"Dear ~~Man~~ ᵐᵉⁿ ~~and women~~ madam, dear ~~xxx~~ sir".
What we can learn from revisions in authentic learner texts

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The present paper explores to what extent methods of writing process analysis, here: the analysis of revisions, can be fruitfully applied to learner corpus data, more specifically data drawn from the Marburg Corpus of Intermediate Learner English (MILE). An analysis of 598 instances of revisions shows that the majority is of a conceptual nature, i.e. involves changes of content. Formal revisions, i.e. revisions demanded by the target language system, come second. Within this group, grammatical, lexical and orthographic/typo revisions are far more frequent than revisions that concern questions of idiomaticity or textual cohesion and coherence. This is interpreted as a lack of awareness of the latter aspects on the part of the writer possibly due to a lesser prominence in the EFL curriculum. In addition, it is found that in more than three quarters of all cases of formal revisions, the text is improved. That means the quality of the final product may mask problem areas of the learner that only become apparent if we take the writing process into consideration. Therefore, it is argued that corpus-based revision analysis provides us with new and interesting ways of exploring (the development of) interlanguage.