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"Irritating but helpful:"
Using a social media tool for peer and user writing feedback in a spanish language course

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"IRRITATING BUT HELPFUL:"
USING A SOCIAL MEDIA TOOL FOR PEER AND USER WRITING
FEEDBACK IN A SPANISH LANGUAGE COURSE

by

Claire Meadows Parrish

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Dedication

To my family: the family that raised me (Lamar, Dana, and Brooks), the family I have formed with my husband, (David, Griffin, and Theo), and the families I have built with my girlfriends (Candice, Erica, Leslie, Nell, Cara, Stacey, and Stacy) and my colleagues (Erika and Adele).

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"IRRITATING BUT HELPFUL:"
USING A SOCIAL MEDIA TOOL FOR PEER AND USER WRITING
FEEDBACK IN A SPANISH LANGUAGE COURSE

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Language students need formative feedback on written production during the drafting phase, before receiving summative feedback on the final written product. However, providing this type of feedback to students adds to instructors' already busy workload. Peer feedback has been suggested as an alternative to instructor-provided feedback, but peers' limited target language knowledge restricts the utility of this feedback. Native speakers may be more capable of identifying target language gaps than are nonnative speaking peers. Furthermore, Web 2.0 affords learners with tools to connect target language learners with native speakers of the target language.

The goal of this study was to understand more about what occurs in the context of language learning via social networking websites. This exploratory case study examined feedback to written production received by 18 intermediate-level university Spanish language learners in an intact semester-long Spanish course using Lang-8, a website that supports language learning via social networking tools. The following four research questions were addressed: 1) Who responds to assigned student writings on Lang-8? 2) How much feedback do students receive? 3) What

kinds of feedback do they get? 4) What is the students' response to this feedback? The amount and types of feedback received from both peers and unknown website users were quantitatively analyzed, and these data were triangulated with student participants' survey responses to four end-of-chapter and one end-of-semester surveys to reveal students' reactions to receiving feedback on Lang-8.

Findings indicated that participants received predominantly accurate feedback from both peer and user responder groups, and this feedback was generally perceived as useful by participants. Moreover, peers offered more global feedback related to content, whereas website users provided more local feedback related to form. Overall, participants' reactions to receiving feedback was positive, but variation was observed in individual responses that was attributed to individual preferences related to response provider groups, feedback types, and language variations present when receiving feedback from multiple sources. Based on the affordances and limitations of using Lang-8 to receive feedback as revealed through this study, it seems that Lang-8 can afford instructors a way to outsource formative feedback for target language learners.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

When students learning a language are asked to write in their new target language, they need and expect to receive feedback during the writing process, rather than merely receiving final assessments of their written products. However, practical difficulties arise because instructors are already engaged in planning, guiding, and assessing the progress of learners of various proficiency levels in multiple classes. Peer feedback has been championed as a solution to this conflict and has been successful to a certain degree. However, typically peers are defined as such because they are at the same general proficiency level, and therefore, not capable of providing the type of feedback needed in the context of target language writing. Native speakers are neither experts of applied linguistics nor metalinguistics, but they are usage experts, and therefore might be better equipped to respond to the needs of target language learners than are classmates. The question, then, is how to provide target language learners with access to target language speakers in a way that is convenient for both groups.

To establish the need for this research, in this first chapter I briefly describe the online context in which writing feedback was provided to students taking a Spanish language course in which written assignments were a frequent occurrence. I will then provide an overview of the existing research on written corrective feedback and social networking tools for the purposes of target language learning. The identification of gaps in the existing research is followed by a description of the

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significance of the present study, including research questions and a succinct explanation of the research design I employed to address these questions. Finally, I conclude with the definitions of important terms to facilitate reader understanding of the computer-mediated context in which feedback was provided and the participant population in the present study.

The affordances of social networking tools: New opportunities for feedback

Web 2.0 tools, specifically social media, can help to connect learners and native speakers of various languages, but we still do not know much about what happens in these online exchanges, especially in the context of feedback to target language writing. Do language learners get useful feedback from native speakers online? If so, how much feedback do they get, what kinds, and from whom? Furthermore, how do learners respond to the feedback itself and to the experience of receiving feedback from veritable strangers online?

Language learning via social networking (LLSN) websites stand in contrast with traditional social networking websites such as Facebook, in which users are focused on making and establishing social networks. Dixhoorn, Loiseau, Mangenot, Potolia, and Zourou (2010) highlighted the tandem learning aspect of LLSN websites, naming them "mutual language learning websites" (p. 28). Zourou, Loiseau, and Potolia (2012) further distinguished between "structured web 2.0 language learning communities" with site-generated language exercises and sites like Lang-8 that are "totally informal" (para. 15) and thus, dependent on users to generate content. Lang-8 is a LLSN website that connects target language learners to target language speakers via the affordances of social media, a Web 2.0 tool. Lang-8 users compose and post written entries in various target languages for comments and corrective

feedback from the website's community of native speakers. Site users are also encouraged to give feedback in their native language(s) by earning *L-points* to increase their user ranking. These points are earned when a user corrects another's entry and when they receive a thank you star from the user receiving corrections or a *like* on corrections provided from another user on Lang-8. Entries written by users with higher *L-points* are displayed higher on the site page for giving corrections, which presumably leads to more feedback from other users.

However, typical LLSN website users are more autonomous than classroom target language learners, as evidenced by the former voluntarily joining LLSN sites to write for various purposes related to language learning. Moreover, because LLSN website users typically provide feedback in their native language(s) rather than in the language(s) of study, participants in the present study were all the more nontraditional users of these sites. One question that undergirded the current project was whether a LLSN website would prove useful for an instructor in search of potential tools to support language learners' engagement with the target language outside of the traditional classroom.

OVERVIEW OF THE EXISTING RESEARCH

Target language writing affords learners opportunities to notice gaps in their production abilities and provides a record for future analysis and reflection (Swain, 1995, 2005). Larsen-Freeman (2003) asserted, "feedback on learners' performance in an instructional environment presents an opportunity for learning to take place. An error potentially represents a teachable moment" (p. 126). Moreover, written feedback and subsequent recognition and examination of target language composition errors afford learners an opportunity to reflect offline, at their own pace.

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However, not all researchers agree that corrective feedback is beneficial to target language learners (Krashen, 1982, 1984, 1992; Truscott 1996, 2007; Truscott & Hsu, 2008). In fact, researchers have argued for decades about what kinds of feedback to provide for learners, when to supply it, how much to give, and whether there is evidence of learner uptake guided by the feedback (e.g., Ashwell, 2000; Bitchener, 2012; Elola & Oskoz, 2016; Ferris, 1999, 2006, 2010; Krashen, 1984; Manchón, 2011; Sheen, 2007; Storch, 2010; Truscott, 1996, 2007). For example, Truscott (1996) ignited much debate when he claimed that grammar-related feedback was not effective and possibly "harmful[and therefore] should be abandoned" (p. 328), as it made little to no difference in grammatical accuracy in subsequent written production and could possibly decrease learner motivation. However, Truscott clarified in 2007 that he did find value in the "[p]rovision of comments on content and clarity" (p. 285). This controversial assertion regarding the value of linguistic feedback ignited much debate that Ferris (1995b, as cited in Ferris 2010) declared moot when she asserted that "It [was] safe to say that the benign neglect approach ... to accuracy issues in L2 writing ha[d] ended" (p. 185). Bruton (2009) was equally dismissive of Truscott's perspective, declaring it "a rather tedious sterile academic debate on limited levels of grammatical correctness in studies with marginal ecological credibility" (p. 611). Moreover, statistical analysis of target language learners' written production over time has demonstrated benefits in terms of accuracy with regard to specific linguistic structures (Chandler, 2003; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Ferris, 1995a, 1997; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Sheen, 2007).

There is certainly no shortage of previous research on target language writing feedback in experimental and quasi-experimental settings. Nonetheless, the majority

of research findings has suggested that uptake depends on the types of feedback provided (Bitchener, 2008; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, 2009; Ferris, 1999). Some researchers (Ellis et al., 2008; Evans, Hartshorn, & Strong-Krause, 2011; Storch, 2010, 2018) have argued that the focus of more recent literature on written corrective feedback is too restricted to be of use to target language instructors, as it ignores the dual influences of context and individual differences present in learner populations. In other words, the ecological validity of these findings is doubtful (Storch, 2018), and therefore so is its usefulness for target language instructors. Moreover, Storch reported that the majority of feedback research was conducted in English as a second/foreign language settings. Therefore, further investigation is needed to uncover what takes place in target language classroom settings in terms of feedback with a focus on languages other than English in order to fill the gaps in writing feedback research.

Web 2.0 tools afford instructors opportunities to engage their learners beyond the "four walls" of the classroom (Conole & Alevizou, 2010). According to Gee and Hayes (2011, p. 1), digital media "'power up' or enhance the powers of oral language" by giving it permanence and permitting wider distribution. These researchers describe the appearance of digital media as a sea change, similar to the manner in which the creation of the written word and the printing press altered the ways in which people communicated. Morgan (2012) highlighted empowering the user and valuing collective intelligence as two aspects of Web 2.0 that are especially important for the context of language development.

Research on the use of social networking tools for language learning purposes is relatively new compared to that of research on feedback. Most often, participants' initial excitement about the affordances of social networks for target language

learning has given way to eventual demotivation (Clark & Gruba, 2010; Brick, 2011, 2012; Kelley, 2010; C.-H. Lin, Warschauer, & Blake, 2016; M. Lin, 2015). Moreover, researchers have expressed concerns about learners' privacy (Prichard, 2013) and the issue of cyber flirting (Brick, 2011, 2012). Nonetheless, questions remain unanswered. For instance, how do students in target language classrooms take advantage of the social networking tools available to them for online language practice and use? What are the affordances and limitations of these tools for target language writing? How do they respond to using them in formal education settings? Do they continue to use these tools after the course has ended?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Although researchers have examined journaling and peer-feedback, to my knowledge no previous study has examined peer feedback to learner journals in the context of websites promoting language learning via social networking tools. Lang-8 in particular has received some research focus, including reviews of the website singularly (Bündgens-Kosten, 2011; Cho, 2013) and in comparison to similar websites (James, 2011; Marciano, Miranda, & Miranda, 2013), use as a method for data collection of TL error patterns and frequency (Flanagan, Yin, Hirokawa, Hashimoto, & Tabata, 2013), usability testing (Liu et al., 2015), online practices and emerging learning environments (Cho, 2012), learner perspectives of use (Cho, 2012, 2015), and as a platform for EFL blogging (M. Lin, 2015). However, none of these studies examined the types of feedback received in the context of this website. In this dissertation, I examined evidence of feedback to participants' journal writings given by peers and by users who self-identify as advanced Spanish learners or native speakers on Lang-8 to participants' journal writings posted on the website. The goal

of this dissertation was to learn more about the providers of feedback on Lang-8, the quantity and types of feedback received by participants, and the resulting perceptions of the participants to the feedback they received. My aim was to bring to light findings related to an under-researched area at the intersection of corrective feedback to target language written production and the affordances and limitations of social networking tools that hope to promote target language use and learning.

The research questions

With the intention of filling the previously mentioned gaps in existing research, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Who responds to assigned student writings on Lang-8?

2. How much feedback do students receive?

3. What kinds of feedback do they get?

4. What is the students' response to this feedback?

The research design

This exploratory case study examined the online interactions of 18 intermediate-level, Spanish language learners at a large, public university in the southwestern United States using a website that supported language learning via social networking tools (LLSN), Lang-8. The study took place during one fifteen-week semester in the fall of 2014, and was situated in a course that had online participation through ten Spanish language journal entries and peer responses assigned as homework in the syllabus. The educational context of the present study challenged the typical divide between second language and foreign language learners of Spanish for various reasons: the geographic proximity to Mexico of the university, the resulting high number of native and heritage language speakers of Spanish attending

the university and living in the surrounding area, and the presence of two students in the class who identified as native speakers of Spanish and six additional students with at least one Spanish-speaking parent. Therefore, the participants in this study ostensibly had greater opportunities for Spanish language contact than those in traditional foreign language settings. However, increased opportunities for contact does not necessarily translate to increased contact, particularly contact devoted to helping someone improve writing in a target language. Therefore, the goal of the present study was to examine if and how Lang-8 influenced Spanish language learners' opportunities to promote target language use and development outside the classroom.

The sociocognitive approach to language learning as outlined by Atkinson, Churchill, Takako, and Okada (2007) was adopted as the framework for the present study. This approach takes as its starting point a combination of sociocultural (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978) and cognitive approaches (Anderson, 2010; Robinson & N. Ellis, 2008) to language learning, arguing that the internal processes that occur during target language learning and use are inextricably related to the sociocultural context in which these processes occur. Therefore, I made an effort to consider not only the feedback as a whole, as evidenced by the online activity that was visible to participants' network of friends, but also the participants' personal experiences and perceptions of LLSN websites as recorded in self-report surveys. Entries posted as private on Lang-8, if any, were not available for investigation.

According to Casanave (1994), the purpose of journal writing is to encourage learners "to experiment [with language] and to develop reflectiveness and intellectual curiosity" (p. 198). In her study, she found that purely quantitative measures of language development as a result of journal writing in terms of linguistic

and lexical features masked improvements in areas such as writing fluency and risk-taking, which were observable in the qualitative data (Casanave, 1994). As a result, the present study did not look for quantifiable learning gains, but rather focused on qualitative data, such as the students' reactions to *Lang-8*, and quantitative data regarding their activity on the site.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The following section describes five terms used in the present study to inform the reader of the specific considerations taken during the present study and to promote awareness of the situated nature of the findings of this dissertation.

Social media tools

According to Reinhardt (2019), although the "definition [of social media tools] is not entirely agreed upon" (p. 3), these tools were an outgrowth of computer-mediated communication technologies, participation in online communities, and the use of online personal homepages. The affordances of Web 2.0 led to the proliferation of user-generated content and networks, resulting in various social media tools (e.g., blogs, wikis, and social networking sites) that allowed users to "participant in, create, and share media resources and practices with other users by means of digital networking" (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 3). The social media tool under investigation in the present study is social networking.

Social networking websites

Duffy (2011) described five features frequently associated with social networking websites: creating a user profile, forming relationships with online

"friends," publicly recognizing these connections, collaborating to create and/or distribute content, and forming online communities. According to Reinhardt (2019), YouTube and other Internet technologies that prioritized developing and presenting user-generated content "gradually integrated [these] social networking elements and by the 2010s became understood as 'social media'" (p. 3).

Language learning via social networking (LLSN) websites

Liu and her colleagues (Liu et al., 2013) used the acronym SNSLL (social networking sites for language learning) to describe Lang-8. However, in the present study, the term *LLSN* is inverted to emphasize the nature of these sites as primarily meant for language learning.

Target language learners

As previously described, the participants in the study included students who self-identified in diverse ways: as native speakers of Spanish, native speakers of English, and a combination of the two with various levels of proficiency. Therefore, I made a conscious decision when writing this dissertation to avoid the use of the terms second language and foreign language when describing the participants and their online activity. Instead, I used the term *target language*, although this phrase, too, has detractors (e.g., Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007). However, previous researchers have carefully considered the language used in reporting findings and implications of their investigations, and therefore, when describing the contexts of these studies being reviewed, I used the terms *second language* (L2) and *foreign language* guided by the author's usage.

Process writing

Process writing approaches (Arndt, 1987; Zamel, 1983b) assert that the act of writing involves many recursive, non-linear processes (e.g., planning, writing, and rewriting). This approach stands in contrast to false beliefs held by some learners that writing is an act of simply transcribing ideas that writers have already mentally organized (Krashen, 1984). Two fundamental elements of process writing approaches are awareness and intervention (Susser, 1994). According to Susser, awareness involves educating learners that ideas often arise from composing processes, "and that there are different processes for different kinds of writing" (p. 34). Intervention frequently involves instructors' active engagement with learners throughout the writing process, as opposed to mere assessments of final written products. However, peers can also provide opportunities for writers to reexamine and rewrite their first drafts via small-group activities and by providing peer responses to writing (Susser, 1994).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The previous chapter presented the rationale for the present study, a summary of the literature related to process writing approaches, writing feedback, and Web 2.0. In an effort to illustrate further the gaps in previous research and therefore stress the need for the current study, this chapter begins by reviewing some of the previous research on process writing approaches in target language learning, feedback, and Web 2.0 tools.

PROCESS WRITING

In the present study, journal writing in the target language classroom was used as part of a process writing approach. The focus on process writing pedagogies in research on target language development was an outgrowth of interest in student-centered process writing approaches to L1 composition instruction and research (Uzawa, 1996), which themselves were a rebuttal to the "product-oriented pedagogies" (Susser, 1994, p. 34) that were popular in the 1960s (Coe, 1987; Johnston, 1996; Miller, 1991). Susser (1994) noted that the rejection of audiolingualism in target language development and subsequent transition from emphasis on form to meaning corresponded with the transition in process writing approaches as a rejection of then-current product-oriented (i.e., form-focused) pedagogies.

Prior to the call for process writing pedagogies in the 1970s, approaches to target language writing were polarized, with "free composition … in direct opposition to the expressed ideals of scientific habit-forming teaching methods which strive to prevent error from occurring" (Pincas, 1962, p. 185). In other words, linguistic accuracy was foregrounded at the expense of personal expression, and target

language written practice was confined to controlled composition, often accompanied by a checklist for sentence level errors and corrections for beginner and intermediate learners (Susser, 1994). The literature on process writing in L1 composition was founded on John Dewey's assertion that learning is a process (Berlin, 1987; as cited in Susser, 1994, p. 32). Consequently, researchers in the 1970s and 1980s maintained that relying strictly on analysis of written products "reveals nothing about how the writer achieved that product, or the 'anguish' [Raimes, 1983] the writer may have gone through to produce it" (Johnston, 1996, p. 348). Moreover, the act of writing itself is composed of many processes operating at once (Berlin, 1982; Flower & Hayes, 1981a, 1981b; Susser, 1994; Tarvers, 1992) rather than a unidirectional process wherein the author generates ideas, plans, and then composes in that order. Indeed, Zamel (1983b) and Arndt (1987) found that both native language and target language writers demonstrated complex patterns of writing processes, regularly alternating between planning, writing, and rewriting stages, which conflicted with traditional perspectives that considered the former a pre-writing activity. According to Johnston, unskilled writers engage less and with fewer of these activities. Furthermore, Johnston pointed out that the linear model of writing ignored the evaluation and revision stages of composition, which had been reported in previous research (Perl, 1979; Sommers, 1980, Zamel, 1983b, as cited in Johnston, 1996, p. 348-349).

Qualitative and quantitative differences in the writing processes of unskilled versus skilled writers have been demonstrated in findings from native language (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Emig, 1971; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981c; Hillocks, 1986, Langer & Applebee, 1987) and second language (Cumming, 1989; Raimes, 1987; Sommers, 1980; Zamel, 1983b) composition research. Uzawa (1996)

summarized these findings about unskilled writers thusly: "Frequently they cut short planning before writing and forget about text organization and their audience. They tend to be inflexible in planning and revising, and seldom revise beyond the word level" (p. 272).

Although Zamel (1976) introduced process writing to the field of English as a Second Language (ESL), she did not specify the assumptions inherent to a process writing approach (Susser, 1994). Nevertheless, a variety of process writing tenets have been promoted in the English as a foreign language (EFL) writing instruction literature, including pre-writing strategies (McKay, 1982), journals (Spack & Sadow, 1983), invention (Liebman-Kleine, 1987; Spack, 1984), intervention (Reid, 1989), rewriting (Chenoweth, 1987), multiple drafts with self-monitoring and peer critique with a focus on coherence (Johns, 1986) and feedback (Keh, 1990). It was also argued that process writing is useful specifically in the context of academic discourse (Spack, 1988), academic reports (Brookes & Grundy, 1988; Canseco & Byrd, 1989; Goldstein, 1993), and in preparation for composition assessment (Lynch, 1988).

In contrast to traditional product-oriented pedagogies, process writing approaches encourage learners to generate and structure their ideas before composing and then to reevaluate and edit their first drafts through activities such as "brainstorming, free writing, journal writing, small-group activities, teacher/student conferences, peer critiquing, revising, editing only the final draft, and some form of publishing" (Applebee, 1986; as cited in Susser, 1994, p. 36). The present study framed participants' Spanish writings on Lang-8 in terms of journal entries to serve as both a context in which to test hypotheses about the use of language forms learned in class, to plan and write drafts of activities to be completed during class time at a

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later date, and to publish Spanish written production for peer and website-user critiques.

The output hypothesis

Responses from peers and Lang-8 website users to target language writing could serve to confirm or contradict learner hypotheses about the comprehensibility and accuracy of their writing. According to Krashen, in addition to a low affective filter, comprehensible input (1985) was necessary for acquisition. Swain, on the other hand, argued that input was necessary but insufficient for second language acquisition. Consequently she proposed the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005), asserting that output serves three purposes in language learning: first, producing output can help language learners identify gaps in the their current target language knowledge; next, it affords learners the opportunity to test their hypotheses about the target language; finally, output can encourage learner reflection and metalinguistic awareness. Swain asserted that production encouraged learners to move from processing semantic elements to processing syntax.

Written production, in particular, has been found to be beneficial for target language development. Williams (2005) argued that writing promotes target language acquisition "through strengthening form-meaning connections, increasing monitoring, and creating communicative need" (p. 72). More specifically, she posited that writing facilitates language development by virtue of three features inherent to the nature of the medium (Williams, 2012): the relaxed pace, the relative permanence of written language, and the precise language required in the absence of paralinguistic cues. In contrast to the synchronous nature of oral discourse, online written discourse is relatively self-paced, as the writer has time to plan, monitor and

edit before submitting a written entry to the website. Furthermore, the act of writing creates a record that the author can return to at a later time, unlike the ephemeral nature of spoken language. I. Lee (2008) similarly noted that the "visual salience" of written production afforded learners with opportunities to notice gaps in target language knowledge and to modify output accordingly. Therefore, according to the Output Hypothesis, learners would benefit from increased opportunities for written practice and feedback, which are made possible via social networking platforms such as LLSN sites.

Awareness and intervention

Awareness and intervention are the two fundamental elements of all process writing approaches (Susser, 1994). The first component highlights the instructor's role in raising learners' awareness that writing is a recursive process of discovery that can lead to learning, as opposed to a simple, linear process of putting previously conceived messages into words (Booth, 1986; Krashen, 1984; Shaughnessy, 1977; Smith, 1982; Susser, 1994). Learners often confuse the process of writing for that of transcription (Susser, 1994) and rarely think to consider their audience while composing (Johnston, 1996; Uzawa, 1996). However, by making them aware of the generative nature of writing, instructors provide learners with tools to "choose the process that suits their writing style and the particular writing task they face" (Susser, 1994, p. 35).

Intervention, the second fundamental component of process writing pedagogies, emphasizes the instructor's dynamic relationship and engagement with learners throughout the writing process, as opposed to providing a simple summative evaluation of written products. In native language writing research, Flower and Hayes

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(1981b) suggested that instructors "could help writers to write, not just learn to repair the damage" (p. 55). Caudery (1995) framed intervention in terms of problem solving: "finding the source of their problems in creating good written texts and enabling them to overcome those difficulties" (p. 1). Krashen (1984) candidly urged target language composition instructors to give content-related feedback throughout the writing process instead of evaluating written products: "feedback is useful when it is done during the writing process, i.e., between drafts. It is not useful when done at the end" (p. 11). Susser (1994) continued this argument, stressing that target language writers in particular need "the opportunity to tell their readers what they mean to say *before* these writers are told what they ought to have done" (p. 35, emphasis in original). After all, the goal of intervention is for learners to "internalize this intervention as they write and revise" (Susser, 1994, p. 36).

Controversy surrounding process writing pedagogies

Process writing pedagogies in native and target language composition were met with mixed reviews. Unhappy with the dominant product-oriented pedagogies (Caudery, 1995), some native language (Hairston, 1982; Witte & Cherry, 1986) and target language (White and Arndt, 1991; Zamel, 1982) composition researchers celebrated the new approach. Raimes (1979) argued that by ignoring the process of writing in favor of a product-oriented focus, instructors "do the writer harm" (p. 4). However, others were less enthusiastic (e.g., Casanave, 1988; Hagge, 1987; Nolan, 1988). In the 1983 TESOL Quarterly forum, Barnes (1983) denounced what he believed were Zamel's (1982) expressionist focus on the process at the expense of written products, alleging that these pedagogies lead to "personal narratives or ruminative essays" (p. 138), which were inappropriate for ESL/EFL students

preparing to enter university. In the same issue, Zamel (1983a) defended her position, asserting that rather than neglecting written products, process writing pedagogies resulted in superior written products due to interventions during the composing process. The following year she reiterated this stance: "a process approach is by its very nature concerned with product" (Zamel. 1984, p. 154). Arndt (1987), Raimes (1985), and other proponents of process writing pedagogies have since echoed this dual emphasis of process and product, advising instructors to focus on both. Moreover, Zamel (1983b) drew a parallel between the process writing tenet of writing as a creative process of learning, or making meaning, and the then-recent reframing in constructive theories and communicative approaches to language learning as creative process of meaning making and negotiation.

Barnes (1983) was not the only researcher to criticize process writing pedagogies by linking them to expressionist composition theorists' emphasis on process over product (e.g., Taylor, 1981). Susser (1994) suggested that this assumed association was reasonable, albeit incorrect, noting that Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and other native language composition experts who promoted process writing approaches were also advocates of the expressionist school, and that target language supporters of process writing pedagogies, "(e.g., Zamel, 1982) used expressionist terminology in discussing process writing" (p. 38). Furthermore, some proponents of expressionist approaches were extreme in their proselytizing. For example, Hughey, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Jacobs (1983) required that "all writing must be taught as creative because of the creative processes that make any and all writing possible" (p. 40).

According to Susser (1994), conflict over the process writing approach could have been attributed to the lack of "comprehensive theories of L2 writing" (p. 31) and

the ambiguity of the term *process* – as an act, a writing pedagogy, and a set of writing theories. Citing Berlin (1987), Susser argued that process was not a theory of writing, per se, but instead a component of "most twentieth century writing theories" (p. 33). Theories of writing are "based on epistemological assumptions about the nature of reality, the nature of the knower, and the rules governing the discovery and communication of the known" (Susser, 1994, p. 33). In contrast, process writing "does not describe a model so much as a way of proceeding within that model" (Gere, 1986, as cited in Susser, 1994, p. 34). In fact, Susser (1994) argued that process writing approaches were compatible with multiple theories of writing, including expressionist and cognitive theories.

However, Susser asserted general acceptance by the mid-1990s of the problematic nature of the three main critiques of process writing pedagogies (1994). That is to say, little confusion remained among ESL/EFL instructors concerning the compatibility of process writing approaches with multiple writing theories. Furthermore, Susser indicated that many instructors had accepted that the affordances of process writing pedagogies were beneficial for formal, academic composition as well as informal and personal writing. In other words, process writing instructors were involved with writing processes without sacrificing attention to written products.

FEEDBACK AS INTERVENTION: TYPES OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK

One form of intervention that has received considerable attention from second language acquisition (SLA) and second language writing researchers is feedback provided to target language learners during the writing process. Ellis described various types of corrective feedback and the debates associated with each type in the

fields of SLA and language pedagogy (2009). Ellis (2009) further explained that positive feedback served to confirm either the truthfulness of content or accuracy of form, whereas negative feedback did the opposite, calling into question the integrity of content or mastery of form. This researcher extolled the former for its favorable influence on learner affect and motivation, attributing the paucity of SLA research on positive feedback to its vague nature in the target language classroom: "'Good' or "Yes" do not always signal the learner is correct, for they may merely preface a subsequent correction or modification of the student's utterance" (Ellis, 2009, p. 3). Corrective feedback, according to Ellis, falls under the broad category of negative feedback and has ignited debates regarding its role in L2 acquisition, the type and number of errors for response, who should provide corrections, and how and when to provide them.

According to Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1995), "what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning" (p. 20). In other words, learning can only occur when the learner is actively attending to form. Furthermore, Bitchener (2012) proposed that written corrective feedback was more likely than oral corrective feedback to be noticed by target language learners. Compared to oral corrective feedback, which tends to be given implicitly (e.g., recasts), Bitchener asserted that "feedback in the written context is always explicit (even when provided as indirect feedback, e.g. underlining or circling errors)" (p. 351). Moreover, he observed that the relative permanence of written corrective feedback affords learners with more time to attend to form.

In target language research, feedback that focuses on linguistic accuracy in written production is called *written corrective feedback* (Storch, 2018). Elola and Oskoz (2016) noted that research has indicated that written corrective feedback can

lead to linguistic improvements not only in later drafts (e.g., Ferris, 1999, 2006), but also in later writings (e.g., Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2010). These researchers have endeavored to determine if written corrective feedback results in "language learning, as evident in the production of more accurate texts" from a cognitive perspective (Storch, 2018, p. 262), and if so, which type is most influential on both later drafts (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 1999) and unrelated products of target language written production (e.g., Evans, et al., 2011). Moreover, researchers have argued whether uptake of feedback serves as confirmation of language acquisition (e.g., Ferris, 2010; Manchón, 2011), of language learning (Bitchener, 2012), or merely as evidence of noticing (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006). Specifically, previous research on written corrective feedback to target language writing has focused attention on the degree of directness (e.g., Chandler, 2003), the number of linguistic items receiving feedback (e.g., Sheen, 2007), and the focus of this feedback (e.g., Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012).

Mao and Crosthwaite outlined seven approaches to instructor-provided feedback used in previous research: "*direct*, *indirect*, *metalinguistic*, *focused* (selective), *unfocused* (comprehensive), and [written feedback] on *local* and *global* issues" (2019, p. 46). For instance, Chandler (2003) compared direct correction, when the instructor provides the learner with the correct form, with three types of indirect correction: underlining to identify the location of the error, metalinguistic explanation of the error type without indication of error location, and a combination of underlining and metalinguistic description. She found that in terms of reduction of errors over time, both types of feedback without metalinguistic description (i.e., providing the correct form and simple underlining) were significantly more effective than error description with or without underlining. Furthermore, in terms of learner

preference, she reported that direct correction was preferred by her participants, as it was the least complicated form of written feedback and faster in terms of time spent revising. Conversely, Chandler's more advanced participants indicated that they felt "they [were] learning more when they [were] involved in self-correction" (p. 293). In other words, these more proficient participants liked receiving direct feedback for its ease, but they recognized that greater understanding could result from the extra effort involved when the instructor merely underlined the kinds of errors that they were capable of self-correcting.

Conversely, Sheen (2007) examined direct written corrective feedback of article use (i.e., focused feedback) with and without metalinguistic description. Sheen performed immediate and delayed posttests, reporting that the two treatment groups (i.e., direct-only and direct with metalinguistic explanation) outperformed the control group (i.e., those who only participated in testing) in the former. Furthermore, the group that received direct feedback and metalinguistic explanations were more successful on the delayed posttest than the group that only received direct feedback. However, this result was mitigated by what Skehan (1998) called *language analytic ability*, which Sheen defined as "the ability to analyze language by creating and applying rules to new sentences (Sawyer & Ranta, 2001)" (as cited in Sheen, 2007, p. 259). Sheen concluded that direct, focused feedback improved the accuracy of target language article use, particularly when accompanied by metalinguistic explanation and in learner populations with higher abilities to analyze language patterns (2007).

In their investigation of revisions made to Dutch junior high school writers' compositions in a foreign language (English) and native language (Dutch), Stevenson, Schoonen, and Glopper (2006) proposed that revisions to target language writing can be classified in terms of Orientation, Location, Action, and whether or not the revision

is triggered by error. According to these researchers, Orientation can be subdivided into conceptual, linguistic, and typographic revisions: conceptual revisions "affect the informational content of the text" (p. 205), linguistic revisions are those that alter inaccurate forms in the text, and typographic revisions are corrections of misspellings that can be attributed to typing mistakes rather than conceptual or spelling errors. According to Stevenson et al. (2006), location refers to when revisions are provided in the metaphorical location of the writer in the writing process: pre-writing, while composing, or rewriting. Action refers to the type of activity involved in the revision: additions, deletions, substitutions, and syntactic alterations such as "chang[ing] the order of words or clauses and recombin[ing] clauses of text" (p. 206). Lastly, error triggered revisions can be judged in terms of "[s]uccess, that is, whether the resulting revision is successful or unsuccessful (i.e., correct or incorrect)" (p. 211). These researchers reported that their participants performed significantly more revisions and wrote shorter texts in their foreign language (i.e., English) than in their native language (i.e., Dutch) writings.

Despite target language instructors' provision of feedback related to more global writing issues (e.g., content, cohesion, audience consideration) in addition to linguistic errors, the latter is that which is most often examined by researchers (Storch, 2018). It has been suggested (e.g., Susser, 1994) that global, content-focused feedback should precede form-focused feedback to "encourage revision (making large-scale changes to content) on early drafts before helping the student with editing (making small-scale changes to form) on the final draft" (Ashwell, 2000, p. 227). Not only is this meant to save time for the instructor, avoiding making multiple surface-level changes to text that might eventually be discarded, but also it is hypothesized to help the learner produce qualitatively better written products (Ashwell, 2000).

Moreover, Ashwell pointed out that if leaners have invested time in form-focused text editions, they may be less likely to revise their texts for content.

However, in his examination of instructor-provided form-focused and meaning-focused responses to multiple drafts of target language writing, Ashwell (2000) tested this hypothesis by comparing the influence on content and accuracy of offering these two types of feedback in various orders among four groups of EFL learners at a Japanese university: content-related feedback given to the first draft and form-focused feedback in the second, the reverse, mixed feedback in the first two drafts, and a control group receiving no feedback on their first two drafts. His results indicated no significant difference in the third and final draft among the three treatment groups, and he argued that no matter the order of the type of feedback provided, his participants were more reliant on form-focused feedback.

Montgomery and Baker (2007) examined teacher-provided feedback of global and local responses to ascertain students' perceptions of this feedback, the quantity of each type of feedback provided, and whether the observed instructor-provided responses aligned with instructors' beliefs about their feedback practices. Their participants also indicated a strong preference for receiving local over global feedback from instructors, which Montgomery and Baker (2007) asserted confirmed findings from Cohen (1987) and Ferris (1995c). Montgomery and Baker also found that although instructors believed they were providing more global than local feedback, the inverse pattern was observed in the responses included for the study. In other words, even though the instructors perceived a focus on global issues, their responses to written texts were concentrated on linguistic accuracy.

A possible explanation for this discrepancy is a lack of clarity regarding what constitutes local versus global feedback. In fact, researchers have expressed some

difficulty distinguishing between certain subcategories of responses depending on the context of the feedback. Díez-Bedmar and Pérez-Paredes (2012) reported the complexity of determining feedback types "when they are not simple replacements of text or they involve commentaries and interaction with a peer learner" (p. 73). Burt (1975, as cited in Ellis, 2009) differentiated between global and local corrections, suggesting that instructors should concentrate on the former. However, Ellis (2009) indicated that these distinctions were more complex than they appeared.

In fact, exemplar global and local errors vary according to the researcher(s). Burt's (1975) conceptualization of global errors included those "that affect overall sentence organization [such as] wrong word order, missing or wrongly placed sentence connectors, and syntactic overgeneralizations" (as cited in Ellis, 2009, p. 6). Moreover, Burt argued that local errors only "affect single *elements (constituents) in a sentence*" (p. 57, emphasis in original). However, according to Montgomery and Baker, local errors include "grammar and mechanics [whereas global errors focus on] ideas and content, organization, and vocabulary" (p. 92, 2007). On the other hand, Budianto, Mukminatien, and Latief (2017) explicitly named vocabulary as a local aspect, as did Min (2005, p. 296) with regard to "word usage".

Given that there is some disagreement among target language writing and acquisition researchers as to what is local versus global feedback, it is not surprising that language instructors and learners would also lack this clarity. Montgomery and Baker (2007) emphasized the importance of avoiding overgeneralizations and taking into account the meaning relative to the rest of the text, noting that replacing one word with another might appropriately be "categorized as vocabulary, grammar, or mechanics, depending on whether the new word was more descriptive or appropriate, improved the grammar, or changed the spelling" (p. 88).

Alternative sources of written feedback

Intervention as it applies to process writing approaches should not be mistaken for an invitation for instructors to enforce their own processes on their learners, but rather to determine where these processes diverge and to "assess each one's particular needs" (Liebman-Kleine, 1987). More recently, Hyland (2016) echoed this perspective, advising that instructors avoid the implication that target language learners should adopt instructor viewpoints, but rather "to stimulate the writer's thinking through pre-writing tasks [and then to react] to the ideas that the writer produces" (p. 13).

Herein lies one of the major practical criticisms of process writing pedagogies (Caudery, 1995, p. 2): "process teaching often requires more in the way of input from teachers and students alike, and the degree of individualization involved can also present organizational problems, leading to disruption of 'normal' teaching patterns." However, Susser (1994) pointed out that the component of intervention is not restricted to instructors, as it can also be realized with classmates via discussion and peer review. For instance, Johnston described the strategy of "rehearsing (Zamel, 1983[b]; Raimes, 1987) [or] self-dialogue … used to generate syntax and vocabulary as well as ideas for content" (as cited in Johnston, 1996, p. 349) in three contexts on a continuum from more teacher- to more student-centered: teacher-student conferencing, peer group or paired discussion, and self-dialogue.

Early research into peer review in target language classrooms focused on learner attitudes (Mangelsdorf, 1992) and the usefulness of training peers to be effective providers of feedback (Zhu, 1995). In addition to training target language learners "to act as collaborators rather than correctors" (2005, p. 28), Rollinson emphasized the importance of "properly setting up the group and establishing

effective procedures" (p. 26). This researcher stressed the importance of the instructor's consideration of group size (i.e., no more than four people per group), quantity of written drafts, and how to assess peer-provided feedback. Ruecker (2011) suggested that articles such as Rollinson (2005) and Hansen and Liu (2005) detailing classroom implementation of peer feedback "indicate[d] that peer review [was] seen as an essential part of the [target language] classroom but challenging to implement effectively" (p. 399).

In their 2016 meta-analysis of peer-provided feedback in L2 writing from 2005 to 2014, Yu and Lee suggested that peer-feedback, self-feedback, and instructor or tutor-provided feedback "can serve different purposes in students' text revisions … and that multiple sources of feedback should be used in the writing classroom (p. 467). For instance, Suzuki's study of Japanese intermediate-level EFL university learners found that peer feedback provided opportunities for global changes to learner writings (e.g., content), whereas self-feedback lead to learners' noticing more local, form-focused changes in later drafts (2009). Furthermore, in a study examining learner use of feedback provided anonymously by peers and instructors to Chinese EFL learners, Xu and Liu (2010) also found that peer-reviewers provided more comments related to global issues and encouragement than did instructors, who tended to focus on local issues. However, Wu, Petit, and Chen (2015) reported opposing findings among EFL university-level learners in Taiwan: unidentified language experts focused on global issues related to organization whereas peer-reviewers focused on more local issues regarding accuracy, despite undergoing peer-review training that focused "on higher order concerns of organization, idea development, and style" (p. 63) .

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Native speaker feedback of target language production has been examined in the context of "dual-language cross-cultural peer review [bringing together Chilean] domestic and exchange students [from the United States] ... through facilitated interaction" in Chile (Ruecker, 2010, p. 398). Ruecker asserted that this type of language exchange not only resulted in improved L2 writing but also advanced learners' knowledge of the target culture. His participants communicated in both Spanish and English, depending on the target language of the piece(s) of writing under review. He argued that this type of peer-review was more advantageous than that performed exclusively by nonnative speakers of the target language, as the peers offering assistance were invariably more fluent than the writer receiving help, asserting that they "functioned as living dictionaries" with innate knowledge of lexical meaning and frequency in various registers (p. 402). Moreover, he proposed dual-language cross-cultural peer review as a possible solution to the problem of target language peers providing feedback that is grammatically inaccurate due to similar levels of language proficiency.

