CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data. There are four main areas in this chapter, namely: (1) discussion of errors found, (2) the comparison of pre and post training in the use of the editing checklist, (3) the relationship between initial student writing ability and the ability to use the editing checklist, and (4) analysis of data collected by the questionnaire.

4.1 Errors found

Errors in students' writing were found in four areas: grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. These errors are those that most dissatisfy and frustrate teachers (Rosen 1993, p.371). This research attempted to implement the editing checklist aimed at reducing surface errors of students' writing. The characteristic feature of editing checklists are lists of common errors students make and that they can use for proofreading their writing for surface features such as run-ons, fragments, and incorrect capitalization, punctuation, or spelling. Four areas of errors can be discussed as follows:

4.1.1 Grammar

While acknowledging that grammar covers a wide variety of features, this research particularly emphasized two aspects: the complete sentence and the use of verb tense. The assumption was that students would not become successful writers, if they were unable to demonstrate knowledge of sentence structure in English. The knowledge of sentence structure assumes control over grammatical features such as the composition of sentences which includes a subject and a predicate. This concept of sentence includes other grammatical elements for example the use of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc. Although the editing checklist can help students realize how to build the complete sentences, students at least should have enough fundamental English knowledge at their level otherwise the editing checklist will not be meaningful for them. This can be illustrated in 'If we will practice everyday we will a good language lerner'. Student's knowledge on the conditional sentences is limited.

4.1.2 Punctuation

Punctuation plays an important role in writing. Without punctuation, writing would be incomprehensible to other readers. These signposts help the readers understand the specific intentions of

the writer. Punctuation directs how the writing should sound and clarifies what it means (Parsons 2001, p.107). Though students feel familiar with the punctuation forms and they could name each of specific marks: period or full stop, colon, question mark etc., they could not use in their writing properly. For instance student 9 came up with the sentence like this 'But! this time, I try reading book.' And she put a comma where it should not have been 'I think, it is very good way for me.' In addition, students placed the period after incomplete or fragment sentences 'If we always practice English language. We will understand it.'

4.1.3 Capitalization

At this level, one might argue that student should not have problems with the use of capital letters. But mistakes in capitalization still were found in students' writing. For instance student 16 used small letter for pronoun 'i' instead of capital letter 'I' in her writing. Even the higher writing ability student still made mistake on this area. Student 8 used the capital letter in the middle of the sentence 'If we don't understand some Vocabulary, we can ask the teacher.'

4.1.4 Spelling

With mistakes in spelling it could be said that students were careless on their writing. A number of misspellings were often found with words the students would be expected to spell correctly (e.g. 'lerner' for 'learner', 'would' for 'world', and 'dood' and 'god' for 'good', on the same paper). It could be said that the correction for spelling should be easy for them if they consult a dictionary to look for the correct word.

To sum up, the four categories of errors were selected as the principle one that inexperienced writers would be able to self-correct on their own. They were not sophisticated for their level to master. In addition, the goal of using an editing checklist was to reduce surface errors and these four areas were assumed by the author that the editing checklist would be able to help students in reducing errors. When dealing with mechanical or grammatical errors in student's writing, the problems were complex rather than simple. Questions were raised whether errors were because of lack of knowledge about certain grammatical points, mis-learned rules, careless performance errors or the influence of the mother tongue language.

4.2 The comparison of pre and post training in the use of the editing checklist

Table 2 shows the comparison of the mean number of pre and post errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Students did worse overall in the area of grammar but they did better in the area of punctuation, capitalization and spelling after training. However, it cannot be assumed that the reduction of errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling resulted from the training in the use of the editing checklist process as the t-test did not show any statistically significant differences in the mean number of pre and post test errors for any of the four factors tested.

Table 2: Comparison of pre and post mean number of errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization and spelling (t-test)

Area	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	Pre-post difference	t	df	Sig. 2 tails
Grammar	20	Pre	12.72	5.07	-.564	-.439	19	.666
		Post	13.28	5.14				
Punctuation	20	Pre	3.4	3.24	.80	1.27	19	.217
		Post	2.5	2.24				
Capitalization	20	Pre	1.5	1.48	.47	.949	19	.355
		Post	1.0	1.59				
Spelling	20	Pre	5.37	3.50	.34	.403	19	.692
		Post	5.03	3.71				

4.3 The relationship between initial student writing ability and ability to use the editing checklists

Assessment of students' overall writing ability found there were 11 lower writing ability students and 9 higher writing ability students.

Table 3: The pre and post differences in errors for higher and lower writing ability students

Area(s) Student(s)	Number of students	Pre-post difference in grammar errors	Pre-post difference in punctuation errors	Pre-post difference in capitalization errors	Pre-post difference in spelling errors
Lower writing ability students	11	-2.59	1.63	0.52	1.78
Higher writing ability students	9	1.9	-0.21	0.4	-1.48

Table 3 reveals that for grammar, the higher writing ability scores group generally benefited more from the checklist than the lower writing ability scores group. The lower writing ability scores students overall did worse in grammar with the checklist than without. The situation was reversed for the other three categories: lower writing ability score students reduced their total number of errors more when using the checklist than the higher writing ability score students. To check for relationships between overall writing ability and changes in the number of errors made with and without the editing checklist,

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statistically significant differences for any of the other three categories: punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. This indicates that the editing checklist was less effective in reducing the number of grammatical errors made by lower writing ability students than those made by higher writing ability students. It is possible that lower writing ability students did not have enough fundamental grammatical knowledge to self-correct their ungrammatical sentences using the checklist whereas the high writing ability students were able to do so.

4.4 Reaction of students to the editing checklist

Because the editing checklist introduced a new technique or tool, the researcher wanted to investigate the students' attitudes towards this process and determine if the students viewed the editing checklist as a useful tool for self-editing. A questionnaire with space for additional comments was distributed to all 33 students in this classroom after the checklist training (See Appendix F).

Table 5 (next page) shows that students viewed the editing checklist as a useful tool in their writing. Four out of five of the respondents (15.15%) who rated the tool as 'very useful' were higher writing ability students. Sixteen students (48.48%) regarded the editing

checklist as a 'useful tool' whereas twelve students (36.36%) viewed the checklist as 'fairly useful'.

Table 5: Students' reaction to the editing checklist

N = 33

	5 very useful	4 useful	3 fairly useful	2 not very useful	1 not useful
Editing Checklists are useful tool in self-editing for writing draft paper.	5 (15.1%)	16 (48.5%)	12 (36.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Students' comments regarding the positive points of using the editing checklist were that it helped them be more careful in their writing. It also helped them reduce writing errors. In addition students reported the checklists provided a clear procedure for editing their papers and that it was easy to use it to check their work. The students reported that they learned more vocabulary because of the editing checklist. One of respondents stated that through the use of the checklist, he would be able to help inexperienced writers in editing their papers. The last positive point was that the editing checklist was a guideline for self-editing and that they became more confident in their ability to self-edit.

However, many negative points regarding the use of the editing checklist were made such as that it was a bore, a waste of time and a complicated procedure to follow. One of the respondents mentioned that even though she understood the meaning of each category in the editing checklists, she was still unable to correct her paper. She felt that her knowledge was not enough to edit the paper. Additionally, editing writing drafts with the editing checklist made students feel more pressurized. They felt that there were too many categories for students to memorize. In summary, the comments regarding the editing checklist were mixed with some positive and some negative points.