Using Directive and Facilitative Feedback to Improve Student Writing: A Case Study of a Higher Education Setting in Cambodia

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Abstract

This paper discusses how two feedback strategies, directive and facilitative, were used in two essay writing classes in the English Language Support Unit (ELSU) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). The study investigated the effects of the two strategies in two types of essay, (1) classification and (2) comparison and contrast, examined the types of student errors, and explored their causes. The student writing data were enhanced through follow-up interviews with each of the participants and through triangulation with the evaluations of a second teacher. The findings of this study show that facilitative feedback may be more effective in improving certain revisions of essays, and directive feedback with others. These results may be useful for university instructors, teachers, teacher trainers, and senior high school teachers who wish to improve their students' writing.

Helping students to improve writing in the drafting stages is a contentious topic for teachers who are often not sure how best to improve the wide variety of errors in students' essays. Two questions arise for the teacher: Should teachers focus more on linguistic errors and grammar issues? Or should teachers help students develop the content of the essay? Students exhibit their own individual problems. Some students still struggle with sentence structure and vocabulary. Others have poor essay organization and unfocused ideas. Some students experience more complex problems – errors in the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and essay structure. As a result, they fail to clearly set out main ideas to support the topic. They also seem unable to clarify their points of view with examples, facts, and explanations, so their arguments seem weak. The question arises, therefore, as to what techniques the teacher should use to help students individually improve their essays.

Directive and facilitative feedback, two interactive strategies to improve students' writing, can be used in this context. Directive strategies use teachers' and classmates' suggestions and comments about errors related to grammar issues, sentence structure, and vocabulary. Teachers and students may also use corrective symbols to identify and improve in correcting linguistic errors and improve sentence structure. Since each essay genre utilizes specific linguistic transitional words and a specific structure, directive strategies are also useful to point out specific linguistic errors in the thesis statements and topic sentences, as well as with unity and coherence in the body paragraphs. Facilitative strategies, on the other hand, focus on teachers' and classmates' questions or comments about the development of ideas and content,

and how these questions can help students indirectly understand shortcomings in their writing, as well as ways to improve (Carney, 2006).

This paper presents a research study conducted in two essay classes at the English Language Support Unit (ELSU) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). Six students from each class participated. The study considered the results of two feedback strategies (directive and facilitative) on errors in classification and comparison and contrast essays, taking into account different types of errors and their respective causes.

Background

The type and effectiveness of feedback in the writing classroom has been the focus of significant research. While some teachers may feel discouraged because students seem to ignore their feedback (Hairston, 1986), other teachers think their feedback is useful (Leki, 1991). In some cases, students may sometimes feel frustrated and confused when reading their teacher's suggestions and comments (Mantello, 1997). Teachers have to be clear about what parts of an essay need improvement, and what specific linguistic errors or issues that students have to improve (Zemach, 2007). Teachers need to convey the idea to students that a good writer is a thoughtful person who can deliver his or her ideas through meaningful and understandable vocabulary, facts, and examples. Therefore, students have to be taught how to produce effective written communication between writers and readers. In this case, peer reviews and student-teacher conferences are very valuable to improve the content and the organization of student writing (Huntley 1992). The student-teacher conference will be successful if teachers provide enough supportive and constructive responses to student writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1998).

According to Ellis (2009) and others (Jacobson Center for Writing, Teaching and Learning, Fall, 2002), teachers choose directive or facilitative strategies at different times to accomplish different purposes. For example, while directive feedback concerning error codes may be helpful when students need to focus on sentence level issues, facilitative feedback such as questioning may be more useful when students are working on linguistic or organizational matters. Directive feedback may help students improve unsatisfactory sentences when the teacher provides them with correct forms and some examples, and possibly helps students rewrite sentences when the teacher indicates particular errors. In contrast, students can feel more positive about improving their writing when questions and suggestions are supportive and what students want to say in their writing is recognized. In a different way than directive feedback, facilitative feedback can help students feel proud of what they can write because teachers do understand some good points and praise their work before asking them to improve some parts of their writing.

Method and Research Tools

The current research was conducted in the form of a classroom case study during a twelve week period. The study examined the effectiveness of two feedback strategies, directive and facilitative, in improving students' ability to revise their classification and comparison and contrast essays. To ensure objectivity, two teachers (the researcher and an outside evaluator) evaluated the final essay draft (see evaluation criteria in Appendix A). Data was also collected from students' interviews, and students were asked to express their opinions in reflective papers. The main research question motivating this study was which feedback, directive or facilitative, is more helpful to students when improving unity and coherence in the two types of essays. The research also attempted to determine whether each strategy is helpful, what errors are (or are not) improved upon by using each specific strategy, and how students feel when their teacher uses each strategy.

Participants

Six students in two intermediate-level essay writing classes in the ELSU at RUPP participated in this case study. The participants were selected from each class, based on regular attendance and performance during two weeks at the beginning of the course. On the basis of their performance, the students were categorized into three types of writers – good writers, fair writers, and poor writers. These categories were determined by an evaluation based on grammatical accuracy, lexical resources, and ability to organize ideas into unified paragraphs with support (Appendix A). Each class had two participants in each of these categories. The participants were in Year 2 or 3, and English is not their major subject. Their majors are in sciences and humanities. English is a supplementary subject for these students; they are required to take six semesters of English.