However, despite the small number of participants (n = 7), Ruecker (2010) reported "scheduling difficulties" when coordinating hour-long meetings for oral feedback about written production (p. 400). Moreover, idealized perspectives of native speakers could negatively affect learner autonomy, as one of Ruecker's participant indicated thusly: "'I mean, we cannot correct them. There's no way they can be wrong. It was authentic'" (p. 402). Lastly, although the researcher encouraged feedback based on content, the participants from the U.S. opposed this instruction, arguing first that grammar was of greater concern for target language writing than it was when writing in their native languages and second that "we know what needs to go in this paper and [the Chilean students] didn't just finish a semester in [a]

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contemporary Latin American poetry [class]" (p. 403). Ruecker gave two suggestions based on these participants' reactions. He warned that form-focused feedback should not be prevented, as being grammatically proficient is a valuable part of target language learning, and that meaning-focused feedback would be more appropriate if the subject matter of the writings were related.

One final issue related to alternative sources of written feedback is that of *face* (P. Brown & Levinson (1987). According to P. Brown and Levinson, issues related to face may be positive and/or negative. *Positive face* has to do with the dynamic emergent identity that one presents to others and assumes that others take as valid. The use of language that goes against the identity that one claims to have is a possible threat to positive face. *Negative face*, on the other hand, has to do with lack of free will. Commands are a classic example of negative face threats, as they impose the will of the speaker on the reader. People tend to mitigate issues of face via such politeness strategies as conventionalized expressions and indirect phrasing (Blas-Arroyo, 2011; Merrison, Wilson, Davies, & Haugh, 2012). Moreover, we will see how website users' and participants' consideration for positive and negative face was demonstrated in Lang-8 responses in the present study.

Web 2.0 has expanded the possibilities for alternative providers of feedback. In the next section, I will review the research related to the affordances and limitations of Web 2.0 tools for target language learning and for receiving feedback on written production.

WEB 2.0: TARGET LANGUAGE INPUT AND OUTPUT

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, and social media permit language learners to use their target language(s) in authentic forms of

communication apart from the classroom setting. In 2003, Bax asserted that the ultimate objective for computer-aided language learning was "to attain a state of *'normalisation'* in which the technology is invisible and truly integrated" (p. 13), offering "a wristwatch, a pen, shoes, [and] writing" as examples of technologies that had become so commonplace as to not be perceived as such (p. 23). Díez-Bedmar and Pérez-Paredes (2012) stated that the widespread use of learning management systems (e.g., Canvas) had accelerated this process by incorporating computer-mediated communication in higher education classrooms. Schroeder, Minocha, and Schneider (2010) also noted that these systems have served as the primary stage for integrating Internet tools into conventional target language classrooms.

Furthermore, due to time constraints within the language learning classroom that limit possibilities for peer interaction, instructors and learners alike would benefit from opportunities for networked communications fostering language use outside of the language classroom (Yang, 2016). Moreover, it has been suggested that circumstances affording learners the freedom to interact in the target language on their own terms (i.e., at times they find convenient and in ways that are personally engaging) have the potential to increase the likelihood of learner participation in target language interactions with peers (Peeters, 2018). Despite these needs, opportunities for meaningful, contextualized target language interaction outside of classroom contexts are limited (Sato, 2013; Yang, 2016).

Researchers have argued that in addition to the obvious benefits of increasing the quantity of target language output, text-based computer-mediated communication improves writing quality and affords learners with opportunities to focus on form (Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012; I. Lee, 2008). In addition to linguistic benefits, computer-mediated communication affords language learners

with opportunities to learn directly from native speakers of the target language about the cultures in which this language is situated (Liaw & English, 2014), fostering successful intercultural communication (Chen, 2012; O'Dowd 2006, 2007). For instance, Özdemir (2017) reported improved effectiveness of intercultural communication among advanced EFL learners at a public university in Turkey as a result of group discussions in an open Facebook group (i.e., "English Teachers") as compared to a control group that engaged in in-class discussions. Moreover, Özdemir described overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward the value of "using Facebook for the development of language skills" (p. 520).

The context in which written feedback is provided adds an additional layer of complexity to the debate about written corrective feedback. Target language writing feedback in the context of computer-mediated communication has received much attention from researchers due to its inherent possibility to increase learner output in meaningful exchanges of information and ideas (Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012; Ene & Upton, 2014; Yu & Lee, 2016). Furthermore, Díez-Bedmar and Pérez-Paredes noted that the function of written corrective feedback "is especially interesting when students do not normally have access to a native speaker who may help them with a [writing] task in a collaborative way" (p. 62).

With rapid advances in technology since the turn of the century, using computers to provide target language learners with written feedback is hardly exceptional. More recently, computer-mediated corrective feedback has been examined in terms of feedback types (e.g., Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012), accuracy (e.g., Ene & Upton, 2014, Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010), and learner responses to both in various modalities and contexts (e.g., Montgomery & Baker,

2007). For instance, Lavolette, Polio and Kahng (2015) examined automated written corrective feedback provided by Criterion, an intelligent computer-assisted language learning program developed by Educational Testing Agency. Other researchers have compared the effectiveness and learner responses to instructor-provided indirect audiovisual feedback using screencasting software versus indirect written corrective feedback using a word processing comments function (e.g., Ducate & Arnold, 2012; Elola & Oskoz, 2016). Written corrective feedback provided by peers and instructors has also been examined using the Track Changes tool in Microsoft Word (AbuSeileek, 2013; Ene & Upton, 2014; Ferris, 2012; Guénette & Lyster, 2013; Ho & Savignon, 2007; Tuzi, 2004), blogs (Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Chen, 2012; Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Elola & Oskoz, 2008), and open forums for computer-mediated communication (Wu, Petit, & Chen, 2015).

In their study of feedback types using forums and wikis, Díez-Bedmar and Pérez-Paredes (2012) asserted that communication formats inherent in two Web 2.0 tools (i.e., wikis and forums in Moodle) determined the type of feedback provided by native-speaker university students in Spain and England. These researchers found that the majority of feedback comments provided in the context of wikis was "of a morphosyntactic or lexical nature" (Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012, p. 79), whereas that provided in forums was more often affective and goal-oriented. In other words, "forums were more process oriented, whereas the wiki was more product-oriented" (Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012, p. 66). These findings support the assertion that context at least partially determines response type.

Today's students can take advantage of opportunities afforded by Web 2.0 tools, such as social media, "to make meaningful use of their target language in real-time contexts and to publish their own work online" (Morgan, 2012, p. 166). Before

the advent of Internet communication technologies, access to authentic target language input in classrooms was limited to that which was available via shortwave radio, television programs, and printed media, such as newspapers (Morgan, 2012). With early Internet communication technology tools, learners continued to be limited to developing their skills passively as consumers of information (Rosen & Nelson, 2008). Leveraging Web 2.0 tools for language learning has afforded learners a platform for "many-to-many interaction" (Schroeder, Minocha, & Schneider, 2010, p. 159) to participate actively in knowledge construction via user-generated content in novel contexts (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007) and with new ways to interact with native speakers (Díez-Bedmar & Pérez-Paredes, 2012) and more advanced learners of the target language (Morgan, 2010).

Researchers have argued that users have been empowered by the possibility of contributing to target language user-generated content by the participatory nature of these tools (L. Lee, 2010; McLoughlin & Lee, 2007; Morgan, 2012). Furthermore, Web 2.0 tools allow users to control the content of websites to varying extents by giving them power to ratify or reject information presented therein via user feedback (Morgan, 2012). In the present study, I looked at how learners exercised the power afforded to them to decide "what is preserved and what is discarded" (Morgan, 2012, p. 167). The interactivity promoted by Web 2.0 tools aids in harnessing the collective intelligence (O'Reilly, 2005), affording learners opportunities to interact with "more competent speakers of the language" (Morgan, 2012, p. 167).

Social networking and target language learning

In his taxonomy of target language learners' developmental processes during peer interactions on Facebook, Peeters (2018) examined the ways in which

university-level EFL learners in Belgium took an active role in knowledge construction through collaborative writing on Facebook. Peeters reported that his participants used both

> full sentences, exemplifying a linguistic repertoire that, to a certain extent, follow[ed] standard EFL writing conventions (cf. Lantz-Anderson, 2016, 2017) [as well as] more informal linguistic features of online communication [that demonstrated] the dynamic, but also social, nature of these Facebook discussions. (p. 914)

Furthermore, Peeters' participants employed the use of emoticons with the likely intent of mitigating possible face threats (2018). Using "these paralinguistic features of online communication" (p. 914) alongside linguistically expressed disagreement highlighted how elements of the communicative context may have subtly influenced peer perception of the intended message. Moreover, interaction in the context of social media can introduce or complement target language learners' opportunities to witness and participate in casual, informal target language use (Peeters, 2018).

In his synthesis of 87 studies published between 2009 and 2018 examining the use of social media tools (i.e., blogs, wikis, and social networking) for target language learning, Reinhardt (2019) reported that the affordances of these tools indicated their role in "the development of intercultural, sociopragmatic, [*sic*] and audience awareness, language learner and user identities, and particular literacies" (p. 1). According to this researcher, 2.6 billion people use social media in one way or another (Statista, 2018, as cited in Reinhardt, 2019). In terms of "collective intelligence" (Morgan, 2012; O'Reilly, 2005), this is a considerable pool for crowdsourcing feedback.

Dizon (2016) examined the effects of focused freewriting in two contexts (i.e., on Facebook and paper-and-pencil writing) to compare "writing fluency, lexical

richness, [and] grammatical accuracy" (p. 1251) among 30 university-level EFL learners in Japan. The experimental and control groups wrote in-class compositions twice per week for 12 weeks, for a total of 24 writings. The control group was not required to respond to peer writings, but the experimental group was tasked with responding to the content posted on Facebook in English to at least two peers. Dizon measured changes in fluency, lexical richness, and grammar using three writing assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester, concluding that gains in writing fluency in the experimental group were significant, but not for grammatical accuracy or lexical richness. Dizon asserted that these findings supported those reported by Wang and Vásquez (2014) that writing on Facebook has a positive influence on target language writing fluency. Although this researcher did mention that it was impossible to know whether fluency gains could be exclusively attributed to participants' use of Facebook or if "computer writing in general was the primary factor" (p. 1256), he made no mention of the influence of reading and/or responding to peer writings on Facebook.

Researchers have also inquired into language learner perceptions and opinions of using social networking websites for target language development. For instance, Kabilan, Ahmad, and Abidin (2010) surveyed 300 undergraduates in Malaysia about the suitability of Facebook as a useful and meaningful learning environment. The majority of participants agreed that Facebook could facilitate improvement in language skills, especially reading and writing, as well as positively affect motivation, confidence, and attitudes towards English language learning. Blattner and Fiori (2011) tasked their participants with using Facebook groups in Spanish as an open resource for authentic language in context. These participants reported being highly motivated by using Facebook to learn Spanish.

Lord and Lomicka's (2013) survey of 425 language students in the United States echoed these findings: when asked which tools learners would like to use in the language classroom, social networking was the most popular tool with 23.5%. However, this was the second most popular response, behind none (25.4%). In other words, these students agreed that these tools could improve language skills and engagement but reported a preference for face-to-face interaction. However, it is important to note that social networking website use was hypothetical in some of these studies (Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, 2010; Lord & Lomicka, 2013): instead of drawing on retrospective user perceptions, learners reported how they would feel, hypothetically, about using Facebook for language learning purposes.

Perhaps as an outgrowth of early research, recent researchers have examined the effectiveness of training language learners to use social networking tools to be effective language learners. For instance, Prichard (2013) performed a needs analysis of his Japanese female university learners of English before training them to use Facebook safely and effectively in four introductory sessions. After using the website for a semester to blog in English, 95% agreed that they were better users of Facebook for language learning purposes. Additionally, the most popular reason cited for not posting more often was not knowing what to post. This suggest that learners' needs should be surveyed and that learners should be subsequently trained in effective and safe social networking website use. Furthermore, learners need to be provided with clear writing prompts. Scaffolding learners with open-ended writing prompts affords them some autonomy in terms of what to write about, while still offering them some level of direction.

As previously indicated, websites for LLSN differ from typical social networking websites in terms of user purpose. Whereas social networking website

users tend to reinforce existing relationships, LLSN sites connect unfamiliar site users for interaction and/or feedback for a specific purpose (i.e., language learning). Other social networking websites for specific purposes include LinkedIn and Academia.edu for professional and post-graduate academic networking, respectively. LLSN sites such as *Lang-8* offer learners a unique and convenient way to use their target language to communicate with current friends and classmates and to form new friendships with other site users. In addition to providing a platform for interactive and collaborative writing, LLSN websites connect students to a community of language learners, including native speakers of various target languages (Dixhoorn et al., 2010; Loiseau, 2011; McBride, 2009; Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009; Zourou, 2012; Zourou et al., 2012).

Although LLSN sites like Lang-8 have existed for more than a decade, research findings are still limited and preliminary in nature. Early research on using LLSN websites for language learning focused on descriptions of affordances and limitations of site features. Researchers and instructors were interested in the pedagogical affordances and limitations of connecting users to an online community of language learners, including native speakers of various target languages (Conole & Alevizou, 2010; Lomicka & Lord, 2009; McBride, 2009). However, concerns arose regarding the quality of the drill activities provided by some sites and of the feedback provided by users (Jee & Park, 2009; Liaw, 2011), as well as usability issues such as site navigation (Liu et al., 2015; Razaei, 2010; Stevenson & Liu, 2010). These early studies highlighted the importance of considering website design when selecting a site for language learners.

Target language researchers have studied identity construction in LLSN. For example, Harrison and Thomas (2009) examined identity formation in Livemocha

and reported that contrary to previous findings on social networking websites, LLSN website users did explore new relationships, rather than merely maintaining existing ones. These findings are bolstered by similar findings in traditional social networking website contexts. Kelley (2010) used Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) concept of the Ideal Self to report that MySpace, a traditional social networking website, could be effective fostering imagined communities for EFL leaners. According to Reinhardt (2019), the limitations of Kelley's (2010) study included a possible "novelty effect" and no control for the effect of the instructor (p. 22). Nonetheless, Reinhardt suggested that further examination of the effects of context (i.e., social networking sites versus non-social networking sites) on motivation would be of interest now that "SNS use has truly become ubiquitous and everyday" (p. 22).

Klimanova and Dembovskaya (2013) also framed their examination of VKontake, a Russian social networking website similar to Facebook, in terms of identity formation and self-presentation for university-level learners of Russian in the United States. These researchers found variations between the global and local identities enacted by heritage and nonnative Russian speakers. Furthermore, they argued that online social networks went beyond offering a platform for target language practice with native speaking peers, affording learners a "multi-modal cultural space" (p. 82) in which they learn to highlight or downplay their first and second language identities. These findings indicate that social networking communities are beneficial in establishing and developing learners' target language identity.

By contrast, other research has yielded much more complicated and mixed findings with regard to the perceptions of actual learner use of social networking websites for language learning purposes. Some researchers have reported that

participants' initial positive reactions to social networking websites for target language learning in the context of higher education were outweighed by the limitations of the platform. For instance, Kikuchi and Otsuka (2008) demonstrated concerns that poor computer skills, not poor English skills, negatively affected their participants' interactions in Windows Live Space, a closed social networking system. Furthermore, Sato and Ballinger (2016) suggested that the relative effort put forth by peers in paired or group interactions had a greater influence on the quality and success of the interaction than did language aptitude. In other words, it is possible that language proficiency levels are less relevant to learner attitudes about peer interaction than are their impressions of peer contributions.

However, as seen in Fernández Dobao's (2016) study of what she called "the silent learner" (p. 42), lack of oral contribution to collaborative writing tasks does not always equate to lack of activity. This researcher reported that her less-active participants took on the role of "observers of their peers' collaborative problem solving activity" (p. 42), and did, in fact, benefit from this interaction, as indicated by the results of a pre-test/post-test measure of vocabulary knowledge. Despite the different modalities of peer interaction (i.e., oral versus written, face to face versus computer-mediated, and synchronous versus asynchronous), Peeters (2018) presented the possibility that these findings could be applied to text-based peer interactions on Facebook. In other words, participants who do not actively contribute to online discussions on social networking websites may still benefit from observing (i.e., reading) the text-based interactions of their peers.

Researchers whose findings indicated initial motivation using the social networking website MySpace also reported cases of eventual demotivation from frustration with site functionality (e.g., Kelley, 2010). Similar instances of eventual

learner frustration were noted in LiveMocha, an LLSN website, linked to site design (Clark & Gruba, 2010) and inappropriate online advances from site users (Brick, 2011, 2012). However it is important to note that inappropriate advances were not found to be an issue in a later study conducted by Orsini-Jones, Brick, and Pibworth (2013), which may be a result of learners becoming more tech-savvy or less put-off by online interactions with strangers as social networking websites become more ubiquitous. Findings from Lloyd (2012) suggest that cyber flirting was "generally considered to be a minor irritation" (para 32). Lloyd reported that although his female participants indicated that some Livemocha.com users seemed more interested in flirting than in language exchange, these users "seemed mostly unfazed by such requests" (para 32). Furthermore, Liu et al. (2015) found that participants' overall comfort with Web 2.0 and target language proficiency level played important roles in participant satisfaction with LLSN websites.

Written feedback in language learning via social networking websites

Some researchers have examined written feedback received by traditional (i.e., self-motivated) users of LLSN websites, finding that the use of social media affords language learners with new opportunities to connect to a community of learners who provide both feedback and emotional encouragement. For instance, Allstrom (2011) examined types of user feedback in 200 speaking and writing activity submissions on Livemocha.com. She found that the largest percent (37.2%) of feedback related directly to emotional valence or face work: 32% involved emotional support, whereas only 4.2% involved potential face-threatening acts. Although types of feedback were not differentiated by submission modality (i.e., spoken or written) in her study, Allstrom's findings suggest that language learners using Livemocha.com

for written practice can expect to receive both corrective feedback and positive emotional encouragement from reviewers. In her study of emerging sociopragmatic competence of target language learners on a traditional social networking website (i.e., Facebook), Lantz-Andersson (2018) asserted that these types of message of support play a part in relationship building and can encourage target language writers' further contributions of target language production. Peeters (2018) asserted that engaging in this type of "socio-affective" (p. 925) communication is crucial to increasing motivation, which in turn guards against the threat of disrupting the process of peer-to-peer interactions.

Researchers have also begun to address how users perceive and use the different types of written feedback they received in LLSN contexts. For instance, Brick (2011) reported that self-directed participants using *LiveMocha* were pleased with the prompt peer-feedback and the affordance of synchronous and asynchronous chatting modes. However, Allstrom (2011), Brick (2011, 2012) and Orisini-Jones et al. (2013) asserted that conflicting and incorrect error corrections undermine the usefulness of these websites for target language development. To remedy this, Brick (2011, 2012) suggested learners take time to build relationships with trusted partners. However, instructors might also choose to embrace variation in feedback as a chance to teach critical learning skills and to illustrate regional and social variations in language use (Liu et al., 2015). The rise of Web 2.0 tools indicates a shift toward increased user participation and user-generated content (Conole & Alevizou, 2010). Therefore, it is important to train learners to be critical thinkers who evaluate new knowledge instead of accepting it without question (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). A more serious concern about using LLSN sites rather than closed learning management systems such as *Canvas* or *Blackboard* is that of cyber stalking, cyber flirting, and

other inappropriate advances in open systems (Brick, 2011, 2012; Lloyd, 2012). To minimize these limitations, learners need to be made aware of privacy settings available on a given site (Prichard, 2013).

Furthermore, in spite of reporting participant's positive impressions of LLSN websites in formal educational settings, most researchers report that few, if any, participants continued to post in the target language on the site in question after the treatment was over. For instance, C.-H. Lin, Warschauer, and Blake (2016) surveyed 4,174 users of Livemocha.com in addition to interviews and artifact analysis of 20 participants (i.e., native speakers of Chinese learning English as a foreign language) in more in-depth case studies. The survey was presented in four languages (i.e., English, Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese), accounting for 84% of users' native language(s) as identified by Livemocha members, and data were collected from April to June in 2009. However, the Portuguese language survey did not receive adequate responses and was therefore excluded from data analysis. These researchers noted that reported gains in "perceived self-confidence and motivation may be attributable to the participants' access to and ability to communicate with native speakers of their target language" (p. 141), citing Kramsch, A'Ness, and Lam (2000) as support for this hypothesis. However, the researchers also reported a decrease in participant usage of Livemocha.com over time, and ultimately all 20 case study participants stopped using target language lessons offered by Livemocha.com.

M. Lin (2015) documented similar findings regarding participants using Lang-8. In addition to pre- and post-testing, this researcher examined the online activity of 18 undergraduate English minors at a university in Taiwan, framing the website as a blogging platform. Participants were tasked with composing at least seven entries on topics of their choice. Data were further triangulated with from in-depth interviews

with five of the participants. M. Lin described gains in writing skills, motivation, and self-efficacy. However, this researcher also reported that although the five interviewees "expressed great willingness to undergo more of this type of experience in the future… tracking [of] their continued blogging patterns after this project [showed that of the 18 participants, only one] used *Lang-8*… upload[ing a single] entry—8 months after the project ended" (pp. 453-454).

Conversely, some of the participants in a study by Schroeder et al. (2010) of 20 social software initiatives in the UK did continue to use "blogs and social networking applications … to maintain an alumni-like community … and, once the course was finished, the communities took on a life of their own" (p. 167). However, these researchers provided no further details about how many people were involved in these online communities, to what extent, nor for how long. Therefore, Cho (2015) called for further research of both active LLSN users and those who use the websites for a short time and then stop in order to inform instructors who are interested in using LLSN websites in target language classrooms. Furthermore, Cho noted the lack of action research exploring target language teachers' actual use for instructional purposes. Reinhardt (2019) echoed this call, noting the need for qualitative studies of "formal education programs that integrate [LLSN websites to] offer insights into the ecologies of" their use (p. 30), as this would inform the study of "user agency, control, and choice … in terms of how language is used in and by social media agents, for what audiences and for what purposes" (pp. 31-32).

Previous research using Lang-8

As indicated in Chapter 1, although some researchers have examined Lang-8 prior to the current study, to my knowledge, no research has examined its use by an

in-tact Spanish language class nor the types of feedback received on the site. Early research on Lang-8 was limited to website reviews (Bündgens-Kosten, 2011; Cho, 2013), comparisons to other LLSN websites like Busuu (James, 2011), and usability testing (Liu et al., 2015). Flanagan et al. (2013) used Lang-8 not as a social networking website, but rather as a data collection crowdsourcing method to identify error patterns and frequencies. These researchers then generated multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank quizzes from these data. Next, participants' writing errors were identified so that they could use the newly created system to find quizzes about the same type of errors for further practice.

M. Lin (2015) examined the use of Lang-8 by 18 university EFL learners in Taiwan as a platform for English blogging. Participants were tasked with biweekly postings of one journal entry and offered bonus points in the course for additional blog posts. They were "encouraged [but not obligated] to comment on peer work or that of other users" (M. Lin, 2015, p. 448). M. Lin reported positive influences on participants' writing skills, motivation, and self-efficacy. However, this researcher's decision to use the website for a purpose other than this which it was designed (i.e., to receive feedback) lead to questionable conclusions. For instance, M. Lin blamed the feedback aspect of the website for an increase in some participants' anxiety related to face, deeming the focus on feedback "an unusual emphasis [that] openly display[ed] linguistic weakness" (2015, p. 454).

Cho (2015) examined the practices in which online learners engage and their perceptions by collecting data from 12 active users for nine months in an outside-of-school context, finding that these participants' activities were related to building and maintaining and online friend network for the purposes of target language practice. Furthermore, this researcher indicated that participants reported positive

perceptions of language learning benefits in three areas: academic, social, and emotional.

Thus far, I have discussed the research findings related to process writing approaches (Susser, 1994), the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005) and how they apply to the context of websites with Web 2.0 tools. I have also reviewed feedback types and providers in the contexts of traditional target language classrooms, experimental settings, and in computer-mediated-communications, specifically those using Web 2.0 tools. As noted in Chapter 1, more research is needed regarding feedback types and providers in contexts other than ESL and EFL learners. Moreover, research about social media tools that has been situated in real classrooms with intact classes is also lacking. Therefore, in an effort to contribute to both of these areas of research and to help close the aforementioned gaps in the literature, the present study addressed the following questions:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Who responds to assigned student writings on Lang-8?
2. How much feedback do students receive?
3. What kinds of feedback do they get?
4. What is the students' response to this feedback?

Chapter 3: Experiment Design and Methodology

INTRODUCTION

The Internet and social media tools have fundamentally changed the way human beings communicate with one another. Language learners have the ability to interact with target language artifacts and speakers at anytime from anywhere with a connection to the Internet. LLSN websites like Lang-8 afford learners with new contexts for target language use and learning. However, it is important to know what happens during those interactions and how they are interpreted by language learners before we can begin to measure linguistic gains or cultural knowledge. We need to know what learners experience receiving feedback in these contexts that is different from feedback received in traditional classroom settings. In addition to investigating the perceptions of the participants who used Lang-8 for written Spanish feedback over the course of one long semester, the methodology detailed in this chapter examines the providers, amount, and types of written feedback these learners received. This chapter describes the participants and course setting and the methods for data collection and analysis.

PARTICIPANTS AND COURSE SETTING

The 18 student participants in the study came from an intact class of Spanish at a large state university in the southwestern United States. Student participants were enrolled in the second of three lower-division Spanish classes (Spanish 610D: Intermediate I) that met two hours a day, three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) for a total of six hours per week in the fall semester of 2014. Of the 18 student participants, seven were female and 11 were male. At the start of the semester, the average age of the student participants was 21.3 years old, with a range

of 18.5 to 28.8 years of age. None of the student participants were majoring in Spanish. Instead, four majored in Economics, three had undeclared majors in Liberal Arts or Undergraduate Studies, two majored in Sociology, and one double-majored in Economics and Computer Science. The remaining eight student participants majored in Biochemistry, Chemistry, Public Health, Neurobiology, Public Relations, Corporate Communications, Psychology, and Philosophy.

In response to the initial background survey, two of the student participants reported knowing Spanish as their native language, and six additional student participants reported having at least one parent who spoke Spanish as their native language. However, three of these six heritage language learners (HLLs) of Spanish admitted difficulty comprehending and/or speaking Spanish in spite of their parental native speaker status. Although the six HLLs varied in terms of Spanish proficiencies, these student participants were so-called typical HLLs in that they were observed to be familiar with more Spanish vocabulary than their monolingual peers. Three of the remaining student participants reported varying degrees of familiarity with languages other than English and Spanish (specifically, German, Mandarin, and Vietnamese) as heritage language speakers.

All but one of the student participants reported previously taking Spanish classes in middle or high school. However, none of the student participants were true beginners, as all had either completed the first lower-division Spanish course at the university, completed an equivalent course at another university in prior semesters, or taken a placement test allowing them to skip the introductory Spanish course.

Roughly one fifth of student participants' final grades in Spanish 610D depended on instructor assessment of Spanish writing: student participants submitted three Spanish compositions written in class (two chapter final tasks and

one final exam essay) for a total of 12.5% of their grade, and writing skills were combined with reading skills in exams and quizzes for an additional 24%. Furthermore, there was a focus on different writing genres (i.e., personal correspondence in chapter one, argumentative essays in chapter three, and editorial essays in the final exam) and connectors used in written and spoken academic discourse. The Spanish composition component of the course was summarized for the student participants in a handout distributed during the first week of classes (see Figure 1).

Finally, the student participants in this study were a convenience sample, as they had enrolled in my section without any inclusion or exclusion criteria. On the final day of class, I left the classroom so that a faculty member of my dissertation committee could request student participants' written consent to participate in the study and permission for me to analyze classroom assignments and student participants' survey responses without my knowledge of who approved or denied inclusion. The faculty member withheld the signed consent forms until after final grades were posted. Ultimately, all 18 students in the course agreed to be included as participants in the study.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5" align="center">Lang-8: A process writing approach</td></tr>
</table>

Spanish composition as a component of this course:
Don't worry – SPN 610D is not an [SWC course](1)! BUT a significant portion (about 20%) of your final grade is based on your abilities to write in Spanish. We'll focus specifically on different written registers, writing genres, and content organization.

Item	Total percentage of final grade	Percentage of final grade based on Spanish writing	Explanation
Final Exam	**20%**		
Multiple Choice	10%	-	
Listening	5%	-	
Essay	5%	**5%**	Prompt given during final
Exams (3)	**25%**	*(Rough estimate – varies by chapter)*	
Chapter 1	8%	**2%**	Single sentences based on prompts
Chapter 2	8%	**2%**	(Like those from Noticias y Sociedad and Media Homework)
Chapter 3	9%	**3%**	
Final chapter tasks (4)	**15%**		
Chapter 1	3.75%	**3.75%**	Email (pp. 64-5 in textbook)
Chapter 2	3.75%	-	
Chapter 3	3.75%	**3.75%**	Argumentative essay (pp. 201-3)
Chapter 4	3.75%	-	
**Total = 19.5%**		

Figure 1: Writing as a component of Intermediate Spanish I (student handout)

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[1] Substantial writing component (SWC) courses included at least three writing activities per semester, excluding quizzes and exams, totaling 16 typewritten double-spaced pages.

Summary of writing topics to be covered	
Written register	We will examine and produce samples of a variety of registers, from more informal and personal (e.g., emails to peers) to more formal, impersonal, and academic (e.g., essays)
Writing genres	We will produce multiple drafts of a variety of genres (e.g., personal communication, argumentative, editorial, etc.)
Elements of textual coherence	In chapters 2-4, we will learn a variety of connector words and phrases for written discourse (pp. 114, 156, 199-200).

Figure 1 (continued): Writing as a component of Intermediate Spanish I (student handout)

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Table 1 offers an overview of the data collection timeline, organized by the date the task was assigned to the student participants. Due dates aligned with departmental decisions regarding classroom activities, assignments, and assessments. Therefore, exam dates are also included in the table, although exams per se were not included in the data analysis.

Table 1: Data collection Timeline

	Data collection instruments	Date assigned	Due date
1	Background survey on Qualtrics	Week 1 (Aug 27)	Week 2 (Sept 5)
2	1st entry on Lang-8	Week 1 (Aug 29)	Week 2 (Sept 3)
3	1st peer responses on Lang-8	Week 2 (Sept 3)	Week 3 (Sept 8)
4	2nd entry on Lang-8	Week 3 (Sept 8)	Week 3 (Sept 10)
5	2nd peer responses on Lang-8	Week 3 (Sept 10)	Week 4 (Sept 15)
6	Chapter 1 final task (an email) in class		Week 4 (Sept 19)
7	3rd entry on Lang-8	Week 4 (Sept 15)	Week 4 (Sept 17)
8	3rd peer responses on Lang-8	Week 4 (Sept 17)	Week 5 (Sept 22)

Table 1 (continued): Data collection timeline

	Exam: Chapter 1		Week 5 (Sept 24)
9	Chapter 1 Lang-8 corrections	Week 5 (Sept 24)	Week 6 (Sept 29)
10	Chapter 1 survey on Qualtrics	Week 5 (Sept 24)	Week 6 (Sept 29)
11	4th entry on Lang-8	Week 6 (Sept 29)	Week 6 (Oct 1)
12	4th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 6 (Oct 1)	Week 7 (Oct 6)
13	5th entry on Lang-8	Week 7 (Oct 6)	Week 7 (Oct 8)
14	5th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 7 (Oct 8)	Week 8 (Oct 13)
15	Chapter 1 final task professor corrections	Week 7 (Oct 8)	Week 8 (Oct 15)
	Exam: Chapter 2		Week 8 (Oct 15)
16	Chapter 2 Lang-8 corrections for homework	Week 8 (Oct 17)	Week 9 (Oct 20)
17	Chapter 2 survey on Qualtrics	Week 8 (Oct 17)	Week 9 (Oct 20)
18	6th entry on Lang-8	Week 9 (Oct 20)	Week 9 (Oct 22)
19	6th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 9 (Oct 22)	Week 10 (Oct 27)
20	7th entry on Lang-8	Week 10 (Oct 27)	Week 10 (Oct 29)
21	7th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 10 (Oct 29)	Week 11 (Nov 3)
22	Chapter 3 final task (an argumentative essay) in class		Week 11 (Nov 5)
23	8th entry on Lang-8	Week 11 (Nov 3)	Week 11 (Nov 5)
	Exam: Chapter 3		Week 11 (Nov 7)
24	8th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 11 (Nov 5)	Week 12 (Nov 10)
25	Chapter 3 Lang-8 corrections	Week 12 (Nov 10)	Week 13 (Nov 17)
26	Chapter 3 survey on Qualtrics	Week 12 (Nov 10)	Week 13 (Nov 17)
27	9th entry on Lang-8	Week 13 (Nov 17)	Week 13 (Nov 19)
28	9th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 13 (Nov 19)	Week 14 (Nov 24)
29	10th entry on Lang-8	Week 14 (Nov 24)	Week 14 (Nov 26)
30	Chapter 3 final task professor corrections	Week 14 (Nov 24)	Week 15 (Dec 1)
31	Chapter 4 survey on Qualtrics	Week 14 (Nov 24)	Week 15 (Dec 5)

Table 1 (continued): Data collection timeline

33	End of semester survey on Qualtrics	Week 14 (Nov 24)	Week 15 (Dec 5)
34	Lang-8 Portfolios	Week 14 (Nov 24)	Week 15 (Dec 1-5)
35	10th peer responses on Lang-8	Week 14 (Nov 26)	Week 15 (Dec 1)

Lang-8: A language learning via social networking website

As described in Chapter 1, Lang-8 is a LLSN website that uses the affordances of social media to connect language learners to a community of more knowledgeable others, including Spanish native speakers and advanced language learners. Website users sign up by entering their email addresses and creating a password or by connecting their Facebook or Twitter accounts and create a user profile. User profiles include required information (a user nickname by which they are identified on the website, native language, and language[s] of study) and optional information (a profile picture, real name, birthdate, Skype/Twitter/Facebook IDs, gender, nation and region, occupation, purpose of study, location, and an *About me* section). Optional fields offer privacy settings to restrict who can see the information entered by the person creating the profile (Public, Share with all Lang-8 users, Share with My Friends only, and Private – Just Me): items marked *Public* can be found using a search engine such as Google, those marked *All Lang-8 users* can be seen by anyone with a Lang-8 user account, those marked *My Friends* are restricted to only those Lang-8 website users who have been approved as Lang-8 friends and are thus connected to that user's Lang-8 profile, and items marked *Private* are visible only to that particular account holder.

Lang-8 focuses specifically on target language writing skills, in contrast with other LLSN websites such as Italki, LingQ, and Polyglotclub that also offer practice in speaking, listening, and reading. Lang-8 users compose and post their target language written production to receive corrections and comments from other Lang-8 members. When posting a target language composition, website users are also provided various required and optional fields. Users are required to choose the target language in which the composition will be written, identified by the website in a conversational tone: *Help me with my*. Users can select between their native language and target language(s) as identified in their profile page, and this function determines where the uploaded writing will appear for correction, as users offering feedback search for journal entries written according to the language in which the entry is composed. The next required field is marked text and described thusly by the website: "Post your journal here. Anything is OK as long as it is in the target language specified in the field above – a self-introduction, what you did last weekend, even how much you love ice cream." Access or privacy settings are also required in order for a user to post, and these match the privacy settings used in optional fields on the profile page (Public, Share with all Lang-8 users, Share with My Friends only, and Private – Just Me). Website users are also invited to use optional posting fields by including a title, a native language version to help provide context for the users providing feedback, and adding tags and images to their journal post, as well as to share the target language writing on their Twitter or Facebook pages if these accounts have been attached to the user's profile page. Premium members can select from a dropdown box explaining what type of corrections they are seeking: in no particular way, so that it is understandable, so that it is natural, as formal language, or as casual language.

Website activity on Lang-8

Data sources included student participants' Spanish journal compositions and responses to peer journals on Lang-8 throughout the semester. The compositions were assigned and collected weekly for homework, and students were required to produce user responses to the aforementioned Spanish writings once a week. A calendar of the assignments can be found in Appendix A in Spanish as presented to the student participants and is translated to English in Appendix B. This calendar included weekly journal writing prompts, pedagogical purposes of the written assignments, targeted language structures, and due dates. The calendar of assignments was provided for student participants' comments and critique at the beginning of the semester, although no such feedback was reported to me at that time. Student participants were put into groups of three, which rotated at the beginning of each of four chapters. Student participant groups were assigned at random by me for the first three chapters, and for the fourth and final chapter students were asked to choose their group members. Peer responses were provided only to members of one's group.

Each week, with the exception of three weeks with chapter exams (weeks 5, 8, and 12) and the final week of class (week 15), student participants were given a prompt on Monday in class and expected to post an entry in response by 11:59pm on Wednesday. They then had until the following Monday at 11:59pm to respond to all of their group members. Student participant responsibilities and possible benefits thereof were explained in a handout during the first week of classes (see Figure 2). Student participants were asked to respond to the accuracy and content of their group members' postings (see Figure 3 for the student handout with a description of

peer-feedback types) and were graded according to the rubric distributed on the first week of class (see Figure 4).

Lang-8: A process writing approach

Writing in a second language:

An underlying assumption of our textbook and my personal approach to learning how to write in Spanish is that part of it involves ***actually writing in the second language***.

> **Summary:** There are many reasons that keeping a journal of early drafts on Lang-8 will be beneficial to you as a user of Spanish. The main three are that you'll be (1) writing in Spanish and (2) reading and responding to your group members in Spanish on a weekly basis. Also, (3) all writing prompts are taken from later assignments to serve as early drafts, providing a place to practice new language for future graded assignments.

Responsibilities:
1) You will be responsible for keeping an online weekly journal in Spanish on the language-learning website Lang-8.
    a. After signing up as a site member, click on this link →Clarrish and add me as a friend on the website. Make sure to add me to your social network so you get credit for your entries because if not I may not be able to access your writing, depending on the privacy settings.
    b. I will remind y'all of the topics and word minimums for each journal entry in class on Monday. Your responses must be posted by Wednesday evening at 11:59pm.
    c. All writing prompts are available now on Canvas for feedback. I am willing to change these topics if you feel you could be better served with an alternative, as the purpose is to provide a space to practice for future classroom assignments.
    d. These entries are NOT graded for accuracy – they are completion grades (see rubric below)
2) In addition, you are responsible for giving feedback to ALL of your group members on a weekly basis.

Figure 2: Responsibilities and benefits of the Lang-8 assignments (student handout)

a. Your written responses to your colleagues' weekly journal entries are due the following Monday evening at 11:59pm. If a member of your team neglects to post for the week, you will not be penalized for not posting a response. Your feedback should be focused on both the content and the accuracy of their writing. You must respond with at least 3 instances of content or corrective feedback for each group members' entries.

b. You will evaluate the participation of your group members at the end of each chapter. Peer-feedback is a lot of work, and it is important to me that y'all feel that your time has been respected, so I want to hear from you about this aspect. Also, participation in peer-evaluation is counted in your Lang-8 grade for each chapter.

c. These responses are NOT graded for accuracy – they are completion grades (see rubric)

3) The final week of the semester you will submit a portfolio with your five best entries – edited according to any feedback you may have received over the semester – that will be graded for accuracy. Please also indicate your favorite entry, as I will publish a collection for the class.

Reading and responding to weekly journals will help you in the following ways:

1) They increase your exposure to and use of content vocabulary, improving vocabulary retention

2) They are asynchronous (i.e. not live like a face-to-face dialogue). This means you have time to compose your responses at your own pace with access to Wordreference.com if you get stuck.

