

Individual Factors Affecting Student Revision after Writing Center Tutorials

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Abstract

This is a part of research investigating the effects of writing center tutorials on student revision. This study attempts to identify factors that might influence students' revisions after writing center tutorials. The participants in this study are nine Japanese undergraduate students in a mandatory first-year scientific English academic writing course and seven graduate tutors. The data for analysis consist of transcripts of 11 audio- and video-recorded tutorial sessions, students' first and the subsequent drafts, and transcripts of interviews with students. Through the interviews with the students, in addition to tutor feedback provided during the sessions, the following five aspects were identified as factors that affect how the students revised their paper after writing center tutorials: (1) students' English proficiency, (2) students' motivation, (3) deadline of paper submission, (4) types of revision problems students were being asked to revise, and (5) the number of visits to the writing center. All these factors seem to be interrelated with each other and may have an important influence on the revision process.

1 Introduction

With the growing demand for instruction in academic writing in higher education, a writing center has been a subject of very considerable interest of administrators, faculty members, and researchers in supporting students' academic writing. Writing centers in universities help students improve their writing through one-on-one tutorial sessions with tutors under its philosophy of "producing better writers, not better writing"¹. Since their origin in the 1930s, writing centers in the U.S. have a long history. U.S. writing centers mainly offer services to first language (L1) English writers. Since the early 1990s, however, with the increase in the number of international students and immigrants, U.S. writing centers have come to play an additional role in serving second language (L2) English writers. In Japan,

since 2004, several universities have founded writing centers to support students' L2 English writing beyond the regular curriculum. In recent years, in addition to English writing centers, there are universities that have writing centers to support students' L1 and L2 Japanese writing or to offer assistance in both English and Japanese writing.

This is a part of research investigating the effects of writing tutorials on how students revise their paper in the specific academic context of a Japanese English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) university writing center. This paper attempts to identify factors that might influence how students revise their paper after they had tutorial sessions at a writing center.

2 Literature Review

Although a large number of empirical studies on writing center has been actively conducted (e.g., Nakamaru², Thonus 1999a³, 1999b⁴, 2001⁵, 2002⁶, 2004⁷; Waring⁸, Weigle & Nelson⁹, Williams¹⁰), there has been a very limited number of studies that attempted to link writing center tutorials with student revision.

Williams¹¹ investigated the effects of writing center tutorials on ESL student revision. She analyzed the change in drafts written after the tutorial session and linked the interactional features of tutorial sessions with students' revisions. She found that surface-level issues discussed in the session were more likely to be considered in revision than substantial problems. The results of her study also showed that students are more likely to make revisions when tutors' suggestions are explicit, when students are actively involved in the tutorial interaction, and when students write down their plans for changes of their texts during the session. As for students' substantial revisions, Williams suggested that extended negotiation and assisted scaffolding by the tutor led to students' substantial revisions. However, she did not examine how students responded to what was discussed during the tutorial session in their revision process.

Following the study of Williams¹², Nakatake¹³ examined the relationship between what was discussed during the session and student subsequent revisions in a Japanese EFL writing center. Her study focused on the types of students' revisions and their responses to what was discussed during the tutorial sessions in revising their drafts. The results showed that the number of content revisions was larger than that of grammar revisions, which is different from Williams' finding mentioned above. This is due to the focus of the tutorial discussions during the session. In fact, in the writing center investigated in Nakatake's study¹⁴, most tutorial discussions focused on content rather than grammar. It was also revealed that while students revised both grammar and contents based on what was

discussed in the tutorial session, they also revised some other area that was not discussed in the tutorial session. Nakatake¹⁵ attempted to identify the feature of tutor feedback that led to students' revisions. Results showed that two salient features of tutor feedback that led to revisions were suggestions and negotiations. In addition, through the retrospective interviews with the students, it was indicated that in some cases, individual factors were more influential on whether the student made revisions or not than how issues were addressed during the tutorial session. Nakatake¹⁶ investigated how Japanese EFL students would use tutor feedback provided during the session in revising their drafts. Nakatake¹⁷ found that the students mostly incorporated what was discussed during the sessions but also made revisions that were not discussed in the sessions. However, what individual factors influence student revisions after the writing center tutorials has remained unexplored.