Data Collection

The data collection was divided into three stages. The first stage encompassed four weeks on two topics of classification essays. Topic 1 was about the advantages of the different modes of transportation in Cambodia. Topic 2 was about the advantages of NGOs in Cambodia. These topics were given to all students, and they were persuaded to write using a variety of principles of organization and categories, i.e., they could categorize the advantages of transportation and NGOs in different ways according to their own purposes. A directive feedback strategy was used with Topic 1 essays and a facilitative feedback strategy was used with Topic 2 essays. Lastly, students were asked to reflect on their classification essay writing. The second stage lasted four weeks and focused on comparison and contrast essays. Students were allowed to choose two sources – two short stories, two folktales, two Cambodian English newspaper articles, or two issues from the *Globe*, an English language magazine. A facilitative feedback strategy was used to improve comparison and contrast essays. Students were also asked to reflect (through written assignments) on their comparison and contrast essay writing experiences. The third stage involved interviewing the twelve students.

Data Analyses

Specific grading criteria were used to evaluate the final draft of the classification essays by a second outside evaluator who has over thirty years of teaching experience, including eight at RUPP. The essays were evaluated based on four sections (Appendix A). The first section regards the overall use of the English language, focusing on two categories: (1) sentence structure and (2) vocabulary and word choices. The second section focuses on the essay introduction and is divided into three categories: “hook” and background information, principle of organization and categories, and thesis statement. The third section includes two categories: topic sentence, and organization of ideas into unified paragraphs with statistics, facts, or examples to support them. The last section concerns the essay conclusion and is classified into two categories: restating the thesis statement and going beyond the thesis with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights.

The grades were evaluated in terms of movements between 5 levels – 1 = Excellent; 2 = Very Good; 3 = Good; 4 = Fair; and 5 = Weak. The total grade was calculated by reference to the number of students and nine categories: 12 students multiplied by 9 categories (i.e., 108 = 100%). The findings of the study are set out below in two sections: (1) directive feedback strategies and (2) facilitative feedback strategies.

Results

Directive Feedback Strategies

Topic 1 classification essay. This section is based on the observations and analysis of the Topic 1 classification essay (the advantages of different modes of transportation in Cambodia), interviews, and a reflective paper written by the students. The results on the revised Topic 1 classification essays are shown through the classification essay evaluation criteria as seen in Table B1 in Appendix B. The total reported for the “excellent” score is zero while the most common grade is “good,” with 42 occurrences (about 40%). The total for “very good” is only 6 (about 5%). The total for “fair” is 34 (about 30%), and for “weak,” 26 (about 25%). The total number of “fair” and “weak” ratings is much higher than the total for “excellent” and “very good” grades. This result shows that there is a large gap between the “excellent” and “weak” grades: 0 and 26. There is also a substantial gap between the total number of “very good” and “fair” scores: 6 and 34.

Examples of the results for directive feedback strategies for the Topic 1 classification essay are shown in Appendix B, Tables B2 to B11; descriptions of the results are provided below.

Subjects, pronouns, articles and prepositions. The results in Table B2 show that many students improved in using subjects and reference pronouns. Less improvement was found with articles and prepositions.

Verb choices, word forms, and spellings. Table B3 shows eight students corrected their problems with verb forms and word choices. They perhaps found it difficult to select the correct words and place them in meaningful sentences, such as the pair of words *bring* - *take*. They also confused the forms *there are* and *have*. Table B4 shows examples of corrected word form and spelling errors. Six students corrected their problems with word forms of the third person singular. Four students improved their use of the plural form, and four students corrected their spelling errors.

Vocabulary. Table B5 shows students made three significant improvements. Firstly, nine students improved word choice by choosing new words which have reasonable and comprehensible meaning. Next, five students made words more meaningful by providing clear explanations and examples. Finally, two students learned how to correct word order problems in their sentences. Table B6 shows that students improved a wide variety of errors. Students revised meaningful and simple sentences and improved their use of parallel structures, punctuation, and comparative adjective forms. A small number of students corrected clauses and other errors.

Essay structure. Table B7 shows examples from some of the six students who improved the “hook” in the introduction and background information. They used a variety of introductory techniques, such as telling an interesting story or raising meaningful questions. Four students improved their ability to utilize the principles of organization and categorization when they categorized transport types according to Cambodian needs and occupations; examples are shown in Table B8.

Four students improved topic sentences in the three body paragraphs by using transition expressions and consistent words; examples can be seen in Table B9. Four students improved their organization of ideas into unified paragraphs with statistics, facts, or examples to support them (Table B10). As illustrated by the examples in Table B11, five students concluded their essays with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights that went beyond the thesis statement. Two students restated their thesis statements.

Persistent problems for Topic 1 classification essays. While there were improvements, there were three problems concerning the directive feedback stage of the study. The twelve students did not improve in correcting certain linguistic errors in areas such as parallel structures, reference objects, and subject pronouns. They also used some phrases to generalize the meaning such as “all the countries in the world,” “for each country,” and “every time.” Six students did not have a clear purpose in categorizing the advantages of the different modes of transportation in Cambodia. They did not group the advantages of the various Cambodian transportation modes; instead, they wrote three advantages of cars or bicycles, confusing the principles of organization and categories. This last problem suggests that because students may have frequently practiced writing cause and effect paragraphs in previous classes, they might have confused classification and cause/effect essays.