3) They offer a place to experiment with Spanish without having to worry about making mistakes because the entries are not graded for accuracy. Accuracy is typically more important in writing than in speaking (there are no context clues or gestures, the reader can't ask for clarification, it's recorded along with any errors, etc.), but NOT IN EARLY DRAFTS. Native speakers and advanced Spanish learners can give you corrective feedback if you want it (select "Share with all Lang-8 users" under Access Settings), just like you can give feedback to anyone learning English.

4) They promote autonomous language learning: I am a lurker who gives you proverbial gold stars (and digital homework points) for participation. You are in charge of managing your own learning and responding to each member of your group. I will occasionally make comments on early drafts, but I will not give corrective feedback on early drafts posted to Lang-8. I reserve corrective feedback for later drafts submitted in class.

Figure 2 (continued): Responsibilities and benefits of the Lang-8 assignments (student handout)

> **Lang-8: A process writing approach**
>
> **Giving feedback**:
>
> **Purpose**:
> In addition to helping out your group members, giving feedback is a way for you to demonstrate to me (Claire) that you have read and thought about your group member's entries.
>
> **Language**:
> All feedback will be given in Spanish.
>
> **Types of feedback**:
> We will focus on three main types of feedback. The first is related to accuracy and the last two are related to content.
>   Accuracy: This feedback is what you are probably most familiar with in Spanish classes, as it concerns corrective feedback on grammar, vocabulary, appropriateness, etc.
>   Negotiation of meaning: One type of content-related feedback has to do with misunderstandings. If you don't understand what your group member is trying to say because you think the message is unclear, you would respond to indicate that you don't understand. You could also offer your own interpretation for assistance or alternative options.
>   Personal reaction: Personal reactions are another type of content-related feedback. You could answer questions such as: Do you agree or disagree? Can you think of another example? Did this person say something you hadn't previously thought of? Etc.

Figure 3: Peer-feedback types (student handout)

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Lang-8: A process writing approach

Assessment:
Homework is worth 5% of your final grade. Daily homework (for example, textbook assignments, worksheets, etc.) is often integrated into the lesson for the following class. This means if you do not complete your homework before class, your ability to participate will be limited. Therefore, your daily homework and subsequent classroom participation will be combined make up 2.5% of your final grade. The other 2.5% will be determined by your participation outside of class on Lang-8.

Activity	Percentage of grade
Journal entries, responses, and peer-review: Chapter 1	20%
Journal entries, responses, and peer-review: Chapter 2	20%
Journal entries, responses, and peer-review: Chapter 3	20%
Journal entries, responses, and peer-review: Chapter 4	20%
Portfolio	20%
Subtotal	100%

You will be assessed at the end of each chapter according to the following rubric:

	Excellent	Average	N/A
Weekly journal entries			
Posted on time	2	1	0
Met minimum word requirement	2	1	0
Content relevant to assignment	5	3	0
Weekly responses to group members			
Posted on time	2	1	0
Met minimum word requirement	2	1	0
Content relevant to journal entry	5	3	0
Peer-review			
Completed the end of chapter survey	2	1	0
Subtotal:	20 points per chapter		

</div>

Figure 4: Grading rubric for entries on Lang-8 (student handout)

The pedagogical purpose of the Lang-8 assignment was multifaceted. However, first and foremost it gave the students a place to practice writing and

reading in Spanish about the topics covered in the course on a weekly basis. Student participants were introduced to the concept of process writing approaches and to Lang-8 through an instructor-led presentation and subsequent small group and whole class discussion during the first week of the course using a handout (see Figure 5). Student participants were organized according to their first chapter groups and asked to describe their personal approaches to writing in Spanish in these small groups before sharing in a whole class discussion any concerns or questions about using the process writing approach.

Lang-8: A process writing approach

<u>Process writing</u>:
A process writing approach recognizes the importance of both the process and products of writing in a second language. The idea is that in writing down our ideas, we are able to understand them more clearly. For our purposes, we want to look at consistent errors, problems that keep appearing in writing processes and products. Feedback you get from your group members and/or from Lang-8 users will help clue you in to these problems.

Consistent errors	Sample issues	
Process	Do you take time to plan before and while composing?	
	Do you give adequate consideration to your audience, text coherence, and vocabulary selection?	
	Do you re-read, evaluate, and then revise what you have written before submitting?	
Product	Grammar	Do you tend to overlook subject/verb or number/gender agreement or issues of tense/mood?
	Vocabulary	Do you use language that is too formal or informal for the context?
	Coherence & organization	Do you misuse or underuse connectors to affect text organization?

Figure 5: Process writing approaches (student handout)

Surveys

In addition to student participants' entries and peer-responses on Lang-8, six surveys were administered to the student participants online via Qualtrics over the course of the academic semester. I implemented a loosely related pilot testing of the present study with my lower-division Spanish students' three times prior to the fall 2014 long semester: spring and fall of 2013 and spring of 2014. Surveys conducted during the piloting phase of the study were administered via Google Forms, and the questions for those surveys were generated without outside help. Conversely, questions for the present study were composed with the assistance of my dissertation committee and reflect more closely my research questions.

Student participants completed a three-page background survey during the first two weeks of the course (see Appendix C for a list of survey questions). A second, one-page survey was administered at the end of each of four chapters to gather data regarding their perceptions and use of written feedback in the Lang-8 activities assigned for that chapter (see Appendix D for a list of survey questions). The four chapter surveys were administered during weeks 5-6, 8-9, 12-13, and 14-15. A two-page, end of semester survey was also given to students during the final two weeks of classes (weeks 14-15) to gather data regarding student participants' overall reactions to and use of written feedback from both classmates and Lang-8 users over the course of the long semester (see Appendix E for a list of survey questions).

Chapter final tasks

Each of the textbook chapters included a final chapter task to be completed in class, which marked the end of each chapter in the textbook. Descriptions (see Table 2 for an abridged English translation and Appendix F for the original Spanish prompts in full) of these tasks as provided in the   textbook   were   given   to   student

participants as writing prompts for the final Lang-8 activity of each chapter to provide an opportunity for students to compose their first drafts.

Table 2: Abridged English translation of prompts for chapter final tasks

Chapter in textbook	Genre	Prompt given to Student
1	An email	You are going to write an email to a student from Spain that is coming to UT next semester to study computer science.
2	A debate	In groups, you are going to talk about the various controversial social topics below: 1. Industrialized countries are superior to developing nations. 2. It should be illegal to smoke and drink alcohol in this country. 3. Our government should allow all immigrants to come to the US without restrictions.
3	An argumentative essay	You are going to write a 5-paragraph argumentative essay about one of the themes below: 1. Looking for new sources of energy: necessary or not? 2. Investing in space exploration: justified or not? 3. Genetic engineering: ethical or not?
4	An interview	You are going to role-play an interview with a Hispanic person from the world of art or culture.

DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question 1

To facilitate data reporting and maintain anonymity, student participants were listed in alphabetical order of their last names and assigned a student

participant (S) number in lieu of using 18 distinct pseudonyms. For instance, student participant 1 will henceforth be referred to as S1.

In order to answer the first research question (Who responds to assigned student writings on Lang-8?), I first analyzed the total number of feedback providers to student participants' Spanish compositions uploaded to Lang-8 over the course of the semester. Next, I separated the feedback providers into two distinct provider groups: student participant feedback providers and website feedback providers. Finally, I analyzed the user profiles of the website feedback providers for information related to their native language and target language as recorded in their Lang-8 website profiles.

Seven of the 18 student participants composed introductory entries that were not assigned in the Lang-8 calendar. However, taking into consideration that only two of these entries were written in Spanish, the surveys specifically dealt with the assigned postings, and the research questions specified that only assigned writings were to be examined, these entries were not included in data analysis.

Moreover, I initially offered instructor responses to student participants' first entries welcoming them to the course, but I quickly realized that this violated my lurker status as described in Figure 2, as well as modeled a specific type of feedback (i.e., comments rather than corrections) to the student participants. Therefore, I stopped posting instructor responses after nine messages, and these responses were also excluded from data analysis. This is a limitation to the current study.

During the data collection period, in order to determine student participants' grades for entries one through five, I checked student participants' Lang-8 activity by navigating to each student participant's profile page at the end of the week after peer-responses were due and taking note of which student participants had responded to

the prompts and to their group members. However, I did not take screenshots during the data collection phase until after the due date for the fifth entry, when one of the student participants reported that his posting had suddenly disappeared from Lang-8. After confirming with his group members that he had, in fact, posted a response to the prompt and that they had been able to respond to his posting, I advised all of the student participants to start taking screenshots of their posted entries in case this were to occur again, and I began taking screenshots of each student participant's entry and all feedback received from peers and users alike when grading the posts. When I began my analysis, I noticed that in some cases additional responses were made to student participants' entries six through ten after I had taken screenshots when gathering data. Therefore, when I began the analysis of these later entries, I revisited all student participants' responses to prompts six through ten to verify that all instances of feedback had been recorded and to include those that were posted after the due date and thus did not appear in the screenshots collected at that time.

In the data analysis phase, instead of using screenshots for the first five entries, I initially attempted to record responses to student participants' postings by purchasing a premium membership, as this upgraded membership afforded me the opportunity to download PDFs, skipping the tedious process of taking screenshots. However, I realized after downloading the first set of student participants' entries that although the PDFs did include feedback provided using the option to post corrections (annotated with an oval in Figure 6) on the site, the PDFs did not include feedback provided using the option to post comments (annotated with a rectangle in Figure 6). Taking into consideration that student participants were given the option of using both comments and corrections and that website user feedback providers

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used this option to explain corrective feedback and offer further commentary, I decided to return to the initial approach and continue taking screenshots.
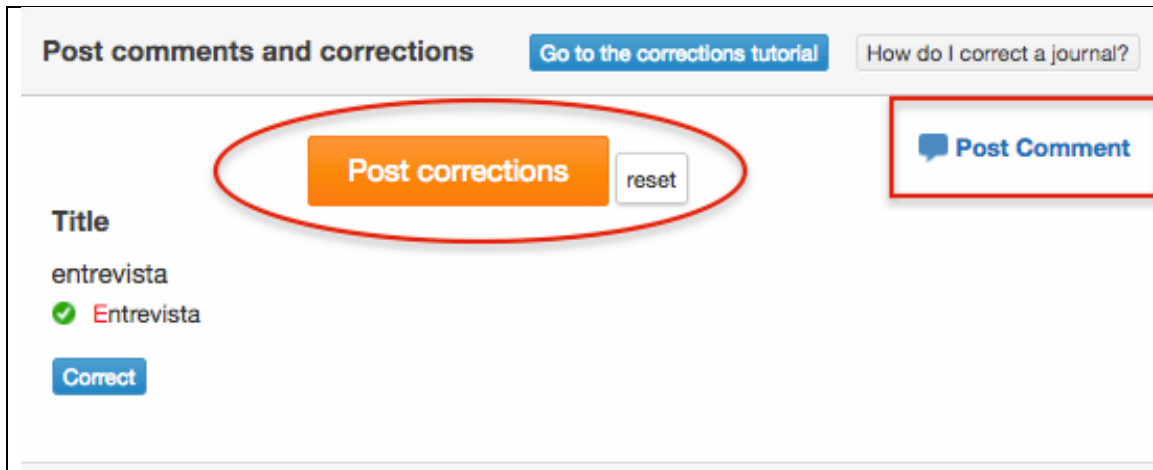
Figure 6: Lang-8 Response Options: Post corrections and post comments

I began the analysis by creating a folder for each student participant, taking screenshots of each of their responses to the weekly prompts, and saving these screenshots in subfolders organized by entry number (one through ten). The screenshots were then copied and pasted into a new excel file for each individual student participant with tabs labeled Entry 1 (E1) through Entry 10 (E10). After copying and pasting the screenshots into the appropriate tab, I worked on each student participant's entries one at a time, counting the number of classroom peers and unknown site users who responded to each entry, thus finding the total number of responses per student participant per entry and separating this number into the two aforementioned subgroups: classroom peers and unknown Lang-8 site users. This number was then confirmed with a secondary count of responses on the site page to rule out poorly taken screenshots. In multiple cases, the same student participant or website user feedback provider posted more than one response to an

entry. When this happened, they were considered a single feedback provider, as the first research question was concerned with who responded to each entry, not how much feedback each website user provided. When a student participant failed to post an entry for a given week, the number of feedback providers was left blank in order to not reduce the average and minimum number of feedback providers for that entry. When a student participant restricted the privacy or access settings of their post to *Share with My Friends* only, the number of website feedback providers was left blank for the same reason. The latter occurred three times: S15 selected this privacy setting for the first and third journal entries, as did S13 for the sixth entry. Therefore, these corresponding cells were left blank. Lastly, when a post received zero responses from student participant feedback providers, the number 0 was entered in the corresponding cell and included in the average final count of feedback providers per entry for that week. This step was not necessary for the website user feedback providers, as all entries posted for feedback to all Lang-8 users received at least one instance of feedback from this provider group.

This number of peer and website user feedback providers for each student participant was compiled in a new excel file entitled *RQ1* (research question 1) Data Summary under a tab marked Numbers. After tallying the number of feedback providers to all ten entries, I recorded the number of total student participant feedback providers, total website feedback providers, total number of entries per user to determine the average number of feedback providers (peer, user, and total) per entry. I compared this information with that in the Users and Classmates tab to confirm that all of the feedback providers were accounted for. For instance, I would search the Users and Classmates tabs for instances of "to Student1 E1" and compare the number of instances found to the number of responses recorded under each

column. Finally, I recorded the number of student participant feedback providers, website feedback providers, and total feedback providers for each student participant's entry uploaded to Lang-8, and summarized the average, median, maximum, minimum and mode student participant and website feedback providers overall and per entry.

I also navigated to each website participant's user's profile page and took note of their language preferences as selected on the site. For example, if a user self-identified as a native speaker of Spanish who wanted to learn English, their profile would note that they were correcting in Spanish and writing in English. This information for each website participant was added to the excel file *RQ1* data summary under a new tab marked Users to provide more information about the individuals responding to student participants' entries. In addition to language preferences, I recorded the student participant's name and entry number to which the site user had responded (e.g., to Student1 E1). To ensure accurate counts of website feedback providers' native and target languages, rather than counting the languages by hand I copied and pasted each column (native language, target language 1, target language 2, and target language 3, and target languages 4-7) into a Word document and used the Find and Replace function, checking the total number of languages again for the total number of website feedback providers.

I repeated this process for peer-responses, recording which classmate had responded to their group members for each entry under a tab marked Classmates. This afforded me a record against which to check survey responses to questions about student participants' perceptions and use of peer feedback.

Research Question 2

In order to answer the second research question (How much feedback do students receive?), I first copied and pasted the screenshots of responses from student and user participants (beginning with S1) for each entry (beginning with E1) into Google Sheets. Using Google Sheets ensured that my data were regularly saved to the cloud and accessible from anywhere with an Internet connection. I also added the extension OneTab to Google Chrome, which is a software program used to customize browsing on the Google Chrome web browser. OneTab saves random-access memory (RAM) by converting open tabs into a hyperlinked list that can then be locked and restored individually or as a group. In addition to speeding up my computer by saving RAM, the extension afforded me more efficiency when returning to participants' journal entries to confirm typographical details obscured by poorly taken screenshots. (Prior to using OneTab, I was repeatedly having to navigate to my Lang-8 profile page, click on *My Friends*, search for participants' usernames, click on the link to the corresponding profile, and then select the *Journal* tab to access the full list of written entries.)

I separated the responses according to participant group and entry number, with user and peer responses to each in separate sheets, for a total of 20 sheets. Responses were also divided by tabs within each sheet and organized in alphabetical order according to the participant who gave them. To receive responses, writings on Lang-8 are divided into lines of text by end marks (periods, exclamation marks, and question marks). Therefore, I treated each line of peer and user response as a separate row for analysis in Google Sheets. Lang-8 allows site users to respond with corrections and/or comments to as many or as few individual lines of text as the responder prefers and to offer a final response at the end (see Figure 7). These final

responses were not counted as an additional line of feedback, but rather grouped into a separate column from in-text comments for analysis.

I am studying biochemistry and I would love to really learn Spanish.
Your Spanish seems really good, keep writing!
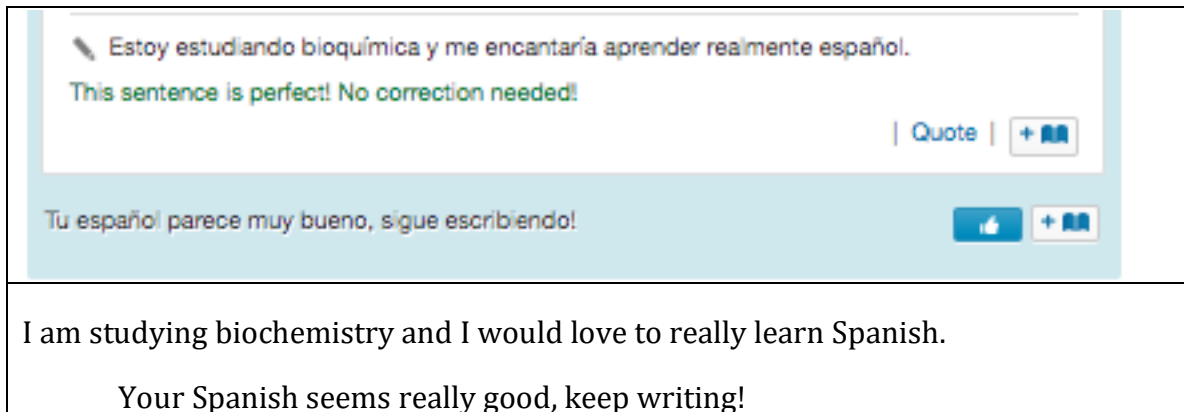
Figure 7: Example of responses to individual lines of text and final response

At the beginning of analysis, I labeled the columns as follows: number of lines with feedback, responder username, response to whom (S1 to S18), entry number (E1 to E10), and response. The screenshots were pasted below response. I reviewed the responses offered by user and peer participants, counting response tokens for each line and entered that number in a sixth column marked *total responses*. Error corrections were also organized in separate columns to indicate whether or not the responder used the Lang-8 highlighting tools to draw the recipient's attention to the change(s) made. I then combined the totals of these two columns and compared it to the sixth column (total responses) to ensure that I had accounted for all corrections. Comments were coded for content (e.g., praise, reader response, grammar explanation) and tallied according to the number of functions served by the comment rather than by token count or length (Budianto et al., 2017).

The next column was for lines that were marked as perfect, followed by a column to indicate whether or not I agreed with the assessment of the responder. This column was not used to count the number of errors ignored in any particular line, but rather meant to keep track of the number of lines incorrectly marked as perfect. Any error I observed in the line from the original post could trigger this classification, from simple punctuation errors (e.g., a missing inverted exclamation mark, see Figure 8), to gender agreement errors (e.g., the noun "empleado" [male employee] without feminine gender inflection change to "empleada" [female employee] used to describe a student who identified as female, see Figure 9), and errors of lexical choice (e.g., the use of the verb "ser" [to be] with "años" [years] instead of "tener" [to have] to talk about age, see Figure 10).
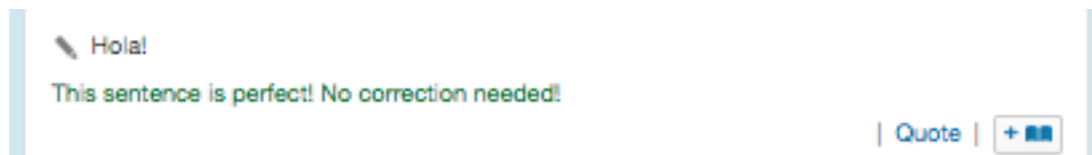
Figure 8: Example of a line with a punctuation error marked as perfect by a user participant
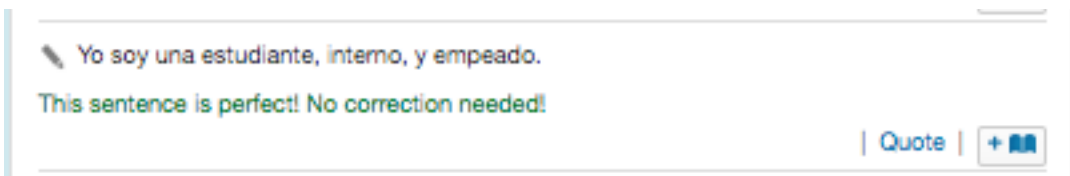
Figure 9: Example of a line with errors of gender agreement, article usage, lexical choice, and punctuation marked as perfect by a student participant
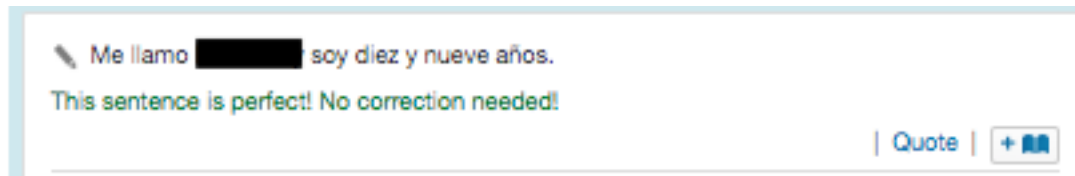
Figure 10: Example of a line with lexical choice errors marked as perfect by a student participant

When counting responses to spelling errors, multiple errors in a single word were considered a single error (e.g., "ventetres*" instead of "veintitrés" [twenty-three], see Figure 11) in lieu of counting each letter that was missing or incorrectly included. However, a single word with both a spelling and gender agreement error that were corrected on Lang-8 was counted as having two separate errors. For instance, had the user in Figure 9 changed "empeado*" to "empleada," the correction would be considered a spelling error due to the missing L and a gender error due to lack of gender inflection.
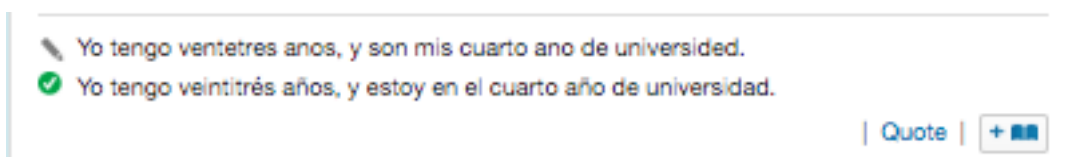
Figure 11: Example of a line with a single word containing more than one spelling error

The in-text commenting function was often used to explain changes made (see Figure 12), to agree explicitly with previous corrections (see Figure 13), or to comment on the content of a particular line. Upon analyzing the first entry for S4, I came across the first instance of a line containing an error that was corrected only using the comments function (see Figure 14) rather than the text editing options on

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Lang-8 or a combination of the two. While analyzing the first entry for S13, I discovered the first instance of a line that was neither marked as perfect nor received a comment (see Figure 15). To account for these types of responses, or lack thereof, I created two additional columns: no change with comment and no change at all. Finally, I created columns to record the number of users who used the *like* tool to indicate agreement with a given response and the instances of gratitude offered by the original poster using the thank you star tool on Lang-8.
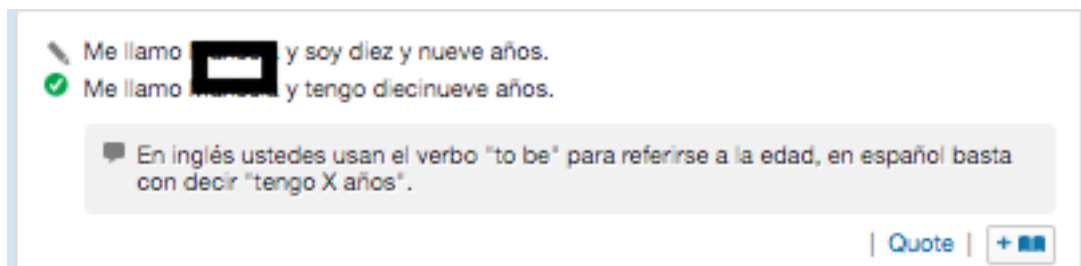
Figure 12: Example of a line with both corrective feedback and the related explanatory comment
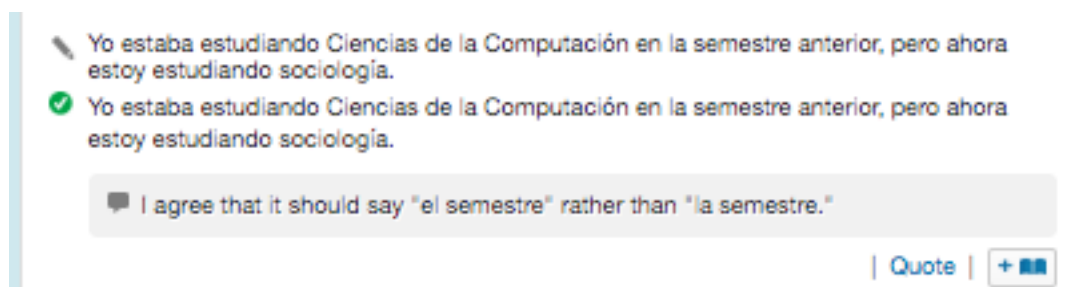
Figure 13: Example of a comment expressing agreement with previous corrections
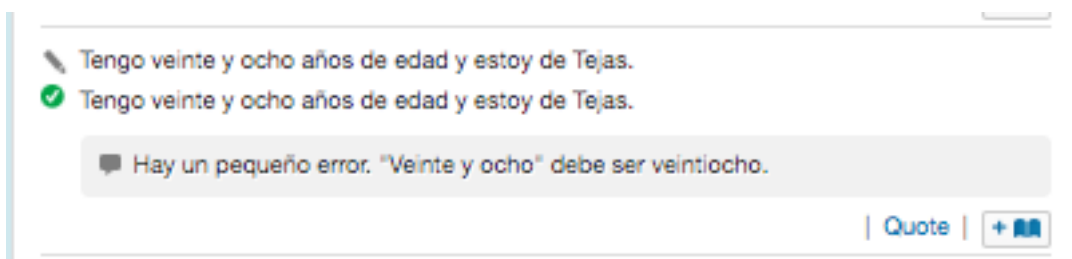
Figure 14: Example of a line containing an error corrected in the comments
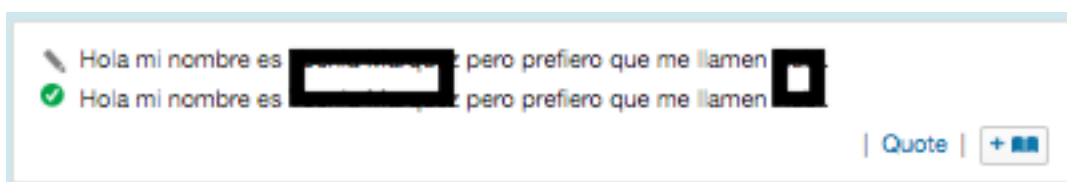
Figure 15: Example of a line containing no change nor comment

Repeated reactions displayed due to website error were not included for analysis (See Figure 16). I also found cases of repeated reactions due to student participant misunderstanding of the assignment. For instance, in the first entry, S8 posted reactions to writings done by S4 first in English, and then returned to repeat her reactions in Spanish, presumably after rereading the assignment details or noticing that her group members had responded in Spanish (see Figure 17). According to the timestamp on Lang-8, just over seven hours had passed between her first and second set of responses, with the first reactions posted September 8 at 14:35 and the second on the same day at 21:44. In this instance, only the second set of responses was included in analysis, as the assignment specified that they should be responding in Spanish. However, when a peer or user participant responded in English and did not return to the website to repost responses in Spanish, the English responses were included in analysis.
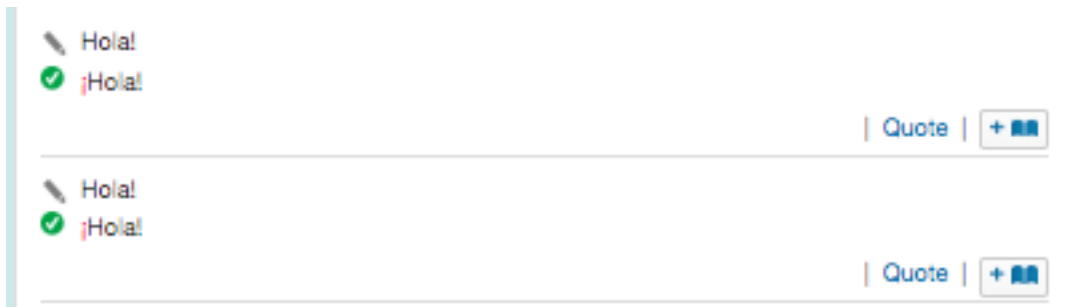
Figure 16: Example of a repeated reaction due to website error
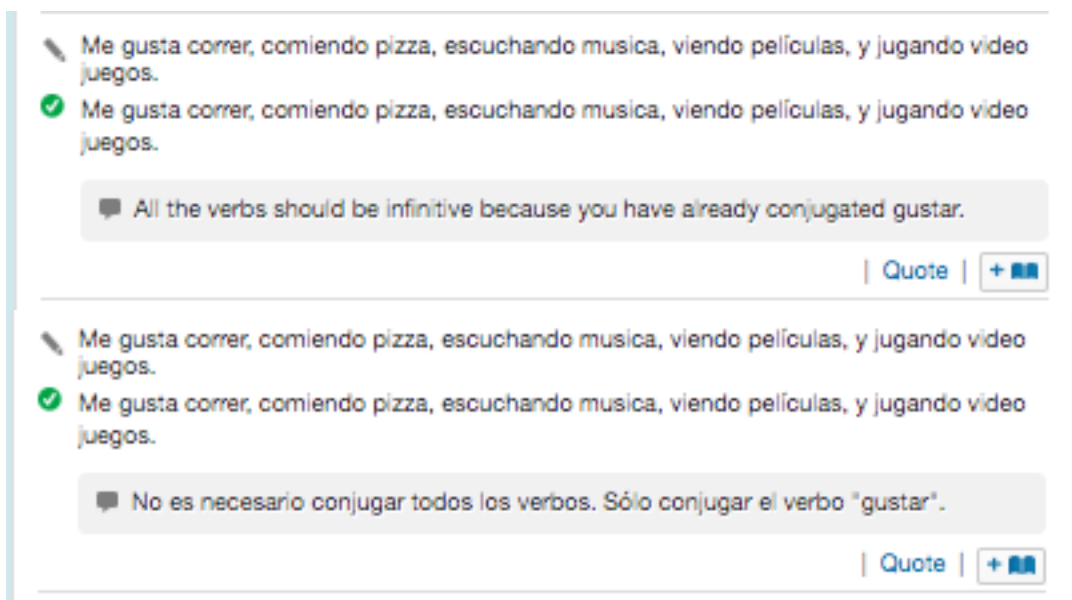
Figure 17: Example of a repeated reactions due to student participant misunderstanding

After responses were counted for each student writing entry, I summed the columns to get the total responses per entry for both peer and user participants and recorded them in a separate Google sheet (*Total Responses*), using the copy and paste special function to paste the values only, rather than pasting the formatting or

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calculations from the prior sheet. Peer participant responses were recorded on a separate tab than user participant responses, and both tabs were summed to find the total number of responses from both participant groups.

Research Question 3

Analyses for the second and third research questions (What kinds of feedback do they get?) were done simultaneously. Consequently, I used the same system in Google Sheets described above to count the response tokens and to code each response according to type. I added a second column after the token count column of both corrections and comments to include the specific response instance and corresponding code (e.g., PRAISE [good job]). This afforded me the opportunity to use the sum function in Google sheets to count the number of responses and also to return at a later time to double-check the accuracy of my classification.

In the student handout Peer Feedback Types (see Figure 3 under Data Collection Tools), I had described three types of responses: accuracy, negotiation of meaning, and personal reaction. Responses related to accuracy were described to student participants as corrective feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and appropriateness. Responses related to negotiation of meaning were described as content-related feedback dealing with a lack of clarity in the original post. Student participants were asked to indicate incomprehension if they judged the message to be unclear and they were encouraged to offer their own interpretation of the post as an alternative. Personal reactions were characterized as a second type of content-related feedback. Students were asked to explain if they agreed or disagreed with opinions expressed in their peers' written production, if they could offer another

example to support the arguments presented, or to let the writer know that reading the post offered them a new perspective on the topic.

During the initial phase of analysis for the third research question (What kinds of feedback do learners get on Lang-8?), I began with these broad categories, differentiating not only between corrections and comments, but also within these two groups. Corrections were classified according to the error they addressed: vocabulary, grammar, or appropriateness. Comments were classified according to their function: negotiation of meaning and personal reaction. After beginning analysis, I attempted to tease apart these classifications according to types.

However, the distinction between grammar and vocabulary reactions proved to be problematic. For example, I struggled to decide if changes related to the use of prepositions should be categorically classified as grammar, or if each response needed to be analyzed for grammatical versus lexical content, as some responses related to the addition, substitution, or removal of prepositions obviously served grammatical functions, whereas others seemingly addressed lexical changes. Therefore, I approached a Spanish-speaking member of my dissertation committee for advice on the topic while analyzing the fourth entries on Lang-8. He shared his opinion that a more interesting manner of analysis would be to examine the intended functions of the corrective responses themselves, rather than to classify them as vocabulary or grammar. For instance, rather than classifying the addition of adverbs (e.g., adding "mucho" [much] after the verb "caminar" [to walk]) and adverbial phrases (e.g., adding "bajo el sol" [in the sun]) as changes related to vocabulary, my committee member suggested that a more illuminating form of analysis would be to consider them added details to give the message more precision (see Figure 18).

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> One thing that I did not like at first was that the university is very big and you have to walk everywhere in the heat.
>
> One thing that I did not like at first was that the university is very big and you have to walk a lot everywhere in the heat. (under the sun)
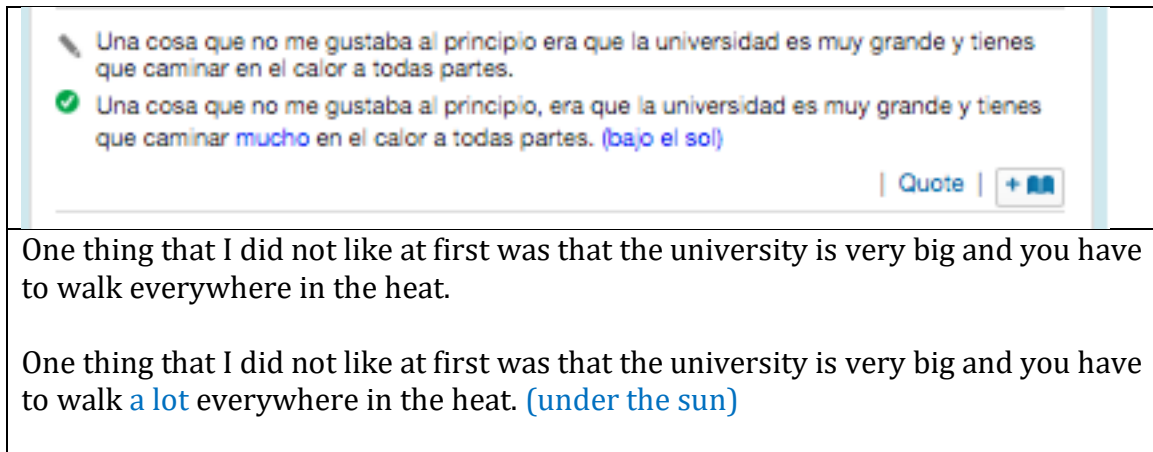
Figure 18: Example of details added by a website user participant in E3

Consequently, I returned to the literature on corrective written feedback in order to come up with a new coding scheme. I decided that the direct/indirect distinction of teacher-provided written corrective feedback outlined by Ellis (2009), wherein direct feedback includes the provision of the corrected form and indirect feedback merely indicates the location of an error, was not appropriate for the context of my study, as the website explicitly asks users to provide direct feedback. Nor was Ellis' (2009) distinction between focused/selective and unfocused/comprehensive useful for my context, as it differentiates between feedback on one or a limited number of preselected error types versus feedback on multiple structures in a text, but neither the website nor the student participants indicated a preference for any particular type of error(s) to be addressed. Therefore, I chose to focus on Ellis' (2009) third classification type of written corrective feedback: global versus local aspects of the text, where local aspects included vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, and global aspects referred to changes that affect ideas, content, and organization.

Following the criteria set forth by Montgomery and Baker (2007), local/form-focused feedback can be separated into three categories: vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. These researchers defined vocabulary feedback as responses related to the variety and register of words in ESL student writings. Grammar feedback responds to complexity and accuracy of written production, and mechanics includes responses dealing with spelling, punctuation, and formatting. However, this distribution of response types did not solve my problem of deciding which language aspects dealt specifically with grammar versus those that dealt with vocabulary. Therefore, I used the three categories employed by Delante (2017), which combined grammar and vocabulary into one aspect, thus nullifying the issue. The second aspect of Delante's (2017) local feedback is syntax, which was limited to word order in the present study. The third and final aspect of local feedback relates to mechanics: capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and in the case of Spanish, accent marks. In my earlier conceptualization of feedback types, both syntax and mechanics were subsumed by grammar, with the latter considered responses to orthographic errors.

I adapted the scheme used by Delante's (2017) study of instructor-provided online written feedback to come up with a new set of final categories, distinguishing between responses to local issues with a focus on form/language and global issues with a focus on meaning. I made no changes to Delante's form-focused categories (see Table 3). However, I let the meaning-focused categories emerge from my qualitative analysis of participant responses. For example, I separated Delante's category *clarity of expression/intended meaning* into two separate categories to account for additions and changes related to *precision/detail* (see Figure 18) and in-text changes or comments signaling *reader incomprehension* (see Figures 19 and 20, respectively).

Items coded for negotiation of meaning during the initial phase of investigation fit into the latter category.

Table 3: Broad categories included in Delante's (2017) scheme

Form-focused: Responses to local issues	Meaning-focused: Responses to global issues
Grammar and Vocabulary	Structure of the written draft
Mechanics	Logical organization of ideas
Syntax	Analysis
	Conciseness, cohesion, and brevity
	Impact, authority, and voice
	Self-learning and/or self-regulation
	Clarity of expression or intended meaning
	Tone
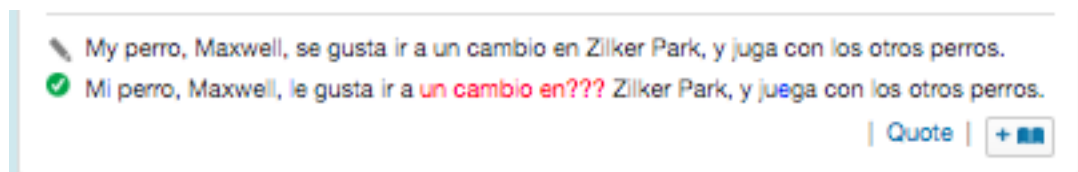
Figure 19: Example of an in-text change indicating reader incomprehension
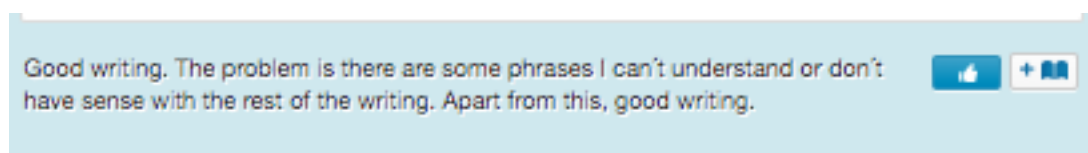
Figure 20: Example of a hedged comment indicating reader incomprehension

Entirely new categories also emerged from my analysis. Delante's (2017) participants were learning English as a second language in Singapore, and therefore did not have to contend with the distinction of the informal (second person singular

informal, "tú") and formal (second person singular formal, "usted") you, which is present in Spanish. I coded responses that altered the formality of the original post in this manner as global issues corresponding to *audience consideration* (see Figure 21). The responses that had been categorized under appropriateness in the original coding scheme were recategorized under audience consideration. When a response altered the original post to indicate possibility or likelihood, rather than certainty, of future events, or when responders made comments addressing the speculative nature of the content of the original post, I considered this a global change and grouped these responses under the category *likelihood* (see Figure 22).

