University of Sunderland

DEVELOPING ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNERS' FEEDBACK LITERACY: RECONCEPTUALIZING FEEDBACK AND RETHINKING FEEDBACK PRACTICES

Sin Wang Chong

PhDEx   April 2020

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a compilation of six published journal articles on assessment feedback in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing classrooms and a commentary discussing findings and materials in these six publications. Findings and materials in these publications, which focus on ESL learners in secondary school (Grade 7), community college, and university, are synthesized in the commentary using a three-dimensional conceptual framework, student feedback literacy (Chong, 2020).

Feedback, which is defined as a sense-making process of students to turn assessment information into action to improve their learning process or quality of their work, is one of the most powerful means to improve students' learning. In ESL writing classrooms, a quintessential feedback process includes students' active engagement with feedback provided by their teachers, peers, or other sources (e.g., from automatic writing evaluation software). Such engagement would, in turn, enable students to utilize formative information in the feedback to improve their written texts. In the feedback literature, while there has been much discussion on the mechanical aspect of feedback, that is, how teachers should go about giving feedback to facilitate students' uptake of formative information (e.g., by engaging students in feedback dialogues), there is a dearth of research on understanding factors which affect students' engagement with feedback.

Recently, Carless and Boud (2018) proposed a conceptual framework of feedback literacy which conceptualizes types of student engagement with feedback (cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement). Drawing upon Carless and Boud's (2018) feedback literacy framework and sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; 1981), this thesis presents and discusses six of my articles published in international refereed journals with reference to two research questions: (1) How is feedback

conceptualized by ESL learners?; and (2) how can feedback activities develop feedback literacy of ESL learners? These articles are anchored on a coherent theme related to assessment feedback and students' engagement with feedback. Among the six, two articles (Chong, 2017a; 2019b) are primary studies, two are conceptual papers (Chong, 2017b; 2018b) and 'theory-into-practice' papers (Chong, 2018a; 2019a) respectively. Adopting an exploratory practice research approach and grounded within a qualitative, interpretivist research paradigm, data of the two primary studies were collected from content analysis of students' peer feedback (Chong, 2017a), open-ended questionnaire (Chong, 2019b), and semi-structured, focus group interviews (Chong, 2019b). Adopting grounded theory and phenomenology as the methodologies, thematic analysis was conducted through inductive and deductive coding to analyze data in the two primary studies. Regarding the conceptual papers and 'theory-into-practice' papers, narrative literature review techniques were used to summarize and critically interpret major findings. Finally, qualitative research synthesis was employed as the methodology of the commentary to bring together findings and materials in the six publications, categorizing major insights by referring to the proposed student feedback literacy framework.

The findings suggest three sources of feedback (teacher, peer, and computer) and three feedback orientations (assessment *of* learning, assessment *for* learning, and assessment *as* learning). Moreover, written corrective feedback, peer feedback, and the use of exemplars were discussed in relation to their affordances to empower ESL learners to be more feedback literate. This thesis is a unique contribution to the feedback literature base because of its complementary focus on theory and practice. Moreover, in bringing together an interpretation of findings and recommendations of feedback practices, I have adopted an interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon feedback literature in the fields of language education and assessment in higher education.

CONTENTS

TABLES AND FIGURES

1. Introduction

Assessment feedback is one of the most effective means to improve students' learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing classrooms, assessment feedback is one of the most commonly employed pedagogical interventions to provide formative information to students for improving their writing. Feedback in ESL writing classrooms can take the forms of teacher feedback, peer feedback, and technology-mediated feedback and is used at different stages of writing (pre-writing, writing, and post-writing). With a view that feedback is conceptualized as both information and process, it is important to consider not only how feedback is given (e.g., the types of feedback) but also how ESL learners engage with the feedback provided. Recent higher education feedback literature describes attributes of students who engage with feedback effectively using the notion of student feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018; Chong, 2020). This thesis, which comprises a commentary and six publications, aims to contribute to assessment feedback research in the language classrooms in two ways. First, the six publications attached in the appendices (Appendices C-H) provide primary data and literature reviews on two typologies of assessment feedback in ESL writing classrooms and discuss perceptions of secondary school, community college, and university ESL learners towards these feedback types. Second, the commentary synthesizes literature and findings in the six publications under the common thread of student feedback literacy, reinterpreting the materials with reference to a proposed three-dimensional framework of student feedback literacy.