The students also do not seem able to construct effective introductory and conclusion paragraphs. They just wrote a few sentences without unity and coherence. These significant points show that students seem to have limited knowledge about the background information and poor essay summary skills. Since this was the first essay for the essay class, students did not notice their errors or completely understand all of the teacher’s feedback at once. Recent research suggests that direct correction of surface errors does not produce significantly better results in EFL student writing than less time-consuming correction measures such as underlining or highlighting errors. Students need teachers to guide them to see the meaning of each error individually (Frodesen, 1991).

Student reactions. Interviews and a reflective paper students wrote on the Topic 1 classification essay provided some insight into students’ reaction to the directive feedback on this essay. One male student felt strongly positive about it, while one female student felt strongly negative. The former wanted the teacher to correct every error in his sentences. When the teacher asked what the students wanted the teacher to do with the first draft of their essays, they responded:

When I finish my first draft, I want to correct as you have already done. And also your ideas of teaching is also good because you wrote symbols, so I know exactly what my mistakes are. I know you also ask me questions, but sometimes I cannot find the best solutions. (Student A)

You wrote some symbols for me and it surprised me because this is a simple mistake but I do wrong. If you tell me a lot of mistakes, I will be upset and disappointed to write this essay. (Student B)

Eight students felt satisfied about directive feedback and found it clear, useful, and preferable. One comment was:

I want you to edit my essay and give some comments about my essays. Especially, some sentences that I could improve or some paragraphs do not have specific meanings. So, I want you to tell me ... (Student C)

Facilitative Feedback Strategies

Topic 2 classification essays. This section is based on the observations and analysis of the Topic 2 classification essay (the advantages of NGOs in Cambodia), interviews, and a reflective paper written by the research participants. The results on Topic 2 essays are shown in Table C1 in Appendix C. There is only one “excellent” grade, while there are 42 which achieved a “good” grade, about 40% and the highest percentage of all grades. The total for the “very

good" grade is 36, or about 33%. The total for the "fair" grade is 22, or about 20%, and for "weak," the total is 7, or about 6%. This result shows that many students received "good" and "very good" scores.

Tables C2-C8 in Appendix C contain examples which show that the majority of students still struggled to improve linguistic issues such as tenses, subjects, verbs, and punctuation in the revised Topic 2 classification essays. It can be seen that when students tried to improve the content and details such as facts, examples, and explanations, new linguistic errors appeared in revised essays. While taking into account learning that may have occurred during the directive feedback strategy used for the Topic 1 classification essay, it seems that students tried to respond directly to the teacher's comments. The facilitative strategy seemed to focus students on the topic.

Comparison and contrast essays. The explicit results on the revised essays of comparison and contrast show definite improvement in Table D (Appendix D). The highest total is 47 (about 44%) for "very good" while the total for "weak" is 1 (about 1%). The totals for "excellent" and "good" are 24 (about 22%) and 28 (about 26%), respectively. The total for the "fair" grade is 8 (about 7%). This also shows that students kept improving.

Two weak writers did not take the teacher's suggestions to improve the unity, coherence, and content of their essays. They just answered the teacher's questions and added a little information in the three body paragraphs while eight good writers improved their essays. Two very good writers improved not only unity and coherence, but also expressed deep opinions about the topics. They also presented what they knew about the topics and shared personal experiences.

It can be concluded that the two weak writers may be confused as to how they should revise (Zamel, 1985) when teachers point out errors to be edited on drafts at the same time that they suggest meaning – level changes, such as further developing a topic. Moreover, the essay structure of comparison and contrast is completely different from that of the classification essay, so the two weak writers needed time to focus on essay structure. They might need three revisions of their essays, rather than just two. On the first draft, they would learn to remedy linguistic errors and rewrite them with appropriate vocabulary, and sentence structure. On the second draft, they might learn to improve essay structure with appropriate transition words. On the third draft, the two weak writers could find more logical facts, examples, and explanation from their reading to support the main points in five paragraphs essays. The large number of student errors is a possible reason why teachers focus mainly on the correction of errors and consequently do not respond adequately to content (Lee, 2009).

Another belief is that writing is a recursive process of discovering meaning rather than a focus on word choice, use of appropriate grammar (such as subject-verb agreement, tense, and article use), syntax (word order), mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling and handwriting), and organization of ideas into a coherent and cohesive form. In many ways, all writing is rewriting, and it is through thoughtful rewriting, guided by facilitative comments, that students can develop strong writing and thinking skills.

Student reactions. Student reactions could be ascertained from interviews and reflective papers which they wrote on the Topic 2 classification essay and the comparison and contrast essays. Eight students wanted the teacher to raise questions with specific points. The teacher's information questions made them think more about logical reasons and find specific examples to support the topics of the body paragraphs as well as the whole essay. They did not seem to want the teachers to highlight and point to every error in the essay, but they wanted to know

which specific part they had to improve. They also wanted to know how well the teacher understood their essays and they wanted feedback on the positive parts of their essays:

I think questions are important because I can see the point that we need NGO and what the government and NGOs have to do in Cambodia. I like questions because I can write more. (Student D)

I tried to improve by answering your questions. You show me some good points about my essay and I need to improve some parts. I read your letters many times. (Student E)

It is also interesting to hear that the majority of students use the teacher's questions and suggestions as a basis for discussions not only in the class but also after class with friends, classmates, and parents.