It is important that you [formal] know UT is a large university, and that there are many students.

It is important that you you [informal] know that the UT is a large university due to its students.
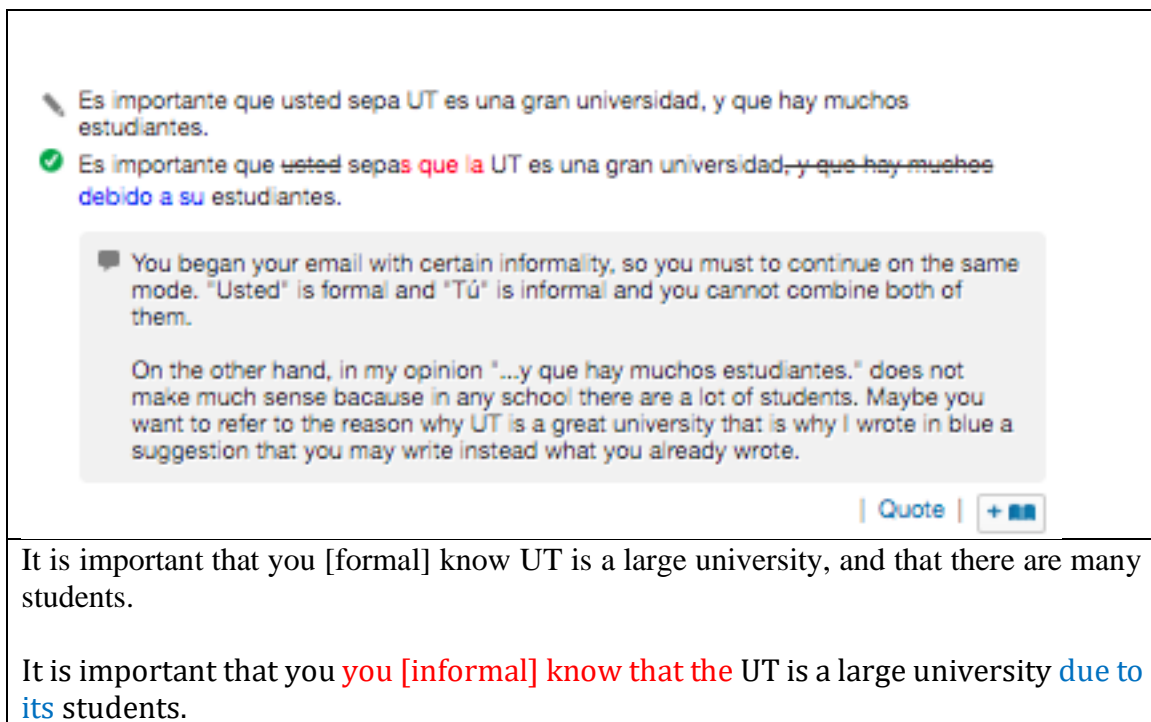
Figure 21: Example of a comment indicating inconsistency of intended audience

> Many people have become ill, and the lack of restrictions has allowed many natives to be exposed to the disease.
>
> With the lack of restrictions many people can get sick, and with this lack of restrictions many natives may be exposed to the illness.
>
> - 50 people have been exposed but show no symptoms of ebola [*sic*], [*sic*] its [*sic*] speculation at the moment.

Figure 22: Example of an in-text change affecting the likelihood of the original post and a comment explaining said change to the text

Delante's (2017) positioning as the instructor gave the researcher more authority than the responders in the current study. Furthermore, social aspects inherent in websites utilizing social media tools to offer responses to target language production added another layer of consideration for positive and negative face (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987) that was absent in Delante's (2017) study. Consequently, I coded responses that served this purpose (e.g., establishing common ground with the writer of the original post, encouraging the writer to keep writing, using hedges to explain responses offered, making jokes, etc.) as *facework* (see Figure 23), which was then subcategorized as either positive or negative. An additional social aspect of the responses to writings emerged from my analysis that was absent in Delante's study: *praise*. Student and website user respondents alike employed phrases praising both the content (see Figure 24) and the style (see Figure 25) of participants' Spanish

writings on Lang-8. These responses were later combined with responder indications of (dis)agreement, personal anecdotes related to the topic of the journal entry, and emotional reactions (see Figure 26) to form the category of *reader reactions*, which subsumed the category of personal reactions from the first phase of my analysis.

It is my third year and my major is Economics and Computer Sciences.

It is my third year and my majors are Economics and Computer Sciences
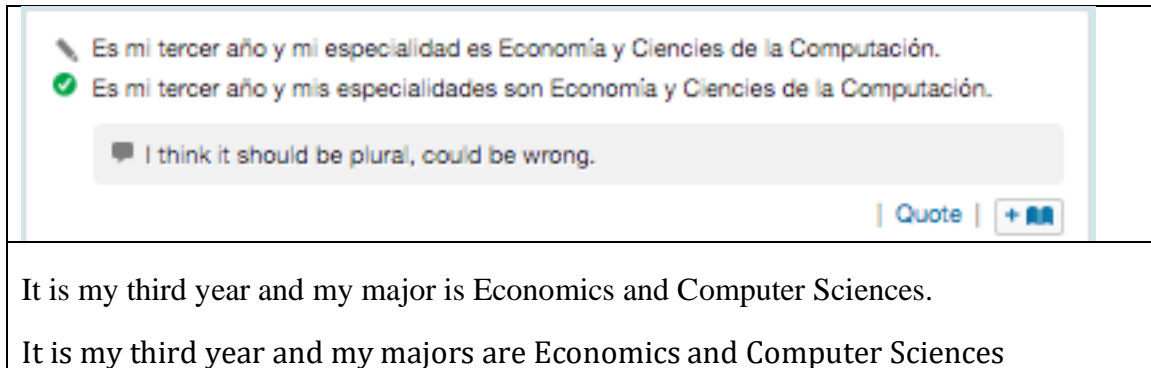
Figure 23: Example of a hedged comment offered by a peer responder

Before, I was born in Alabama and I lived in Texas briefly because my father was in the army.

Before, I was born in Alabama and I lived in Texas briefly because my father was in the army.

How interesting! In which state do you prefer living?
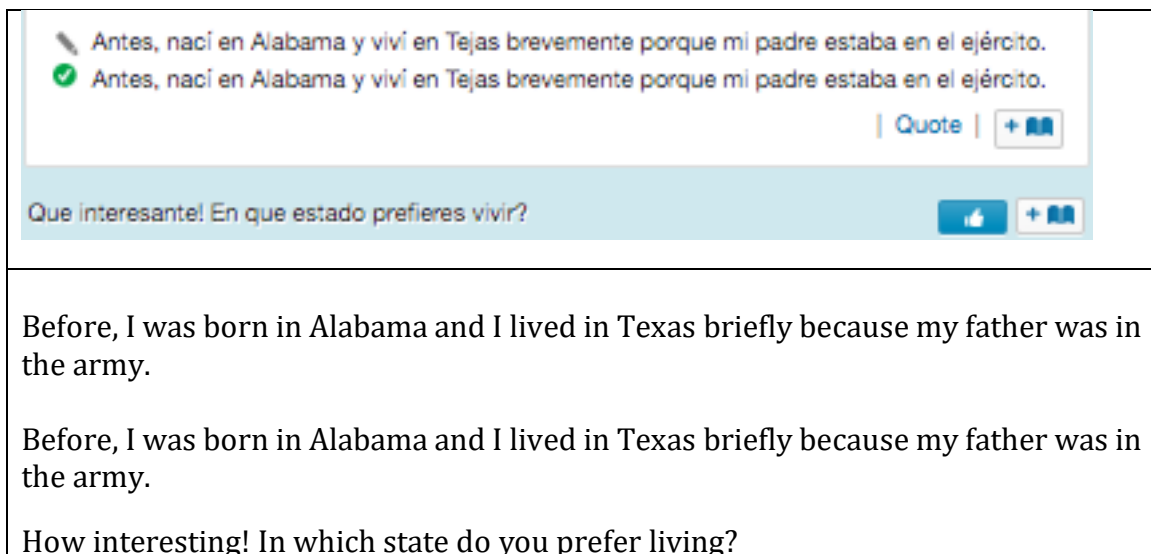
Figure 24: Example of comment offered by a peer responder that praised the content of student writing on Lang-8

I am a student at the University of Texas studying corporate communications. This sentence is perfect! No correction needed!
I am eighteen years old and I am from Jalisco, Mexico. This sentence is perfect! No correction needed!
good work
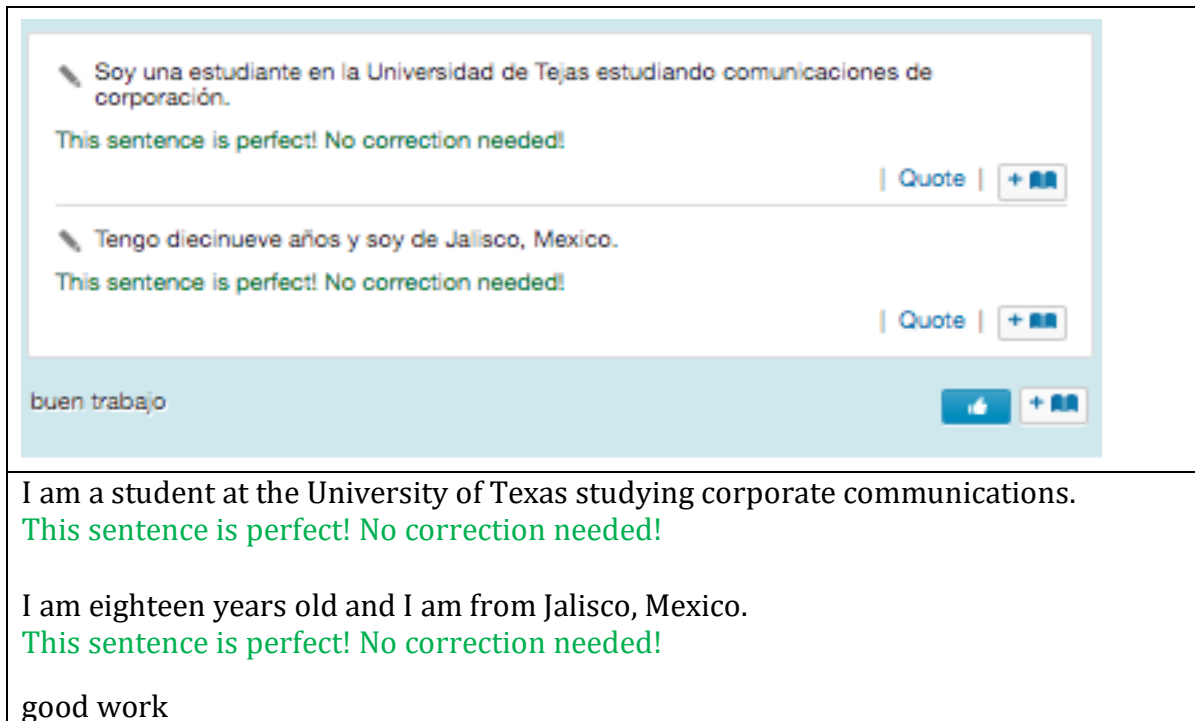
Figure 25: Example of comment offered by a peer responder that praised the writing style of student writing on Lang-8

Good writing, sad story.

Figure 26: Example of comment offered by a website user that praised the style of and offered an emotional reaction to the content of student writing on Lang-8

The final global category derived from my analysis was for comments related to repetitive language in the original posts (see Figure 27). I categorized these instances as *repetition*. The broad categories of the final coding scheme are presented in Table 4. The full description of all categories and their corresponding codes can be found in Appendix G.

I am from Devine, Texas but I live in Austin, Texas.

I am from Devine (Texas), but I live in Austin also in Texas.

-   to make it not so repetitive

Figure 27: Example of comment offered by a website user related to repetitive language

Table 4: Broad categories included in final coding scheme for the third research question

Form-focused: Responses to local issues	Meaning-focused: Responses to global issues
Grammar and Vocabulary	Audience consideration
Mechanics	Facework
Syntax	Likelihood
	Precision/Detail
	Reader Incomprehension
	Reader Reaction
	Repetition

Many of the codes and categories from the initial phase of response type analysis (i.e., grammar or vocabulary) clearly fit into the above categories. Responses that had been identified as related to grammar were classified under the corresponding subcategory within grammar and vocabulary (e.g., agreement, article usage, conjunctions, prepositions). The responses that I had previously labelled as vocabulary that dealt with these specific parts of speech were also easily rearranged into the new coding scheme. However, lexical changes that were initially placed under

the broad category of vocabulary needed to be reexamined with the current coding scheme in mind. This amounted to roughly one fifth of the 2,426 codes I had completed before reconceptualizing the types of responses as global or local.

Determining the distinction between local/form-focused and global/meaning-focused aspects of the text proved to be simpler than the previous distinction (i.e., grammar versus vocabulary) had been. For example, error-triggered responses were categorized as local except in the case of misuse of the formal and informal forms of address, as these were coded for audience consideration. However, in certain cases I continued to struggle to define changes made as local or global, especially when I began using the new coding scheme. In these cases, I consulted two Spanish-speaking faculty members of my dissertation committee for outside perspectives. For instance, in Figure 28 a user responder made two changes: a lexical substitution and a prepositional addition. The latter was categorized as form-focused, but the former required further consideration.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the research on lexical substitutions in terms of global and local responses is contradictory. Some researchers (e.g., Min, 2005) claim that word usage is always local, as global changes are those that affect more than one sentence in a text. However, others (e.g., Stevenson et al., 2006) say that content revisions "result in a change in the informational content." Stevenson et al. (2006) offer as an example the case of changing "She has two cats" to "She has three cats" (p. 205), asserting that this change is meaning-focused because it changes the mental representation of the sentence, albeit only slightly.

With this in mind, I reached out to a member of my committee who is a native speaker of Spanish to ask for her opinion on the example in Figure 28. Her response was that I should focus my attention on the context to discover if the suggested

substitution was based on correcting the writer's lexical error, or if it could be attributed to "different mental representations for the word 'sueldo' in the writer's and feedback provider's mind, but not necessarily marked by the context" (V. Sardegna, personal communication, September 30, 2019). She advised that in her opinion it was meaning-focused, as the website user was paying attention to the meaning of the word "sueldo," which in his mind did not correspond to what he interpreted as the writer's desired mental representation when composing the line in Spanish. According to the Diccionario de la lengua Española de la Real Academia Española [The Royal Spanish Academy's Dictionary of the Spanish language], "sueldo" means "Remuneración regular asignada por el desempeño de un cargo o servicio profesional" [regular compensation assigned for the performance of a professional position or service] (Sueldo, n.d.), whereas "salario mínimo" [minimum wage] is a collocation defined as "salario que establece la ley como retribución mínima para cualquier trabajador" [salary established by law as minimum compensation for any worker] (Salario, n.d.)

Now, the minimum salary in Texas is $7.25 per hour.

Now, the minimum wage in Texas is [missing preposition] $7.25 per hour.
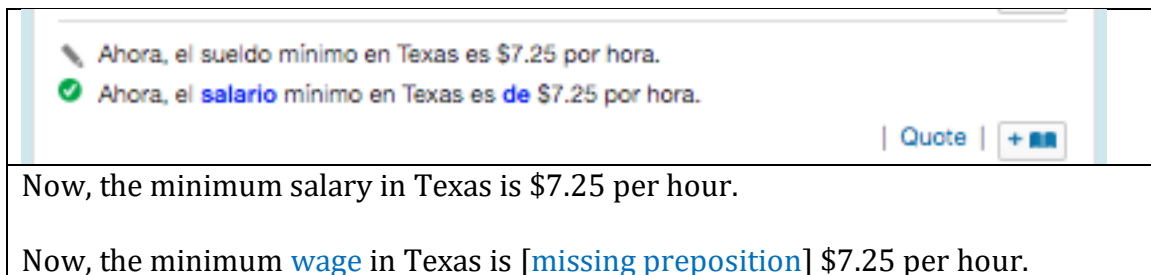
Figure 28: Example of an in-text lexical substitution offered by a website user that was coded for global change

This decision to classify a lexical substitution as global rather than local coincided with my understanding of the concept of local versus global changes: lexical

substitutions due to preference are local/form-focused, but those due to differing mental representations of the meaning of a phrase or sentence are global/meaning-focused. In Figure 29, the lexical substitution of "sólo" for "solamente" was coded as local because these two words are synonyms, as the latter is included in the definition of the former (Sólo, n.d.). Therefore, I assumed that the user providing the response made the change due to preference rather than a difference in the mental representation of the word itself. This particular instance of feedback was coded for eight changes: five local (gender agreement for "pasada" to "pasado" [past], adding the preposition "de" in "tratar de" [to try to], changing the phrase "la actividad de beber alcohol" [the activity of drinking alcohol] to "su consumo" [its consumption] due to reader preference, changing the word "solamente" [only] to "sólo" [only] due to preference, and changing the word "crimenes" [crimes] to "crimen" [crime] from plural to singular form due to preference) and three global responses (changing the past-tense verb "crearon" [they created] to "provocó" [it provoked] for clarification of detail and adding two phrases for clarification of details: "la venta de alcohol y" [the sale of alcohol and] and "con ello" [with this]).

> ✎ Por ejemplo, en el pasada de los Estados Unidos, el gobierno trató prohibir la actividad de beber alcohol y solamente crearon más crimenes.
>
> ✓ Por ejemplo, en el pasado de los Estados Unidos, el gobierno trató de prohibir la venta de alcohol y su consumo y con ello sólo provocó más crimen.
>
> | Quote | + 📖

For example, in the past of the United States, the government tried to prohibit the activity of drinking alcohol and just created more crimes.

For example, in the past [gender agreement] of the United States, the government tried [missing part of verb phrase] to prohibit the sale of alcohol and its consumption and with this only provoked more crime.

Figure 29: Example of an in-text lexical substitution ("solo" [only]) offered by a website user that was coded for local change

In addition to coding the responses for types (local or global), I coded error-triggered responses in terms of success, i.e., whether the error was corrected, not corrected, or if a new error was introduced by the response (Stevenson et al., 2006). The unsuccessful error-triggered responses were coded in the same manner as successful responses, with errors indicated by the word "Oops" added to the code. For example, when a response successfully corrected an error of subject-verb agreement, it was coded as SVAGREE; when a response unsuccessfully corrected this type of error, it was coded as SVoopsAGREE. Oops codes were tallied with other codes of their type; accordingly, in the example above, both SVAGREE and SVoopsAGREE were considered local responses to agreement, as well as recorded separately to keep an overall count of unsuccessful responses.

Local responses that were error-triggered (e.g., adding missing lexical items or changing or deleting those that were incorrectly used, errors of agreement, improper conjugation of verbs) were easily judged as successful or unsuccessful according to whether an error was corrected, not corrected, or if a new error was

introduced. Global responses that were error triggered were limited to participants'
inconsistent use of formal ("usted") and informal ("tú") references to the intended
reader within a single entry. However, global responses were also judged as incorrect
when suggested additions made to the text in an effort to add detail or due to *reader
incomprehension* altered the meaning of the text. For instance, in Figure 30, the user-
provided response included an extra negation that changed the intended subject from
"people who have healthy lives" to "people who do not have healthy lives."

It is not fair that the peoples have a healthy lives have to pay the taxes for the
peoples with no healthy lives.

It is not fair that the people that do not have a healthy life have to pay the taxes of
people with unhealthy lives.
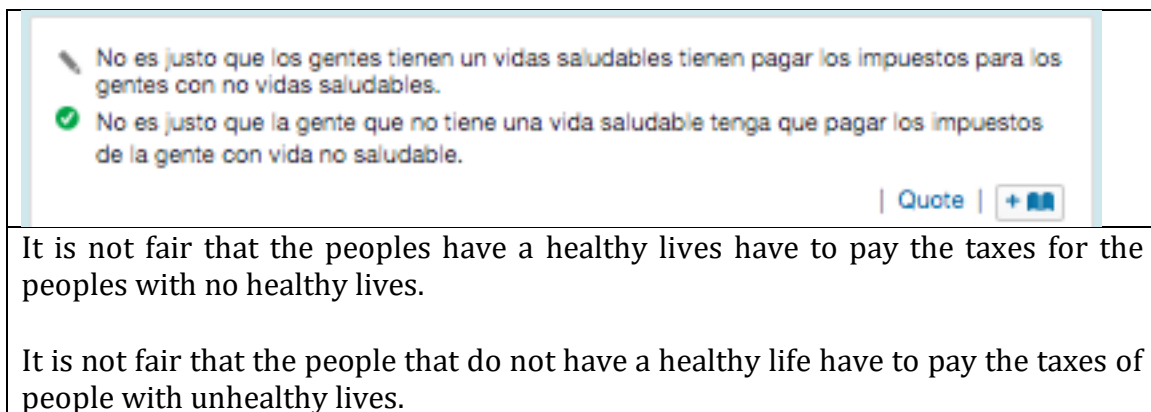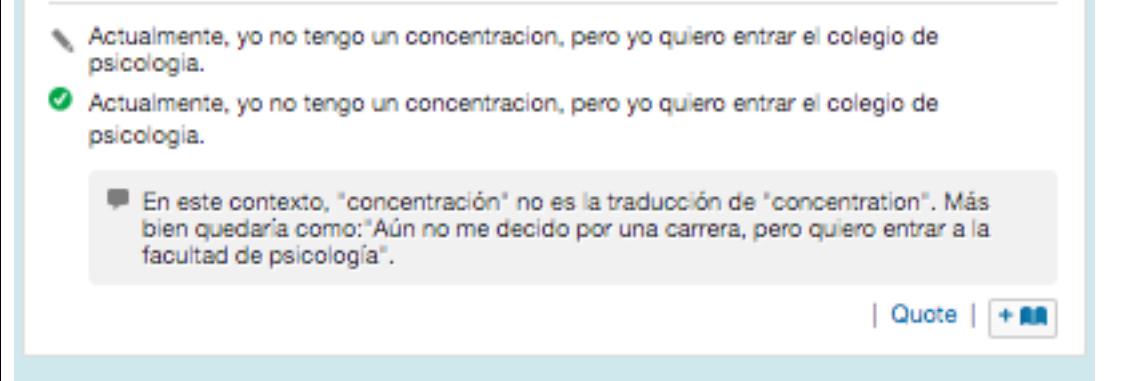
Figure 30: Example of a user-provided in-text revision indicating reader
incomprehension of the line receiving response

Errors of *reader comprehension* were also categorized as incorrect if they
indicated a misinterpretation of the participant's Spanish writing, regardless of
whether or not the suggested changes altered the writer's intended meaning. For
example, in Figure 31, S18 used the word "concentración" instead of the phrase "área
de concentración" in reference to her major (i.e., the main subject of her study at
university). However, as indicated in the first line of his comment, the user who
responded to her entry interpreted her use of this word to mean *concentration* rather
than *major*. Therefore, the first sentence in this comment was categorized as an error

of *reader comprehension*, and the second half of the comment was categorized as a successfully provided alternate expression.

Currently, I don't have a [*sic*] major, but I want to get into [*sic*] the school [*sic*] of psychology.
Currently, I don't have a [*sic*] major, but I want to get into [*sic*] the school [*sic*] of psychology
- In this context, "concentración" is not the translation of "concentration". More like it would be "I still have not decided on a major, but I want to enter the faculty of Psychology".

Figure 31: Example of a user-provided comment indicating reader incomprehension of the line receiving response

After responses offered by a particular peer or website provider were counted and coded, I kept a running total for each entry by each provider until all entries receiving responses from one person were analyzed. Then I summarized the subtotals to find the total number of responses and corresponding reaction codes and entered them into another spreadsheet named *Types of Feedback*. After analyzing feedback totals and types for each of the ten entries, I returned to each student's original writing on the website to confirm that I had included all of the responders in the Google sheet *Total Responses*. Next, I returned to the *User Response* Google sheet

for each responder listed in the *Total Responses* sheet to confirm that I had the correct number of responses. Upon confirmation, I locked the row in question by highlighting it, clicking on the Data tab, Protected Sheets and ranges, Set permissions, Range Editing Permissions, and selecting Show a warning when editing this range. This prevented me from accidentally adding or removing any previously confirmed reaction totals. I used a color-coding scheme to indicate where in the process of analysis the row in question was completed: rows were highlighted in purple when I was entering response data, orange when the initial entry was completed, and green when the numbers had been confirmed.

Next, I compared the number of total reactions recorded with the number of codes entered in the *Types of Feedback* sheet to confirm that the total number of responses corresponded with the number of codes entered for a particular response provider. I then repeated the steps described above to lock confirmed rows in the *Types of Feedback* sheet. As a final check for each of the ten entries, I did a search for that entry (e.g., E1) in the excel file from the first research question to confirm that all responses to a given entry had been recorded in both the *Feedback Totals* and *Feedback Types* Google sheets. Lastly, I downloaded a copy of the sheet for each entry to my computer in case of a problem with Google sheets.

Research Question 4

In order to answer the fourth research question (What is the students' response to this feedback?), data from five learner surveys were compiled and coded to examine student participants' reactions to the Spanish writing activities on Lang-8. As previously explained, in addition to the background survey completed at the beginning of the semester, four of the five surveys examined for the final research

question were completed at the end of each chapter to evaluate student participants' perceptions and subsequent use of the feedback they received on the assigned writings for the corresponding chapter from their group members and website users. As group membership rotated at the beginning of each new chapter, these surveys were meant to capture student responses to a particular group of peer-feedback providers. A sixth and final survey was also completed by student participants at the end of the semester in reference to their overarching impressions and use of written feedback from both feedback provider groups. All surveys were administered via Qualtrics, a web-based software for creating surveys and generating reports, and completed by student participants on their own time. Student participants were asked, but not required, to identify themselves in the four end-of-chapter surveys, so I could look for evidence of changing opinions over the course of the long semester. Conversely, the end-of-semester survey was anonymous, as I wanted to get the most honest perspective possible from student participants without causing them concern regarding the impact of negative feedback on their course grade.

Each of the identical one-page end-of-chapter surveys consisted of eight questions: one question asking the student to self-identify, four questions using a Likert scale, and three open-ended questions. The Likert-scale questions, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), were as follows: Feedback from my group members was useful to me; I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts; Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me; and I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts. Each set of questions about feedback from the two responder groups was followed by an open-ended question asking participants to elaborate on their previous response: How or why not? (re: Feedback from [my group members/other Lang-8 users] was useful to me /

I incorporated feedback from [my group members/other Lang-8 users] into later drafts). A final question was added for further commentary: Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8? A copy of the end-of-chapter surveys I asked participants to complete can be found in Appendix D.

To analyze the results of the four end-of-chapter surveys, I first generated and exported the data using numeric values, which converted the students' Likert-scale responses to their corresponding numeric value. I then calculated the mean, median, mode, and range of these responses. Next, I copied these results into a separate Google sheet, separated by question, to look for evidence of change over time. Finally, I calculated the average from these figures to get the overall average of all four data points and compared the figures for each of the four chapters.

After examining the descriptive statistics for the four chapter surveys, I copied and pasted the responses to the open-ended questions into a separate Google doc and printed the results to create a hard copy for my initial analysis, keeping the responses separated by responder group. When analyzing the open-ended responses separately from the Likert-scale responses, I found some to be ambiguous, so I returned to the Qualtrics reports to review whether those responses had been framed as positive, neutral, or negative, according to the Likert-scale response. I then separated the responses according to this framing for further analysis.

I read through the responses once without marking anything to get a general idea of student reactions. Then I reread the responses a few times, underlining what emerged as relevant to me. After underlining the hard copies, I went back with different colored highlighters to create a provisional color-coding system. Next I returned to the Google Doc and added the color-coding scheme. I created a key in a second Google Doc that I kept open in another window so I could see the key while

coding the text. After coding the three response groups (positive, neutral, and negative) for the two responder types (peer and site user), I combined the response groups for each chapter and compared the color-coded Google Doc with the underlined hard copy to confirm that all underlined comments had been categorized. Then I printed out the comments in each category and attempted to tease them apart. Finally, I returned to the hard copies and underlined which part of the response phrase led me to categorize it as I had to confirm that they all belonged in the same category, making changes when necessary.

Some single comments were coded into multiple categories. For example, a response to the second open-ended question in the first chapter survey (How or why not? [re: Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from my other Lang-8 users into later drafts]) that was coded for a single theme was "The feedback from native speakers was a little more helpful because they explained context and depth a little more." The student participant offering this response (S7) had scored the usefulness of peer-provided feedback lower than that for user-provided feedback: 2 and 3 respectively. I interpreted this response as a single idea and therefore used only one code: usefulness of explanations in comments. Another response to the same question from the first chapter survey that was coded for two themes was "This was especially useful, [*sic*] I got many useful corrections from other Lang 8 users that speak Spanish fluently." This student participant (S8) had also scored user-provided feedback higher than peer provided, although she had viewed both types more favorably: 4 and 5 respectively. The response by S8 was coded for two themes: (1) superlative positive evaluation about user feedback and (2) perceived advantages of feedback provided by fluent speakers of Spanish. The use of "especially" and repetition of the word "useful" in the response by S8 suggested to

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me that this student participant was more adamant in her positive evaluation of user-provided feedback than the student in the prior example. I judged this response as two complete ideas, even if it was not punctuated as such, and coded it accordingly.

One final note regarding the counting and coding of these survey responses relates to student participants' answers to the last open-ended survey question in the four end-of-chapter surveys: Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8? Students who did not have anything else to add expressed this to me in one of two ways: leaving the question blank or responding "no" or "nope". These negative responses to the question were not coded for content, as it was my opinion that they were equivalent to leaving the answer blank.

The fifth survey I analyzed to answer the fourth research question was the two-page end-of-semester survey that was administered to gather data about student participants' overall reactions to and use of responses received on Lang-8. This survey consisted of 27 questions. However, 11 of the questions were included for the purposes of gathering information for a future study. As these 11 questions were not relevant to the four research questions in the present study, I excluded them from my analysis. However, all 27 survey questions are presented in Appendix E with asterisks indicating which questions were included in analysis for this study.

Eight of the 16 remaining survey questions used a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The additional eight questions allowed student participants to offer open-ended responses. These eight open-ended questions were presented as both positive and negative interpretations of student participants' reactions to using Lang-8 to receive feedback from both responder groups. The final question asked, "Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8?" Similar to the end-of-semester surveys, some

student participants responded negatively to this question (e.g., "no," "nope," and "No, everything has been covered). Consequently, these responses were not coded for analysis, as it again was my opinion that they were tantamount to leaving this answer blank.

The eight Likert-scale questions also employed language implying positive or negative reactions to receiving feedback from the two responder groups. These questions, numbered ten to 17 in the full survey, inquired about students' experiences of receiving feedback.

To analyze the results of the end-of-semester survey, I once again began by printing a hard copy of each individual survey response to get an idea of the overall impression as indicated by a given student's answers. I read through these hard copies once before I began the coding process. Next, I used a color-coding system to highlight whether the student participant agreed or disagreed with the first eight Likert-scale questions and summarized these responses to see which students, if any, indicated that they had differentiated between the two responder groups. For instance, if a student participant indicated that reading comments and corrections from both responder groups was not a waste of their time, then I looked at the next two questions to see if they also felt they had learned from the feedback they received from both groups, if they were eager to read the feedback from both groups, and finally if they agreed that the corrections were prescriptively correct. In the hypothetical example described above, I would have classified this student as a participant who did not distinguish between the two feedback-provider groups. Next I reorganized the hard copies according to this classification and read the open-ended comments with this framing in mind for further context for analysis.

As I read through the eight sets of open-ended responses this second time, I underlined what I believed to be valuable for my analysis. As with the four end-of-semester surveys, after underlining the hard copies, I then went back using different colored highlighters to create a new provisional color-coding scheme. After establishing this provisional color code on the hard copies, I returned to the electronic version of the document to add the provisional color codes, making changes to collapse or separate categories as needed. I again created a key to these color codes in a second document fie that I kept open in another window to confirm the consistency of codes used as I added them in the electronic file with student participants' survey responses.

Similar to the coding for the end-of-chapter open-ended responses, some single comments were coded for multiple themes. For example, in response to the first open-ended question (What benefits, if any, are there to feedback from your classmates?), one student wrote "it gives me a better understanding of the things I do wrong. It also lets me talk to that person in class if I need clarification on why something is incorrect." The first sentence in this response was coded for advantages of etic perspectives of how to improve later drafts and the second sentence for the added advantage of opportunity for face-to-face communication with group members for clarification.

After color coding the open-ended responses in the electronic file, I created a Google Sheet with separate tabs for each of the eight open-ended questions. Within each tab, I used one column to record the answers from those students who had differentiated between peer and website user feedback, as indicated in their Likert-scale responses. I also used a second column for students who did not seem to differentiate between the two feedback provider groups. Finally, I added a third

column for the one student whose responses were determined to be ambiguous with respect to this distinction.

Next, I copied and pasted the color-coded responses from the electronic file into the corresponding tab and column in the Google Sheet. I then printed each tab and counted the number of unique responses to ensure that all of the surveys were included in the hard copy. I then used the hard copy to underline which part of the response had determined its subsequent categorization. These underlined words and phrases were then counted to provide further differentiation or association of the responses within each color-coded theme. I recorded these tallies in the document I had used as a key for color-coding, confirming the number of codes written on the hard copies for each comment and the total number of codes recorded in the key document. Next, I copied and pasted the codes from this document into a ninth tab of the aforementioned Google Sheet and added eight columns under which to record the number of tokens of each code that were found in response to the eight open-ended questions. I then totaled the instances of tokens for all of the codes used in a separate column and sorted the spreadsheet according to this total in order to examine the frequency of each code. Finally, I color coded the questions columns according to perceived benefits and disadvantages and created a column where I noted whether or not the codes appeared exclusively in response to questions of each type.

After completing the coding of the open-ended survey responses, I returned to the Likert-scale responses. I again generated and exported the data using numeric values to convert the students' Likert-scale responses to their corresponding numeric values. I calculated the mean, median, mode and range of these responses in order to examine the descriptive statistics for the end-of-semester survey. Finally, I sorted the responses to each Likert-scale question from low to high to gain further

understanding of the distribution of responses and recorded the number of tokens per response below the summary of descriptive statistics.

Chapter 4: Results

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the methodology used to collect data about responses learners received to their written Spanish production on Lang-8. This chapter will summarize the results that emerged from the data as they correspond to each of the four research questions.

FREQUENCY AND PROVIDERS OF FEEDBACK

The first research question asked who provided responses to student participants' assigned writings on Lang-8. This section will attempt to answer this question by analyzing the number of feedback providers to student participants' Spanish journal writings on Lang-8 (overall, per student participant, and per student participant per entry), classifying the feedback providers by participant group (peers and website feedback providers), and examining the user profiles of the website users who provided feedback to the 18 student participants.

I began by calculating the total number of classroom peers and unknown Lang-8 website users who provided feedback for all ten assigned Lang-8 journal entries for a total of 406 student participant and website user feedback providers to the 151 journal entries posted by student participants (see Table 5). Dividing this figure by 18 student participants yielded an average of 22.6 total feedback providers per student participant (range = 12-31). However, this number is an average and does not take into account that some student participants received multiple instances of feedback to various journal writings from the same website user. Moreover, further dividing this number by ten to figure the number of response providers per entry would have been misleading, as not all of the student participants posted a response

to all 10 writing prompts. As seen in Table 5, seven of the 18 student participants responded to all ten writing prompts on Lang-8 (S1, S2, S8, S11, S12, S16, and S18). Of the remaining 11 student participants, five responded to nine of the ten prompts (S4, S5, S7, S13, and S17), two responded to eight prompts (S3 and S15), one student participant responded to six prompts (S6), two responded to five of the prompts (S10, S14), and one responded to only four of the ten prompts (S9).

Next, I divided the number of total journal entries posted by all student participants (151) by 18 to find the average number of journal entries per student participant: 8.4 (range = 4-10). Dividing the total number of response providers by the total number of entries yielded an average of 2.7 feedback providers per entry to each student participant. To determine the average number of feedback providers per entry for each individual student participant, I repeated the process, dividing each student participant's total feedback providers by total journal entries. Finally, to check the average number of responses per entry to each student participant as previously determined, I totaled the column for average number of feedback providers per student participant per entry, divided by 18, and found a similar average of 2.7 feedback providers per entry for each student participant (range = 2.1-3.8).

Table 5: Overview of feedback providers per entry

Student participant	Total feedback providers	Total journal entries	Average responders per entry
S1	24	10	**2.4**
S2	28	10	**2.8**
S3	25	8	**3.1**
S4	22	9	**2.4**
S5	24	9	**2.7**
S6	16	6	**2.7**
S7	22	9	**2.4**
S8	31	10	**3.1**
S9	15	4	**3.8**
S10	12	5	**2.4**
S11	23	10	**2.3**
S12	30	10	**3.0**
S13	27	9	**3.0**
S14	17	5	**3.4**
S15	17	8	**2.1**
S16	23	10	**2.3**
S17	25	9	**2.8**
S18	25	10	**2.5**
TOTAL	406	151	49.5
AVERAGE	**22.6**	**8.4**	2.7
MEDIAN	23.5	9	2.7
MAX	31	10	**3.8**
MIN	12	4	**2.1**
MODE	25	10	**2.4**

Feedback provider subgroups: Peers and unknown website users

To determine the number of feedback providers in each subgroup, the total number of feedback providers was then separated into classroom peers and unknown site users (see Table 6). This table revealed a similar number of total average student participant feedback providers (n = 10.8; range = 5-16) and Lang-8 website user feedback providers (n = 11.7; range = 6-18). This trend remained

constant when the number was broken down to reflect the average number of student

participant (n = 1.3) and website (n = 1.4) feedback providers per entry (see Table 7).

Table 6: Total frequency and type of feedback providers

Student participant	Total peer feedback providers	Total website feedback providers	Total feedback providers
S1	8	16	24
S2	16	12	28
S3	12	13	25
S4	13	9	22
S5	10	14	24
S6	8	8	16
S7	10	12	22
S8	13	18	31
S9	8	7	15
S10	5	7	12
S11	12	11	23
S12	15	15	30
S13	12	15	27
S14	8	9	17
S15	11	6	17
S16	10	13	23
S17	13	12	25
S18	11	14	25
TOTAL	195	211	406
AVERAGE	**10.8**	**11.7**	**22.6**
MEDIAN	11	12	**23.5**
MAX	16	18	**31**
MIN	5	6	**12**
MODE	8	12	**25**

Table 7: Average type and frequency of feedback providers per entry

Student participant	Average peer feedback providers per entry	Average website feedback providers per entry	Total average feedback providers per entry
S1	0.8	1.6	**2.4**
S2	1.6	1.2	**2.8**
S3	1.5	1.6	**3.1**
S4	1.4	1.0	**2.4**
S5	1.3	1.8	**3.0**
S6	1.3	1.3	**2.7**
S7	1.1	1.3	**2.4**
S8	1.3	1.8	**3.1**
S9	2.0	1.8	**3.8**
S10	1.0	1.4	**2.4**
S11	1.2	1.1	**2.3**
S12	1.5	1.5	**3.0**
S13	1.3	1.7	**3.0**
S14	1.6	1.8	**3.4**
S15	1.4	0.8	**2.1**
S16	1.0	1.3	**2.3**
S17	1.4	1.3	**2.8**
S18	1.1	1.4	**2.5**
TOTAL	23.9	25.4	49.2
AVERAGE	**1.3**	**1.4**	2.7
MEDIAN	1.3	1.4	2.7
MAX	2.0	1.8	**3.8**
MIN	0.8	0.8	**2.1**
MODE	1.6	1.3	**2.4**

Feedback provider subgroup: Peers

It should be noted that although peer feedback was assigned for homework to two group members each week, which should have yielded a total of 20 instances of peer feedback per student participant, not one received a full 20 instances. In other words, as with the rate of student participant responses to the Lang-8 prompts, the rate of student participant responses to peer entries was inconsistent. As illustrated

in Tables 8 and 9, some of the student participants were more active in terms of responding to instructor prompts and providing feedback to their peers' journal entries, whereas others were less active on the website.