1.1 Definitions of feedback

Despite being a widely adopted assessment tool by teachers across different academic disciplines and a classroom practice frequently discussed and researched in the field of education, the term 'feedback' was not first used in the educational field but in engineering (Wiliam, 2013). 'Feedback' was originally used as jargon in an engineering system called 'positive feedback loops' and 'negative feedback loops'. 'Positive feedback loops' refer to 'the effect of the evaluation [which] was to push the system further in the direction in which it was already going' and 'negative feedback loops' is defined as the evaluation effect which leads to the opposite result of the existing tendency in the system (Wiliam, 2013, p. 196). In engineering, 'negative feedback loops' are more useful than 'positive feedback loops' because the former produces stability while the latter simply reinforces the current tendency in the system. For example, the usefulness of a 'negative feedback loop' is evident in the functioning of a room thermostat. A room thermostat employs a 'negative feedback loop' to maintain the desired room temperature. When the room temperature decreases below a certain point, the thermostat activates the heating system until the temperature is back to the desired value. The use of the terms 'positive' and 'negative' to describe the nature of feedback in engineering is, therefore, not a judgment on its value; instead, it 'merely describes the relative alignment of the existing tendency of the system and the impetus provided by the feedback' (Wiliam, 2013, p. 197). While the definition of 'feedback' is clear in the field of engineering, how feedback is conceptualized and used in education is less precise.

1.2 Feedback as information

Indeed, the definition of 'feedback' in educational research is 'slippery' and is often considered as a continuum (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Rand, 2017). On the two ends of the continuum are the 'old paradigm' and the 'contemporary paradigm' of feedback (Carless, 2015). In the 'old paradigm', feedback is conceptualized as *information* which is delivered to students mainly by teachers (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Price, Handley, & Millar, 2011; Winstone & Pitt, 2017). This 'tutor-centered transmission-oriented' model of feedback is defined by the types of information in the feedback which help students improve their learning performance (Ajjawi & Regehr, 2019, p. 652). In the feedback literature, there has been much discussion on this technical aspect of feedback i.e., how teachers should go about giving feedback so as to facilitate students' uptake of formative information. For example, Molloy and Boud (2013) articulated the importance of 'designing' (not simply 'giving') effective feedback. In their paper, they introduced various feedback designs with different degrees of effectiveness. "Feedback Mark 0" describes feedback which is given by teachers when the work is completed with hopefully useful information. "Feedback Mark 1", on the other hand, involves an iterative task design which provides students with the opportunity to act on the feedback (e.g., in a revised draft). In their seminal paper, Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggested that feedback should assist students in their reflection on three questions: where am I going (feed up), how am I going (feed back), and where to next (feed forward). They suggested four types of feedback information which can be used by students to enhance their learning: *task-focused*, *process-focused*, *self-regulation-focused*, and *self-focused*.

Task-focused information concerns the correctness of students' work which, in the context of English writing, entails such writing features as grammatical accuracy, rhetorical organization, and meaning. While evidence-based task-focused feedback practices focusing on quality of arguments, organization, rhetoric, and language of students' writing are well-documented in TESOL literature (Ferris, 1997; Hyland, 1998; Lee, 2008; Montgomery & Baker, 2007), a substantial body of the recent research base focuses on written corrective feedback (WCF). WCF, or error correction, is feedback which provides corrective information regarding the accuracy of grammatical items on students' written work, usually given by teachers. In the past two decades, a plethora of evidence-based WCF strategies have been reported and promulgated, especially in the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) contexts. These evidence-based WCF strategies include direct/indirect WCF (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010), focused (selective)/unfocused (comprehensive) WCF (Lee, 2018), metalinguistic WCF (Shintani & Ellis, 2013), synchronous/asynchronous WCF (Shintani, 2016), computer-generated/mediated WCF (Chacón-Beltrán, 2017; Ye, Lo & Chu, 2014), and dynamic WCF (Evans, Hartshorn, & Strong-Krause, 2011) (Table 1). In general, findings from WCF studies which adopt a quasi-experimental research design affirm the effectiveness of the said WCF strategies in improving ESL learners' accuracy in a range of rule-governed linguistic features, including the English article system ('a', 'the'), hypothetical conditional, the past tense, preposition, noun ending (Chong, 2018a, 2018b).

