more such studies carried out using the same framework in Primary and Secondary educational institutions. Following on from the above, with AR carried out either in HE or High Schools, it would be useful to note if and in which particular ways some stages of Burns (2005) may require adaptation to suit local circumstances.

A key feature of this study is the realisation that MCAs tend to appear within the overall analysis stage. Perhaps other studies implementing the framework suggested by Burns (2005) would clarify whether this was an isolated case or an instance of a general pattern. If the latter were found to be the case, then a comparison of how such MCAs evolve and relate to each other would perhaps prove fruitful, especially with regard to their leading to critical moments such as when no more refinement of the research tools is necessary.

Teacher Development and Teacher Knowledge

Aspects already outlined above on action research are related also to teacher-development (TD), as

TD may occur both during and as a result of AR. Also related to AR and TD is teacher knowledge (TK), which in view of the interwoven elements of each, is also referred to below where appropriate.

Teacher Development

In this study, AR on conferencing data led to teacher development. That is to say, the three areas of the study tended to overlap, and thus teacher development led to an improvement in our means of data analysis. This relationship is illustrated in Box 2.

In contrast to the other two areas on which this study worked, AR and conferencing, there does not appear to be a similarly clear framework in which to place teacher development. Borg (2003), in describing teacher development as an “unobservable dimension of teaching,” explains how it is not always possible to measure such a feature. Mann (2005), however, clarifies many issues relating to development arising from AR. He explains how AR studies, such as the one this study represents, play a part in putting the classroom practitioner at the centre of efforts to understand and develop language teaching and learning practice, and how there are important reflective and developmental processes that need to be considered alongside AR; these are what Burns (2005: 57) terms “related branches”.

Self-direction and development

Placing self-development at the centre of his definition of language teacher development, Mann (2005) explains the strong relationship between self-direction and self-development, and cites Hill (2000) who states that “it is healthy for professionals to have an active role in their own developmental processes.” This point is illustrated in this study, as AR team members at both stages of conferencing acted independently in order to analyse and reflect on data generated. In contrast, my attempt to impose conferencing styles on other team members illustrates an example of what Tomlinson (2003: 2) describes as the worst type of teacher development, as they would have been “surreptitiously pushed in pre-determined directions.”

In terms of TD in this study, it is noticeable that there are two related aspects. Firstly, there is

development internally. Edge (1999) refers to this as self-development at the individual level. Secondly, there is the account of development of knowledge which this study as a text represents. On reflection, and working from Mann's (2005) core themes in teacher development, this study illustrates an internal bottom-up study. The study enabled in-service development, with no need to attend courses. It was carried out on a voluntary basis, with little direct institutional support, and thus contrasts well with top-down continuing professional development which generally represents institutional requirements. As the study largely valued the insider view, and was instigated by individuals working both independently and in groups, it reflects Mann's (2005) core themes and concerns two types of development.

Researcher development

As a researcher, I developed an awareness of the issues involved in soliciting interest in a study, in recording interviews so as to generate data, and in the myriad problems of creating and working from transcripts. Other were related to negotiating access, getting a feel for research instruments used, understanding the complexity of the dynamics of relationships between AR team members, and of realising difficulties involved with using technology to capture the crucial speech events without which this study would have been impossible.

Research ethics

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of any researcher development concerns an appreciation of the ethics involved in a research study. Taking advantage of those who may or may not fully comprehend what they are agreeing to is not morally acceptable. For example, in Stage One (conferencing), I forgot to ask students' permission whether they wanted to participate in the study, and whether I could use their names for the research purposes, which could be perceived as an example of unethical coercion. This was, however, rectified in Stage Two, prior to which I requested the students' written permission.

Individual development

While speculating on how to proceed to Stage Two conferencing, AR team members reflected on points in order to construct teacher knowledge concerning more refined conferencing tools. During Stage Two conferencing EG reflected on criteria in order to adapt them, while based on analyses the AR team noted the emergence of categories.