This paper thus aims to explore what individual factors influence how much and how students revise their paper in response to tutor feedback.

3 Method

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 11 tutoring pairs. The tutees were nine Japanese undergraduate students at a top-ranked research university enrolled in a mandatory first-year English academic writing course for science majors. In that course, the students were required to write an experimental scientific paper which uses the IMRaD (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion sections) structure in English based on their original basic experiment. In this study, each student visited the writing center voluntarily.

The tutors were seven graduate students from various departments; they were either native speakers of Japanese or non-native speakers of Japanese fluent in Japanese and have high English proficiency. All sessions were conducted in Japanese. The detailed tutorial session information is shown in Table 1. To protect the students' identities, pseudonyms are used.

Tutorial	Student	Tutor	Session length (min)	Student's paper content area	First-time visit?	Repeat visit with same tutor?	Rated English proficiency level	Deadline of submission
A	Daiki	T1	52	Experimental Psychology		No	None	7 days later
B	Daiki	T2	43	Experimental Psychology		No	None	2 hours later
C	Shota	T4	37	Chemistry		Yes	None	17 days later
D	Aki	T4	44	Biology		No	Eiken ¹⁸ Grade 2	19 days later
E	Hiroshi	T3	47	Biology		Yes	None	14 days later
F	Ken	T3	25	Physics	Yes		TOEIC ¹⁹ 905	14 days later
G	Mikako	T6	19	Physics		Yes	Eiken Grade 2, TOEIC870	1 day later
H	Ren	T3	48	Geological Science	Yes		Eiken Grade 2	1 day later
I	Wataru	T4	36	Experimental Psychology	Yes		Eiken Grade Pre-1	4 days later
J	Takuya	T5	43	Experimental Psychology	Yes		Eiken Grade 2	48 days later
K	Takuya	T7	45	Experimental Psychology		No	Eiken Grade 2	7 days later

Table 1. Tutorial Session Information

3.2 Procedure

With the students' and tutors' consent, 11 tutorial sessions were audio-recorded using a voice recorder and video-recorded using a video camera. Both recordings were transcribed and coded. In some of the 11 sessions, the tutors were the same. In addition to the transcriptions, the drafts that the students brought to the sessions as well as revised drafts after their visits to the writing center were copied and retained for analysis. In addition, within a few days of submitting the revised papers, semi-structured retrospective interviews with the students were conducted by the author to clarify their revision processes after the sessions. Each interview was conducted in Japanese for an average length of 60 minutes. They were audio-recorded with a voice recorder and later transcribed for analysis. In the interview, the students were shown copies of the first and the subsequent revised drafts and asked why they had made each revision in a certain way.

3.3 Data Analysis

Regarding the types of revision, Villamil and Guerrero²⁰'s five categories to analyze student revisions (grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, content, and organization) were used as the initial framework. In addition to the five categories, "style", which includes rules for scientific academic English writing, was added to this framework, because the written products for this study were scientific papers.

Focus	Definition
Grammar	subject-verb agreement, word form, tense, number (plural/singular), articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions
Vocabulary	effectiveness in expressing meaning, word choice, idiomatic usage
Mechanics	punctuation, capitalization, use of words for number, spelling, etc.
Style	scientific writing style in English, citations and references
Content	development of idea, elaboration of ideas, adequate/enough support (facts, examples, evidence, details), clarity of ideas or meaning by adding or deleting information
Organization	paragraphing, reorganizing the structure of text by changing the order of sentences within or beyond paragraphs for logical flow

Table 2. Categories of Focus of Feedback

An analysis of the students' use of tutorial discussions in their revision processes were undertaken based on the transcriptions of the sessions, the first and second drafts the students submitted, and the students' retrospective interviews. Each revision was compared with the tutorial discourse, and then analyzed as to whether each revision in the subsequent draft reflected what was discussed during the session. In this study, the success and quality of the students' revisions were not taken into account. In the coding scheme of students' responses to writing center tutorials, three categories were used: incorporated, not incorporated, and not discussed. Definitions of each response are summarized in Table 3.