Table 1: Evidence-based WCF strategies (Chong, 2019c)

WCF strategies	Definition
Direct/indirect WCF	*Direct WCF:* Explicit correction of errors *Indirect WCF:* Implicit correction of errors using codes, underlining, circling
Focused (selective)/unfocused (comprehensive) WCF	*Focused WCF:* Correction of one or a number of pre-selected types of grammatical errors *Unfocused WCF:* Correction of all grammatical errors
Metalinguistic WCF/metalinguistic explanation	Explanation of errors in the form of commentaries
Synchronous/asynchronous WCF	*Synchronous WCF:* WCF given on screen (e.g. on Google Docs) while students are writing *Asynchronous WCF:* WCF given on screen after students have finished writing
Dynamic WCF	An approach to correcting errors based on individual needs of students
Computer-generated WCF/computer-mediated WCF	*Computer-generated WCF:* WCF given by automated writing evaluation systems *Computer-mediated WCF:* WCF given by teachers on an online system

Process-focused feedback information pertains to 'how a task is handled and then completed' (Lam, 2015, p. 404). Specifically, feedback which provides information focusing on task process helps students understand the steps and strategies needed to 'act on' the feedback given. According to Glover and Brown (2006), process-focused feedback includes three types of information: an acknowledgement of a problem (e.g., the verb tense is incorrect), a suggestion to rectify the situation (e.g., check that the future tense is used when making predictions), and a justification (e.g., because predictions concern something that is yet to happen). Compared with task-focused feedback, process-focused feedback is perceived as more useful to students because it is more specific, promotes 'deeper learning' (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 93), and increases students' motivation to write and revise (Busse, 2013).

Feedback which focuses on the *self-regulation* dimension 'addresses the way students monitor, direct, and regulate actions towards the learning' (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 93). Its intention is to promote metacognitive behaviours of students in the learning process. 'Metacognition' is defined as 'how one monitors or thinks about one's own cognition' (Dinsmore, Alexander, & Loughlin, 2008, p. 398), or simply, 'thinking about thinking' (Fisher, 1998, p. 1). Self-regulation-focused feedback contributes to the enrichment of students' metacognitive knowledge and focuses on three interrelated variables: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and conditional knowledge (Brown, 1987; Schraw & Moshman, 1995).

Feedback which concerns declarative knowledge answers the 'what' questions, including: 'what is a "relative clause"?', 'what is "simple past tense"?'. On the other hand, feedback which contributes to the procedural knowledge of learners imparts 'knowledge about the execution of procedural skills' (Schraw & Moshman, 1995, p. 353). Such questions as 'how to form a "relative clause"?' and 'how to form a sentence using "simple past tense"?' relate to the procedural dimension of knowledge. Finally, focusing on conditional knowledge, feedback provides information about 'when and why to apply various cognitive actions' (Schraw & Moshman, 1995, p. 353). The question which is most often addressed in this type of feedback is 'what is the *best* strategy or skill to be used *in this particular task*?'. For instance, when writing a recount, students with a high level of conditional knowledge are able to identify the right opportunity to use relative clauses (e.g., when providing additional information about a person or an event) and are able to justify the inclusion of a relative

clause (e.g., to give more in-depth description of a place). Conversely, if a student possesses a low level of conditional knowledge, s/he is not able to determine when, for example, simple past tense needs to be used when writing a recount. S/he may be confused about whether to use simple past tense in a dialogue in a recount.

Feedback information can focus on *self*. In spite of being viewed as the least effective form of feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hyland & Hyland, 2001), self-focused feedback, or 'person-focused feedback', is often used by teachers to provide 'evaluations and affect about the student' rather than the students' performance in the task (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 96). One form of such feedback is praise (e.g., 'good effort'). While praise can strengthen student's self-esteem and provide affective scaffolding to students, research has found that it is unlikely for students to benefit from self-focused feedback because the information provided is less actionable (Lam, 2015).