Accordingly, student participant feedback that was not provided to late or missing journal entry posts on Lang-8 was included in the analysis to give a more complete picture of student participants' online activity or lack thereof. As explained in Figure 2 (Chapter 3), student participants were not penalized if they did not provide feedback to any group member who had failed to upload a post on Lang-8 in response to the instructor-provided prompt, nor to those who posted after the assignment deadline (Wednesdays at 11:59pm). Therefore, to examine the online activity of those student participants who provided peer feedback more consistently, the number of responses posted by student participant feedback providers was combined with the number of non-responses to late or missing journal posts on Lang-8 in Table 8. Furthermore, to highlight the inactivity of those student participants who did not provide consistent peer feedback, the instances of non-responsiveness to on-time journal posts on Lang-8 were also combined with those to late or missing journal posts in Table 9.

Thirteen of the 18 student participants provided peer feedback to more than half of the on-time prompt responses, as seen in Table 8. Only two student participants (S1 and S16) provided feedback to all on-time prompt responses on Lang-8 posted by their group members. One student participant (S18) provided feedback to all but one on-time prompt response, and four student participants (S2, S3, S8, and S11) provided feedback to all but two on-time prompt responses. One student participant provided feedback to all but three (S13), four (S17), five (S7), six (S5), seven (S4), and eight (S12) on-time prompt responses, respectively.

Table 8: Summary of student participant peer feedback on Lang-8

Participant	Frequency of peer feedback to on-time peer writing on Lang-8	Frequency of lack of peer feedback to late or missing peer writing on Lang-8	Total frequency of student participant peer feedback on Lang-8
S1	13	7	20
S2	18	0	18
S3	14	4	18
S4	12	1	13
S5	10	4	14
S6	6	1	7
S7	10	5	15
S8	16	2	18
S9	4	2	6
S10	6	3	9
S11	14	4	18
S12	9	3	12
S13	13	4	17
S14	6	1	7
S15	3	4	7
S16	15	5	20
S17	11	5	16
S18	14	5	19
TOTAL	194	60	254
AVERAGE	**10.8**	**3.3**	**14.1**
MEDIAN	11.5	4	15.5
MAX	18	7	20
MIN	3	0	6
MODE	14	4	18

Five of the 18 student participants (S6, S9, S10, S14, and S15) provided peer feedback to less than half of the on-time journal writings, as seen in Table 8. Combining instances of student participant lack of feedback provided to on-time and late or missing peer journal writings highlighted these five student participants' lack of online activity: S15 provided feedback to only three of 13 on-time journal writings

posted by classroom peers, S9 provided feedback to four of 14, S6 and S14 provided feedback to six of 13, and S10 provided feedback to six of 11 (see Table 9).

Table 10 summarizes the online activity of these five less active student participants. Journal entry activities have been abbreviated according to the order in which they were assigned. For instance, E1 refers to the activity related to the first instructor prompt for student participants' online journal entries, E2 refers to the second instructor prompt, and so on. The two cells next to each student participant's S number represent the participant's Lang-8 activity: the top cell answers whether or not a given participant posted a journal entry in response to the instructor prompt (yes/no), and the bottom cell gives a visual representation of the number of on-time peer journal entries for which the student participant provided feedback, with the numerator representing how many group members received feedback from a given student participant and the denominator the number of on-time journal entries posted by that student participant's group members. Finally, the bolded borders between columns 4 and 5, 6 and 7, and 9 and 10 represent the shuffling of group members at the end of each of the four textbook chapters.

Table 9: Summary of lack of student participant peer feedback on Lang-8

Participant	Frequency of lack of peer feedback to on-time peer writing on Lang-8	Frequency of lack of peer feedback to late or missing peer writing on Lang-8	Total frequency of lack of student participant feedback provider activity
S1	0	7	7
S2	2	0	2
S3	2	4	6
S4	7	1	8
S5	6	4	10
S6	13	1	14
S7	5	5	10
S8	2	2	4
S9	14	2	16
S10	11	3	14
S11	2	4	6
S12	8	3	11
S13	3	4	7
S14	13	1	14
S15	13	4	17
S16	0	5	5
S17	4	5	9
S18	1	5	6
TOTAL	106	60	166
AVERAGE	**5.9**	**3.3**	**9.2**
MEDIAN	4.5	4	8.5
MAX	14	7	17
MIN	0	0	2
MODE	2	4	6

As seen in Table 10, further examination of these five student participant's lack of online peer feedback activity revealed that four of them stopped responding to peer journal entries altogether at some point in the semester: S9 provided no further student participant feedback to peers after the second of ten journal entries, S10 stopped responding to peer journal entries after the fourth instructor prompt, and S6

and S15 stopped responding after the sixth journal entry. However, the peer feedback provided by S14 was more sporadic than the other four participants who provided inconsistent feedback to their peers: S14 did not provide peer feedback for either of his group members on-time journal entries 1, 3, 5, or 8, and only to one of the two group members on-time journal entries 2, 6, 7, and 10.

Table 10: Summary of less active student participant activity on Lang-8

	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	TOTAL
S6	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	6 entries
	2/2	0/2	2/2	0/2	0/2	2/2	0/2	0/1	0/2	0/2	6 peer responses
S9	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	4 entries
	2/2	2/2	0/2	0/2	0/1	0/2	0/2	0/2	0/2	0/1	4 peer responses
S10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	5 entries
	2/2	2/2	1/2	1/1	0/1	0/2	0/2	0/2	0/2	0/1	6 peer responses
S14	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	5 entries
	0/2	1/2	0/2	2/2	0/2	1/2	1/2	0/2	0/1	1/2	6 peer responses
S15	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8 entries
	0/2	1/2	1/2	0/2	0/2	1/1	0/1	0/1	0/2	0/1	3 peer responses

Furthermore, four of these five student participants (S6, S9, S10, and S14) were also the least active in terms of journal entries, as seen in Tables 5 and 10: S9 responded to fewer than half of the instructor prompts, S10 and S14 responded to half of the prompts, and S6 responded to six of ten prompts. However, in spite of this fact, their failure to provide online peer feedback did not fully correspond to the timing of missing journal entries posted by these student participants in response to instructor prompts. For instance, although S9 had the fewest number of journal

entries (four) and stopped providing peer feedback after entry 2, this participant did post journal entries 3 and 6. S10 also responded to one of the later instructor prompts (entry 9), in spite of abandoning his peer feedback responsibilities after entry 4. One possible explanation is that these students found more value in receiving feedback from student participants and website users than in providing feedback to their group members. We will return to this possibility in the analysis of the final research question.

Lastly, it should be noted that S6 was the student described in Chapter 3 who claimed that his fifth journal entry disappeared after posting it, which had led me to recommend that all student participants begin taking screenshots both after posting and after providing feedback to their group members on Lang-8. Therefore, although S6 was given credit in class for completing the assignment, for the purposes of data analysis, this student participant's fifth journal entry was recorded as not completed because there was no record for me to analyze.

Feedback provider subgroup: Unknown website users

To conclude the first research question, I examined the information I had compiled from the website feedback providers' user profiles in the *RQ1 data summary* excel file under the tab marked Users. As seen in Table 6, there were a total of 211 website feedback providers to student participants' online journal entries. However, as previously mentioned this number did not take into account multiple instances of feedback that were provided by the same website user. The data compiled from website feedback providers' online profiles revealed that there were at least 133 unique website feedback providers. In the time between data collection and analysis, some of the website feedback providers deleted their Lang-8 accounts, and although

their six feedback responses to student participants were still visible on Lang-8, their profile information was no longer available. Therefore, I have no way of determining if the six instances of website user feedback were provided by one Lang-8 user, by six separate users, or by a combination of the two. Furthermore, I had no way of confirming their native and target languages as listed in their now deleted Lang-8 user profiles. As a result, these six instances of website user feedback were combined into one unknown user and added to the 132 Lang-8 users whose native and target languages could be identified by the data listed in their profile pages.

As seen in Table 11, the majority of website feedback providers with active user profiles self-identified as native speakers of Spanish (n = 129). The remaining three website feedback providers were native speakers of Traditional Chinese, Japanese, and English, respectively. The users who identified as native speakers of Traditional Chinese and Japanese both selected Spanish as their primary target language, and the former listed English as the secondary target language. The native speaker of English selected Japanese as the primary and French as the secondary target languages.

Table 11: Native languages of Lang-8 website user feedback providers

Native language listed in Lang-8 profile	Number of website feedback providers
Spanish	129
Traditional Chinese	1
Japanese	1
English	1
Unknown (profile deleted)	1
Total	**133**

As seen in Table 12, the majority of website feedback providers with active user profiles selected English as their primary (n = 80) or secondary (n = 24) target

languages. Japanese was the second most popular primary target language (n = 19), followed by Korean (n = 9), and various Western European languages (German, French, Italian, and Spanish). Furthermore, 57 of the 132 website feedback providers with active user profiles selected a secondary target language. After English (n = 24), French (n = 8) and German (n = 7) were the most frequently selected secondary target languages, followed by Japanese (n = 5) and Brazilian Portuguese (n = 3) and Russian (n = 3). Only one of the 132 website feedback providers with active user profiles selected more than two target languages. In fact, this user selected seven target languages: Japanese, German, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, English, and Russian. Finally, the average number of target languages identified by the 132 website feedback providers with active user profiles was 1.47 (range = 1-7).

As seen in Table 13, of the 211 responses to journal entries provided by Lang-8 website users, nearly half (n = 97) of the website feedback providers responded to only one of the 151 journal entries on Lang-8. Twenty website feedback providers responded to two of the journal entries posted by student participants on Lang-8, and nine responded to three journal entries. The highest frequency of individual website user feedback provided was ten instances, provided by one Lang-8 user. On average, each website feedback provider offered 1.6 instances of feedback to student participants' postings (range = 1-10).

Table 12: Target language(s) of Lang-8 website user feedback providers

Target language selected by website feedback providers	Number of users with this primary target language	Number of users with this secondary target language
English	80	24
Japanese	19	5
Korean	9	2
German	6	7
French	5	8
Italian	3	1
Spanish	2	0
Mandarin	2	0
Turkish	2	0
Tagalog	1	0
Portuguese (Brazil)	1	3
Norwegian	1	0
Russian	1	3
Traditional Chinese	0	2
Esperanto	0	1
Catalan	0	1
Total	**132**	**57**

In summary, the 148 participant entries that were posted with privacy settings allowing views from unknown website users received feedback from this responder group. These results demonstrate that posting written Spanish entries for feedback on Lang-8 did indeed yield responses from website users, the vast majority (97%) of which were offered by self-identified native speakers of Spanish. However, there are at least some nonnative Spanish-speaking users who offered comments and corrections to participants' journal entries. Furthermore, 78% of the 133 website users had indicated in their profiles interest in learning English, adding further incentive to respond to native speakers of English who could potentially become Lang-8 friends for continued language-learning exchange. However, 46% of the

feedback providers offered only one instance of response to one participant, suggesting that rather than building a circle of friends for mutual tutoring, these website users were trying to build up L-points to increase their user ranking, which would result in their writing samples being seen by more Lang-8 and potentially receiving more feedback.

Table 13: Frequency of feedback provided by website users

Instances of feedback provided to student participants	Number of website feedback providers	Total instances of website feedback provider responses to student participants
1	97	97
2	20	40
3	9	27
4	1	4
5	2	10
6	1	6
7	0	0
8	1	8
9	1	9
10	1	10
TOTAL		211
AVERAGE		**1.6**
MEDIAN		1
MODE		1
MAXIMUM		10
MINIMUM		1

Conversely, the rates of participant responses to writing prompts and to their group members' journal entries were irregular, as university-level students in a required Spanish-language course have varying degrees of motivation to learn Spanish and other commitments that compete for their time and attention. However, we saw that 72% of peers responded to more than half of the ten assigned journal

entries that were submitted on time, and this response rate was lower for entries that were posted late and therefore would not affect the responder's homework grade.

In the following section, I will examine the number of instances of feedback that were received by student participants on Lang-8 from both peer and website-user responders.

The second research question asked how much feedback participants received on Lang-8. This section will attempt to answer this question by analyzing the amount of feedback provided by peers and website users as measured by various metrics employed during data analysis: number of lines written in Spanish that received feedback, lines that were marked as perfect, in-text response tokens with and without the use of highlighting tools offered by Lang-8, the context in which responses were provided (i.e., in text or using the comments function), and likes provided by website users and student participants.

Table 14: Responses provided to participants on Lang-8

Feedback provider	Lines of text	Lines marked perfect	In-text responses	Comment responses	Likes	Total responses
Users	1402	326	3008	517	72	**3923**
Peers	774	168	1176	489	2	**1835**
TOTAL	**2176**	**494**	**4184**	**1006**	**74**	**5758**

As seen in Table 14, students received a total of 5,758 reactions to their Spanish writings on Lang-8. The majority of reactions (68%) were offered by website users. Users reacted to more lines of text (64% of total lines) than did student response providers and offered 72% of all in-text responses. In fact, both responder groups provided participants with more in-text responses than comments on written

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Spanish, as 73% of all responses received by participants were recorded in the text itself instead of using the comments function.

However, two caveats must be taken into consideration when examining these figures. There were at least 133 website user-response providers, whereas there were only 18 peer-response providers. Therefore, we might expect participants to receive more feedback from this larger group of responders. However, it is also important to remember that peer-response providers were tasked with providing weekly responses to their group members. Conversely, Lang-8 users were presumably using Lang-8 of their own volition to learn their target language(s), and therefore were intrinsically motivated to respond to Spanish writings on the website. Furthermore, this study specifically examined the responses received by student participants enrolled in my class, so I did not examine the frequency nor type of feedback these same users gave to other Lang-8 members. In other words, due to different responsibilities and the limited scope of the present study, one might also expect peer-feedback providers to give more frequent corrections to this particular group of participants. We will return to the issue of imbalanced responder group size in the analysis of the third research question (i.e., feedback types).

Tables 15 and 16 provide a more detailed view of the amount of responses received by each student for both responder groups. As seen in Table 15, half of the participants (S1, S6, S7, S10, S11, S12, S13, S16, and S18) did not receive any peer feedback to at least one of their Lang-8 journal entries. For instance, S1 only received peer responses to 6 out of 10 entries on Lang-8. This column was excluded from Table 19 because, as previously explained, the only participant writings on Lang-8 that did not receive user-provided feedback were those that were restricted by privacy settings (i.e., S13 for E6 and S15 for E1 and E3). On average, participants received

more in-text responses (21 and 8.4, respectively) and slightly more comments (3.6 and 3.3, respectively) from website users than from their peers.

Table 15: Response summary for entries that received peer-provided responses

Participant	Percentage of total entries that received peer responses	Lines marked as perfect by peers per entry	In-text responses by peers per entry	Comments by peers per entry	Total responses by peers per entry
S1	60%	0.7	11.7	0.7	13.1
S2	100%	1.8	7.4	5.2	14.4
S3	100%	0.0	9.6	1.5	11.3
S4	100%	1.1	7.1	2.9	11.1
S5	100%	0.2	12.0	4.1	16.3
S6	83%	0.7	20.8	1.0	22.5
S7	89%	0.6	2.7	3.3	6.6
S8	100%	1.3	5.6	4.1	11.0
S9	100%	4.3	10.5	5.3	20.0
S10	80%	1.0	5.2	2.8	9.0
S11	90%	2.7	5.5	1.9	10.1
S12	90%	0.2	5.8	5.1	11.2
S13	89%	0.6	4.0	3.9	8.4
S14	100%	0.6	20.0	5.2	25.8
S15	100%	3.1	2.4	3.9	9.4
S16	80%	0.1	3.6	2.5	6.2
S17	100%	1.8	11.2	2.9	15.9
S18	70%	0.8	5.8	3.0	9.6
TOTAL		21.5	150.9	59.2	231.9
AVERAGE	**91%**	**1.2**	**8.4**	**3.3**	**12.9**
MEDIAN	95%	0.8	6.5	3.2	11.2
MODE	100%	0.6	5.8	5.2	N/A
MAXIMUM	100%	4.3	20.8	5.3	25.8
MINIMUM	60%	0.0	2.4	0.7	6.2

Table 16: Response summary for entries that received user-provided responses

Participant	Number of entries	Total lines marked as perfect	In-text responses per entry	Comments per entry	Likes per entry	Total responses per entry
S1	10	12	27.9	2.5	1.3	32.9
S2	10	16	14.8	1.7	0.1	18.2
S3	8	6	48.6	4.6	0.5	54.5
S4	9	10	17.4	4.3	0	22.9
S5	9	9	22.9	3.9	1.3	29.1
S6	6	1	30.3	5.0	0	35.5
S7	9	17	20.0	2.0	0	23.9
S8	10	53	14.9	5.3	2	27.5
S9	4	26	12.0	8.0	0	26.5
S10	5	20	15.4	4.2	0	23.6
S11	10	42	10.0	3.1	0	17.3
S12	10	28	12.3	2.0	0.5	17.6
S13	8	15	17.1	6.1	0	25.1
S14	5	2	47.4	2.0	2	51.8
S15	6	8	15.2	0.5	0	17.0
S16	10	23	15.5	2.6	0	20.4
S17	9	18	14.4	3.0	0	19.4
S18	10	20	22.0	4.4	0.7	29.1
TOTAL	148	326	378.2	65.3	8.4	492.4
AVERAGE	**8.2**	**18.1**	**21.0**	**3.6**	**0.5**	**27.4**
MEDIAN	9	16.5	16.3	3.5	0.0	24.5
MODE	10	20	N/A	2.0	0.0	N/A
MAXIMUM	10	53	48.6	8.0	2.0	54.5
MINIMUM	4	1	10.0	0.5	0.0	17.0

However, although peer response providers offered more than twice as many in-text responses as they did comments (see Table 14), 27% of peer-provided reactions were in the form of comments, whereas only 13% of user-provided reactions were comments. In other words, relative to website-user responders, peer responders were more likely to offer comments than in-text corrections. This

assertion is further supported when examined in terms of lines of text that received comments only (see Table 17). Of the 2,176 lines of text receiving responses from both responder groups, only 25 lines were neither marked as perfect nor received in-text changes or comments, accounting for 1.1% of total lines of text. Finally, in-text corrections and comments offered by both responder groups received 74 *likes*, and all but two were given by unknown website users. Furthermore, both *likes* offered by students were given to responses they received on Lang-8.

Table 17: Lines neither marked as perfect nor including a response

Feedback provider	Lines of text displayed with comments only	Lines of text displayed with no change
Users	35	11
Peers	110	14
TOTAL	145	25

As previously explained, Lang-8 offers various highlighting tools for responders to draw attention to changes made to target language compositions. Editing tools allow users to change text to bold, strikethrough, or change the color of text from black in the original to red, blue, or gray in the response. However, Lang-8 offers no explanation as to how these tools are meant to be used, which affords users freedom in deciding whether or not to draw attention to changes made and how to do so. For the purposes of this study, any use of any highlighting tools in a response was coded as *marked* and the absence of their use as *unmarked*. As seen in Table 18, the majority of responses offered (73%) on Lang-8 were marked by response providers using highlighting tools.

Table 18: Marked and unmarked in-text responses provided to participants on Lang-8

Feedback provider	Marked in-text responses	Unmarked in-text responses	Total in-text responses
Users	2357	651	3008
Peers	677	499	1176
TOTAL	3034	1150	4184

Lang-8 also allows users to mark lines of written text as perfect if the responder is unable to identify any errors in the target language writing. However, as described in Chapter 3, I observed instances of various types of errors that were overlooked by both responder groups. As seen in Table 19, more than one third (39%) of the total lines marked as perfect did, in fact, contain errors of some type. Somewhat unsurprisingly, peer responders were more likely to assess incorrectly a line of written text as perfect (59%) than were self-identified native speakers and advanced Spanish learners on Lang-8 (29%).

Table 19: Lines incorrectly marked as perfect

Feedback provider	Lines marked as perfect	Lines incorrectly marked as perfect	Percentage of lines incorrectly marked as perfect
Users	326	95	29%
Peers	168	99	59%
TOTAL	494	194	39%

These results show that, on average, participants received 2.6 responses per line of text in their Lang-8 journals with the majority offered by the user-response group. Overall, participants were more likely to receive in-text responses from users than they were from their group members who offered more comments. It is likely that this discrepancy was due to the timing of the group member response assignment, which we will return to in the analysis of the fourth research question

(i.e., student participants' survey responses about their experiences using Lang-8). Additionally, these results also demonstrate that there were more instances of nonresponse to journal entries from the peer responder group, although both groups overall response rates were high (91% versus 100%). Highlighting tools were used 73% of the time to draw writers' attention to in-text changes, which would presumably aid in noticing. Lastly, both groups incorrectly marked some lines of text as not needing corrections when in fact I did find errors, and the majority nonnative-speaking peer responders were more likely to do so than the majority native-speaking website users.

TYPES OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED BY STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

The third research question asked what kinds of feedback participants received on Lang-8 from both responder groups. This section will attempt to answer this question by analyzing the amount of local/form-focused and global/meaning-focused responses that emerged from my analysis of peer- and user-provided responses on Lang-8. First, I will present a summary of these types of responses given by website users and peers, followed by further analysis of the accuracy of these responses. It is important to note, however, that likes were not counted as a type of response for this research question, and therefore, the total number of responses is different than that presented in the previous section.

As seen in Tables 20 and 21, the vast majority of responses (76%) that participants received from both responder groups on Lang-8 were focused on local issues (i.e., grammar and vocabulary, mechanics, and syntax). This result was not particularly surprising, as the website itself is set up for giving form-focused feedback to improve the accuracy of target language writing. Table 20 shows the percentages

of total responses offered by both responder groups on Lang-8, and Table 21 includes the raw token count of these response types. However, as previously discussed, the number of responders in the website-user response group was more than seven times that of the peer-response group (133 and 18, respectively). Therefore, a more precise measurement of the amount of responses of each type (local and global) to students' Spanish writings on Lang-8 would compare local and global responses by provider groups.

Table 20: Responses to local/form-focused and global/meaning-focused issues from both responder groups compared to total responses from both groups

Feedback provider	Marked as perfect	Responses to local/form-focused issues	Responses to global/meaning-focused issues	Total responses
Users	6%	54%	8%	68%
Peers	3%	22%	7%	32%
Total	9%	76%	15%	100%

Table 21: Total responses by type offered by both responder groups

	Users	Peers	Total
Marked as perfect	**326**	**168**	**494**
Grammar and vocabulary	1993	839	**2832**
Mechanics	849	262	**1111**
Syntax	95	36	**131**
Comments explaining local issues	115	104	**219**
Reference to previous responses to local issues	5	20	**25**
Total local responses	**3057**	**1261**	**4318**
Audience consideration	69	48	**117**
Detail/precision	62	65	**127**
Facework	199	142	**341**
Likelihood/certainty	15	7	**22**
Reader incomprehension	73	22	**95**
Reader reaction	28	114	**142**
Repetition	20	6	**26**
Total global responses	**466**	**404**	**870**
Total responses	**3849**	**1833**	**5682**

Table 22: Responses to local/form-focused and global/meaning-focused issues from website users

	Marked as perfect	**User responses to local/form-focused issues**	**User responses to global/meaning-focused issues**	**Total user responses**
Token count	326	3057	466	**3849**
Percentage of responder group total	9%	79%	12%	**100%**

As seen in Table 22, 79% of total user responses were triggered by local/form-focused issues. Furthermore, 69% of peer responses were directed towards local issues (see Table 23). In other words, when responses were examined within responder groups, both were again found to have offered more feedback about local

than global issues. However, separating responses by responder groups served to highlight a greater tendency for peer responders to offer global responses when compared to user-provided responses, as the former offered nearly twice as many global responses than did the latter group (22% and 12% of within group totals, respectively). The majority of these peer responses (58%) were categorized as positive facework (30%, n = 120) and reader reactions (28%, n = 114). Taking into account that students also worked with their group members three times per week in class, I had initially expected to find more evidence of positive facework in responses offered by peers. However, unknown site users provided slightly more evidence of positive facework than did peer responders (34%, n = 157). Upon further reflection, I realized that perhaps the frequent face-to-face interactions between group members decreased the need to hedge their corrections and establish common ground, as their relationships were better able to endure possible face threatening acts than those with unknown website users. As expected, website users were almost twice as likely to use language that could be interpreted as a threat to positive face (9%, n = 42) than were peers (5%, n = 22), as there was less risk of subsequent retaliation or exclusion from the group.

Table 23: Responses to local/form-focused and global/meaning-focused issues from peers

	Marked as perfect	Peer responses to local/form-focused issues	Peer responses to global/meaning-focused issues	Total peer responses
Token count	168	1261	404	**1833**
Percentage of responder group total	9%	69%	22%	**100%**

As seen in Table 24, peer responders offered a greater percentage (3%) of local responses that contained errors than did user responders (2%) relative to total local responses. Tables 25 and 26 demonstrate that this disparity was magnified when examining form-focused responses containing errors within responder groups: peer responders erroneously altered 11% of local issues addressed, whereas users' responses to local issues were only incorrect 3% of the time.

Table 24: Incorrect and correct responses to local issues from both responder groups compared to total local responses from both groups

	Responses	Percentage of total local responses
Total local responses	**4318**	**100%**
Correct user-provided local responses	2979	69%
Incorrect user-provided local responses	78	2%
Correct peer-provided local responses	1126	26%
Incorrect peer-provided local responses	135	3%

Table 25: Incorrect and correct responses to local/form-focused issues from website users

	User Responses	Percentage of user responses
Total user-provided local responses	**3057**	**100%**
Correct user-provided local responses	2979	97%
Incorrect user-provided local responses	78	3%

Table 26: Incorrect and correct responses to local/form-focused issues from peers

	Peer Responses	Percentage of peer responses
Total peer-provided local responses	**1261**	**100%**
Correct peer-provided local responses	1126	89%
Incorrect peer-provided local responses	135	11%

Conversely, peer responders offered fewer incorrect global responses (1%) than did website users (3%) relative to total global responses, as seen in Table 27. Furthermore, Tables 28 and 29 confirmed this trend when analyzing errors in meaning-focused responses within responder groups: users' global responses contained more errors (5%) than did peers' (3%).

Table 27: Incorrect and correct responses to global issues from both responder groups compared to total global responses from both groups

	Responses	Percentage of total responses
Total global responses	**870**	**100%**
Correct user-provided global responses	442	51%
Incorrect user-provided global responses	24	3%
Correct peer-provided global responses	393	45%
Incorrect peer-provided global responses	11	1%

Table 28: Incorrect and correct responses to global/meaning-focused issues from website users

	User Responses	Percentage of user responses
Total user-provided global responses	**466**	**100%**
Correct user-provided global responses	442	95%
Incorrect user-provided global responses	24	5%

Table 29: Incorrect and correct responses to global/meaning-focused issues from peers

	Peer Responses	Percentage of peer responses
Total peer-provided global responses	**404**	**100%**
Correct peer-provided global responses	393	97%
Incorrect peer-provided global responses	11	3%

These results revealed that users and peers offering responses on Lang-8 focused more of their attention on local issues than they did global. This response pattern was possibly influenced by the design of the site, as Lang-8 users are specifically focused on language learning rather than writing skills. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 3, the PDF files that premium members can download for future reference focus on in-text changes, excluding comments altogether, which is where the majority of meaning-focused responses were concentrated (i.e., facework, reader incomprehension, and reader response, which accounted for 66% of all global responses from both responder groups). However, when response types were isolated according to provider group, we saw that peer responders were more

inclined to respond to global issues than were user responders. Again, this is likely due to the timing of the group member response assignment, which I will address in the next section. Finally, similar to the findings about lines marked as perfect, peer responders were more likely to offer incorrect responses to local issues than native-Spanish speaking website users. However, this pattern was reversed with regard to global issues: peer responders were less likely to suggest changes that would alter the overall meaning of the text or the formality of addressing the hypothetical reader. This can likely be attributed to peer responder familiarity with the content and goals of the writing assignments. References to this shared knowledge also appear in response to the survey questions in the next section.

The following section examines the different types of feedback that student participants received from their classroom peers and from unknown Lang-8 website users. I will begin by presenting the results of the four end-of-chapter surveys, followed by the results from the end-of-chapter survey.

STUDENT RESPONSES TO FEEDBACK

Student participants' responses to the Likert scale questions in the four end-of-chapter surveys are summarized in Table 30. Just as not all students chose to complete traditional homework assignments, some of the student participants in this study chose not to respond to the end-of-chapter surveys. Furthermore, in order to elicit the most information that student participants were willing to share, they were not required to answer all of the questions in a given survey. Of the 18 student participants, 17 responded to the first-chapter survey, and 16 responded to the third- and fourth-chapter surveys. The second chapter survey was completed by only 14 student participants, and one participant (S7) left the second set of Likert-scale

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questions blank. Consequently, for this survey, 14 participants responded to the first two Likert-scale questions about peer-provided responses, and only 13 responded to the second set of Likert-scale questions about user-provided responses. However, S7 did provide comments related to the usefulness/incorporation of feedback provided by Lang-8 users, so her incomplete set of responses were not discarded from analysis. Moreover, all four chapter surveys included some anonymous responses; results of the first chapter survey included one unnamed student participant, and the remaining three chapter surveys included two unnamed student participants. Although it was not possible to determine which of the student participants chose not to respond to a given survey and which chose to respond anonymously, there were nine of the 18 student participants who responded to all four surveys and identified themselves: S1, S2, S4, S5, S10, S11, S12, S16, and S18.

Table 30: Descriptive statistical summary of numeric responses to Likert scale questions for chapters one to four

Feedback from my group members was useful to me.					
	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Average
Mean	**3.8**	**3.3**	**3.8**	**4.1**	**3.7**
Median	4	3.5	4	4	**4**
Mode	4	4	4	4	**4**
Min	2	1	2	3	**1**
Max	5	5	5	5	**5**
(n)	17	14	16	16	
I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts.					
Mean	**3.8**	**3.1**	**3.6**	**3.8**	**3.6**
Median	4	3	4	4	**4**
Mode	4	3	5	3	**3**
Min	2	1	1	2	**1**
Max	5	5	5	5	**5**
(n)	17	14	16	16	
Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me.					
Mean	**4.2**	**3.9**	**4.1**	**4.3**	**4.1**
Median	4	4	4	4	**4**
Mode	5	4	4	5	**5**
Min	3	1	2	3	**1**
Max	5	5	5	5	**5**
(n)	17	13	16	16	
I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts.					
Mean	**4**	**3.7**	**3.8**	**4.1**	**3.9**
Median	4	4	4	4	**4**
Mode	3	4	4	4	**4**
Min	3	2	1	2	**1**
Max	5	5	5	5	**5**
(n)	17	13	16	16	

End-of-chapter survey responses

As seen in Table 30, receiving feedback from both responder groups was, on average, viewed positively in terms of usefulness, with responses offered by Lang-8 users consistently receiving higher average ratings from the student participants.

Furthermore, peer (average = 3.3, range = 1 to 5) and user (average = 3.9, range = 1 to 5) responses to the second chapter were viewed as least useful by the student participants and to the fourth chapter as most useful (peer responses: average = 4.1, range = 3 to 5; user responses: average = 4.3, range = 3 to 5). Additionally, according to the Likert-scale survey results, more feedback offered by website users was incorporated into later drafts for all four chapters than that provided by group members. Again, responses to chapter two were rated lower than any other chapter (peer responses: average = 3.1, range = 1 to 5; user responses: average 3.7, range = 2 to 5). These responses also demonstrated more participant positive reactions to the first and the fourth chapter surveys, as no participants indicated that they strongly disagreed with any statement in the surveys for these chapters. It is possible that the novelty of using a website to receive feedback from native speakers had subsided after the first chapter, resulting in disappointment for the second and third end-of-chapter surveys. However, the return to positive impressions after the fourth and final chapter suggested to me that they saw the value in the exercise once they were no longer tasked with its performance.

Much like the average response to the Likert-scale questions was positive, the majority of the student participants' responses to open-ended questions from the end-of-chapter surveys were positive (see Table 31). The following section describes the types of themes that emerged during analysis within these broad categories: positive, negative, and ambivalent reactions.

Table 31: Broad categories of open-ended responses to the end-of-chapter surveys

170	Positively coded tokens
46	Negatively coded tokens
19	Ambivalently coded tokens
235	**Total coded themes**

Positive reaction tokens to open-ended questions in the four end-of-chapter surveys are summarized in Table 32. I will describe in more detail the themes that appeared more than ten times in the four end-of-chapter surveys, accounting for 86% of the total positive response tokens.

Local feedback related to grammar and vocabulary was the most common theme to emerge from the coding of positive open-ended responses. I identified 34 instances of appreciation for form-focused feedback in 26 responses. Thirteen of these instances noted the usefulness of peer and user feedback for particular parts of speech (e.g., verb conjugations, syntax, pronouns). Eleven responses included explanations that feedback was useful for correcting "small mistakes," "minor errors," etc. Ten responses referenced grammar or grammatical concepts in general. These responses indicated that the participants noticed that both responder groups had concentrated the majority of feedback on local issues, with 79% of user (n = 3057) and 69% of peer-provided (n = 1261) feedback addressing form (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and syntax).

Table 32: Overview of open-ended answers coded as positive reactions to responses on Lang-8

Number of coded tokens	Aspect receiving positive response	Sample responses
34	Local, form-focused feedback	"Feedback from my group members was useful because they pointed out little things that I overlooked, for example, number/gender agreement." (S18 in chapter 1 survey)
		"It improved my grammar and placement of pronouns for particular assignments." (S14 in chapter 1 survey)
29	Alternative ways to and choice of how to express meaning in Spanish	"When I had multiple corrections, I was able to choose which ones I didn't like and which ones I did." (S10 in chapter 1 survey)
		"They [users] gave me alternatives for saying phrases that I would otherwise not use" (S16 in chapter 2 survey)
27	User feedback in general	"The native speakers are extreeeeeeeeemely [*sic*] helpful!" (S8 in chapter 1 survey)
		"It was useful getting corrections from fluent speakers who were able to add fluidity to my text as well." (unnamed respondent in chapter 2 survey)
16	Posting writings to Lang-8	"I like that we have writing practice and its [*sic*] on a fun site rather than just turning in a sheet of paper every class." (S1 in chapter 1 survey)
		"I enjoy using lang 8, [*sic*] its [*sic*] a cool and collaborative way to do homework (S13 in chapter 1 survey)
15	Peer feedback in general	"I find them really useful--peer editing helps me improve my writing." (S18 in chapter 1 survey)
		"I trust my group members' feedback" (S4 in chapter 3 survey)
13	Noticing	"I was making a lot of mistakes with verb conjugation, but I was able to realize what I was doing wrong after it was pointed out in my entry." (unnamed respondent in chapter 3 survey)
		"I definitely saw many flaws in my writing, which would have gone unnoticed without the peer reviewing." (S16 in chapter 4 survey)

Table 32 (continued): Overview of open-ended answers coded as positive reactions to responses on Lang-8

Number of coded tokens	Aspect receiving positive response	Sample responses
12	Usefulness for revision	"It [user feedback] helped me revise my writing almost immediately after posting." (S16 in chapter 1 survey)
		"I enjoy these entries though and If i [*sic*] actually made more effort in a timely manner Lang 8 would be helpful. Especially on preparing for written assignments like the tare final" (S1 in chapter 3 survey)
7	Solution to use of Spanglish	"Feedback from other Lang-8 users were useful because … they corrected something I said that may have been direct translation/Spanglish." (S18 in chapter 1 survey)
		"I still have a big problem with using Spanglish and I've always learned Spanish through a classroom setting so my sentences tend to be really formulated." (S18 in chapter 4 survey)
6	Global, meaning-focused feedback	"It really provides fluency and a better understanding for the type of language that is actually used in spanish [*sic*] speaking countries." (unnamed respondent in chapter 3 survey)
		"I feel like this [user feedback] always makes my posts flow better and makes the sentences flow better together!" (S8 in chapter 4 survey)
4	Promptness of user responses	"The site is definitely good for those looking to practice their writing skills, [*sic*] and receive feedback pretty quickly." (S5 in chapter 4 survey)
		"The feedback from the users was rather quick and mostly correct." (S16 in chapter 1 survey)
2	Usefulness of explanations in comments	"The feedback from native speakers was a little more helpful because they explained context and depth a little more." (S7 in chapter 1 survey)
		"They catch small mistakes and typically explain those errors very well." (S8 in chapter 1 survey)

Table 32 (continued): Overview of open-ended answers coded as positive reactions to responses on Lang-8

Number of coded tokens	Aspect receiving positive response	Sample responses
2	Topics of writing prompts	"I enjoyed these topics" (unnamed respondent in chapter 2 survey)
		"I really enjoyed the topics for the writing assignments on lang [*sic*] 8." (S7 in chapter 2 survey)
2	Written nature of assignment	"It's also a physical assignment so it's easy to document and keep track of your progress--to see if you're progressing, degressing [*sic*], or just at a plateau." (S18 in chapter 3 survey)
		"One of the best parts of Lang-8 is that it's in writing. A lot of times, people corrected me verbally and so their corrections would fly right over my head. Seeing it in writing, I can physically see what I did wrong and I can always go back to it if I ever needed to reference it." (S18 in chapter 4 survey)
1	Open-ended nature of assignment	"I like that we are able to respond freely." (S11 in chapter 2 survey)
170	**Total**	

The second most common theme to emerge from the analysis of student participant positive responses in the end-of-chapter surveys was an appreciation for responses containing alternative modes of expression. This access to increased language variation was indicated by students 29 times in numerous forms. Six responses referred to "other ways," four mentioned "alternatives" or "alternative way(s)," and another four mentioned "different ways" to express themselves. Four responses indicated increased learner autonomy offered by multiple sources of feedback, as they had more than one option (e.g., "I can choose which correction is better suited for what I want to convey." S10 in chapter 3 survey). Taking into consideration that 19% (n = 805, with 751 lexical items changed due to participants'

lexical choice errors or preference, and 54 alternative forms offered without deletions of existing text) of total local feedback was coded for alternative forms of expression, participants' awareness of this variation is not surprising.

The benefits of receiving feedback from native/fluent speakers of Spanish was the third most common positive theme. Thirteen of these 27 responses included a reference to the benefits of receiving feedback specifically from "native speakers" or "fluent speakers," as this status afforded them with a certain amount of authority (e.g., "So many native speakers give the best form to actually write/say something"). Five of the 27 responses from four student participants used superlatives to describe website-user feedback (e.g., "greatest resource," "especially useful," etc.).

Sixteen responses indicated students' positive evaluation of using Lang-8 for Spanish writing practice. Three of these responses included high praise. For instance, in the chapter 2 survey, S18 said "It's awesome!" Three other responses used the less enthusiastic evaluation "good," and two said it was "fun."

Fifteen responses included favorable assessments of peer feedback in general. Four comments offered by two student participants (S13 and S18) noted that unlike the Lang-8 users, their peers knew the details of the assignment and/or what language structures we had covered in class. S4 reported in the surveys for chapters 3 and 4 that he had more "trust" in his peers than he did in the unknown Lang-8 users who provided him with feedback. These findings support the proposed interpretation of the third research question results that group-member familiarity with the content and goals of the various writing prompts led to fewer incorrect responses to global issues.