Students' responses	Definition
Incorporated	Incorporate or clearly reflect what was discussed in the session
Not incorporated	Not incorporate what was discussed in the session 1) by making no change, 2) by deleting the discussed points without substituting anything else, or 3) by making revisions that are different from the tutor's suggestions
Not discussed	Make revisions seemingly independent of what was discussed in the session

Table 3. Categorization of Students' Use of Tutor Feedback

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Students' Revisions

Types of revisions made by each student after writing center tutorials are shown in Table 4.

Tutorial	Student	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Style	Content	Organization	Total
A	Daiki	1 (4.17%)	5 (20.38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	17 (70.83%)	1 (4.17%)	24 (100%)
B	Daiki	14 (41.18%)	9 (26.47%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (32.35%)	0 (0%)	34 (100%)
C	Shota	16 (34.04%)	12 (25.53%)	3 (6.38%)	0 (0%)	14 (29.79%)	2 (4.26%)	47 (100%)
D	Aki	13 (22.41%)	22 (37.93%)	0 (0%)	7 (12.07%)	15 (25.86%)	1 (1.72%)	58 (100%)
E	Hiroshi	1 (7.14%)	1 (7.14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (78.57%)	1 (7.14%)	14 (100%)
F	Ken	10 (45.45%)	7 (31.82%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (22.73%)	22 (100%)
G	Mikako	2 (11.76%)	6 (35.29%)	3 (17.65%)	3 (17.65%)	3 (17.65%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)
H	Ren	4 (7.69%)	7 (13.46%)	2 (3.85%)	5 (9.62%)	29 (55.77%)	5 (9.62%)	52 (100%)
I	Wataru	7 (13.21%)	7 (13.21%)	1 (1.89%)	2 (3.77%)	35 (66.04%)	1 (1.89%)	53 (100%)
J	Takuya	10 (33.33%)	9 (30.00%)	2 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	5 (16.67%)	4 (13.33%)	30 (100%)
K	Takuya	16 (38.10%)	13 (30.95%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13 (30.95%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)

Table 4. Types of Revisions (Numbers and Percentages)

Results show that there is a large variation among students in regard to what types of revisions they made. In Tutorial A, E, H, and I, content revisions accounted for more than half of their total revisions, while grammar revisions ranked first in Tutorial B, F, J, and K. In Tutorial D and G, the majority of revisions were made on vocabulary. It is notable that the same student, for example Daiki, made different types of revisions depending on the tutorial sessions. Daiki made the highest percentage of content revisions after Tutorial A. In contrast, after Tutorial B, he revised grammatical errors extensively. This implies that students have a different goal and purpose for each visit to the writing center.

Table 5 illustrates how each student used what was discussed during the session in revising their drafts.

Tutorial	Student	Incorporated	Not incorporated	Not discussed	Total
A	Daiki	4 (16.67%)	2 (8.33%)	18 (75%)	24 (100%)
B	Daiki	31 (91.18%)	3 (8.82%)	0 (0%)	34 (100%)
C	Shota	39 (82.98%)	3 (6.38%)	5 (10.64%)	47 (100%)
D	Aki	49 (84.48%)	4 (6.90%)	5 (8.62%)	58 (100%)
E	Hiroshi	7 (50.00%)	3 (21.43%)	4 (28.57%)	14 (100%)
F	Ken	11 (50.00%)	2 (9.09%)	9 (40.91%)	22 (100%)
G	Mikako	9 (52.94%)	0 (0.00%)	8 (47.06%)	17 (100%)
H	Ren	23 (44.23%)	1 (1.92%)	28 (53.85%)	52 (100%)
I	Wataru	10 (18.87%)	1 (1.89%)	42 (79.25%)	53 (100%)
J	Takuya	19 (63.33%)	5 (16.67%)	6 (20.00%)	30 (100%)
K	Takuya	16 (38.10%)	12 (28.57%)	14 (33.33%)	42 (100%)

Table 5. Students' Use of Tutor Feedback (Numbers and Percentages)

Results show that the students mostly incorporated tutor feedback into their revisions. It is striking that all the students except Daiki in Tutorial B not only followed tutor feedback, but also made revisions that were not discussed during the sessions. Another point worth noting is that eight out of nine students in this study failed to incorporate what was discussed during the session to a greater or lesser degree. As Table 4 and 5 show, each student made a different decision as to whether to revise, what to revise, and how to revise after the writing center tutorials. This variation is affected by many factors, which are discussed in detail in the following section.