I was caught up in your speech about the history of transportation in Cambodia. We used to ride on the elephants and fought with Mongolia. I did not have much time to read history because I am busy with my major subject. (Student F)

I think it is helpful. If you had just asked me to read these questions and look at my mistakes without discussion, I would have been stuck. The discussion reminded me of some ideas. I do not know! I could see other students' mistakes have many similarities to me. Oh, I am very happy not only me. (Student G)

Some students reported more confidence in improving both linguistic errors and essay organization from answering the teacher's questions and thinking about the teacher's suggestions. This led them to learn to focus on ideas rather than correct grammar. The focus on ideas made them more optimistic and open in discussions with their teacher during conferences and with their classmates in the classroom.

Discussion

The results show that the facilitative strategy may have been more effective than the directive feedback strategy as a means to improve student writing related to overall essay organization and depth of understanding of (and interest in) the topic. Although the facilitative feedback strategy helped students gradually improve writing, directive feedback may still be a strong foundation for the facilitative strategy since it was used as the first tool to improve students' writing on a concrete topic. Students might have some experiences of how to improve linguistic errors, sentence structure, essay organizations, and the content. This most likely had an influence that carried over to later essays. However, some students tried to respond to the teacher's comments and questions to improve the content of essay and forgot to focus on vocabulary and sentence structure.

A facilitative strategy seems to be more successful in improving the communicative nature of writing. When there is some grammatical or lexical difficulty, questions and comments sound like meaningful and friendly communication between students and teachers. They allowed students to feel free to make decisions to revise their essays (Walter-Echols, 2008). Some students were challenged to improve not only words or sentences, but the content of the whole essay. Students valued the teacher's questions and comments and also tried to eliminate plagiarizing.

Lehtinen (2007) suggests that ideas are the most important and common aspect in good writing even though everyone has different styles of writing; even teachers and students have their own style of writing. Therefore, it would be best to focus on expanding students' usage of writing and to develop their ideas. This might help students to develop their writing in the long-term, and they might keep writing independently and continuously after essay courses have finished.

The results indicate that teachers need to balance both strategies equally when writing feedback to improve student writing. Teaching writing is not only a combination of using language, building sentences, and organizing ideas logically; it also involves the writer's purpose and beliefs. Both logic and rhetoric should be used to create a good essay. Researchers also claim that teaching writing is "not a product but a process." Teachers need time to understand students' texts and "examine the intangible process," not just "evaluate the tangible process" (Hairston, 1982, p. 84).

From a directive feedback strategy perspective, since some students do not want to correct all their errors marked by the teacher's correction symbols and follow all of the teacher's suggestions and questions to improve their five paragraph essays, the teacher has to select specific errors and raise only a few specific comments and suggestions or questions. Lee (2009) and Grabe and Kaplan (1998) suggested that comments should not overwhelm the students with a sense of failure and that they should address organizational issues by suggesting options rather than dictating solutions. This shows that a teacher has to provide students some room to think about what they can do to improve their essays.

Teachers can spend some time helping students examine and notice errors in group discussions, student-teacher conferences, or in whole class discussions. It would be practical if writers noticed and processed their errors (Ellis, 2009). However, correcting and discussing students' errors in class works best with fairly controlled writing activities, where there are not too many possible answers (Doff, 1993). Doff (1993) also suggests that the teacher should correct only the errors that seem most important, or only errors of a certain kind (e.g. items that were taught recently, or just problems with verbs).

Conclusion

The intent of this research was to explore how two feedback strategies, directive and facilitative, help students improve their essay writing and revision skills. The research seems to indicate that both strategies have value and that used in combination, complement one another. Essay writing is a complex process and different types of feedback are important at different stages in the process to achieve different goals. In this study, most students showed more improvement and satisfaction with the facilitative feedback. They reported much higher levels of engagement with and interest in revising their work. However, this may be due in part to the fact that the strategy was used in the second essay, and they already had the experience of revising based on directive feedback. Directive feedback tends to make beginning essay writers feel they have a strong foundation to build on. Some students, particularly those who come from teacher-directed educational backgrounds, may feel more comfortable with this approach and may require directive feedback in their early stages to prepare them to work with facilitative feedback. While facilitative feedback appears to be most effective in engaging students with content and improving their writing skills, using a combination of feedback strategies in the classroom guarantees that all aspects of the writing process are addressed and that students gain the skills and confidence to improve their work.

Biodata

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Appendix A
Evaluation Criteria

Section 1: Overall Criteria	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Weak
Sentence boundaries	Clear sense	A few errors with sentence boundaries, but they do not interfere with clarity or interrupt flow	Some errors with sentence boundaries, but they do not interfere with clarity or interrupt flow	Poor control of sentence boundaries; frequent fragments or run-ons	Very poor control of sentence boundaries; frequent fragments or run-ons no sense of rules evident
Verb tense	Shows good command of present, past, and future; only a few errors in verb formation, which rarely interfere with clarity	Shows good sense of present, past, and future, though there may be a few errors	Shows good sense of present, past, and future, though there may be some errors	Frequent distracting errors in verb forms; shows some consistent control of present and past tense	Lacks control with verb tenses
Clause structures	Most of the clause structures are correct although the student shows some minor difficulties; errors do not interfere with clarity	Most of the clause structures are correct	Some of the clause structures are correct	Writer sometimes has good control of clauses: verbs, and/ or subject missing	Writer does not have good control of clauses: verb, and/ or subject missing
Subject-verb agreement	Agreement between subjects and verbs is correct	Agreement between subjects and verbs is correct	Agreement between subjects and verbs mostly is correct	Frequent errors in subject-verb agreement distract the reader	
Sentence length	Uses acceptable balance of simple, compound and complex sentences				