Thirteen responses indicated that receiving feedback on Lang-8 helped them become more cognizant of their recurrent mistakes. Three of these comments

referenced newly being "aware," three said they were able to "see" errors, and two used negative terminology to indicate noticing what they had "missed" (S12 in chapter 3 survey) or "over looked [*sic*]" (S10 in chapter 1 survey).

Twelve comments indicated that the feedback was useful for purposes related to revision. Five responses partially repeated the question prompt to confirm that they had, in fact, incorporated the feedback in later drafts. Three responses cited the specific class assignment for which these writings were intended to serve as rough drafts.

Finally, in Table 32 I used two sample responses from the same student (S18) for two separate aspects that received positive responses: solution to use of direct translation from English (i.e., Spanglish) and written nature of assignment. This is because the seven comments referring to the use of Spanglish and both comments about the advantages of written feedback were provided by this one student. S18 mentioned her tendency to use Spanglish in all four end-of chapter surveys: once in chapters 1, 2, and 3, and four times in chapter 4. Likewise, she commented that she appreciated having written evidence of corrective feedback in the surveys for chapters 3 and 4. These two were the only instances of a positive response theme with more than one token that were attributed to a single student participant.

The majority of the negatively coded reaction tokens in the responses to the four end-of-chapter surveys involved student participants' complaints about their group members' failure to post and/or respond on Lang-8 (see Table 33). As described in the results of the first research question, 11 participants neglected to respond to writing prompts for a total of 29 missing Lang-8 journal entries. Furthermore, as explained in the results of the second research question, there were 12 instances of participant journal entries that did not receive any peer feedback.

Therefore, the salience of this complaint is a logical response to group members' failure to participate in groupwork. Six of these twelve complaints replied to the final open-ended question (Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8?). Therefore, it should be noted that the possibility exists that for these six responses, the student participants were merely reporting on group member inactivity to ensure that they did not receive a penalty for not completing the homework assignment, as I told them in class that they could let me know about extenuating circumstances in the surveys if they were concerned about their homework grades being affected by just such an occurrence. For example, note that the response quoted in the first row of student participant data in Table 33 indicates not that S7 did not post at all, but rather that she did not post on time. The first three entries to which the chapter 1 survey corresponded were due on September 3, 10, and 17. Peer responses for these entries were due the following Monday, September 8, 15, and 22. The only entry that S7 posted late was the first, which she posted on September 8, the day that responses were due. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that S8 may have been concerned that she would lose points for not responding to her group member and wanted to highlight the fact that she did not do so because the post was late.

Table 33: Overview of open-ended answers coded as negative reactions to responses on Lang-8

Number of coded tokens	Aspect receiving negative response	Sample responses
12	Group member inactivity	"[S7] did not turn her entry in on time so there was an occasion where I was not able to provide corrections, and she failed to provide corrections for my entry." (S8 in chapter 1 survey)
		"The most trouble I have with lang 8 [*sic*] is getting some group members to actually do their entries and corrections. Sometimes I will not have anything to correct because my partners did not do their work." (unnamed respondent in chapter 4 survey)
7	Doubts regarding accuracy of native speaker feedback	"I'm cautious to use feedback from other users of Lang-8 for previously mentioned reasons, i.e. people using stylistically gramatically [*sic*] incorrect ways of speaking it without understanding the correct usage of words despite being native speakers." (S4 in chapter 2 survey)
		"I think the only downside is that some of them probably learned Spanish informally so they may or may not know proper grammar, etc.. [*sic*]" (S18 in chapter 3 survey)
7	Lack of motivation to review responses	"I usually didn't look at the revisions before the next assignment was due." (S1 in chapter 1 survey)
		"The writing assignments on Lang-8 are not that helpful as they are right now because I rarely go back and look at Lang-8. If we had to visit Lang-8 more often, I feel like it would be more helpful." (S12 in chapter 3 survey)
5	Perceived insignificance of feedback	"I never really gave it much thought because they weren't major revisions." (S11 in chapter 1 survey)
		"The feedback I received from my group was always because of simple mistakes." (unnamed respondent in chapter 4 survey)

Table 33 (continued): Overview of open-ended answers coded as negative reactions to responses on Lang-8

Number of coded tokens	Aspect receiving negative response	Sample responses
4	Accuracy/ specificity of group member feedback	"I did not receive thorough feedback from my group members." (S11 in chapter 2 survey)
		"Most of the time I will mak [*sic*] a simple mistake, or a correction [from my group members] will be incorrect" (S7 in chapter 3 survey)
3	Tendency for users to offer feedback before peers	"I already had a lot of feedback from random people. My group members would just comment on my entries if at all." (S10 in chapter 1 survey)
		"I usually only use the corrections from native speakers because they answer first" (S14 in chapter 3 survey)
2	Changes between drafts rendered responses useless	Also, I usually rewarded [*sic*] my posts for actual assignments so the corrections were moot. (S15 in chapter 3 survey)
		"I didn't do later drafts to where the feedback given was relevant, but I looked at all the feedback I was given to see what my mistakes were." (S15 in chapter 4 survey)
2	Personal issues interfered with assignment	"October was a low point for me personally and I almost withdrew from UT. So [*sic*] I was not concerned with my lang 8 [*sic*] homework" (S1 in chapter 3 survey)
		"Out of all my responsibilities and priorities this is on the bottom of the list." (S1 in chapter 3 survey)
1	Feedback restricted to group members	"I sort of wish that our Lang-8 posts could be corrected by anyone in our class" (unnamed respondent in chapter 1 survey)
1	Editions judged as unnecessary	"The other lang-8 users were able to point out some gramatical [*sic*] errors, but a couple of times they made corrections where one wasn't needed, like changing my ir+infinitive future tense to synthetic future when both are correct." (S15 in chapter 3 survey)

Table 33 (continued): Overview of open-ended answers coded as negative reactions to responses on Lang-8

1	Reader incomprehension	"Some users gave me feedback that wasn't helpful due to their lack of understanding of what the assignment was/what I was trying to say." (S9 in chapter 3 survey)
1	Preference for giving feedback	"Giving feedback was more helpful to me than receiving it" (S6 in chapter 4 survey)
46	**Total**	

Conversely, five of the remaining six complaints about group member inactivity were in response to the first open-ended question (How or why not? [re: Feedback from my group members was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts]): three times in the second chapter (S6, S7, and S18), once in the third (S15), and once in the fourth (S11). The final instance appeared in response to the second open-ended question (How or why not? [re: Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts]) in the fourth and final chapter: "I read the other lang- 8 [*sic*] users [*sic*] feedback since my own group members never posted anything" (S1).

The next most often cited complaint (n = 7) in the four end-of-chapter surveys related to doubts regarding the prescriptive accuracy of the feedback offered by Lang-8 users. One student participant in particular (S4) indicated consistent caution in using website user feedback for writings that were to be submitted for a grade in class, as he expressed this concern in all four end-of-chapter responses. For instance, S4 wrote in the survey for chapter three "I don't trust other Lang-8 user's feedback

while my grades are on the line." The three other participants whose responses were coded for this theme (S1, S10, and S18) only mentioned this concern once: in the surveys for the first, first, and third chapters, respectively. Taking into consideration the discrepancy between the accuracy of peer- and user-provided responses, with users providing fewer inaccurate local responses and peers providing fewer inaccurate global responses, I interpreted the salience of user inaccuracy in participant survey responses as one of two options: either global inaccuracies were perceived as more disruptive than local, or participants were more forgiving of inaccurate responses from their peers given their common nonnative speaker status.

Lack of motivation to review responses on Lang-8 was also noted in the student participants' answers to the end-of-chapter surveys seven times. The second example (S12) in Table 33 was coded as two separate tokens representative of this theme: first because he stated that he returned to the website infrequently ("The writing assignments on Lang-8 are not that helpful as they are right now because I rarely go back and look at Lang-8.") and again when he offered what I interpreted as a suggestion for my future practice as an instructor ("If we had to visit Lang-8 more often, I feel like it would be more helpful"). An unnamed respondent to the third end-of-chapter survey also made a similar suggestion: "When done beforehand, the feedback was useful. I would recommend making Lang-8 entries due during a day of the week that would be before the assignment that the entry was preparing me for." The four remaining tokens for this theme were given by S1 twice in the first survey in response to two different questions and once in the second and third surveys.

The next most frequent negative responses in the end-of-chapter surveys related to student participants' perceived insignificance of local, form-focused feedback. In the first survey, S7 explained her neutral responses (Likert score = 3) to

the usefulness and subsequent incorporation of peer-feedback thusly: "The comments were never in too much in depth. It would be a simple conjugation correction or word usage correction most of the time." She repeated this sentiment in the second and third end-of-chapter surveys. It is possible that she was the unnamed survey respondent in the fourth and final survey who echoed this belief, as this student participant also rated the corresponding questions about group member feedback as a three, followed by this comment: "The feedback I received from my group was always because of simple mistakes." However, at least one other student participant (S11) agreed, as can be seen in Table 33. The first sentence in the responses provided by S7 in the first end-of-chapter survey (see above) was coded as referring to lack of accuracy and specificity of peer feedback. S11 again provided a similar response, albeit this time in the second survey (see Table 33). However, these two themes were not combined, as the former comments were found in response to feedback from both response groups, and the latter applied only to group-member feedback.

The tendency for users to offer feedback before peers will be discussed briefly. The remaining negative response theme tokens were given by a single student participant and are displayed in Table 33.

Nineteen of the 235 response tokens were classified as ambivalent because they contained both positive and negative evaluations that I felt would be out of context when separated. For instance, in the first end-of-chapter survey, in response to the final question asking student participants if there was anything else I should know, S6 replied: "Its irritating, but helpful." He did not respond to the third survey, but he offered analogous responses to the same question in the second ("Irritating, but helpful.") and fourth (Still helpful, still irritating.) surveys. He was not the only

student participant to express such an opinion. For instance, in the third end-of-chapter survey, S18 responded:

> "I really like using Lang-8. Yes, it is time consuming and yes, sometimes I'm annoyed that I have to do it when there's so many other things to do, but, [*sic*] I honestly think that it helps me in the long run. Learning a language isn't an easy task and I don't expect it to be. I just see Lang-8 as another resource to improve my fluency and grammar [*sic*] that's all."

S2 and S11 also offered comparable answers in the second and fourth surveys, respectively.

Another set of responses (n = 6) that were classified as ambivalent were those in which students indicated that they understood the value of the activity in theory, but they had not participated in the entries for the corresponding chapter. In the second end-of-chapter survey, S10 responded "I feel bad for not posting every time because it actually is very helpful. I just forget." In the final end-of-chapter survey, S1 answered "The writing assignments would have been helpful if I had done them in a timely manner." This participant had made equivalent assertions in response to the surveys for the second and third chapters, and S5 made a similar point in response to two different survey questions for the second chapter.

The third and final set of ambivalent responses (n = 7) addressed the value of the reactions posted by both response groups on Lang-8. In the third end-of-chapter survey, S16 wrote "Much of the [user] feedback was helpful, but not all of it was useful." In the first chapter survey, S9 was less vague than S16, writing "Some of the things they [users] recommended were not grammatically correct but generally useful."

During the examination of open-ended survey responses, I noticed that in the first chapter survey, two of the student participants (S5 and S12) used the same responses verbatim to answer the question asking them to expand on their Likert-scale responses for both responder groups. S5 responded "I do remember there were at least 2 or 3 times where I was corrected, and I incorporated it into future assignments, such as the Tarea Fiinal [*sic*]." The typo included in the last word of both comments indicated that she copied and pasted her response to the first open-ended question into the response for the second. S12 responded "The feedback was useful because I got to see what I did wrong/other ways of saying what I wanted to say." Their open-ended responses, in combination with the identical Likert-scale ratings these two participants gave for all four questions (4, agree), suggest that they did not differentiate between the usefulness of responses provided by the two responder groups, nor the subsequent incorporation of this feedback into future drafts, for the first three entries that corresponded to the first chapter survey.

S5 continued this response pattern, answering that she agreed with the Likert scale questions for both groups for all four end-of-chapter surveys. Furthermore, she continued to repeat identical comments in response to the questions asking her to explain her Likert-scale selections for the first three chapter surveys. Open-ended responses that were repeated by S5 can be found in Table 34. Consequently, these duplicate comments were only coded one time for content. However, her responses to the same questions in the survey for the fourth and final chapter did, in fact, differ, as can be seen in Table 34. Furthermore, her response to the final open-ended question in each end-of-chapter survey were all unique to the corresponding chapter.

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Table 34: Open-ended responses submitted by S5 for each end-of-chapter survey

Chapter	How or why not? (re: Feedback from my group members was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts)	How or why not? (re: Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts)
1	I do remember there were at least 2 or 3 times where I was corrected, and I incorporated it into future assignments, such as the Tarea Fiinal.	I do remember there were at least 2 or 3 times where I was corrected, and I incorporated it into future assignments, such as the Tarea Fiinal.
2	I did not utilize this for these entries, but I know that it was most definitely useful to me in chapter 1.	I did not utilize this for these entries, but I know that it was most definitely useful to me in chapter 1.
3	A lot of the errors that I typically make on my entries have to deal with the accents, so I'm more aware now of including them in my writing assignments, like with the Tarea Final.	A lot of the errors that I typically make on my entries have to deal with the accents, so I'm more aware now of including them in my writing assignments, like with the Tarea Final.
4	I am aware now of incorporating accent marks when necessary.	I've become aware that I need to focus on making sure that I stay consistent when I refer to things as singular or plural, and maintaining that tense in my phrases.

Conversely, S12 did vary his responses to the questions asking him to explain his Likert-scale selections after the first chapter (see Table 35). In response to the second end-of-chapter survey, S12 acknowledged his lack of differentiation with regard to his response by adding a parenthetical note: "(just like feedback from my group members)". However, his responses to the third and fourth end-of-chapter surveys reflected a difference in his perception of the value offered by each responder group. For chapter three, he paraphrased his response to the prior survey, noting that peer-feedback was useful because his group members had noticed errors that he had not detected in his writing and afforded him with alternative forms he could use in

the revision stage. In contrast, his response to the final end-of-chapter survey did not reiterate the former point regarding error correction but did affirm his appreciation for the input offered by peer-reviewers regarding how to improve his wording. For chapter three, he noted an advantage to receiving responses from native speakers and more advanced learners with greater Spanish experience. In response to the final end-of-chapter survey, S12 foregrounded the likelihood that native speaker corrections would, in fact, be prescriptively correct.

Table 35: Open-ended responses submitted by S5 for each end-of-chapter survey

Chapter	How or why not? (re: Feedback from my group members was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts)	How or why not? (re: Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts)
1	The feedback was useful because I got to see what I did wrong/other ways of saying what I wanted to say.	The feedback was useful because I got to see what I did wrong/other ways of saying what I wanted to say.
2	Feedback from my group members was useful to me because the feedback was either a correction or an alternative way to say what I wanted to say. This way I learned what I did wrong or learned another way to say what I wanted to say and thus I did incorporate the feedback from my group members into later drafts.	Feedback from other Lang-8 members was useful to me (just like feedback from my group members) because the feedback was either a correction or an alternative way to say what I wanted to say. This way I learned what I did wrong or learned another way to say what I wanted to say and thus I did incorporate the feedback into later drafts.
3	Feedback from my group members was useful to me because my group members caught errors that I missed and they also provided insight on other ways I could rewrite my sentences.	Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me because many of the other Lang-8 users are native Spanish speakers or are more familiar with Spanish so it is useful to me to see what native Spanish speakers suggest.
4	Feedback from my group members was useful to me because it gave me a second opinion on how I could write/improve my sentences. I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts.	Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me because most of the Lang-8 users are native Spanish speakers and their corrections are correct most of the time. I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts.

A third student participant (S2) also offered identical responses to the open-ended questions in the first end-of-chapter survey about receiving feedback from the

two response provider groups ("Feedback was useful, showed me errors in my use of syntax and ways to correct them, I would only change certain sentence structures if they were better than my current version."), but added a slash mark and the following explanation specific to website user responses: "/ Native speakers would show causal [*sic*] ways to say things as if in their own country, native lingo". However, in spite of this elaboration on his original response, S2 also rated the usefulness (4, agree) and incorporation (3, neutral) of responses for both responder groups equally in the first chapter. Unlike S5 and S12 described above, S2 differentiated his responses to the Likert scale and open-ended questions for the second and third end-of-chapter surveys. Nonetheless, his answers to the Likert-scale questions in the fourth end-of-chapter survey were again identical. Moreover, he evidently copied and pasted his response to the open-ended questions, as demonstrated in his repetition of the word "other" in both comments ("Corrected Feedback, Allowed me to see other other forms of a sentence."), which differed only by the addition of a final clause in the second response noting the native speaker status of Lang-8 users ("Corrected Feedback, Allowed me to see other other forms of a sentence from a native speaker point of view").

Two other instances of student participants' lack of differentiation between the usefulness of reactions from the two responder groups were found in the third and fourth end-of-chapter survey. S15 responded to the question about group member feedback in the fourth survey thusly: "I didn't do later drafts to where the feedback given was relevant, but I looked at all the feedback I was given to see what my mistakes were." In response to the question about website user feedback, he wrote "Same reason as for the feedback from classmates." S10 indicated his similar perception in response to the fourth chapter survey: "The corrections were as helpful

as the ones from my classmates and were basically the same ones. They did offer other ways of rephrasing my sentences that I found useful." The second part of this response was coded as a positive response under alternative ways to express meaning in Spanish.

Conversely, two out of three student participants (S10 and S14) who disagreed (Likert-scale equivalent of 2) with the usefulness of group member feedback strongly agreed (Likert-scale equivalent of 5) that feedback from Lang-8 users was useful. S10 explained his reaction to the latter question thusly:

> "The responses were very helpful. Most of the time, the simple things I over looked [*sic*] were corrected. Or something I wasn't too sure about was fixed. When I had multiple corrections, I was able to choose which ones I didn't like and which ones I did."

However, this perceived lack of utility of the responses offered by his group members ("I already had a lot of feedback from random people. My group members would just comment on my entries if at all.") can be at least partially explained by the timing of the Lang-8 assignment. S14 offered a similar response: "The lang- 8 [*sic*] users would be the first to correct me, not leaving much room for my class mates [*sic*] to make too much of a difference."

As previously explained, students were reminded of the weekly writing prompts in class on Monday and asked to post their response in Spanish by Wednesday. They were then asked to provide responses to their group members before the following Monday. This schedule was given in an attempt to facilitate asynchronous communication among group members outside of class, but in delaying group member responses, I inadvertently constructed an imbalance between the two responder groups. Lang-8 users were presented with target language writings for feedback immediately after being posted, and postings were listed on the site in

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reverse chronological order. Therefore, in most cases the website user responses were given relatively soon after the entry was posted, and the group member responses were given days later, when many of the instances of error-triggered and negotiation of meaning feedback had already been addressed. As indicated in the results of the second and third research questions, it is likely that this issue of timing explains the peer-responder group tendency to provide more comments than in-text responses and more global rather than local responses. S10 also noted his dissatisfaction of this discrepancy in types of responses from both responder groups in his open-ended responses to the surveys for chapter three ("I didn't write an entry, [*sic*] however, I usually only use the corrections from native speakers because they answer first"). As this was at least partially a result of the design of the writing assignment, it is a limitation to the present study.

End-of-semester survey Likert-scale responses

In order to organize the results of the end-of-semester survey, I will begin with an overview of the student participants' responses to the eight Likert-scale questions. Then I will present the results of those students (n = 8) who did not differentiate between the two responder groups and those who did (n = 7), followed by the student (n = 1) who offered conflicting opinions. Finally, I will present the findings from the student participants' responses to the open-ended questions from the end-of-semester survey.

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis of student participants' responses to the eight Likert-scale statements in the end-of-semester survey that were included for analysis in the present study are summarized in Table 36. Sixteen out of eighteen total student participants responded to this survey, and although the

survey was completed anonymously, the 16 distinct IP addresses used to respond, as indicated by Qualtrics, suggest that no one student responded more than one time to this survey. Identical misspellings of the word "knowledgeable," spelled as "knowledgable" hinted at the possibility that one student participant may have offered more than one survey response: namely, the fourth and sixteenth responders to the survey. However, upon further comparison of these two survey responses, I noticed that the corresponding Likert-scale answers differed greatly with respect to the final three questions: the fourth person disagreed with all three statements and the sixteenth strongly agreed. Therefore, we will assume that only two student participants chose not to respond with their overall impression of receiving comments and corrections to their Spanish writings on Lang-8.

As demonstrated in Table 36, the majority of the responses to both negatively framed Likert-scale statements indicate that these student participants disagreed that reading the comments and corrections offered by both responder groups was a waste of their time. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the range (one to four) of both responses, none of the participants strongly agreed with these assertions. Moreover, analysis of individual student responses to this statement indicate that only four participants agreed that reading peer comments and corrections was a waste of their time, and one agreed with the same statement regarding website user comments and corrections. In addition, the total number of student participants who disagreed (five for peers and eight for users) or strongly disagreed (two for peers and four for users) with this statement yielded a total of seven and twelve for peer responders and website user responders, respectively. These figures provide further support to the observed difference of the averages of the 16 responses to these questions reported in Table 36.

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Table 36: Descriptive statistical summary of numeric responses to Likert-scale statements for end-of-semester survey

Likert-scale question	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Reading my CLASSMATES' comments and corrections of my drafts on Lang-8 was a waste of my time	**2.7**	3	3	1-4
Reading my LANG-8 USER comments and corrections of my drafts on Lang-8 was a waste of my time	**2.1**	2	2	1-4
Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from my CLASSMATES	**3.2**	3	3	1-5
Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from my LANG-8 USERS	**3.9**	4	4	3-5
I was eager to read the feedback from my CLASSMATES	**3.1**	3	3	2-5
I was eager to read the feedback from my LANG-8 USERS	**3.6**	3.5	3	3-5
Most of the corrections I received from my CLASSMATES were correct	**3.9**	4	4	3-5
Select one - Most of the corrections I received from LANG-8 USERS were correct	**4.0**	4	4	3-5

The average scores of the third and fourth questions in Table 36 also indicated that the 16 student participants who responded to this survey felt as though they had learned from the feedback received from both responder groups, with feedback from Lang-8 users again receiving more positive responses. However, the descriptive statistics for these two questions failed to illustrate fully the variation between student participants' responses to these two questions. Further analysis of individual responses showed that half of student participants' responses were neutral with regard to peer feedback, with three disagreeing and five agreeing that they had learned from their peers, whereas only four people responded neutrally to the question about user feedback, and the remaining 12 either agreed (n = 10) or strongly

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agreed (2). Again, this difference of opinion supports student participants' perception of higher educational value of Lang-8 user feedback, as suggested by the average response score and range of responses to these two questions.

In addition, Table 36 illustrates that, on average, student participants were somewhat eager to read the feedback from both responder groups, albeit more so for responses offered by users than those offered by peers. However, the majority of responses to these two questions indicated that half of the student participants were neither eager nor unenthusiastic to read comments and corrections provided by either group, with eight student participants selecting "neutral" in response to both. Again, these participants confirmed slightly more enthusiasm for reading website user feedback than peer feedback, as nobody disagreed or strongly disagreed with the question about the former group. In contrast, four student participants disagreed with the question about the latter.

Finally, both responder groups received the highest average rating from student participants in terms of the accuracy of corrections provided. Furthermore, as indicated by the range of responses, none of the student participants disagreed with the statement regarding the accuracy of feedback offered by either group.

As previously described, I also examined the degree to which student participants differentiated between peer and website user feedback, as indicated in their Likert-scale responses to each set of questions about the two responder groups in the end-of-semester survey. As previously explained, this survey was completed anonymously, so the participant identifiers used in the preceding sections cannot be applied to the responses of this survey. Therefore, their responses are identified in the order in which the surveys were completed (e.g., the first student responder is SR1, the second is SR2, etc.), as reported by Qualtrics. A summary of the numerical

value of the responses to the eight Likert-scale questions given by the students (n = 8) who did not indicate a perceived difference between peer and website user providers of feedback is presented in Table 37. As indicated by this table, all eight of these student participants (SR3, SR6, SR10, SR11, SR12, SR14, SR15, and SR16) gave exactly the same response to each set of questions. That is not to say that these eight participants gave responses identical to one another, although some similarities in their responses are evident and will be discussed below.

Table 37: Numerical value of responses to Likert-scale statements for end-of-semester survey, as given by students who did not indicate a perceived difference between the two responder groups (n = 8)

	SR3	SR6	SR10	SR11	SR12	SR14	SR15	SR16
Reading my CLASSMATES' comments and corrections of my drafts on Lang-8 was a waste of my time	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	2
Reading LANG-8 USER comments and corrections of my drafts was a waste of my time	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	2
Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from my CLASSMATES	3	5	4	4	5	3	3	3
Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from LANG-8 USERS	3	5	4	4	5	3	3	3

Table 37 (continued): Numerical value of responses to Likert-scale statements for end-of-semester survey, as given by students who did not indicate a perceived difference between the two responder groups (n = 8)

	SR3	SR6	SR10	SR11	SR12	SR14	SR15	SR16
I was eager to read the feedback from my CLASSMATES	4	4	3	3	5	3	3	4
I was eager to read the feedback from my LANG-8 USERS	4	4	3	3	5	3	3	4
Most of the corrections I received from my CLASSMATES were correct	3	4	5	4	5	3	4	3
Most of the corrections I received from LANG-8 USERS were correct	3	4	5	4	5	3	4	3

All but one of these student participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the first set of Likert-scale statements indicating that reading comments and corrections from both classmates and Lang-8 users was a waste of their time. Four of these participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had learned a lot from the feedback, and the remaining four responded neutrally to this statement. Furthermore, none of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with the final two sets of questions about their eagerness to read feedback from both responder groups and the accuracy of the feedback they received. However, four of these student participants (SR10, SR11, SR14, and SR15) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement regarding their eagerness to read feedback from both groups, and three student participants (SR3, SR14, and SR 16) chose the neutral response regarding the accuracy of the feedback they received. SR14 was the only

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student participant from this group who responded neutrally to both of the final two sets of questions (eagerness to read and accuracy of feedback).

Table 38: Numerical value of responses to Likert-scale statements for end-of-semester survey, as given by students who indicated a perceived difference between the two responder groups (n = 7)

	SR1	SR2	SR4	SR5	SR7	SR8	SR9
Select one - Reading my CLASSMATES' comments and corrections of my drafts on Lang-8 was a waste of my time	4	3	4	2	4	3	3
Select one - Reading LANG-8 USER comments and corrections of my drafts was a waste of my time	3	2	2	1	2	2	1
Select one - Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from my CLASSMATES	3	2	1	3	2	3	3
Select one - Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from LANG-8 USERS	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Select one - I was eager to read the feedback from my CLASSMATES	3	3	2	3	2	2	2
Select one - I was eager to read the feedback from my LANG-8 USERS	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
Select one - Most of the corrections I received from my CLASSMATES were correct	4	4	3	4	4	4	3
Select one - Most of the corrections I received from LANG-8 USERS were correct	4	4	4	5	4	4	4

Finally, although SR6 and SR12 did not appear to distinguish between peer and user-provided feedback, both participants responses also indicated their positive impression of receiving feedback to their Spanish writing in Lang-8: SR6 agreed with both statements about eagerness and strongly agreed with the two statements about learning from feedback and the accuracy of the feedback received from both

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responder groups. SR12 appeared to be more enthusiastic than the average survey responder, strongly disagreeing with both statements about reading feedback being a waste of time and strongly agreeing with the remaining statements about learning as a result from reading feedback, eagerness to read, and the accuracy of feedback received.

Conversely, there were seven students who did, in fact, appear to differentiate between the perceived value of the two feedback responder groups (SR1, SR2, SR4, SR5, SR7, SR8, and SR9). In contrast to the previously described group of student participants, considerably more variety was observed among the responses from this group (see Table 38). Therefore, I will begin by presenting the similarities among these seven responses and then look at the differences indicated by each individual survey responder.

As seen in Table 38, these seven student participants uniformly agreed with the fourth Likert-scale question (Select one - Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from LANG-8 USERS). All seven also agreed that the corrections they received from Lang-8 users were correct; however, one student participant (SR5) indicated more conviction than the other six by selecting "Strongly agree". These results indicated that all seven student participants who differentiated between peer and website user responder groups positively regarded the educational value and accuracy of feedback from the latter group.

Beginning with the first end-of-semester survey responder (SR1), the responses offered by this student participant (see Table 38) indicated a slight preference for user-provided feedback. SR1 agreed that reading comments from their peers was a waste of time but remained neutral with regard to this question about the website user responder group. SR1 also neither agreed nor disagreed that reading

the feedback from peers resulted in learning but agreed that this was the case for comments and corrections offered by Lang-8 users. However, this student participant did not differentiate between the two groups in the final four questions, remaining neutral in reference to eagerness to read feedback and agreeing that both groups offered accurate corrections. Therefore, we can conclude from these responses that SR1 found user feedback to be less of a waste of time and offer more in terms of educational value, in spite of the perceived accuracy of the feedback from both groups. Furthermore, this respondent's participation in reading the responses received was, overall, neither eager nor unenthusiastic.

Survey responses from SR2, SR8, and SR9 followed similar patterns. These three participants responded neutrally to the first question, reporting that reading peer comments and corrections was neither a waste nor a good use of time, and disagreed (SR2) or were neutral (SR8 and SR9) that they had learned from peer feedback. However, responses offered by these three survey responders signaled that reading feedback from Lang-8 users was useful in terms of time spent and educational value. In fact, SR9 strongly disagreed that reading user feedback was a waste of time. However, the perceptions of these three student participants diverged in response to three of the last four questions regarding eagerness to read and accuracy of feedback. SR2 agreed with SR1 as described above: neither eager nor unenthusiastic to read feedback from both provider groups. In contrast, SR8 and SR9 both disagreed that they were eager to read peer feedback, but SR8 reported eagerness to read user-provided feedback, whereas SR9 was neutral. SR8 also agreed that classmates provided accurate feedback, but SR9 was neutral. Finally, SR2, SR8, and SR9 agreed that corrections from Lang-8 users were accurate. Consequently, we can infer from

these responses a preference for user over peer feedback even though both types of feedback were deemed to be prescriptively correct.

Responses from SR4 and SR7 also indicated preferences for Lang-8 user-provided feedback, as these student participants agreed that reading peer feedback was a waste of time and reading Lang-8 user feedback was not. Furthermore, SR4 strongly disagreed and SR7 disagreed that reading feedback from peers was a learning experience but agreed with the same statement about user-provided feedback. Their opinions diverged regarding eagerness: SR4 was not eager to read any of the feedback received from either group, although for classmates the response indicated disagreement and neutral for website users. In contrast, SR7 was eager to read user-provided feedback. Although SR4 neither agreed nor disagreed that the corrections provided by peers were accurate, SR7 did find these responses to be so. Finally, both SR4 and SR7 agreed that user-provided corrections were accurate.

The responses offered by SR5 were more extreme than those offered by the other seven student participants who differentiated between peer and user-provided feedback, and again we see a slight preference for the latter. SR5 did not believe that it was a waste of time to read comments and corrections offered by peers (disagree) or Lang-8 users (strongly disagree). In response to the statements about learning from and eagerness to read feedback, SR5 was indifferent with regard to peer responders (neutral) and positive about website users (agree). Finally, SR5 felt that most of the corrections received from classmates (agree) and website users (strongly agree) were accurate.

Finally, one student (SR13) offered mixed reactions to the end-of-semester survey Likert-scale questions. SR13 agreed that reading comments and corrections from both responder groups was a waste of time. However, this participant agreed

that feedback from both responder groups was useful in terms of learning. SR13 was neutral regarding eagerness to read peer feedback and strongly agreed with the same statement about user-provided feedback. These apparent contradictions are possibly explained by this participant's perceptions of accuracy of corrections offered by peers (agree) and users (neutral), perhaps indicating a prior assumption that user-provided feedback would be more useful than that provided by peers; apparently this assumption was not supported by the perceived accuracy of feedback received.

The following section will describe the participants' responses to the open-ended questions from the end-of-semester surveys. I will first present an overview of the themes that emerged from the coding of these responses and then explain how these codes were interspersed as responses to each of the eight open-ended questions.

End-of-semester survey open-ended responses

A total of 122 open-ended responses to the end-of-semester survey were coded for emergent themes, excluding the six that indicated student participants had no further comment about the Lang-8 writing activities as previously described. Thirty-seven themes initially emerged from the analysis of these open-ended responses, which were collapsed into 22 final themes with 168 tokens. Table 39 presents the total token count of each of these final themes and identifies the framing of the questions (i.e., benefits, disadvantages, mixed, and not applicable [N/A]) where the responses were found. A more detailed account of these tokens can be found in Appendix H, where I identify how many instances of each theme emerged in response to the various eight open-ended questions. The eight most common themes received were coded more than six times and account for 127 of the 168 tokens, or 76% of

coded themes. Therefore, in the next section I will describe these eight themes in more detail.

Table 39: Summary of tokens of emergent themes in response to open-ended-questions

Theme	Reactions	Tokens
Receiving responses from untrained feedback providers	Disadvantages	27
Alternatives affording comparison and autonomy	Mixed	21
Receiving responses from usage experts	Benefits	19
Conflicting feedback	Disadvantages	16
Impressions of assignments on Lang-8	Mixed	13
Etic perspectives of how to improve later drafts	Benefits	12
Shared class experiences, or lack thereof	Mixed	10
No disadvantage	Disadvantages	9
Preference for instructor-provided feedback	N/A	6
Accuracy of feedback	Benefits	6
Recommendations for language instructors	N/A	5
Explanations of feedback	N/A	4
Misunderstandings related to intended message	Disadvantages	4
Global feedback	Mixed	3
Opportunity for face-to-face communication with group members for clarification	Benefits	2
Increased metalinguistic awareness	Benefits	2
Lowered stakes	Benefits	2
Timing of writing assignments on Lang-8	Disadvantages	2
Grades	N/A	2
Preference for giving feedback	N/A	1
Advice for Spanish student writers	N/A	1
No difference between responder groups	Benefits	1
TOTAL		**168**

The disadvantages of receiving responses from untrained feedback providers (i.e., non-instructors) was the most common theme to emerge from analysis of the open-ended responses. The 27 tokens that corresponded to this theme were the result of combining two related issues: concerns regarding the accuracy of corrections and explanations received as feedback on Lang-8 from both

responder groups and hesitancy to trust the feedback received from multiple sources. The former appeared 12 times in response to the second open-ended survey question (What disadvantages, if any, are there to feedback from your classmates?) and ten times for the fourth question (What disadvantages, if any, are there to feedback from your other Lang-8 users?). Ten survey responders indicated that a disadvantage to peer feedback included the possibility that their group members had offered inaccurate feedback. For instance, SR5 said "Feedback from my classmates can be disadvantageous at times because their corrections are not always 100% correct. So [*sic*] they might give me wrong corrections that causes [*sic*] me to have to come up with the right answer." SR6 explained how this uncertainty was resolved in this participant's later drafts:

> "The only bad thing about receiving feedback from my classmates is that they're not always right, but because I feel like my Spanish is mediocre compared to most of them, a lot of times, I'll just go with whatever they say. I don't always go with their corrections if my gut questions it enough, but most of the time, they're pretty convincing."

The remaining two responses to the disadvantages to peer feedback that were coded for untrained feedback providers expressed concerns that their peers would overlook their mistakes because they were at relatively the same proficiency level. For instance, SR4 responded: "They aren't generally native speakers either so they may make the same mistakes that you do."

The ten tokens of this theme that appeared in response the question about disadvantages to feedback from Lang-8 users all addressed the possibility of receiving inaccurate feedback. SR4 noted that "Native speakers aren't always completely knowledgable [*sic*] from a grammatical standpoint," and SR15 responded that "Some people may be very good at speaking, but not necessarily understand or even know

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about all of the grammatical rules, like subjunctive, past participle, existing aticidente [*sic*], etc."

Finally, the theme of untrained feedback providers also appeared five times in response to the eighth open-ended question, which was the sixth question included in analysis for the present study (What disadvantages, if any, are there to having multiple sources (from classmates, Lang-8 users, and the instructor) of written feedback?). For instance, SR11 candidly replied that "Sometimes only 1 person edits your work, they're wrong, and you're screwed." SR13 employed more diplomatic language to say that "Help from some can be hard to put complete trust in."

The second most frequently occurring theme in the coding of the open-ended responses to the end-of-semester survey was comments about students' increased exposure to alternative forms of expression in Spanish, with 21 tokens. This theme emerged from the combination of three related topics: language variety, options for comparison, and learner autonomy. References to alternative forms of expression appeared in response to four questions, so I will examine examples of each one below.

In response to the open-ended question about benefits of receiving feedback from Lang-8 users, three students indicated their appreciation for language variation. For instance, SR7 said "You can get multiple ways to rephrase some sentences [*sic*] and they might correct things that classmates at our level might overlook." SR13 echoed this positive outlook of language variation, noting that benefits included "New perspective, more likely to get aided by a native speaker, and *alternate ways of speaking*" (emphasis added).

Conversely, five students referenced this diversity of input in responses to the question about disadvantages to receiving feedback from Lang-8 users. Three responses specifically referenced dialectical or regional variation as a drawback to

native speaker feedback. For example, SR11 responded thusly: "They're not always right, and dialectal differences can go against curriculum." Another student participant, SR3, commented about the distinction between the formal Spanish that was learned in the classroom and spoken Spanish: "We are learning different material and structure than the way they are used too [*sic*] speaking their native language." However, SR12 disagreed that variation was disadvantage, responding "none! Sometimes I disagree with their corrections, but it is often that we are both correct, and I just have a prefernce [*sic*]."

Twelve students mentioned variation of language alternatives as a benefit to having multiple sources of written feedback. Eight students referred to "compiling" or "comparing" corrective feedback from multiple sources. SR5 replied "Having multiple sources of written feedback is very beneficial because it gives you the opinion of not just one person, but a group of experienced people. If a consensus is made on a correction, then I will generally trust it." Four more students used the words "variety" or "difference" in reference to more global writing aspects. SR2 noted that "The benefit of having multiple sources is you can receive different opinions for the same topic to promote *discussion or thinking*" (emphasis added).

One mention of language learner autonomy appeared in response to the question asking students to identify disadvantages to multiple sources of feedback. SR4 disagreed with the question, reporting that "Having multiple sources of written feedback is not disadvantageous in my opinion. I receive multiple corrections from people of different experiences and *then it is up to me to figure out the best possible correction*" (emphasis added).

However, as seen in the responses about the disadvantages of website user feedback, not all student participants appreciated having to make their own decisions

when feedback did not agree. All 16 tokens coded for this theme appeared in ten responses to the question regarding disadvantages of multiple sources of feedback. Six students used the word "confusing" and one used "confusion" in reference to multiple sources of feedback. For instance, SR1 simply replied "It can get confusing," and I was left to infer that this student participant was making reference to having received different responses from multiple sources. However, the remaining comments referencing confusion explicitly said that "different" (n = 3), "conflicting" (n = 3) and "contradict[ing]" (n = 2) feedback, or "sources [that] disagree" (n = 1) were disadvantages to multiple sources of feedback. SR6 replied "It can get confusing sometimes because some of the corrections would contradict each other. You just have to use your best judgment at that point." Therefore, this latter group of comments was coded for two themes: confusion and contrasting feedback, which were later combined to form the category *disadvantages of alternative forms of expression*.