4.2 Individual Factors

This section discusses what individual factors might have affected students' revisions after writing center tutorials. Through the retrospective interviews with the students, the following were identified as critical factors that affect the way the students revised their paper: (1) students' English proficiency, (2) students' motivation, (3) deadline of paper submission, (4) types of revision that students were asked to make, and (5) the number of visits to the writing center.

4.2.1 Students' English Proficiency

One important factor that affected students' revisions found in this study is students' English proficiency. Even though students wanted to or tried to make revisions based on their tutor feedback, some students did not have sufficient English proficiency to revise properly in English, and had difficulty with revising their texts based on tutor feedback. In the interview with Hiroshi, for example, he commented, "I think my English is not good. I tried to revise the parts being asked to revise by my tutor, but I had no idea how to say it in English and finally I gave up revising the parts." In contrast, students with higher English proficiency inclined to revise their texts as advised by their tutor. They also seem to be likely to attempt revising other problematic parts that were not discussed during the sessions. Ken in Tutorial F has high English proficiency [his reported TOEIC score was 905] partly because the high school he graduated from is SELHi (Super English Language High School) which concentrates heavily on English education, designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology.

In this study, the students were asked whether or not they had English qualifications and whether they had an experience of living or studying abroad as a measure of their English proficiency. Not all of the students in this study, however, have taken standardized English tests. It is hard to say that students'

English proficiency affect their revisions based on the results of this study. However, in the interview, some students commented that if they had a better command of English, they might have been able to make more appropriate revisions. Therefore, it is probably safe to say that students' English proficiency can affect their revisions to some degree. Future research will be required to examine precisely whether English ability can affect the amount and quality of their revisions.

4.2.2 Self-motivation

Another important factor that appears to play a role in the revision process is students' self-motivation. Students visit the writing center with different levels of motivations: students who are highly motivated to improve their writing, students who want to get a good grade in the class, students who lack confidence in writing a scientific paper in English, students who are reluctant to work on the task but do not want to fail the class because the class is a required course to graduate, and students who have no idea what to do to accomplish the task. In some cases, students visit the writing center because they are told to do so by their instructors. In the current study, all the participants voluntarily visited the writing center.

If students are highly motivated, they are likely to attempt not only content revisions which require deeper analyses or explanation but also actively deal with the problems that were not discussed during the sessions. In this study, for example, Ken in Tutorial F showed himself to be a very self-motivated writer and was actively involved in the discussion. He not only revised his paper in reaction to his tutor's feedback, but also made other revisions that were not discussed during the tutorial session. His high motivation to improve his writing is considered to be one of the factors that resulted in self-initiated revisions. In addition to his high motivation, his high English proficiency as mentioned earlier enabled him to make more revisions than what was discussed during the tutorial session. However, those students who were highly motivated to revise their paper but had inadequate English proficiency, might have had difficulty making revisions. This study found that such students were likely to visit the writing center again to seek further feedback from tutors on their revised texts and attempted revisions many times. There were some students who gave up making revisions in response to tutor feedback even though they were highly motivated to revise their paper but had their deadline coming up and had inadequate English proficiency. In this way, several factors are intricately interrelated with each other and lead to students' revision decisions.

Not only students' motivations for visiting the writing center but also their motivations for revising their texts after the tutorial sessions affect students' revisions. Some students seem to lose motivation to revise their paper when they receive excessive feedback beyond their capacity or ability to handle it. In light of the student's situation at hand, tutors should provide appropriate amount of feedback to avoid demotivating students.