Teacher development: significance

In view of Borg's concluding remark (2003) that "much more research on second and foreign language teachers practices and conditions in teaching is required", I feel the study makes a valid contribution, and perhaps partially fills a research space, in that it concerns TD based upon AR within Turkey that took place over a five-year period, providing an account of conferencing carried out by teachers of English in the higher education sector in Turkey in an EAP context. The latter point is perhaps made more pertinent when one considers the following: Borg's (2003) survey of 64 studies in the field of teacher cognition published between 1976 and 2002 show how only two have taken place in Turkey: Sendan and Roberts (1998) and Tercanlioglu (2001). Sendan and Roberts (1998) concerned a case study of one student, while that of Tercanlioglu (2001) concerned teachers of reading. Borg (2003: 104) also reports two studies in teacher cognition in writing instruction, Burns (1992) and Tsui (1996), both of which analysed classroom practices, but without dealing specifically with feedback on writing. Therefore research accounts such as this not only illustrate the possibility for successfully carrying out AR in the EAP environment of the higher education sector in Turkey, but how such research could, by implementing the framework suggested by Burns (2005), contribute to teacher development in other pedagogical contexts.

Teacher knowledge

Related to TD as an outcome of AR is the development of teacher knowledge (TK). Whereas it was noted above how in comparison with AR, TD does not appear to be written up in terms of models or frameworks, teacher knowledge issues located in this study indicate the interwoven aspects of AR, TD and TK.

Types of knowledge

Mann (2005: 106) explains how received knowledge is parcelled up into topics on pedagogic components such as second-language acquisition. In contrast, I noted how this study allowed for a movement away from what Mann (ibid) terms "a reliance of transmission methodology", towards a constructivist model described in Roberts (1998). In terms of individual knowledge, Mann considers how the movement away from the transmission of knowledge framework described in Fanselow (1988) towards viewing teachers as legitimate 'knowers', has led to a greater consideration of the types of teacher knowledge. In this regard, this study produced

what I would argue is primarily 'usable knowledge', (Lageman 2002); i.e. having located features of conferencing that tended to relate to successful outcomes on follow-up drafts, I would expect teachers to use such pedagogical tools with their classes.

Using terminology in Mann (2005), this study represents an example of constantly reshaping knowledge occurring as a combination of the following: external knowledge received from pre-service courses (received and declarative knowledge); knowledge gained from the teaching context (local and situated knowledge), along with individual, personal, practical and usable knowledge. In terms of situated knowledge developing over time, this study highlights how individual knowledge in the form of usable pedagogical skills, a factor in the combination described above, adds to a teacher's knowledge base.

Mann (2005: 107) suggests that further research is required into how teachers develop and build knowledge bases. I would suggest that discoveries made by both AR teams illustrate how action research on conferencing data resulted in teacher development in the form of newly-constructed teacher knowledge that would add to the knowledge base of teachers.

Limitations concerning conferencing

This study looks at short term improvements in writing carried out by twelve students. It involved five teachers and concerned the relationship between first drafts and alterations on follow-up drafts. Unlike Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997), it does not look at the first drafts of the next essay written by the students in the same study. A key area in which I felt the study was affected concerned providing students with a teacher-corrected pre-conference draft. EG and I noted how this made it harder to detect how what took place in the conference itself was related to what we had identified as 'successful' alterations to the follow-up draft. A possible solution to the conflict between research and pedagogic goals would be to explain to students why first drafts were to be given back only prior to the conference.

Further research into conferencing

It may be the case that longer-term studies concerning conferencing may be necessary. In doing this and further analysing data generated in this study, I feel it would be of value to investigate more thoroughly the role played by the L1 during conferencing. It may also be valuable to locate and examine the role of interpersonal, pedagogic and

informational exchanges in conferences. A third potential area for future research could concern how conferencing may motivate student writers.

Conclusion

This study has indicated how an AR project may proceed along varying lines. Accordingly, this study comprised the discovery of desirable conferencing features in terms of beneficial effects on follow-up drafts; teacher development; and the creation of teacher-knowledge. The study further reflected on how AR cycles are not linear, but involve overlapping and interrelated phases. It also illustrated how a long-term study may be affected by various incidents, and how these may be overcome. Struggling at times to do so, writing up the above account was aided by points provided in Burns (2010: 161-162) in the hope that, as she suggests, "[...] your audience gets good insights into the AR process, your findings and the insights you gained for improving professional practices." I would recommend this list of points to others seeking to publish accounts of AR projects.

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