The fourth most common theme, impressions of Lang-8, was composed of seven positive, four negative, and two mixed assessments of the website, its users, and the journal writing assignment. One positive evaluation appeared in response to the third open-ended question, which asked for benefits to receiving feedback from Lang-8 users. SR16 praised the speed with which feedback was received: "They are native speakers and should be knowledgable [*sic*] about the language. *A good number of other users actually reply pretty quickly* and can be helpful" (emphasis added). The remaining six evaluations of the website and website users were found in response to the final two open-ended questions. In the response offered by SR7, two facets were praised by SR7: again, the speed with which feedback was received and the repeated nature of writing journal entries. This student participant wrote "Actually,

Lang8 is a great way because it gives feedback quicker and assignments are more frequent." The four remaining positive comments were in response to the final survey question asking student participants if there was anything else that they would like to say about the journal writing assignment on Lang-8. All four were brief positive responses. For instance, SR10 replied "good tool," and SR15 said "Short and sweet and educational."

However, as indicated in the chapter surveys, some of the student participants were unhappy with certain aspects of the assignment. In response to the final survey question, four student participants expressed negative opinions. For example, one student offered potential solutions to technical issues (SR11: "Encourage students to write their entries in a word processor, and then copy/pasting the entry into Lang-8 to avoid technological problems [potentially have them submit a physical copy to the professor as well]"), and another complained about the timing of the assignment (SR7: "Sometimes it would be a hassle to correct assignments because almost everything was already corrected and I didn't want to repeat things that were already said."). SR3 argued that the amount of work done writing and correcting journals on the website was not reflected in the small impact the assignment had on final grades, and SR16 suggested that the abundance of class assessments overshadowed journal writing: "These assignments were created with good intentions but there are so many other assessments in this class that this site was put on the back burner." Finally, two student participants responded to the final open-ended survey question with mixed opinions. For example, SR6 provided a detailed response about the advantages and disadvantages of weekly writing assignments on Lang-8:

> Honestly, I dreaded doing Lang-8 a lot because between work and my classes, it was just another "whatever" assignment to me. But, [*sic*] I did think Lang-8

was very helpful and I'm glad I forced myself to do them because they helped me be prepared in class for the most part. They also helped me know where I was at with the material. I judged that based off how easy or difficult it was for me to write my own entry and correct other entries."

The next most common theme to emerge from analysis was the advantages of outsider perspectives regarding how to improve later drafts of student participants' journal entries. The twelve tokens that comprised this theme were given in response to the three questions about benefits of feedback from classmates, Lang-8 users, and multiple sources. Eight instances were coded from six responses to the benefits of peer feedback. These instances included six remarks about the usefulness of outsider feedback for proofreading: three references to corrections and three references to writers overlooking their own errors. For example, SR3 noted that "Some benefits are that you get to see how you can improve something you wrote or catch mistakes you didn't realize you had made." In addition to local, form-focused feedback, one of these six responses also included a reference to global feedback; SR5 said "Feedback from my classmates is beneficial because it gives me their correction, *opinions and ideas that I might not have thought of* or that I missed" (emphasis added). Three similar responses were given as examples of the benefits of Lang-8 user feedback. For instance, SR15 noted that "*Some additional feedback can be beneficial*, especially if it's their primary language" (emphasis added). One final reference to etic perspectives was found in response to the question about benefits of receiving multiple sources of feedback. SR13 enjoyed having "An overall sense of how the language can be used, *while seeing a few forms of editing*" (emphasis added).

The seventh most often mentioned category of responses included eight references to group-member familiarity with shared class experiences as a benefit to peer feedback and one negative reference to the lack of this knowledge as a

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disadvantage to receiving website user feedback. Seven of the eight tokens counted for peer feedback were positive. For instance, SR7 answered that "The assignment is usually focused on the grammar we are working on in class so by having classmates correct you, they are mainly making sure you've understood the chapter." In contrast, SR3 argued that shared class experience would not necessarily be beneficial because "If your classmate thinks he is right when he is not, he may confuse your understanding of a lesson." The final negative response highlighted the importance of feedback providers' knowledge of the purpose of writing assignments. For example, as a disadvantage to website user feedback, SR13 responded that "*They do not know what the assignment's goal was*, we do not know if their help is credible, and they may be fluent in the language, but not correct in terms of writing" (emphasis added). This particular response was also coded twice for untrained feedback providers: once for the accuracy of corrections and again for trust.

A total of nine negative responses were offered to the three questions about disadvantages of feedback: four for peer feedback, three for user-provided feedback, and one for multiple sources of feedback. Unlike similar negative responses to the final question requesting any further comment about the Lang-8 comment, these answers were not discarded, as they were given in response to a specific question and therefore were considered content responses, rather than a negation of having more comments. In response to peer feedback, SR14 responded "I don't really see any disadvantages to this." SR16 simply responded "None" in response to the question about disadvantages to multiple sources of feedback. In response to user feedback, SR5 was more verbose: "Feedback from other Lang-8 users is not disadvantageous in my opinion. I generally trust their opinion/experience/corrections because they have more experience with the language than I do."

Summary of survey responses

Although personal preference as indicated by their responses were varied, participant responses to the five surveys coincided with the findings from the other research questions. For instance, the most common positive type of open-ended survey response and the fourth most common negative response to the four end-of-chapter surveys were related to the abundance of local, form-focused feedback. In response to the end-of-semester survey, appreciation for local feedback was the sixth most commonly occurring code. These results indicate that participants were aware of the prevalence of form-focused feedback, although reactions to this type of feedback were mixed. Most responses indicated that receiving comments and corrections for local issues were helpful, as they would not have noticed these errors on their own. However, dismissal of the importance of form-focused feedback occurred five times in the end-of-chapter surveys, indicating that some participants felt that they would have been able to find these errors on their own.

Reactions to language variation present in the local feedback that was coded for alternate forms of expression from native speakers were also mixed. Some participants found value in being exposed to alternative forms of expression, whereas others objected, arguing that variation was confusing. Interestingly, language variation introduced by peer-response providers was not highlighted by participant survey responses, despite the similar percentages of total local responses from the two responder groups related to alternative forms: 19% of total local responses from website users and 18% of total local responses from peers. It is possible that participants did not notice this similarity due to the large number of responses in the raw data: 582 for users and 223 for peers.

In fact, despite the consistently higher average rating of responses offered by website users in terms of usefulness in the end-of-chapter surveys, feedback from native speakers of Spanish in general was mixed. Native speaker feedback was viewed positively by some, as indicated by the slight preference for user feedback in the end-of-semester survey and the comments in all five surveys analyzed for the fourth research question noting that this responder group was more experienced with Spanish. However, other participants expressed hesitation about incorporating website-user feedback into later drafts, as native speakers do not always possess expertise in writing or grammar.

The weekly writing assignments were viewed positively in terms of opportunities for noticing and revisions of later drafts. Furthermore, students reported satisfaction from frequent contextualized Spanish use and from receiving user-provided responses to their Spanish writing relatively quickly. Conversely, technical issues with the website was frustrating for the participants, and the timing of the group-member responses was problematic, as it set up an imbalance between the two responder groups and left some of the participants feeling like they were unable to contribute or that their contributions were meaningless.

Survey responses indicated a generally positive reception to peer feedback due to shared knowledge of class content and assignments and the opportunity to receive outside perspectives on written Spanish production in a low-pressure setting, before this writing was graded for content and accuracy. However, many students reported displeasure related to group member inactivity, wariness about the possibility of inaccurate peer feedback, and a general lack of motivation to review responses on Lang-8.

Finally, according to the responses to the end-of-semester survey, only seven of the eighteen participants perceived a difference in the usefulness of the two provider groups. Moreover, these seven participants indicated a preference for user-provided feedback to varying degrees.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

INTRODUCTION

Thus far I have presented the rationale for the study, an overview of the related literature, the methodology that I used for data collection and analysis, and the findings from this dissertation. In this chapter, I first review the four research questions guiding the investigation. Next, I summarize the findings of the study and explain how they support or challenge findings from previous research. I then discuss the implications for practical applications of the findings. I conclude with the limitations of the study design, suggest possible improvements for future research, and propose ideas for related future research.

In order to examine the feedback received by participants from classroom peers and Lang-8 website users, the following research questions were asked to direct the study:

1. Who responds to assigned student writings on Lang-8?
2. How much feedback do students receive?
3. What kinds of feedback do they get?
4. What is the students' response to this feedback?

USING WEB 2.0 FOR TARGET LANGUAGE WRITING FEEDBACK

The primary purpose of this exploratory case study was to examine the feedback participants received in the computer-mediated context of LLSN websites. This dissertation examined an alternative way for students in an intact semester-long Spanish course to get feedback on their written production in the target language before receiving summative feedback from me on their final written assignments in

class. Specifically, I was interested in one way to outsource the task of providing formative feedback to both classroom peers and the Internet public.

In Chapter 1, I noted that native Spanish speakers, as usage experts of Spanish, might be better equipped than classroom peers to respond to the feedback needs of target language learners. I proposed that Lang-8, a language learning via social networking website, could serve as a platform to connect students conveniently to native speakers of Spanish and more advanced Spanish learners. However, as I pointed out, not much was known about what occurred in these online exchanges, leading to a number of research questions. The findings of this study have answered some of these questions and have given rise to more.

For instance, I saw evidence that the participants received feedback to target language writings on Lang-8 from native speakers and peers that they perceived as useful, as indicated by end-of-semester survey responses. Moreover, 97.4% of user- and 89.3% of peer-provided written corrective feedback that was error-triggered was successful, lending additional support to participants' perceptions of usefulness. Furthermore, participants received close to 4,000 responses from native speakers in the form of both in-text corrections and comments related to content and form. Additionally, there was evidence suggesting that participants' reactions to user- and peer-provided feedback was generally positive. However, individual participant reactions to receiving this feedback varied according to participants' preferences related to, but not limited, the following: opinions regarding receiving feedback from untrained native speakers, participant opinions regarding the variation present in alternative linguistic forms, preferences for local over global responses or vice versa, and the presence or absence of shared knowledge of the goals of writing prompts. Lastly, with regard to continued use, none of the participants in this study used Lang-

8 after the end of the course semester, in line with previous research findings (Brick, 2011; 2012; Clark & Gruba, 2010; C.-H. Lin et al., 2016; M. Lin, 2015). However, one participant (S16) posted one unassigned entry to Lang-8 for additional user feedback – a revised draft of E10, the chapter four final task, before it was due in class. It would be interesting to look at this student's Lang-8 activity (e.g., posts and responses received) in a future study to investigate evidence of uptake from one draft to the next and at his survey responses for possible explanations for his motivation to seek out more feedback autonomously.

Additionally, I pointed out in Chapter 1 that participants in this study were not conventional LLSN website users in at least two ways: motivation to use Lang-8.com and native-status of language of responses offered. We saw references to the former of these distinctions in the survey data. For instance, the third highest response to the four end-of-chapter surveys indicated low motivation to review responses received on Lang-8. Participants reported both forgetting about the Lang-8 assignment and/or not prioritizing it in relation to other responsibilities. Moreover, participants indicated extrinsic motivation in the survey responses through repeated references to their course grades, and as indicated by a decreased likelihood of peer response to journaling entries that were posted late and therefore would not influence my evaluation of responder participation.

New questions emerged during the analysis of participant data for future investigation. Primarily, I would like to know more about the cause of differing rates of posting journal entries and peer responses. As we saw in Table 10, participants made dissimilar decisions about when to respond to writing prompts by posting journal entries and when to respond to peer journals, which indicated the influence of outside factors. Future research might examine the influence of writing prompt

topics versus that of group member interpersonal relationships on these rates. For instance, one student responded in the first end-of-chapter survey that she wished anyone in the course were able to provide responses instead of only her group members. Moreover, the fourth chapter survey responses demonstrated a return to favorable impressions of the Lang-8 writing activity. I suggested in Chapter 4 that participants' positive impressions might be due to a combination of relief and nostalgia: they appreciated the value of the activity now that they were no longer responsible for completing the assignments. A second interpretation is the influence of group member (dis)harmony, as chapter four was the only time I allowed them to pick their group members. Findings related to this topic might support or challenge Rollinson's (2005) assertion of the importance of careful consideration of group membership in peer-feedback activities.

This section has summarized the findings of the research questions in light of the questions presented in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. The following section will situate these findings in relation to the findings of previous research.

Affordances and limitations of receiving target language writing feedback on Lang-8

Written output is thought to be especially advantageous because it provides a record of output to which language learners can return for later reflection, confirming or denying the success of their attempts to use the target language for the exchange of ideas and information (I. Lee, 2008; Williams, 2012). In the present study, one student in particular highlighted the advantage of having a written record of corrections in her responses to two of the end-of-chapter surveys (see Table 32). Furthermore, several responses to the end-of-chapter surveys indicated that

participants appreciated the activity as a way to notice errors, and an additional two addressed increased metalinguistic awareness that would not have occurred without the provision of feedback (See Table 39). Moreover, I identified many references to comparing corrective feedback from multiple sources, which would have been considerably more difficult were these corrections given orally. These findings are in line with the proposed benefits of written target language output and therefore support the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005), which asserts that output contributes to language learning by affording learners with opportunities to notice gaps in target language knowledge, to test hypothesis related to language production, and to encourage metalinguistic awareness.

Declining rate of peer responses to journal writings

The findings of the present study supported Susser's (1994) assertion of the benefits of a process writing approach in both formal and informal contexts, although they perhaps challenge the suitability of LLSN sites for formal language practice. Participants successfully composed rough drafts for both personal and academic writing purposes and received feedback from peers, indicating in survey responses that they had made revisions to content and to form as a result of the feedback they had received. As previously described, the writing prompts for the third (E3) and eighth entries (E8) on Lang-8 asked participants to outline their responses to the final task for the first and third chapters: E3 was an email (i.e., informal genre of personal communication) to a student from Spain who is coming to the university the following semester to study computer science, and E8 was a five-paragraph argumentative essay (i.e., formal genre of academic writing) about one of three topics related to the textbook's content for the third chapter (i.e., Is it necessary to look for new sources of

energy?, Is it justified to invest money in space exploration?, and Is genetic engineering ethical or not?). However, it is interesting to note that although all 18 participants posted journal entries for E3 on Lang-8 for peer and user responses, only 13 students posted entries for E8 (i.e., the formal, argumentative essay). Moreover, the corresponding end-of-chapter survey responses related to the incorporation of user- and peer-provided feedback in later drafts also indicated a slight difference (see Table 30): average survey responses to the incorporation of feedback was slightly higher for chapter one than chapter three for both peers and website users.

One possible explanation for the decrease in participant journal writing activity for E8 is in relation to writing genre. Peeters (2018) discussed the use of informal language in online communication in his study as evidence of the changing and interpersonal nature of Internet-based communications. Furthermore, Lantz-Anderson (2018) suggested that "the social media context [i.e., Facebook] offered a casual space for [learner] communication" (p. 705). Therefore, it is possible that the participants perceived the context of Lang-8 as more suitable for informal language practice than for feedback on formal language. Future research might sort peer journal responses and peer- and user-provided responses according to the writing prompt topic to examine the possible influences of language register on both participants' journal entry responses and types and amount of feedback received.
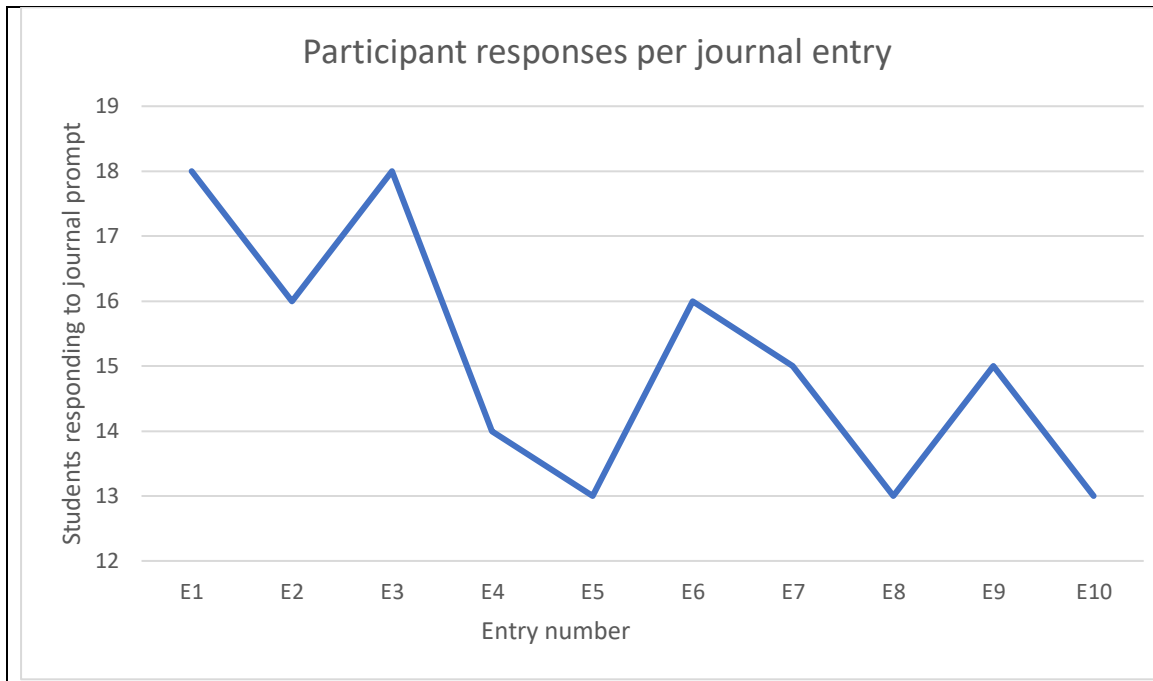
Figure 32: Total participant journal entries per assigned writing prompt

In fact, when examining the number of journal entries posted over time, I saw a general decline (see Figure 32). A second possible explanation for this downturn would confirm findings reported by various researchers of traditional social networking websites (Kelley, 2010) and LLSN sites (Brick, 2011, 2012; Clark & Gruba, 2010), asserting that even participants who were initially pleased with the affordance of these websites were eventually discouraged by problems related to their design. Conversely, C.-H. Lin et al. (2016) attributed participant attrition on Livemocha.com, another LLSN website, to multiple factors including lack of instructor scaffolding of the activities. Moreover, M. Lin (2015) suggested that participants' anxiety related to loss of face could be to blame for attenuation of participants' online activity on Lang-8. Indeed, none of the 18 participants in the present study posted any entries on Lang-

8 after the end of the semester, further confirming the findings of the aforementioned studies.

Moreover, during the three semesters that I piloted the study using Lang-8 in the courses I taught (Intermediate Spanish I and Intermediate Spanish II), 68 of my students signed up for Lang-8. However, only three continued to post after the course had ended. One student posted two entries six months after her final post for the course. Another student posted 11 times: four times the month after the course ended, three times later that same year (i.e., 2014), once in 2015, and three times in 2016. The third student was the most active of all, posting a total of 84 additional entries: 11 times the following year (i.e., 2014), 72 times in 2015, and one last time in 2016. Therefore, the causes of attrition in LLSN websites is another area ripe for future research.

Returning to the present study, a third possibility for the lower rate of responses over time is a lessening of what Reinhardt called the "novelty effect" (2019, p. 22). In other words, by the eighth of ten entries, these participants were less impressed by the uniqueness of receiving responses from native speakers of Spanish. However, as seen in Figure 32, all but three of the 18 participants responded to the writing prompt for the following entry (E9). Further possible reasons for lower response rates to E8 include participants' other responsibilities in the Spanish course or other courses, work-related responsibilities, and other issues related to their personal lives (e.g., in the third end-of-chapter survey, S1 responded thusly: "October was a low point for me personally and I almost withdrew from UT. So [*sic*] I was not concerned with my lang 8 [*sic*] homework").

Participants' privacy concerns

Prichard (2013) suggested that learners needed to be trained to use social networking sites safely for language learning. As previously indicated, the issue of privacy settings was addressed during an in-class discussion the first week of the semester. As mentioned in Chapter 4, only three of the 151 entries posted to Lang-8 restricted the privacy settings to *Share with my friends only* on their posts. S15 limited visibility of his first and third entries, and as a result received only peer responses to both of those entries. However, S13 selected the same privacy setting for her response to the sixth journal-writing prompt and received no responses at all. Both of these students left their journal entries unrestricted for the remainder of the semester.

Eight of the participants did not use any of the available privacy settings for their posts, meaning that anyone with an internet connection could find their Lang-8 journal entries using a search engine. The remaining eight participants restricted views of their journal entries to Lang-8 users only for some of the entries: three participants used this setting for one entry, one restricted views for two entries, two participants restricted views for three entries, one restricted views for four entries, and one restricted all of her journal entries to Lang-8 users only. Furthermore, 72% of participants used their first and last names on Lang-8, and 72% listed their age at the time of writing. All but two students mentioned the name of the city where they lived and attended university, 61% included references to places they had lived before Austin, and somewhat alarmingly, two gave their full dates of birth.

These findings corroborate Prichard's (2013) recommendations regarding safe use of social media. Despite my informing the students of the available privacy settings and the risks of posting personal information on a public website, the majority provided information that could put them at risk. A possible explanation for

this tendency is related to Bax's (2003, 2011) theory of Normalization: perhaps today's university-level students have become so accustomed to sharing personal details with the Internet public via social media that they are unaware when they do so. However, I feel the need to urge future researchers to remind students multiple times of the importance of maintaining anonymity through these settings.

One final point related to the limitations of using LLSN and traditional social networking websites is the absence of evidence of cyber flirting (Brick, 2011, 2012; Lloyd, 2012; Orsini-Jones et al., 2013): I did not find evidence of inappropriate advances in the responses provided by Lang-8 users, nor did my students report it in their survey responses. Therefore, in the present study, cyber flirting did not appear to be of concern.

Audience consideration

Unskilled writers have been observed to neglect taking their audience into account (Johnston, 1996; Uzawa, 1996). There was evidence of this in the 117 responses (86% of which were correctly changed by feedback providers), both in-text alterations and explanations provided in the comments, to participant's journal entries wherein website users and peers noticed that participants had alternated between the two forms of you (*usted* versus *tú*) in their journal entries. Moreover, according to Hayes (2012), journal writing is not typically composed for outside audiences, but rather "for which the writer is the sole audience. Here, formal rules [such as standards for spelling and grammar] may be relaxed a bit" (p. 376). My framing the weekly writing activities as journal entries, combined with the design of Lang-8, which also refers to learners' writings as journal entries, may have subconsciously influenced the participants to pay less attention to audience

consideration and mechanical issues, including accent marks, punctuation, and spelling. Furthermore, these types of form-focused issues are often overlooked or unused in informal Internet-based communication (e.g., texting), which may explain why they were overlooked by the participants in their writings and the website user responder group in their responses.

Realistic perspectives of native speakers

In his study of dual-language cross-cultural peer review, Reucker (2010) reported that his native English-speaking participants were hesitant to question their native-Spanish speaking peers and attributed their reluctance to idealized perspectives of native speakers. By contrast, the participants in this study demonstrated their willingness to question the prescriptive accuracy of native speaker feedback in their survey responses. For example, ten of the comments coded for the theme of untrained feedback providers in the end-of-semester survey responses were given in reference to native speaker feedback. Moreover, the second-most-commonly coded negative response on end-of-chapter surveys made reference to doubts regarding the accuracy of native speaker written corrective feedback. Classroom discussions related to prescriptive and descriptive grammar used in video recordings for Spanish listening practice are a possible explanation for the discrepancy between the finding of this study and Reucker's findings. However, more research would be needed to confirm these findings.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

As suggested by Yang (2016), my students used considerably more Spanish outside of the classroom to exchange information and ideas than would have been feasible without an online platform like Lang-8. For instance, they posted 151 journal

entries and provided each other with 1,176 in-text responses and 489 comments. This suggested that although the Spanish used to write entries and to respond was not always prescriptively correct (hence the quantity of local feedback), they understood at least some of what their peers wrote and were able to form responses in Spanish to this content. Furthermore, the 104 comments explaining local changes to the text provided by participants to their group members indicated explicit metalinguistic awareness, supporting Swain's (1985, 1995, 2005) assertion about the value of comprehensible output, specifically for noticing (Schmidt, 1995). Moreover, the 120 instances of positive facework in peer responses suggested a level of sociopragmatic awareness that would not have been revealed to me without the written peer interactions on Lang-8. That is not to say that participants would not have used Spanish in ways that took their peers' positive face needs into consideration in face-to-face interactions in class, but using Lang-8 to post comments provided permanence to this language use (Gee & Hayes, 2011), which afforded me greater opportunity to observe these responses. Lastly, close to 6,000 responses were provided by both responder groups to learner written production, and my sole contribution was introducing the website and deciding the writing prompts. Therefore, the answer to the question of whether or not Lang-8 would prove useful to me, as the instructor, as a tool to support language learner's engagement outside of the classroom is yes.

However, as noted in the previous chapter, some students were more active than others in terms of responding to the journal writing prompts. Therefore, participants with less active group members found themselves unable to offer responses to nonexistent journal entries. One option to remedy this inactivity, as suggested by a participant in the end of semester survey, is to raise the percentage of

the final grade for online writing activities. Another possible solution for instructors hoping to use websites like Lang-8 to outsource formative feedback is to ask students to attempt first to respond to their group members, but in the case of group member inactivity, to respond to the journal entry of another classmate. This would afford the students who are willing to be more active online with more opportunities to read and respond in the target language.

Moreover, the participants in this study offered a number of practical implications in their survey responses. One particularly prescient response to the end-of-semester survey echoed a suggestion provided by Ferris (2003) and implemented by Cassidy and Bailey (2018) that feedback to common errors be incorporated into subsequent classroom lessons. Another participant suggested that instructors advise learners to compose their journal entries in a word processing system and then copy/paste the text to Lang-8, as this would afford them a record in case of website malfunctions like that described by S6 for E5. Furthermore, the spellcheck option available in word processing software might help language learners to self-correct typographical errors before posting, which would allow feedback providers to focus more of their attention on meaning rather than accents, spelling, and accidental typos, which accounted for nearly 20% of total feedback on Lang-8.

It is important to note, however, that the target language proficiency level of participants in the present study seemed to be particularly well-suited for this type of online activity. For instance, beginner-level learners might not be able to construct target language writings in the first place, nor to understand corrections and comments from users provided in the target language. Furthermore, the willingness of some participants in the present study and the hesitancy of others to think critically about conflicting feedback reflected concerns related to target language proficiency.

Less proficient learners might not yet possess the target language knowledge necessary to feel competent enough to disagree with native speakers. Therefore, learner proficiency levels must be considered before implementing this type of online activity with native speaker responses to target language writings.

Another practical suggestion to increase student engagement with target language writing on websites like Lang-8 is to have students visit the site at least once a day to read and respond to at least one user entry – either a classmate's writings in the target language or an unknown site user's writings in the students' native language(s). Furthermore, as suggested by Brick (2011, 2012), students should be encouraged to add those users that provide particularly useful feedback to their friend networks and to offer feedback in the students' native language(s) to these new friends, as this would offer incentive to continue using the website after the semester ended. Moreover, perhaps allowing the students to choose their own group members would improve student response rates, as this would offer students more control over the activity and interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, as the assignment is a group activity, evaluation of students' online participation should be partially determined by their group members. Therefore, instead of end-of-chapter surveys that gathered data for research purposes with optional inclusion of peer-evaluations, instructors might want to use these surveys as an opportunity for students to assess the participation of their group members, in addition to providing a space for students to voice their opinions and concerns about the journaling assignments and the LLSN website, per se.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the consistency of due dates was meant to aid in participants' remembering to post on time. However, in addition to the imbalance this created between responder groups, some survey responses indicated

that the drafts composed on Lang-8 were not conveniently timed with regard to the final versions written in class. For example, an unnamed respondent in the third end-of-chapter survey indicated that drafts on Lang-8 needed to be assigned earlier than they were: "When done beforehand, the feedback was useful. I would recommend making Lang-8 entries due during a day of the week that would be before the assignment that the entry was preparing me for." In contrast, S15 implied the opposite in his responses to both the third and fourth end-of-chapter surveys, noting that his posts had been thoroughly reworded by the time the in-class writing was due. Therefore, instructors would need to carefully set up the timing of due dates for early drafts of writings to coordinate them with and maximize their usefulness for final drafts to be completed later in class. Reminding students of due dates could be more easily done using the learning management system (e.g., Canvas), as these systems often employ some type of homepage with to do lists and reminders for upcoming assignments.
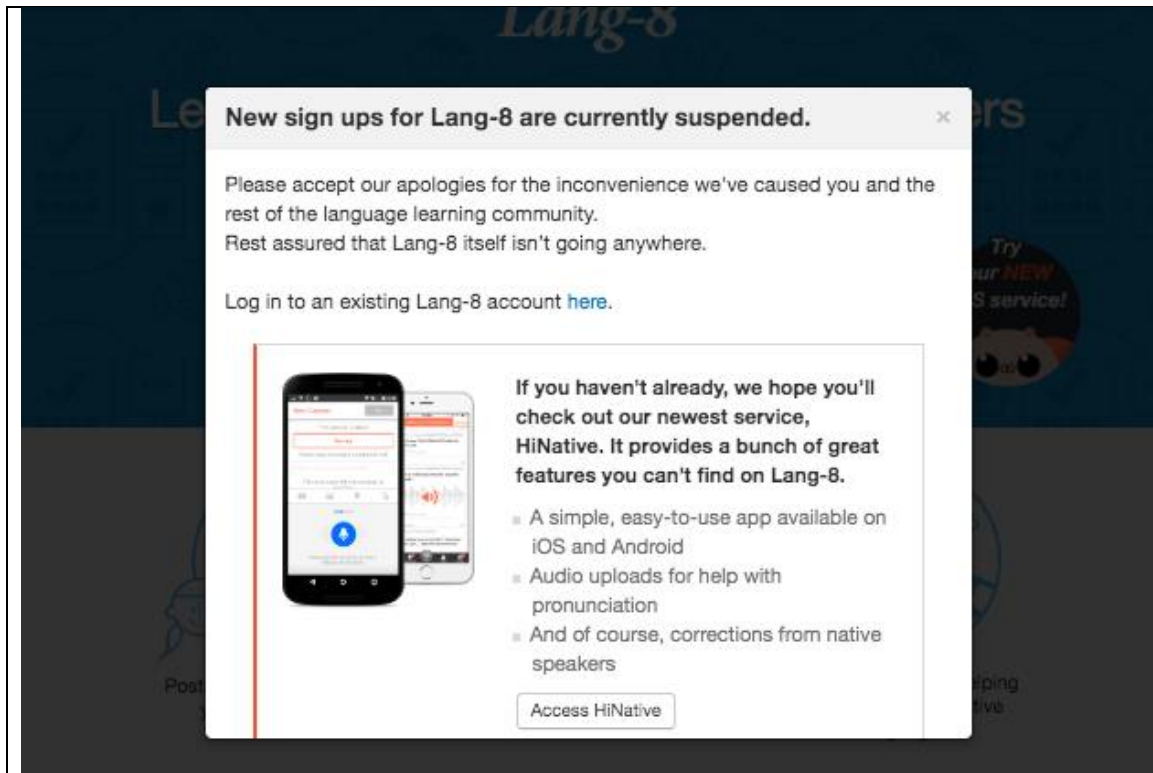
Figure 33: Screenshot of window informing prospective Lang-8 users that registrations were suspended for new users

However, since data collection for this dissertation ended, Lang-8 has stopped registering new users. Clicking on the homepage button marked *Create an account* will open a window like the one seen in Figure 33 directing language learners to the HiNative app created by Lang-8. HiNative is another platform that connects target language learners to native speakers for corrections, in addition to other services. Taking into consideration that Lang-8 was dependent on users for content creation, as noted by Zourou et al. (2012), the findings from this research were dependent upon the particular user population at the time data were gathered. Therefore, we cannot assume that the specific feedback content examined in this dissertation would be replicated in the HiNative app, but future research could compare the feedback

offered there to the results of this dissertation. However, the design of the app is for mobile phone use, which tends to be more suitable for shorter texts. Therefore, users are more likely to maintain a focus on local rather than global feedback.

Finally, suggestions for website designers and developers of sites like Lang-8 have emerged from the findings of the present study. For instance, if the purpose of providing feedback to target language learners is to aid in noticing (Schmidt, 1995), then feedback should be made more noticeable. In counting and categorizing feedback types and tokens, the use of highlighting tools greatly helped me to locate changes that had been made, particularly typographical changes such as accent marks, punctuation, and spelling. For example, changes made by the feedback provider in Figure 11 are not as easily detected as those found in Figure 18. Moreover, the lack of uniformity in use of the editing tools provided by Lang-8 (e.g., Figure 21) may lead to confusion. Therefore, my first suggestion for website designers and developers would be to program responses with a tool similar to that of track changes in Microsoft Word. For instance, insertions would be written in blue font, deletions would be struck through in red font, and comments would indicate the word or section of the text to which they refer.

A second recommendation for website design applies to the T-V distinction present in many world languages (R. Brown & Gilman, 1960). This "nonreciprocal power semantic" distinction is derived from the Latin pronouns *tu* and *vos*, wherein the former indicated familiarity and the latter indicated formality in address (R. Brown & Gilman, 1960, p. 255). As previously described, premium (i.e., paying) members of Lang-8 are given the option to indicate whether an entry is meant to use formal or casual language. However, the 69 instances of changes made to participants' journal entries for *audience consideration* indicated that this distinction was at times

not recognized by participants, the majority of which identified as native speakers of English, a language which does not differentiate between the formal and familiar you. Moreover, 13 instances of in-text changes made for *audience consideration* were unsuccessful, as the feedback provider had no way to know which of the two forms was intended in the journal entry. Therefore, adding an optional dropdown box for all website users with a choice between formal and informal audiences would not only benefit the writer, as it could serve to remind them of this distinction while composing an entry, but also the responder, as it would clarify which language forms are being attempted in the writing. If this option is not included in the website design, I highly suggest that instructors using these types of LLSN websites ask their students to indicate the intended audience formality at the beginning of each new journal entry for the same purposes.

A third suggestion for website design refers to an additional way for users to earn *L-points* or their equivalent. As explained in Chapter 1, users earn these points in one of the three ways: by providing feedback to target language learners, by getting *likes* on this feedback from other native speakers on the site, and by receiving thank you stars from the user receiving responses. During data analysis, I noticed a lack of two-way communication on the site. For instance, feedback providers would often ask questions related to language use to clarify what the original post intended to say or questions related to content to prompt writers' generation of new ideas and further language exchange. However, I only found one instance of response to these types of questions in all 2,176 lines receiving corrections or comments on Lang-8. In other words, communication on the site was predominantly one-way. However, if users were rewarded with *L-points* for responding to feedback providers, they might

be more likely to do so, which would lead to more online interaction and therefore more target language use.

Another suggestion related to website design and development is to offer an optional list of open-ended writing prompts to scaffold writing and to coordinate corrections and content-related comments. As noted in Ruecker (2010), content-related responses would be more appropriate if the topics being written about were similar. Furthermore, Figures 38 and 39 in the following section demonstrate two instances in which feedback providers appeared to be motivated to give longer-than-average responses due to their interest in the topic of participants' writings. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that users may be more inclined to provide more feedback to writings about topics that interest them. Moreover, the ability to search categories of personal interest would help facilitate finding writings related to those topics for feedback.

Finally, I believe it necessary to remind website designers that despite careful consideration taken when creating a website, one cannot control all of the purposes for which the affordances will be put to use. For instance, in this dissertation, I asked my students to join the online community for only a limited time and with the purpose of submitting classroom assignments. The study described in Chapter 2 by M. Lin (2015) also used Lang-8 for an in-tact class with the expressed purpose of blogging, rather than receiving feedback, and in fact, found the form-focused feedback to be harmful to participant's anxiety levels and considerations of face.

This section discussed the findings in light of the existing research about peer- and native-speaker-provided feedback. In the following section, I present the limitations to the present study and make suggestions for future research.

The central limitation of this study is attributable to the timing of the journal entry/response assignment schedule. First, as discussed in the last chapter, in an effort to coordinate the asynchronous nature of interaction on Lang-8 and to help participants remember when their journal entries (i.e., responses to the writing prompts) and peer responses were due, I set two weekly deadlines: journal entries were due on Wednesday and responses to their group members were due the following Monday. However, this created an imbalance between responder groups, as website users were presented with target language writings before participants were tasked with responding. As a result, all of the journal entries that were posted with privacy settings allowing for unknown user feedback had already received responses from website users before their group members had had a chance to respond. Therefore, despite these results confirming the findings from Suzuki (2009) and Xu and Liu (2010) reporting that peer feedback was more often related to global issues, I cannot report with certainty that, had peers been encouraged to respond as soon as entries were posted, the peer responders would have offered as many comments that were coded for the global category reader response. It is possible that in the absence of user feedback targeting error-triggered and unclear written production, peers might have offered more responses to local issues, which would support findings from Wu, Petit, and Chen (2015).

To rectify this disparity among responder groups, future researchers want to ask students to visit Lang-8 once a day to track group member activity and to respond any time they saw fit before the deadline for responses on Monday. In fact, one student response to the third end-of-chapter survey indicated a preference for visiting the site more frequently: "The writing assignments on Lang-8 are not that

helpful as they are right now because I rarely go back and look at Lang-8. If we had to visit Lang-8 more often, I feel like it would be more helpful."

Alternatively, participants could advise their group members via email or text when they had finished posting to Lang-8, or peer responses could be separated from website-user responses if participants posted their journal entries in two separate locations: on Lang-8 for user feedback and within the course management system (i.e., Canvas) for peer feedback. However, the additional step involved in this design might be viewed negatively by students who already reported being overwhelmed with the number of assessments associated with the course. Furthermore, separating contexts of the feedback provider groups would limit participants' exposure to native language use. For example, they would be less likely to read the responses native speakers offered to their group members if they were not required to check the other Lang-8 journal entries. In the present study, twenty instances of peer response were coded for reference to local changes made by previous responders (see Figure 34). Only five instances of this response type were offered by website-user responders, as they were more likely to use the *like* function on Lang-8 to indicate agreement.
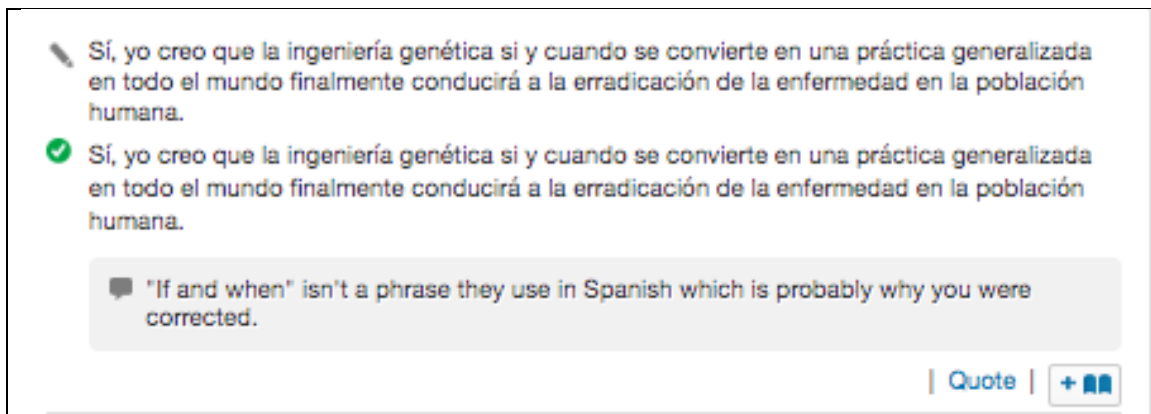
Figure 34: Example of a peer response using the comments function to explain changes offered by a previous responder

A second limitation to the present study due to design flaws were the few comments (n = 9) I provided on Lang-8 welcoming students to the course. As described in Chapter 2, this both violated my promise to participants that I would not interfere with student-led activities on Lang-8 and modeled a particular type of feedback (comments rather than in-text corrections), which could have influenced how the participants chose to respond from the outset of the study. In follow-up studies, researchers and instructors should refrain entirely from communicating with participants on Lang-8, instead welcoming them to class in person or via Canvas.