4.2.3 Deadline of Paper Submission

How much time is left before submitting the final paper also affects students' types of revisions and the use of tutor feedback. Regarding the types of revisions, when the deadline is looming, the students had a tendency of revising grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and style more than content. This is presumably because those revisions are relatively easier than content revisions and are achievable with a short period of time. When students had enough time before the deadline, they spent a great deal of time revising their papers. In Tutorial J, Takuya had 48 days to the submission deadline and it was the first time for Takuya to visit the writing center. He brought his introduction and methods sections to the writing center. His purpose of visiting the writing center was to ask his tutor to see if all the needed information on his experiment was included in his paper. After the tutorial session, Takuya had sufficient time to make revisions, especially to deal with content revisions thoroughly based on his tutor feedback. On the other hand, Ren in Tutorial H and Wataru in Tutorial I confessed during their interview that they could not incorporate all feedback given by their tutors due to lack of time, although they acknowledged that their tutors gave them very useful feedback. They explained that their priority was to complete their papers in time, and did not have enough time to revise all issues raised by their tutors. This finding indicates that how much the students have completed their papers by the time they visit a writing center tutorial plays a role in their revisions. Interestingly, Shota in Tutorial C, Aki in Tutorial D, Mikako in Tutorial G, and Wataru in Tutorial I, actively made the self-motivated revisions their tutors identified because they wanted the tutors in the writing center to check their revised drafts. This implies that these positive attitudes related to the deadline of paper submission also affect students' revisions after tutorials at the writing center.

Paper submission deadline is one of the important factors to understand the situation that the student is in. The purpose of visiting the writing center, which section the student brought to the session (text length), and the points the tutor should focus on during the session differ depending on how much time is left

before submitting the final paper. Deadline of paper submission greatly affects tutoring sessions as well as revisions themselves. Before starting the tutorial sessions, tutors should therefore check the deadline of the student's paper submission and provide an appropriate amount of feedback with students according to their deadline. There is a limit to the number of what can be discussed in a session. If there is still much time left until the student submits the final draft, both the tutor and the student can spend a great deal of time focusing on each problematic point. However, when the deadline of paper submission is looming, some students are nervous or get into crunch mode. Others may leave all the decision-making to tutors. Even though the tutors give the students a lot of advice on their papers, they may not be able to incorporate all of them into their revisions. If the deadline of the student's paper submission is looming, tutors must provide feedback the student can handle. Otherwise students may become rather confused, anxious, or demotivated. It is crucially important for the tutors to narrow down the points they need to discuss during the session and not to make them reluctant to revise their texts. Taking advantage of face-to-face tutorials, tutors have to provide suitable feedback for each student, monitoring the student closely.

4.2.4 Types of Problems to Be Revised

In order to understand how students revise in response to tutor feedback provided during tutorials, we must look not only at the nature of tutor feedback offered to students, but also at the types of problems students are being asked to revise. Students tend to easily deal with surface-level problems such as grammatical errors because they can revise them mechanically to some extent. In contrast, content revisions require deeper analyses or explanation, or developing their arguments. Consequently, problems related to content are less likely to be revised. In this study, it was revealed that among content revisions, issues related to background research were less likely to be dealt with by some students. Through the retrospective interviews with those students who did not make content revisions, this study found that the students had difficulty in searching background studies and synthesizing them when they wrote the Introduction section or the Discussion section. Takuya stated in the interview that "my tutor advised me to find more relevant previous research, but I didn't know how to search for articles relevant to my research and how to incorporate that background research into my paper."

Whether students can deal with revision problems that they are asked to revise can be highly associated with English proficiency. Due to lack of their

English proficiency, they may not be able to revise the parts that their tutor asked them to revise, although they might be able to explain them in their first language, Japanese. Takuya, in Tutorial K, was asked to avoid too many relative clauses and also to avoid using too long sentences in some parts of his paper. In the interview, he mentioned that “during the session, I thought I would be able to deal with these problems, but when I attempted to revise them at home after the tutorial session, I ended up failing to make revisions.”