Vocabulary	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Weak
Word form	The word forms are correct and clear; a few incorrect word forms, but they do not interfere with sentence clarity	The word forms are mostly correct; a few incorrect word forms, but they do not interfere with sentence clarity	The word forms are generally clear, though there may be a few errors	Many errors in word form which sometimes interfere with clarity, causing frequent re-reading	Many errors in word form which often interfere with clarity, causing frequent re-reading
Word order	Acceptable sequencing of subject-predicate, both for statements and questions; most modifiers used correctly, resulting few coherence problems	Acceptable sequencing of subject-predicate, both for statements and questions; most modifiers used correctly, resulting few coherence problems	Acceptable sequencing of subject-predicate, both for statements and questions; there may be minor errors	Ordering of words sometimes follows acceptable sequencing	Ordering of words does not follow acceptable sequencing
Word choice	Use of vocabulary is seldom confusing to reader; synonyms frequently employed with some minor imprecision	Use of vocabulary is not often confusing to reader; synonyms frequently employed with some minor imprecision	Control of basic vocabulary is present; occasionally word choice might be confusing the reader; synonym use is present	Use of basic vocabulary is present; the reader is sometimes confused	Use of basic vocabulary is very confusing to the reader; frequent repetitions of common terms

Section 2: Introduction	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Weak
Hook and background information	The hook is clear and focused; the writer uses questions, anecdotes or personal experiences to hold the reader's attention	The writer tells relevant anecdotes, experiences, and raises some interesting questions to hold the reader's attention	The writer seems to write from knowledge or experience; the ideas focused on the topic clearly	The writer tries hard to raise questions and tell anecdotes to hold the reader's attention	The hook is not clear and focused; the writer does not use questions, anecdotes or personal experiences to hold the reader's attention
Introduction: Classification Essay					
Principle of organization and categories	The writer classifies things clearly into smaller groups or categories on the basis of shared characteristics	The purpose of organization and categories is clear for readers	The writer attempts to clearly present the purpose of organization and categories	The reader finds it hard to understand the clear purpose of organization and categories	The writer fails to clearly present the purpose of organization and categories
Introduction: Comparison and Contrast Essay					
Creation of two equivalent topics with a clear focus	Logical and well presented reasons why the writer compares the two equivalent topics	The writer has clear purposes to compare or contrast the two equivalent topics	The writer attempts to present the clear purpose of comparing or contrasting the two equivalent topics	The writer attempts to present the purpose of comparing or contrasting two equivalent topics, but the reader finds it hard to understand	The writer fails to present a clear purpose of comparing or contrasting two equivalent topics
Thesis statement	The statement is well written and presents main categories which strongly support the topic	The main categories are clear in the thesis statement and they link to the topic and body paragraphs	The writer attempts to present categories which clearly link to the topic and body paragraphs	The writer lists information without thinking of the unity and coherence of the sentence	The writer fails to present a thesis statement

Section 3: Body Paragraphs	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Weak
Topic sentence of each paragraph	Clear, relevant topic and controlling idea used in all body paragraphs where required	The writer clarifies the main points; well supported details	The writer attempts to clarify relevant topic and controlling idea used in all body paragraphs where required	The reader finds it hard to understand relevant topic and controlling idea used in all body paragraphs, where required	The writer fails to identify topic sentence; topics poorly stated and/or unfocused and no controlling idea evident
Support	Logical support for main ideas, with a variety of specific statistics, facts, and examples	Well-developed support for main ideas, with a variety of specific statistics, facts, and examples	Support may be fairly specific, but not greatly varied	Support may be very limited	Support may not be relevant
Unity	The paragraph maintains a clear focus; all details work together to develop a clear point	The paragraph maintains a clear focus; all details work together to develop a clear point	Paragraph demonstrates minor trouble maintaining a clear focus; a few details may wander off the main point	Some trouble maintaining a clear focus; throughout the paragraph the support is sometimes related to the main topic	Serious trouble maintaining a clear focus; throughout the paragraph the support is not related to the main topic
Coherence	Smooth, logical flow of ideas from one sentence to another; nearly all transitions are used where needed	Smooth, logical flow of ideas from one sentence to another; some transitions are used where needed	Most transitions correctly used; a few missing where needed; a few resulting coherence problems	Some transitions correctly used; most missing where needed	Most transitions not correctly used; most missing where needed

Section 4: Conclusion	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Weak
Restatement of the thesis statement	Excellent summary with signal words such as <i>in conclusion, to sum up</i>	Very well organized summary signal words such as <i>in conclusion, to sum up</i>	The writer attempts to restate and paraphrase thesis statement and main ideas in the body paragraphs	The writer lists main points without thinking of the unity and coherence of sentence	The writer fails to state main points in the essay
Extension beyond the thesis with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights	The writer raises very impressive words to give advice, warnings, predictions or insight	The writer demonstrates own view and leaves it for readers to predict	The writer's opinions focus on the topic although some are not relevant	The writer's opinions do not often focus on the topic and some are not relevant	The writer's opinions do not focus on the topic and they are mostly not relevant

Appendix B
Directive Feedback Strategy: Topic 1 Classification Essay

Table B1

Grading Results: Revised Topic 1 Classification Essays

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Weak	Number of Students
Overall Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	<i>n</i>
1. Sentence structure	0	0	5	4	3	12
2. Vocabulary and word choice	0	0	6	6	0	12
Introduction						
1. Hook and background information	0	0	1	6	5	12
2. Principle of organization and categories	0	0	4	3	5	12
3. Thesis statement	0	2	5	2	3	12
Body Paragraphs						
1. Topic sentence for each paragraph	0	1	8	1	2	12
2. Ideas organized into unified paragraphs with supporting statistics, facts, or examples	0	0	6	4	2	12
Conclusion						
1. Restatement of the thesis statement	0	3	3	4	2	12
2. Extension beyond the thesis with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights	0	0	4	4	4	12
Total	0	6	42	34	26	108