A third limitation to the present study is the absence of confirmation that Lang-8 users were, in fact, native speakers of Spanish. Although 97% of the user responders indicated in their profiles that Spanish was their first language, there is no way to corroborate these claims. This factor further limits the generalizability of the results of the present study to responses of native speakers to Spanish learners' written production in general. However, this does add to the ecological validity of research about LLSN websites.

A fourth limitation of the study is the lack of data to examine whether the feedback these participants received resulted in improvements in later drafts and/or over time. Initially, I had planned to compare the rough drafts posted in participant journals on Lang-8 with the written products submitted in class for the chapter one and three final tasks: an email and an argumentative essay. However, upon further examination of the emails written in class for the first chapter, I noticed that the students' final submissions had little in common with the journal entries they had posted on Lang-8.

For instance, Figure 35 shows the journal entry posted by S17 in response to the third entry prompt (an email to a student from Spain), and Figure 36 shows the first half of the final version of the text and the summative local feedback that I gave the student in response to his writing. The only similarity between the two drafts is found in the greeting ("Dear Miguel") and the first half of the first sentence ("Congratulations on your opportunity to attend the University of Texas" and "Congratulations on your new opportunity"). S17 received feedback to this second line in E3 from one user and one peer on Lang-8. The user corrected the spelling of "Tejas" to "Texas," which did not appear to have an effect on the final written product, as S17 spelled the word with a J on the sixth line of the in-class writing. On the other hand, the peer marked the line as perfect, but S17 made changes to the content of this sentence, disregarding the feedback from both response providers. In other words, in spite of receiving a mechanical (i.e., spelling) change from a website user and a perfect evaluation of this line from a group member, S17 decided to change partially the content of the only line from his original journal entry that made it into the final submission, resulting in no evidence to examine for uptake.

Querido Miguel,

Felicidades por tu oportunidad de asistir la Universidad de Tejas. Quiero comparar las diferencias entre la vida universitaria Espana y de los EEUU. Hay algunos diferentes entre los dos pero pienso que este informacion va a beneficarte. Primero, puedes saber que el precio para atender UT es mas caro que las universidades en Espana. Ojala que ahorra tu dinero y no compres cosas innecesarias. En addicion, tu dormitorio debe cuestar mucho. El ajusta sera deficil pero necesario. Si trabajas mucho, puedes buscar un trabajo. Las companias americanas les gustan los estudiantes que ganan titulos. Un titulo es un senal de una persona responsable y sabia. Espero que tiene un rato magnifico en los EEUU.

Sinceramente,

Dear Miguel,

Congratulations on your opportunity to attend the University of Texas. I want to compare the differences between Spanish and US university life. There are some different between the two but I think this information will benefit you. First, you can know that the price to attend UT is more expensive than the universities in Spain. Hopefully you save your money and do not buy unnecessary things. In addition, your bedroom should cost a lot. The adjustment will be difficult but necessary. If you work hard, you can look for a job. American companies like students who earn degrees. A degree is a sign of a responsible and wise person. I hope you have a great time in the US.

Sincerely,

Figure 35: Journal entry posted on Lang-8 by S17 for the third entry (E3) in preparation for the chapter one final task (an email to a student from Spain)

However, as these chapter final tasks were handwritten from square one using pen and paper in class with no access to dictionaries nor textbooks rather than making editions to an electronic or hand-written earlier draft, perhaps a more suitable form of analysis for a future study would be to consider this "final" task a later piece of writing rather than a final draft. For instance, student journal entries could be analyzed for specific response types, and those types of errors could be examined in hand-written essays.

As an example, S17 can be seen switching from the informal you (tú) to the formal (usted) forms in the final line of the body of the email (e.g., "Espero que tiene…" [I hope that you {formal} have…] in Figure 35), which was an error of mood and audience. However, in his hand-written email, he correctly used the informal (tú) throughout the email in both subjunctive (e.g., Line 5:" Ojalá que hagas…" [I hope that you {informal} make {subjunctive}…] in Figure 36) and indicative moods (e.g., Line 4: "Por esa razón, puedes…" [For that reason, you {informal} can {indicative}…] in Figure 36). These changes might suggest that although the content of the draft changed, the lessons learned from receiving feedback were maintained, as evidenced by his consistent consideration for audience and frequently correct usage of the subjunctive mood. However, other intervening activities completed during class time and other homework would have to be taken into account for their possible influence on the change.

Dear Miguel,

    Congratulations on your new opportunity. This university has many positives for the students. First, the university is in the center of the city of Austin. For that reason, you can talk with many different people. Hopefully you make many new friends at the university of Texas. Also, the professors here are some of the best in the United States. It is necessary that you get to know your professors so that they can help you. There is only one negative of this university in my opinion: the traffic. You are going to need a lot of time if you want to use public or private transportation. I think that university like in the US has significant difference from that of Spain. For example, you are just going to take two or three classes every day of the week. I hope that you can use your time in a logical manner. The adjustment will be difficult but it is a positive in ...

Figure 36: Final version of the email written in class by S17 for the chapter one final task (an email to a student from Spain)

    Further limitations to the generalizability of this study include the small sample size (n = 18) of participants, the convenience sampling, and the lack of a control group, such as students receiving only peer feedback. However, as noted by previous researchers, little is known about corrective feedback in the context of real-

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world classrooms (Storch, 2018) and actual use of LLSN websites for instructional purposes (Cho, 2015; Reinhardt, 2019). Therefore, it is my opinion that the ecological validity afforded by including participants in an intact university-level class of Spanish learners outweighs these particular limitations.

One final limitation to the present study is identical to that described by Cassidy and Bailey (2018). I did not provide any training to the participants in terms of what types of feedback are most useful, as suggested by Zhu (1995) and Rollinson (2005). However, as noted by Cassidy and Bailey, this avoided "the undue influence of the instructor's beliefs on the students' perceptions about the peer review process" (2018, p. 29). Moreover, as the purpose of this exploratory case study was to determine what types of feedback peers offered in the context of Lang-8, participant training would have interfered with the desired results.

In addition to the aforementioned suggestions to the present study for future research, analysis of the data revealed other directions for future research that were not strictly inspired by the limitations of this study. As described in Chapter 3, some participants provided commentary related to content and form in both English and Spanish. It has been suggested (e.g., Stevenson et al., 2006) that peer-provided writing feedback in the native language served different functions than feedback provided in the target language. Therefore, in a follow-up study, I could separate the types of feedback provided by both responder groups according to the language used with a focus on the functions served by native and target language responses.

A second topic for further investigation is to consider the quality, rather than the quantity of comments provided by both responder groups. For instance, the token count of global responses revealed that relative to provider groups, peers provided more responses related to global issues in terms of quantity and success. However,

examining only the quantity of these comments ignored a possible distinction in the quality of comments. For instance, Figure 37 gives an example of peer-provided global feedback that was categorized as contributions for detail/precision. S1 responded to the eighth journal entry written by S15 about alternative sources of energy with a single line of text that offered three other possible sources for the writer to consider: wind, solar, and hydroelectricity. Conversely, Figure 38 shows an example of user-provided global feedback to a different participant for the seventh entry about investments in special exploration. This response was coded for four contributions to detail/precision: (1) adding CO_2, which would lead to (2) life cycles and (3) terraforming, which would lead to (4) gravity similar to that of Earth. Clearly this user had prior knowledge of the topic being discussed, which in combination with his linguistic ability as a native speaker, resulted in a qualitatively more complex response. However, quantitative analysis measures reduced this difference to three aspects of feedback versus four. Therefore, further qualitative analysis of peer- and user-provided comments would complement the findings of this study.

Creo que también invertiremos en el viento, el sol, el agua y la energía

I think we will also invest in wind, sun, water and [*sic*] energy
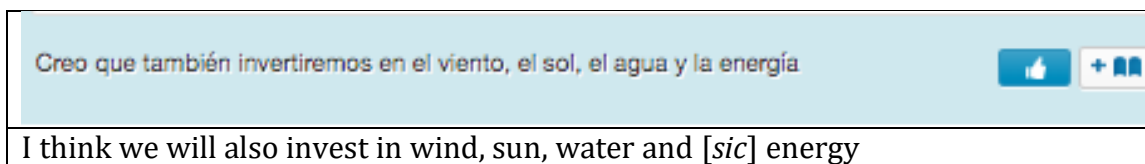
Figure 37: Example of peer-provided comment to S15 in the eighth journal entry

Tienes razón, necesitan llenar la superficie marciana de CO2 para provocar un efecto invernadero que inicie de nuevo el ciclo de la vida en Marte y luego un proceso de terraformación, para alcanzar una gravedad equivalente a la de la Tierra. Muy buen tema de discusión :D

You are right, they need to fill the Martian surface with CO2 to cause a greenhouse effect that restarts the cycle of life of Mars and then a process of terraforming, to achieve gravity equivalent to that on Earth. Very good topic for discussion :D

Figure 38: Example of user-provided comment to S4 in the seventh journal entry

Another possible direction for future investigation of this data set relates to possible gains in cultural knowledge. Finding from Ruecker (2010) suggested that in addition to target language learning, participants involved in dual-language cross-cultural peer review had opportunities to gain knowledge about the target culture. Figure 39 gives an example of a response to a journal writing about the importance of traditions. This was an unusually long and detailed response about a particular website user's familial and cultural practices, but it might be interesting to investigate these types of comments in future research.

¡Hola ███
Para mí, las tradiciones también son muy importantes. Algunas de las más importantes para nuestra familia son: reunirnos en Navidad o Año Nuevo (¡al igual que tú!), guardar flores de cardos al principio de cada año (para que no falte la prosperidad), y tomar mate con amigos y familia. Esto último lo hacemos todo el tiempo y en todo lugar, ¡es algo que nos identifica! y aunque al principio, cuando éramos niños, a ninguno nos gustaba esta bebida (es muy amarga), la tomábamos igual para poder compartir esta tradición con nuestros allegados. Ahora que soy mayor, ¡no puedo pasar ni un día sin disfrutar el compartirlo!
¡Saludos!

Hi S5!
Traditions are also very important to me. Some of the most important for our family are: meeting at Christmas or New Year (just like you!), saving thistle flowers at the beginning of each year (for prosperity), and drinking mate with friends and family. We do the latter all the time and everywhere, it is something that identifies us! and although at the beginning, when we were children, none of us liked this drink (it is very bitter), we drank it anyway to be able to share this tradition with our relatives. Now that I'm older, I can't spend a day without enjoying sharing it!
Best wishes!

Figure 39: Example of user-provided comment to S5 in the tenth journal entry

A final possible area for future research of this data set is to compare the influence of feedback received to the summative grade given to final written products composed in class. For instance, I might examine the amounts and types of feedback provided to participants' first drafts on Lang-8 in connection to the grades I assigned to their essays written in class. The correlations with improvement in terms of accuracy and content would allow me to determine whether certain feedback tokens, types, or a particular combination of the two were more influential on later drafts.

CONCLUSIONS

I conclude with three final participant responses to the end-of-semester survey that I believe conveniently summarize the mixed impressions of receiving feedback on Lang-8 as revealed this study. First, I start with the positive reaction from one student: "Allowing for us to write rough drafts without fear that our grades will

suffer for accuracy is so important. This has made me a much more comfortable writer! I loved lang 8 [*sic*]!" Next, is a more measured response that highlights both positive and negative aspects of the online assignment

> It should be continued. It may not be the most entertaining task, but something will take its place if it is removed and I find the option to view the feedback from other Lang 8 users useful. Also [*sic*] whatever replaces it will probably be harder.

Finally, we have a response that succinctly highlighted the perceived disadvantages of receiving native speaker feedback: "They do not know what the assignment's goal was, we do not know if their help is credible, and they may be fluent in the language, but not correct in terms of writing."

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the writing feedback on Lang-8, an LLSN website. Specifically, my aim was to examine the providers of feedback in this online context and to look for differences between the two provider groups (i.e., peers and unknown website users) with a focus on feedback tokens, types, and participant reactions to the feedback they received. The analysis revealed both affordances and limitations to receiving feedback from native speakers and peers on Lang-8.com, which have been outlined in this chapter. For instance, the majority of Lang-8 users self-identified as native speakers of Spanish, and the majority of participants self-identified as native speakers of English. Both feedback groups provided responses to participants' written Spanish production, with peers offering more feedback on global issues and users focusing on local issues. As seen in the survey responses, the students' reactions to receiving this feedback were varied, leading to the caution that one should not conclude from these data that one type or provider of written feedback to target language production is superior in all cases. However, findings do suggest that students' perceptions of written feedback depend

on multiple factors related to individual differences in the perceived value of local versus global feedback, the impressions of native speaker language use, and the variations present when receiving feedback from multiple sources.

Given the ubiquity of social media in the lives of today's university students, LLSN websites are deserving of more investigation. The present study attempted to fill the gaps identified by previous researchers of both written corrective feedback and LLSN websites by examining feedback received in an Intermediate-level Spanish course at a large university in the southwestern United States. The ecological validity of using LLSN websites in formal educational contexts combined with the examination of a target language other than English offered insight into a previously underexamined area of research. Taking into consideration the potential to connect language learners and language users in asynchronous communications for the development of both target language and target culture knowledge, LLSN websites can offer language instructors with one way to outsource formative feedback.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Calendar of Lang-8 Assignments for Students in Spanish

Tarea	Tema	Propósito (relativo al currículo)	Formas que deben usar	Fecha límite
Grupos Capítulo 1				
1ª entrada	Una presentación de ti mismo (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para conocerse y despertarse del posible abandono del español	Verbos en el presente (ser, estar, gustar, tener)	Miércoles, 9/3/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
1as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 9/8/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
2ª entrada	Una(s) pregunta(s) de ¡A hablar! #1 (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que vean las preguntas antes del viernes en clase	Depende de la pregunta, pero fíjense en los mandatos formales e informales y los singulares y plurales	Miércoles, 9/10/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
2as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 9/15/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
3ª entrada	Un email: el borrador de la primera tarea final (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que se preparen para la primera tarea final (un email) que tenemos la semana que viene en clase	Detalles en la página 65	Miércoles, 9/17/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
3as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 9/22/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche

Tarea	Tema	Propósito (relativo al currículo)	Formas que deben usar	Fecha límite
Grupos Capítulo 2				
4ª entrada	Una(s) pregunta(s) de ¡A Hablar! #2 (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que vean las preguntas antes del próximo lunes en clase	Depende de la pregunta, pero fíjense en los usos nuevos del subjuntivo que hemos observado	Miércoles, 10/1/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
4as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 10/6/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
5ª entrada	Escribir unas ideas para la segunda tarea final (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que se preparen para la segunda tarea final (un debate)	Detalles para el debate en la página 134, pero fíjense en cómo reaccionar y expresar opiniones, emociones y/o duda/incredulidad.	Miércoles, 10/8/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
5as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 10/13/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche

Tarea	Tema	Propósito (relativo al currículo)	Formas que deben usar	Fecha límite
6a entrada	¿Qué vas a hacer en el futuro? ¿Qué quieres ser? ¿Dónde planeas vivir? Etc. (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para practicar el futuro	Estructuras para referirse al futuro (ejemplos en las páginas 208-209)	Miércoles, 10/22/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
6as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 10/27/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
7a entrada	Una(s) pregunta(s) de ¡A hablar! (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que vean las preguntas antes del miércoles en clase	Depende de la pregunta, pero fíjense en la diferencia entre el futuro sintético y el subjuntivo	Miércoles, 10/29/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
7as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 11/3/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
8a entrada	El bosquejo del ensayo argumentativo descrito en la página 203 (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que se preparan para la tercera tarea final (un ensayo argumentativo) que tenemos el miércoles en clase	El futuro sintético, el subjuntivo con conjunciones de tiempo, propósito y contingencia	Miércoles, 11/5/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
8as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 11/10/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche

Tarea	Tema	Propósito (relativo al currículo)	Formas que deben usar	Fecha límite
Grupos Capítulo 4				
9a entrada	Una(s) pregunta(s) de ¡A hablar! (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que vean las preguntas antes del viernes en clase	Depende de la pregunta, pero fíjense en los tiempos pasados y el pasado del subjuntivo	Miércoles, 11/19/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
9as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 11/24/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
10a entrada	15 preguntas que le pueden formular durante la entrevista relacionadas con su trayectoria profesional, sus influencias, su biografía o su identidad cultural (mínimo de 75 palabras)	Para que se preparan para la última tarea final (una entrevista) que tenemos el próximo miércoles en clase	Todos ☺	Miércoles, 11/26/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche
10as respuestas	Haz comentarios o correcciones con explicaciones muy breves			Lunes, 12/1/2014 a las 11:59 de la noche

APPENDIX B: Calendar of Lang-8 Assignments Translated to English

Assignment	Topic	Purpose (relative to course curriculum)	Forms that you should use	Due date
Chapter 1 Groups				
1st entry	An introduction of yourself (minimum of 75 words)	To get to know one another and get used to using Spanish again	Present tense verbs (to be, to be pleasing to, to have)	Wednesday, 9/3/2014 at 11:59pm
1st response	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 9/8/2014 at 11:59pm
2nd entry	Any question(s) from Let's talk #1 (minimum of 75 words)	To familiarize yourself with the questions before Friday in class	Depends on the question(s) you choose, but pay attention to the singular and plural formal and informal commands	Wednesday, 9/10/2014 at 11:59
2nd response	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 9/15/2014 at 11:59
3rd entry	An email: the outline of your response to the chapter 1 Final Task (minimum of 75 words)	To prepare you for the chapter 1 final task (writing an email) that we have next Monday in class	Details for the assignment are on page 65 of our textbook	Wednesday, 9/17/2014 at 11:59
3rd response	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 9/22/2014 at 11:59

Assignment	Topic	Purpose (relative to course curriculum)	Forms that you should use	Due date
Chapter 2 Groups				
4th entry	Any question(s) from Let's talk #2 (minimum of 75 words)	To familiarize yourself with the questions before next Monday in class	Depends on the question(s) you choose, but pay attention to the new subjunctive forms we have been studying	Wednesday, 10/1/2014 at 11:59
4th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 10/6/2014 at 11:59
5th entry	The debate: come up with your arguments for the chapter 2 final task (minimum of 75 words)	To prepare you for the chapter 2 final task (a debate) that we have next Wednesday in class	Details for the assignment are on page 134 of our textbook, but pay attention to how to react and how to express opinions, emotions, and/or doubt/disbelief	Wednesday, 10/8/2014 at 11:59
5th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 10/13/2014 at 11:59

Assignment	Topic	Purpose (relative to course curriculum)	Forms that you should use	Due date
Chapter 3 Groups				
6th entry	What are you going to do in the future? What do you want to be? Where do you plan to live? Etc. (minimum of 75 words)	To practice talking about the future	Structures to refer to the future (examples on pages 208-209 of our textbook)	Wednesday, 10/22/2014 at 11:59
6th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 10/27/2014 at 11:59
7a entry	Any question(s) from Let's talk #3 (minimum of 75 words)	To familiarize yourself with the questions before next Wednesday in class	Depends on the question(s) you choose, but pay attention to the difference between the synthetic future and the subjunctive	Wednesday, 10/29/2014 at 11:59
7th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 11/3/2014 at 11:59
8th entry	The outline of the argumentative essay described on page 203 (minimum of 75 words)	To prepare you for the chapter 3 final task (an argumentative essay) that we have this Wednesday in class	The synthetic future and subjunctive with conjunctions of time, purpose, and contingency	Wednesday, 11/5/2014 at 11:59
8th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 11/10/2014 at 11:59

Assignment	Topic	Purpose (relative to course curriculum)	Forms that you should use	Due date
Chapter 4 Groups				
9th entry	Any question(s) from Let's talk #4 (minimum of 75 words)	To familiarize yourself with the questions before this Friday in class	Depends on the question(s) you choose, but pay attention to the various past tenses, both indicative and subjunctive	Wednesday, 11/19/2014 at 11:59
9th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 11/24/2014 at 11:59
10th entry	15 question that you can ask during the interview related with the interviewee's career path and their influences, biography or cultural identity (minimum of 75 words)	To prepare you for the chapter 4 final task (an interview) that we have next Wednesday in class	All of them ☺	Wednesday, 11/26/2014 at 11:59
10th responses	Make comments or corrections with very brief explanations			Monday, 12/1/2014 at 11:59

APPENDIX C: List of background survey questions

1   What is your full name?
2   When is your birthday? (mm/dd/yyyy)
3   Where were you born?
4   Where did you grow up?
5   What is your current major?
6   How many hours are you taking this semester?
7   Do you have any other responsibilities this semester? (job, internship, childcare, etc.)
8   Have you ever learned SPANISH informally (not in a classroom, but by being around SPANISH speakers)? If so, please explain.
9   Have you ever learned any languages (other than SPANISH or ENGLISH) informally? If so, please explain
10   Did you take SPANISH classes prior to starting classes at UT? If so, for how long?
11   Have you ever taken any other language classes (not SPANISH or ENGLISH)? If so, for how long?
12   Did you take SPN 601D? If so, please explain when and your general impression of the class. If not, please explain why.
13   Have you travelled to any SPANISH-speaking places? If so, where, when, and for how long?
14   Have you traveled to places where neither ENGLISH nor SPANISH is the main language? If so, where, when, and for how long?
15   Have you spent any time around SPANISH speakers? If so, how often did they speak SPANISH to you? Did you speak SPANISH or ENGLISH back to them?
16   Have you spent any time around speakers of languages other than ENGLISH and SPANISH? If so, how often did they speak their language to you? Did you speak ENGLISH or another language back to them?
17   What is your impression of using online tools in university courses? If you have used them, did you like them? Why or why not? If you have not used them, are you open to the idea? Why or why not?
18   Please describe the WRITING you have done in your previous SPANISH classes. What kinds of activities did you do in/out of class? What did you enjoy and/or dislike about writing in SPANISH in the past?
19   Please tell me about your writing practices in SPANISH. Do you make outlines or figure it out as you go? Do you have a friend or family member look over your SPANISH writing before you submit assignments? Do you make a lot of revisions at the end or revise as you go? There is no one right answer.

20 Tell me about your expectations for this semester, in terms of your final course grade. Are you shooting for an A, or will you be okay with a C+?

21 Is there anything else you want me to know about you or our class going into this new semester?

22 Please tell me about your writing practices in ENGLISH. Do you make outlines or figure it out as you go? Do you have a friend of family member look over your ENGLISH writing for important occasions (cover letters, term papers, etc.)? Do you make a lot of revisions at the end or revise as you go? There is no one right answer.

APPENDIX D: End-of-chapter survey questions

1 What is your full name?
   Please select one: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
2 --Feedback from my group members was useful to me
3 --I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts
4 How or why not? (re: Feedback from my group members was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from my group members into later drafts)
   Please select one: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
5 --Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me
6 --I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts
7 How or why not? (re: Feedback from other Lang-8 users was useful to me / I incorporated feedback from other Lang-8 users into later drafts)
8 Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8?

APPENDIX E: End-of-semester survey questions

1*   What benefits, if any, are there to feedback from your classmates?

2*   What disadvantages, if any, are there to feedback from your classmates?

3*   What benefits, if any, are there to feedback from other Lang-8 users?

4*   What disadvantages, if any, are there to feedback from other Lang-8 users?

5*   What benefits, if any, are there to feedback from your instructor?

6   What disadvantages, if any, are there to feedback from your instructor?

7*   What benefits, if any, are there to having multiple sources (from classmates, Lang-8 users, and the instructor) of written feedback?

8*   What disadvantages, if any, are there to having multiple sources (from classmates, Lang-8 users, and the instructor) of written feedback?

9*   If you had the opportunity to give the Spanish department advice about the best type of feedback to give students on compositions, what would you tell them?

Please select one: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

10*   --Reading LANG-8 USER comments and corrections of my drafts was a waste of my time

11*   -- Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from my CLASSMATES

12*   -- Generally speaking, I learned a lot from the feedback I received from LANG-8 USERS

13*   -- I was eager to read the feedback from my CLASSMATES

14*   -- I was eager to read the feedback from my LANG-8 USERS

15*   -- Most of the corrections I received from my CLASSMATES were correct

16*   -- Most of the corrections I received from LANG-8 USERS were correct

17   -- GIVING FEEDBACK on Lang-8 to my classmates was a waste of my time

18   -- Generally speaking, I learned a lot from GIVING FEEDBACK to my classmates

19   -- I was eager to GIVE FEEDBACK on Lang-8 to my classmates

20   -- I find it easy to provide feedback on GRAMMAR

21   -- I find it easy to provide feedback on CONTENT

22   -- It was easy for me to FIND THINGS to correct in my classmates' drafts on Lang-8

23   -- I consulted our TEXTBOOK in order to correct my classmate's errors

24   -- I consulted a DICTIONARY in order to correct my classmate's errors

25   -- I consulted our TEXTBOOK before making corrections to my later drafts based on Lang-8 feedback.

26*   Is there anything else you would like to say about the writing assignment on Lang-8?

APPENDIX F: Chapter final tasks from the course textbook

Chapter 1 final task: An email

Nuestra tarea final

UN EMAIL

Vas a escribirle un email a un estudiante de España que viene a UT el próximo semestre para estudiar informática.

En tu email, tienes que:
- describir la vida universitaria aquí (lo positivo y lo negativo)
- comparar la vida universitaria de EEUU con la de España
- darle consejos sobre las finanzas de los estudiantes
- decirle lo que debe hacer para "sobrevivir" esta experiencia

En casa, debes prepararte bien, haciendo lo siguiente:
- completar ¡A investigar! (buscar información en el Internet)
- organizar tus ideas
- preparar una ficha con una lista de 5 palabras útiles

En clase, vas a escribir tu email. No te olvides de...
- traer tu ficha (no puedes usar libros o diccionarios)
- incluir un saludo y un cierre
- editarlo bien y revisar el registro antes de entregarlo

Capítulo 1: El ritmo de la vida   65

Chapter 2 final task: A debate

UN DEBATE

En grupos, van a hablar de varios temas sociales controvertidos. Ya que es un debate, van a expresar sus opiniones, expresar acuerdo / desacuerdo, interrumpir, etc. No se olviden de usar las expresiones que han aprendido en la sección "Mejorando el discurso".

1. Los países industrializados son superiores a los países subdesarrollados.

2. Debe ser ilegal fumar y beber alcohol en este país.

3. Nuestro gobierno debe permitir que todos los inmigrantes vengan a EEUU sin restricciones.

4. Los EEUU necesita un Seguro Médico Universal.

5. Las personas de diferentes religiones no se deben casar.

6. Los hijos de inmigrantes deben recibir una educación universitaria gratis.

Chapter 3 final task: An argumentative essay

UN ENSAYO ARGUMENTATIVO

Vas a escribir un ensayo argumentativo de 5 párrafos sobre
uno de los temas de abajo.

Antes de escribir En grupos, hablen de los siguientes tres temas. Mientras hablan, apunta ideas que se te ocurren o mencionan tus compañeros que te puedan servir en tu ensayo.

Tema 1: buscar fuentes de energía fuera de la Tierra: ¿necesario o no?

Tema 2: invertir en la exploración espacial ¿justificado o no?

Tema 3: la ingeniería genética: ¿ética o no?

➤ Ahora, elige el tema sobre el que escribirás: _____

➤ ¿Cuál es tu posición, a favor o en contra? _____

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Chapter 4 final task: An interview

UNA ENTREVISTA

Para su tarea final van a hacer un juego de roles -- en grupos de tres-- para representar una entrevista a un hispano o una hispana del mundo del arte o la cultura. La representación no debe sobrepasar cinco minutos y debe incluir información interesante e importante de la persona a quien elijan.

Preparación

- Vuelvan a su ficha de ¡A investigar! Elijan a una de las personas para su tarea final. Después, usen la información que han recopilado para escribir por lo menos quince preguntas que le pueden formular a esa persona relacionadas con su trayectoria profesional, sus influencias, su biografía o su identidad cultural.

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Chapter 4 final task (continued): An interview

- Mientras escriben su cuestionario, recuerden lo que aprendieron en "Mejorando el discurso" y apliquen las estrategias para formular unas preguntas excelentes.

- Escriban las preguntas y piensen en unas respuestas que suenen naturales o sean originales.

Practicando la entrevista

- Decidan quién tendrá el rol del entrevistado y quiénes serán los entrevistadores.
- Decidan la información que van a presentar y practíquenla cronometrando su tiempo: NO más de cinco minutos.
- Pídanles a algunos amigos que hagan de audiencia para estar seguros que han incluido toda la información necesaria para que la entrevista quede clara.

La representación

- Preparen una tarjeta 3x5 con cinco palabras o frases sueltas que les puedan servir durante su representación.
- Pueden usar materiales auxiliares (fotos, PowerPoint, música, etc.), pero no olviden que lo importante es la entrevista en sí.
- En clase, ¡usen sus dotes teatrales! Su representación debe ser interesante y amena, además de informativa.

El público

- Mientras ven la representación, completarán una actividad.

Classification of response types			
Form (local)		**Meaning (global)**	
Grammar and vocabulary		**Audience consideration**	
Agreement		Effort to maintain consistency (formal vs informal)	AUDMATCH, UDTU, TUUD
Changed gender	GENFEM, GENMASC, GENNEU	References to consistency	AUDMATCHCOM
Changed gender erroneously	GENoopsFEM, GENoopsMASC, GENoopsNEU	Considerations of forcefulness	FORCE
Number	NUMSING, NUMPL	References to context, assignment	META
Changed number agreement erroneously	NUMoopsSING, NUMoopsPL	Level of formality changed, but mismatch with assignment	TUoopsUD, UDoopsTU
Subject/verb	SV AGREE, SVoopsAGREE	Impersonal or passive se	SEIMP, SEPAS
Article usage		**Cohesion/Transitions**	
Added article	ARTNODEF, ARTNOINDEF	Adds elements (e.g., transitions) related to text cohesion	ADDTRANS
Cut article	ARTCUTNONEED, ARTCUTNODESC	Makes comment about cohesion of OP	COHESION
Changed article	INDEFtoDEF, DEFtoINDEF	Changes elements (e.g., transitions) related to text cohesion	TRANSCHANGE

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Conjunctions		Facework	
Add conjunction	CONJ	Complete common ground	METOO, CG
Changed conjunction	CONJCHANGE	Partial common ground	CGBUT
Deleted conjugation	CONJOFF	Partial common ground with difference foregrounded	BUTCG
Lexical choice		Comment includes emoticon	EMOTICON
Added phrase	ADDPH	Comment encouraging original poster to keep writing	KEEP
Added phrase with new grammatical error	ADDoopsPH	Comment includes joke/sarcasm	HAHA
Added verb	ADDVERB	Comment includes self-deprecating joke	HAHAME
Added verb with new grammatical error	ADDoopsVERB	Respondent hedges correction or disagreement	HEDGE
Added word	ADDWORD	Comment minimizes error importance or making only small changes	NBD
Comment included alternative phrase that wasn't included in text	ALTPHRASECOM	Comment indicates original poster is not wrong, but changes/ alternatives are suggested	NOTWRONG

Change one word for another	CHANGEWORD, CHANGEoopsWORD	Comment presents change as a recommendation rather than a necessity	RECO
Comment about changing one word for another	CHANGEWORDCOM	**Likelihood**	
Change word or phrase for another phrase	CHANGEPHRASE	Response changes verb to conditional tense, indicating possibility	CONDT
Comment about changing word or phrase for another phrase	CHANGEPHRASECOM	Response changes verb to synthetic future/future of probability, indicating likelihood rather than certainty	FUTPROB,
Change verb for another verb	CHANGEVERB	Response changes future of probability to conditional – indicating possibility rather than likelihood	FUTPROBtoCONDT
Change verb for another in comments	CHANGEVERBCOM	Comment draws attention to speculative nature of original post	LIKELYCOM
Change verb + added new grammatical error	CHANGEoopsVERB	Response changes past perfect tense to present with "PODER" to indicate	PASTPERFtoPOSSP RES

		possibility rather than certainty	
Change verb phrase	CHANGEVERBPH	**Praise**	
Change verb phrase in comments	CHANGEVERBPHCOM	Comment makes positive evaluation of content	POSEVALCONTENT
Changed infinitive to conjugated verb	CONJUG	Comment indicates positive evaluation of writing	PRAISE
Deictic change	DEICTIC	**Precision/Detail**	
Removed one word	DELETEWORD	Comment mentions that changes to text are to clarify	CLAREXCOM
Removed one word in comments	DELETEWORDCOM	Addition of detail – single word	DETAILWORD
Removed phrase	DELETEPHRASE	Addition of detail in comments – single word	DETAILWORDCOM
Removed verb	DELETEVERB	Addition of detail – phrase	DETAILPHRASE
Changed English word to Spanish	ENGLISHCHANGE	Addition of detail in comments – phrase	DETAILPHRASECOM
Changed English word to Spanish with spelling error	ENGLISHCHANGEoopsSPEL	Follow-up question related to content	FUPQ
Changed false friend to Spanish word	FALSEF	Addition of detail in form of repetition for emphasis	REPENF
Changed conjugated verb to infinitive	INF	**Reader incomprehension**	

		(partial and total)	
Changed infinitive to noun form	INFtoSUST	Comment indicates lack of comprehension	DONTGET
Comment indicates OP sounds more nativelike if they make a change	NLIF	Clarification needed – reader asks if this is what original post meant to say	DYM
Comment indicates nonnative like language	NOMESUENA, NOSEDICE	Comment references false friend word/phrase that (as far as I know) wasn't intended by original post	FFoopsCOM
Highlighted lexical word with no change made to indicate confusion	NOCHANGEOJO	Text editions indicate lack of comprehension	WTF
Draws attention to change (no explanation)	OJO	**Reader reaction**	
Comment indicates OP lexical choice might be/is Spanglish	SPANGLISHCOM	Reader offers personal anecdote/info in comments related to topic	ABOUTME
Comments about lexical choice	VOCEX, LEXCHOICECOM	Added supporting argument	ADDSUPP
Changed word from singular to plural	WORDPL, NUMSING2PL	Reader asks for advise related to content	ADVICE
Changed word from singular	WORDPLCOM	Explicit agreement	AGREE

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to plural in comments			
Mood		Partial agreement with dissenting view	AGREEBUT
Changed subjunctive to indicative	INDIC	Presents counterpoint	COUNTERPOINT
Changed infinitive to que + subjunctive	INFtoConjSUBJ	Explicit disagreement	DISAGREE
Changed indicative to subjunctive	SUBJ	Emotional reaction to topic in comment	EMOREACT
Erroneously changed indicative to subjunctive	SUBJoops	Explains differences/ similarities between OP and home country	ENMIPAÍS
Changed indicative to past subjunctive	SUBJP	Reader offers personal opinion about topic	IMO
Negation		Reader indicated learning something new about topic in comments	NOSABÍA
Changed negation form	NEG	Reader offers opinion on topic in comments with(out) agreeing/disagreeing	OPINION
Changed negation form erroneously	NEGoops	Affirmative restatement of content	RESTATE
Pronouns		Tag questions	TAGQ
Added pronoun	IOP, DOP	**Repetition**	

Subject pronoun deleted in response	PRODROP	Comment references repetitive language	REPEAT
Changed pronoun	PRONMIX		
Personal A			
Added/subtracted personal A	APERS		
Prepositions			
Contractions	CONTRAC		
Added preposition	PREPADD		
Changed OP's preposition for another	PREPNEW		
Removed preposition	PREPOFF		
Tense/aspect			
Conjugated an infinitive from OP	CONJUG		
Spanglish: changed infinitive to progressive tense	INFoopsPROG		
Changed participle to present tense verb	PARTtoPRES		
Changed preterit to present tense	PRETtoPRES		
Changed present to preterit tense	PREStoPRET		
Changed progressive to infinitive	PROGtoINF		

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Changed progressive to present tense	PROGtoPRES		
Changed preterit to imperfect or vice versa	T&A		
Changed tense from present to imperfect	TENSEtoIMP		
Changed tense from present to progressive	TENSEtoPROG		
L1 translations			
Responder used L1 translations to explain lexical difference/choice	L1TRANS		
Mechanics			
Capitalization			
Added/removed capitalization	ORTHCAP		
Added/removed capitalization incorrectly	ORTHoopsCAP		
Punctuation			
Added/removed punctuation	ORTHPUN		
Added/removed punctuation incorrectly	ORTHoopsPUN		
Spelling			
Corrected spelling error	ORHTSPEL		

Unsuccessfully corrected spelling error	ORTHoopsSPEL		
Corrected spelling error likely cause by typo	TYPO		
	Tildes		
Added/removed tilde	ORTHTIL, ORTHCUTTIL		
Added tilde, but wrong one/place	ORTHoopsTIL		
Syntax			
Apocope error	APOCO		
Changed word order	SNTX		
Changed word order unsuccessfully	SNTXoops		
Corrected post-positioning error	POSTPOS		
Comment compared Spanish and English syntax norms	VsENG		
All			
Local/form-focused change/error explained in comments	LOCALEX		

APPENDIX H: Frequency of emergent codes in open-ended end of semester survey responses

	PRO: Peer feedback	CON: Peer feedback	PRO: User feedback	CON: User feedback	PRO: Multiple sources of feedback	CON: Multiple sources of feedback	Advice for the Spanish Dept?	Anything else?	TOT
Receiving responses from untrained feedback providers									
Accuracy of corrections or explanations		12		9		4			**25**
Trust issues				1		1			**2**
Alternatives affording comparison and autonomy									
Alternatives			3	5	4				**12**
Autonomy						1			**1**
Comparison					8				**8**
Receiving responses from usage experts									
Usage experts			16						**16**
Realistic language			3						**3**
Conflicting feedback						16			**16**
Impressions of assignments on Lang-8									
Like lang-8			1				2	4	**7**
Mixed reactions to lang-8								2	**2**
Dislike lang-8								4	**4**

	PRO: Peer feed-back	CON: Peer feed-back	PRO: User feed-back	CON: User feed-back	PRO: Multiple sources of feedback	CON: Multiple sources of feedback	Advice for the Spanish Dept?	Any-thing else?	TOT
Etic perspectives of how to improve later drafts	8		3		1				**12**
Shared class experiences, or lack thereof	8	1		1					**10**
No disadvantage		4	3			2			**9**
Preference for instructor-provided feedback		1					5		**6**
Accuracy of feedback			1		5				**6**
Recommendations for language instructors									
Teach from feedback							2		**2**
1-on-1 office hours							1		**1**
No peer feedback							1		**1**
Blatant brownnosing							1		**1**
Explanations, explicitness of feedback							4		**4**

	PRO: Peer feedback	CON: Peer feedback	PRO: User feedback	CON: User feedback	PRO: Multiple sources of feedback	CON: Multiple sources of feedback	Advice for the Spanish Dept?	Any-thing else?	TOT
Misunderstandings related to intended message									
Changed content of writing (misunderstanding, reader incomprehension, unfamiliar with assignment requirements)				3					**3**
Don't understand what I mean, so can't help				1					**1**
Global feedback									
Fluid/flow/connected			1						**1**
Overall sense of language					1				**1**
Writing structure							1		**1**
Opportunity for face-to-face communication with group members for clarification	2								**2**
Increased metalinguistic awareness	1		1						**2**
Lowered stakes	1						1		**2**
Timing of writing assignments on Lang-8		2							**2**
Grades							2		**2**

	PRO: Peer feed-back	CON: Peer feed-back	PRO: User feed-back	CON: User feed-back	PRO: Multiple sources of feedback	CON: Multiple sources of feedback	Advice for the Spanish Dept?	Any-thing else?	TOT
Preference for giving feedback	1								**1**
Advice for Spanish student writers							1		**1**
No difference between responder groups			1						**1**
TOTAL	**21**	**20**	**30**	**21**	**19**	**24**	**21**	**10**	**168**

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