Regarding the underlined part in Excerpt (1), Ren in Tutorial H was asked to explain what “the required level” was by his tutor.

Excerpt (1) (from Ren’s first draft)

Then, the level of liquid was dropped to the required level by slightly straightening the tip straw.

During the session, when Ren and his tutor negotiated the meaning of “required”, Ren explained what the required level was in Japanese. However, he explained in the interview that he had attempted to explain it in English in the same way as in Japanese, but he did not know how to explain it in English and gave up revising the part.

Hiroshi’s difficulty with revision seem not to be solely due to lack of English proficiency. Lack of comprehensive writing skills also appears to play a role in revisions. Hiroshi experienced difficulty providing more detailed explanation. The following excerpt shows an example of a revision problem the tutor identified but Hiroshi failed in revising.

Excerpt (2) (from Hiroshi’s first draft)

By these results, my hypothesis that the value of threshold in spatial vision in the participants is over 0.1mm is correct. In fact, these values (0.46mm-0.69mm) are largely different from the theoretical one (0.12mm).

On the underlined part in Excerpt (2), his tutor advised him to specify whose theory is or clarify what he meant by “theoretical” and also explain why the results in his study are different from the theory of previous studies. He attempted to revise this part, but he ended up leaving it unchanged. He mentioned that he was struggling with gathering evidence or information to support his argument. In writing center tutorials, it may be necessary for tutors to take into account students’ English proficiency and comprehensive writing skills, and to determine to what

extent they should make concrete suggestions.

Through the retrospective interviews with students, it was also found that in general, many students have great difficulty writing the discussion section of IMRaD paper, which requires students to elaborate on the issues raised in the Introduction section, suggest potential future research and applications, and limitations of the experiment. In order to provide more effective tutorials, it is important for tutors to keep in mind what problems students encounter in revising their drafts after writing center tutorials. It should be noted that the results described above cannot be necessarily applied to the cases of other writing centers, because the written products in the present study are scientific papers. However, the findings are expected to be useful for future development of writing instruction in classes.

4.2.5 Writing Center Visits

In this study, before starting the tutorial session, the tutors asked the students whether the students were a first time visitor to the writing center or a repeat visitor. If the tutors forgot to ask it, I asked it in the retrospective interview conducted after they submitted their revised draft. Although the number of writing center visits may not have a direct influence on student revisions, it may affect students' familiarity with tutoring style and tutors, and thus their volubility and behavior during the session. As mentioned earlier, the number of writing centers in Japanese universities has been increasing year by year. However, it still cannot be said that the concept of a writing center is widely recognized in Japan. Therefore, writing centers and tutorial sessions are unfamiliar with many Japanese students and they have no idea what they can do at the center. Compared to the first visitors to the writing center, repeat visitors have already known what a tutorial in this writing center is and what they can do during the session. In fact, some repeat visitors were more likely to be actively involved in sessions. They freely asked questions about the points that they were concerned about, having useful discussions that resulted in revisions. Daiki, for example, had visited the writing center several times prior to Tutorial A and B. In Tutorial A and B, Daiki mostly took control of the tutorial conversation and almost all exchanges were initiated by Daiki, which might have resulted in revisions. In addition, different characteristics emerged in Daiki's revisions after Tutorial B. Daiki's revisions after Tutorial B have characteristics different from other students' revision types – While other students made more revisions on contents than on grammar, Daiki made more revisions on grammar than on contents. Behind this is the fact that he had visited the writing center many times prior to Tutorial B as mentioned above

and was provided with considerable feedback on content. In addition, the deadline of submission was two hour later. For these reasons, he asked his tutor to check surface-level errors rather than content at the beginning of the session in Tutorial B. As a result, Daiki made different types of revisions between after Tutorial A and after Tutorial B: content revisions accounted for the highest percentage of all types of revisions after Tutorial A but the number of grammar revisions was largest after Tutorial B. The number of visits to the writing center also affects focuses of tutor feedback and types of revisions.