Table B2**Subjects, Pronouns, Articles, and Prepositions**

Areas Improved	<i>n</i>	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Subjects ("They" refers to fishermen.)	7	If <u>we</u> have no boats, <u>we</u> cannot travel on the water. <u>We</u> can save time and <u>our</u> fishes also don't have bad smell... <u>The useful transportation</u> is using motor for their living in day life.	If <u>they</u> have no boat <u>they</u> cannot travel on the water. <u>They</u> can save time and the <u>fishes</u> also don't have bad smell. <u>They</u> use motor for their living in day life.
Pronouns	4	All of the <u>people</u> use Now technology changes transportation to modern material that <u>people</u> use to decrease their difficulty.	All of <u>them</u> use Now technology changes transport to modern materials that <u>they</u> use to decrease their difficulty.
Articles	3	When people drive car... in outskirt city Topic: Useful transportation	When people drive a car... in <u>the</u> outskirt of <u>the</u> city Topic: <u>The</u> useful transportation for <u>fish seller</u>
Prepositions	1	Have you ever think about things that are important <u>in</u> your life?	Have you ever thought about things that are important <u>to</u> your life?

Table B3**Verb Choices**

Areas Improved	<i>n</i>	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Verbs	8	... bicycle to <u>bring</u> them from one place to one place. The fish sellers get a little benefit from their selling, so they <u>chose</u> motor <u>There are</u> many people <u>that</u> use it. It <u>don't use</u> gas or anything ales that can pollute environment. In Cambodia <u>have</u> three types of transportation such as on the land, on the water, air. <u>All of this very useful</u> for people to travel or go anywhere that they want.	People now use planes, motorbikes and bicycle to <u>take</u> them from one place to one place. The fish sellers get a little benefit from their selling, so they <u>choose</u> motorbike Many Cambodian people <u>like to use</u> it very much. It <u>does not</u> use gas that pollute environment at all. In Cambodia, <u>there are</u> three types of transportation such as on the land, on the water, on the air. <u>It is very useful</u> for people to connect with each other, travel or go anywhere that they want.

Table B4
Word Forms

Areas Improved	<i>n</i>	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Word form	6	<u>Every people</u> need to travel from one place to <u>other place</u> .	<u>Each person needs</u> to travel from <u>one place to one place</u> .
Plural form	4	People use the different kinds of transportation according to their <u>condition</u> and <u>place</u> .	People use the different kinds of transportation according to their <u>conditions</u> and <u>places</u> .
Spelling	4	<u>Anther</u> transportation is motorbike. It can take students from their house to school or <u>other pleases</u> that they want.	<u>Another</u> transport is motorbike. They can take students from their house to school or <u>other places</u> that they want.

Table B5
Words with Explanations and Examples

Areas Improved	<i>n</i>	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Word choice	9	People use the <u>transportation</u> with <u>machine</u> to help them to be short time. <u>Government officer</u>	People use <u>modern transport</u> , such as <u>car, motorbike, boat</u> , and so on, to help them to <u>save</u> time. <u>Government officials</u>
Explanation examples	5	It's the true when people buy a bicycle, it <u>cheaper than motorbike</u> . So, they can <u>afford</u> with it... They use it to load people to hospital or to...	It's the true, when people buy a bicycle, <u>they can spend at less 30\$ for one bicycle</u> . They use it to load people to hospital <u>or village where is far away from their village</u> .
Word order	2	because it spends their <u>money</u> a <u>little</u> .	because it spends a <u>little money</u> to buy gas or oil than car.

Table B6***The Wide Variety of Errors***

Areas Improved	<i>n</i>	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Simple sentences	4	It can help them to reduce time, it is faster than bicycle, and it spends money less than car but it still help people to work in time.	It is easy to ride in the city because of traffic jam, and is faster than bicycle. They spend money less than car but it still help them to work.
Parallel structures	4	The useful of bicycle for people in countryside such as: <u>healthy, save money and save environment friendly</u>	It make people <u>get healthy, save money and save environment friendly</u> .
Punctuation	3	If a country hasn't transportation it will have problem and don't develop at all. In Cambodia the useful land road transportation...	If a country has not transportation, it will have a lot of problems and it does not develop at all. In Cambodia, the useful land road transportation...
Comparative adjectives	3	Car is <u>more wonderful</u> way for transportation because it can contain many people when they travel.	Cars are the <u>best</u> transportation for traveling. It is <u>bigger</u> size than bicycles and motorbikes.
Clauses <i>although</i>	2	Although, it is small <u>but</u> it is enough to go anywhere in the water.	Although it is small, it is enough to go anywhere in the water.
To be + adjective	1	Cambodian uses transportation everyday and tries to think which one <u>is very usefulness</u> .	Cambodian uses transportation everyday and tries to think which one <u>is very useful</u> .
Passive forms	1	<u>it is not only use</u> for going some places, but it is also useful for people to carry materials, goods, and heavy things...	<u>motor is not only used</u> for going some places, but it is also useful for people to carry materials, goods, and heavy things ...