In this study, in addition to the number of writing center visits, repeaters were asked whether the tutorial represented a repeat visit to a tutor with whom the student had previously worked. Some students intentionally made an appointment with the same tutor with whom the student had previously worked. Others did not care whether the tutor was the same as last time or not, and made an appointment with whoever was available. In any case, in this writing center, students who have visited the writing center once are more likely to return for a further tutorial talk to improve their writing.

That is being said, there seems to be little difference in revision type and use of feedback between first-time visitors and repeat visitors. However, repeat visitors seem to feel more relaxed during the session, make better use of the limited 40 minutes, and have useful discussions that result in self-motivated revisions. In that sense, writing center visits is an indirect factor that influences students' revisions.

Compared to other factors mentioned above, writing center visits may not be directly associated with revisions. However, if students have high motivation towards improving their writing and also feel only one session is not enough to achieve their writing goals, they may visit the writing center again. Repeat visitors in this study are all such writers. In addition to these reasons, Hiroshi and Takuya stated in the interviews that they came to take tutorials in order to compensate for their lack of English proficiency. In the interviews, some students mentioned that they finally made satisfactory revisions thanks to multiple tutorial sessions in the writing center. For these reasons, the number of visits to the writing center has an indirect influence on students' revisions, mutually interrelating with other factors.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine what factors influence revision process after the writing center tutorials. Through the interviews with the students, the study found that, in addition to tutor feedback provided during the sessions, the following individual factors were interrelated and may be important influences

on their revision process: (1) students' English proficiency, (2) students' motivation, (3) deadline of paper submission, (4) types of revision problems students were being asked to revise, and (5) the number of visits to the writing center. It seems likely that all these factors are interrelated with each other and may be an important influence on the revision process.

It should be noted here that the existence of other agents such as peer feedback provided during peer review and teacher feedback in class needs to be taken into account. Indeed, some students in this study revised their papers based not only on tutor feedback provided during the writing center tutorial but also on peer feedback and teacher feedback they received in their class. Basically, human cognitive activities are always influenced by various factors. Therefore, there should be a number of possible factors influencing students' revisions after writing center tutorials in addition to the factors discussed in this paper.

When students revise their paper after the tutorial session, all the revisions might not come from writing center tutorials. It should be kept in mind that student revisions after writing center tutorial are shaped by interrelation between writing center tutorials and various individual factors.

The results in this study suggest that in order to examine the effects of writing center tutorials on student revision, we must take into account not only the nature of tutor feedback provided during the session, but also at other factors such as the types of problems students are being asked to revise and individual student factors. This study is still preliminary, and future studies should investigate other factors affecting students' revision process in different contexts. Further research will be also required to identify factors affecting revision success.

Note

This paper is based on a part of my PhD dissertation at the University of Tokyo²¹, Japan. The content was partially revised and modified for this paper.

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¹³ M. Nakatake, “The impact of tutorial sessions at a writing center on student revisions,” The Professor Rossiter Festschrift Editorial Committee (eds.), *West to east, east to west: Studies in the field of English education –Dedicated to Professor Paul Rossiter on his retirement* (Seibido, 2012), 113-134.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ M. Nakatake, “Tutor feedback and student revision in an EFL writing center,” *JACET-KANTO Journal* 1 (2014), 36-50.

¹⁶ M. Nakatake, “Students’ responses in the revision process to writing center tutorials,” *JACET-KANTO Journal* 2 (2015), 55-69.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Eiken (Jitsuyo Eigo Gino Kentei) is administered by the Japan-based Society for Testing English Proficiency, one of the most widely used as an English proficiency test in Japan. It has seven levels: Grade 1, Grade Pre-1, Grade 2, Grade Pre-2, Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5.

¹⁹ TOEIC (Test of is English for International Communication) is an English proficiency test for non-native speakers of English administered by ETS (Educational Testing Service). The TOEIC results are shown as a score from 10 to 990.

²⁰ O. S. Villamil & M. C. M. de. Guerrero, “Assessing the impact of peer revision on L2 writing,” *Applied Linguistics* 19 (1998), 491-514.

²¹ M. Nakatake, “The effects of writing tutorials on student revisions in a Japanese writing center,” Diss. University of Tokyo (2017).