Table B7

Hook and Background Information

Areas Improved	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Unity and coherence of introductory paragraph * Transition expressions	In the ancient time, Cambodian people use elephants as transportation. <u>The time passed, people invented new transportation from simple to sophisticate that have effective function</u> to run their businesses or use for another purposes. There are many kinds of job available in Cambodia including Et Chhay, fish seller, singer...	In the ancient time, Cambodian people use elephants to transport or <u>moved heavy things, especially used for fighting. One time, Cambodia was attacked by Mangolia, but fortunately Cambodia got successful. Because of using elephants, Cambodians armies could kill enemy troops easily. But, now, there is no invasion</u> as before so people focus on businesses or other purposes to live their lives people need different kinds of job are available in Cambodia including Et Chhay, fish seller, singer...
Independent and dependent clauses; present needs and reasons	<u>Today, Science</u> is developing very quickly that makes transportation develop too. Consequently, in Cambodia, <u>we can see many types of transportations</u> that are use by Cambodian.	<u>Since science</u> is developing very quickly, transportations are improving too. Consequently, in Cambodia, many types of transportations are used because <u>they have many advantages to serve the needs</u> of Cambodia society for many years.
Introduction questions	No information	What transports do people use in Cambodia? What are advantages of them?

Table B8

The Principles of Organization and Categories, and Thesis Statement

Areas Improved	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Shorten sentence; principles of categories (based on jobs and usefulness)	In Cambodia, there are three essential categories of vehicles that are <u>suitable with the job such as: students are very suitable to ride bicycle. The fish sellers are possible to ride on motor. The high positions of government officers are necessary to use car.</u>	In Cambodia, there are three essential categories of vehicles <u>which are useful with the job such as students, fish sellers, and government officials.</u>
Specify job (fish seller)	Of course, there are three main types of helpful transports <u>such as fish finding boat, motorbike, and bicycle.</u>	In fact there are three types of helpful transportations <u>for fish seller, such as fish finding boat, motorbike, and bicycle.</u>
Specify more information	There are three types that people use transportation: bicycle, motorbike and car.	There are three types that <u>Cambodian people use the land transportation: bicycles, motorbikes and cars for journey everyday in the communication or working.</u>

Table B9
Topic Sentences

Areas Improved	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Transition expressions	<p>Fish finding boats are boats that fish seller need to find fishes and it is the most important thing for fisher man.</p> <p>While boat is important, motorbike is also crucial for them.</p>	<p><u>The most important type of mean transportation for fish seller is fish finding boat.</u></p> <p><u>The second crucial type of transportation for fish seller is motorbike.</u></p> <p><u>The third mean transportation that useful for fish seller is bicycle.</u></p>
Consistent use of words (useful types of transportation in Cambodia)	<p>One <u>classification</u> that is suitable for the students is ride bicycles.</p> <p>Other <u>category</u> that is possible for the fish sellers is ride motorbike.</p> <p>The <u>third type</u> which is the best for the high government officers is car.</p>	<p>One <u>useful type of transportation in Cambodia</u> for the <u>students</u> is bicycle.</p> <p>Other <u>useful type of transportation in Cambodia</u> for the <u>fish sellers</u> is motorbikes.</p> <p>The third <u>useful type of transportation in Cambodia</u> for the <u>government officials</u> is car.</p>

Table B10
Organizational Ideas

Areas Improved	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Examples and explanation	<p>Also, the prices of <u>bicycles are cheap</u> that parents are possible to buy for their children.</p> <p>As we estimate the situation of each family in Cambodia was shown that the level of <u>income in each family is medium or some poor people.</u></p>	<p>The prices of bicycles in Cambodia are around <u>10 or 15 dollars</u>, so the parents are probable to buy it for their children because <u>the average level income of each people in Cambodia is 30 dollars per month.</u></p>
Facts and statistics	No information	<p>50% of Cambodian people use bicycles. 30% of Cambodian people use motorbikes. 20% of Cambodian people have cars.</p>

Table B11
Conclusion

Areas Improved	Original Essay	Revised Essay
Signal words Restate information Opinions	Transportation is important according to their geography. They use the transportation to for respective activities in their daily lives. It is the systematic for transportation in Cambodia. We can see people use the transportation in accordance with their abilities and the situation in their village.	<u>As has been demonstrated above,</u> transport is useful according to their places. They can use <u>car, motorbike, bicycle,</u> and so on in accordance with their locations— <u>city, country, and water...</u> <u>If people do not have transports in their family, it will be difficult for them to work and live.</u>
Restate the thesis statement	In short, people in the capital use car for their transportation...	<u>As has been demonstrated above,</u> <u>people can use their cars for their transportation because...</u>

Appendix C

Facilitative Feedback Strategy: Topic 2 Classification Essays

Table C1
Revised Topic 2 Classification Essay

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Weak	Number of Students
Overall Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	<i>n</i>
1. Sentence structure	0	0	5	7	0	12
2. Vocabulary and word choice	0	1	7	4	0	12
Introduction						
1. Hook and background information	0	2	5	3	2	12
2. Principle of organization and categories	0	7	4	1	0	12
3. Thesis statement	1	6	1	3	1	12
Body Paragraphs						
1. Topic sentence of each paragraph	0	8	3	1	0	12
2. Ideas organized into unified paragraphs with supporting statistics, facts, or examples	0	5	6	0	1	12
Conclusion						
1. Restatement of the thesis statement	0	5	4	1	2	12
2. Extension beyond the thesis with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights	0	2	7	2	1	12
Total	1	36	42	22	7	108

Table C2
Sentence Structures

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
Tenses	The world <u>is</u> peace but there have a lot of street children, widower, people which <u>did not have</u> full leg or arm and the poor social structures. For solving this situation, a lot of organizations <u>were created</u> for support people's living. Cambodia, after the war <u>they</u> have been shortage...	Tenses (improved mostly in the three body paragraphs)	When we <u>finished</u> the war, Cambodia <u>is shortage</u> the human resources... Cambodia has <u>request</u> an FAO.
Poor subjects	<u>NGOs</u> (key word) try to support health service ... <u>They</u> cure people... <u>They</u> teach people. <u>NGOs</u> (key word) have supported the school ... <u>It</u> does not take students' money ...	Poor subjects (mostly improved)	<u>The children</u> have to separate with their mum. <u>API goes to training the farmer</u>
Verbs	In Cambodia, <u>there have</u> social structure only in the city but at the rural areas, <u>it does not</u> have.	Two main verbs (new problems)	It is trying to promote the Cambodian to <u>stop think</u> ... It against children to drop school by <u>doesn't</u> take school fee.
Punctuation	Since, NGOs <u>represented</u> in Cambodia, we can see Cambodia <u>have</u> developing a lot of sectors...		 the boys always rethead their father's job like the father <u>is farmer</u> so the boy <u>is farmer</u> .
Plagiarism (copied information from brochure)	The Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) is a Cambodian Non-profit and non-government organization with a mission to serve the long-term democratic and social development needs of Cambodia through the provision of services in the areas of advocacy and policy development.	Fragments (new problems)	<u>When</u> the NGOs can make these three sectors above be strong. <u>The Cambodian</u> will became a develop countries.

Table C3

Vocabulary and Word Choices

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
Do not use own words to create sentences	Increase South to South learning and promote the use of evidence based approaches to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDs	Do not understand the variety of word choice	UNDP <u>creates</u> schools for children and <u>rent</u> teachers to teach that <u>don't take</u> school fee from children.

Table C4

Hook and Background Information

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
Do not discuss the topic directly	During the World War II in 1945, it was damaged everything such as home, animal, woods, people...	Discuss the topic directly	During the Civil War (Khmer Rough) in Cambodia (1975-1979), the civil war hunted everything...

Table C5

Principles of Organization and Categories

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
Clear types of NGOs and their responsibility	The advantages of NGOs in Cambodia can be classified into <u>three types</u> which take <u>responsibility</u> on health, education, and rural development.	Clear <u>groups</u> of NGOs and their responsibility	The NGOs which bring advantage to Cambodia can be classified into <u>three groups</u> which take <u>responsibility</u> on health, education, and rural development.

Table C6

Thesis Statement

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
The topic and the main ideas of the body paragraphs are not clear.	<u>The advantages of NGOs</u> in Cambodia can be classified into <u>three types</u> which take responsibility on <u>health, education, and rural development</u> .	The topic and the main ideas of the body paragraphs are clear.	<u>The NGOs which bring advantage</u> to Cambodia can be classified into <u>three groups</u> which take responsibility on <u>health, education, and rural development</u> .

Table C7
Body Paragraphs

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
Discuss only advantage and responsibility but miss the word "group" or "type"	One advantage of NGOs in Cambodia is health. Another advantage of NGOs in Cambodia is education. The third advantage of NGOs in Cambodia is rural development.	Discuss advantages and main focuses	One <u>group</u> of NGOs, which have advantage for Cambodia, focus on health is CARE and KHANA. Other group of NGOs focus on education is <u>UNDP and Save the Children</u> . The <u>third group of NGOs</u> focus on rural development is <u>API and FAO</u> .
No statistics or clear explanation	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) represent in Cambodia is seeking a qualified candidate to fill position of National Consultant on Forests and Climate Change.	Statistics and clear explanation	At <u>Samlot, in Battambang</u> province, UNDP build <u>10 primary schools</u> for children. Save the children educates <u>female children</u> to go to study. It against children to drop chool... FAO also care about the <u>produce of rice</u> . It teaches people to grow <u>rice 3 times per years</u> . It estimates the climate for the farmer.

Table C8
Conclusions

Students' Problems	Original Essay	Students' Improvements and Problems	Revised Essay
No signal words Present new topic	Since, NGOs represented in Cambodia, we can see.... ...compare with the Cambodia at nineteen century.	Signal words and clear focus to the essay main points.	As you can see.....NGOs can help the government of Cambodia with a lot of <u>sectors... strong... good health and education</u> .

Appendix D

Facilitative Feedback Strategy: Comparison/Contrast Essays

Table D

Revised Comparison/Contrast Essay

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Weak	Number of Students
Overall Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	<i>n</i>
1. Sentence structure	1	3	7	1	0	12
2. Vocabulary and word choice	1	4	6	1	0	12
Introduction						
1. Hook and background information	2	6	3	0	1	12
2. Two equivalent topics with a clear focus	2	6	3	1	0	12
3. Thesis statement	5	5	2	0	0	12
Body Paragraphs						
1. Topic sentence of each paragraph	3	6	1	2	0	12
2. Ideas organized into unified paragraphs with supporting statistics, facts, or examples	2	4	5	1	0	12
Conclusions						
1. Restatement of the thesis statement	4	6	1	1	0	12
2. Extension beyond the thesis with advice, warnings, predictions, or insights	4	7	0	1	0	12
Total	24	47	28	8	1	108