1.3 Feedback as a process

Research has shown that feedback information, regardless of its specificity and quality, may have little impact on students' learning because such information is often misunderstood due to the mismatch between teachers' and students' expectations (Carless, 2006; Boud & Molloy, 2013; Evans, 2013). Boud and Molloy (2013) used the phrase 'dangle the data' to depict the inefficacy of feedback if it is merely information ('data') which remains unused ('dangle'). Indeed, in national surveys of university students' learning experiences, students' perception of the usefulness of feedback is one of the

least satisfying learning experiences in their study. For instance, in the 2019 National Student Survey in the UK, only 73% of the university students surveyed were satisfied with 'assessment and feedback' while the overall satisfaction rate is 84% (Office for Students, 2019). In a similar vein, results of 2018 Student Experience Survey in Australia (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, 2019) show that feedback and assessment practices of Australian universities are not an area which undergraduates and postgraduates are most satisfied with. These survey results suggest that there is an exigency to reconcile the teachers' and students' perspectives on feedback. In order to do that, it is necessary to move from the old paradigm of feedback (feedback as information) to a contemporary paradigm of feedback and continuously explore learning-oriented and learner-centered innovative feedback practices in higher education contexts (Carless, 2015; Winstone & Carless, 2019). The contemporary paradigm of feedback is viewed as a 'student-centered process-oriented' approach to feedback (Ajjawi & Regehr, 2019, p. 652). Under this paradigm, feedback is conceptualized as 'a process through which learners make sense of information from various sources and use it to enhance their work or learning strategies' (Carless & Boud, 2018, p. 1315). Feedback, when viewed as a process, entails a situated, culturally embedded, socially mediated practice which comprises two dimensions: the *interpersonal* process and the *intrapersonal* process (Carless, Salter, Yang, & Lam, 2011; Chong, 2018c; Nicol, 2010; Rust, O'Donovan, & Price, 2005; Swain & Watanabe, 2013).

First, feedback is an *interpersonal* process because feedback is relational and emotional (Chong, 2018d; Dann, 2019; Yang & Carless, 2013). Feedback is relational because it is an interactive process between the 'giver' and 'receiver' of feedback. Instead of understanding the feedback as a unidirectional process (i.e., teachers transmitting knowledge through feedback), the contemporary paradigm of feedback underscores the importance of 'dialogue' between the teacher and students in the feedback process (Carless, 2006). When engaging in feedback dialogues, students do not merely receive information passively from their teachers, but they make sense of and act on the feedback (Mulliner & Tucker, 2017). In some situations, students also become providers of feedback (e.g., providing peer feedback) (Huisman, Saab, Driel, & van den Broek, 2018; Walker, 2015). A number of relational and emotional factors have been identified in assessment feedback literature in higher education which may affect students' perception and uptake of feedback. These factors include power (Tan, 2004), trust (Carless, 2009; Gamlem & Smith, 2013), relationship (Chong, 2018d), and emotions (Molloy, Borrell-Carrió, & Epstein, 2013).

The sense-making process of feedback does not happen only in the interpersonal but also in the intrapersonal dimensions. When feedback is understood as an intrapersonal process, it is posited that students engage in 'internal dialogues' with their inner selves through self-regulation (Carless, 2016; van der Kleij, 2019). Recent feedback studies which look into students' individual characteristics conclude that 'individual differences between students account for the large variability in the effects of feedback on student learning'

(van der Kleij, 2019, p. 176). From a learner psychology perspective, a number of student characteristics are believed to exert an impact on their perception and engagement with feedback, namely motivation (Han, 2019), beliefs and goals (Han & Hyland, 2015), language analytical ability (Shintani & Ellis, 2015), prior knowledge and learning experience (Porte, 1997), self-regulation and self-efficacy (van der Kleij, 2019). A review of how these factors affect students' engagement with feedback is included in Section 2: Literature Review.

1.4 Objectives of the thesis

With the above view that feedback concerns not only 'transmission of information' but also the 'negotiations and recreations of meaning' (Ajjawi & Regehr, 2019, p. 653), feedback researchers began to focus on students' engagement with feedback, which has been conceptualized by Sutton (2012) and Carless and Boud (2018) as feedback literacy[1], and ways to develop students' feedback literacy. However, the literature which explores feedback literacy paints a rather bleak picture: most students have a low degree of feedback literacy because they do not feel well-prepared to act on the feedback (Burke, 2009). Behaviours of feedback illiterate students mentioned in literature include skimming feedback (Gibbs & Simpson, 2005) and leaving feedback uncollected (Sinclair & Cleland, 2007). Students' low feedback literacy is in part caused by teachers' lack of proficiency and experience in designing optimal

---

[1] [1] While the term 'students' engagement with feedback' was not used in the feedback literacy frameworks of Sutton (2012) and Carless and Boud (2018), components of their frameworks reflect three facets of student engagement: cognitive (the *epistemological* dimension in Sutton (2012), and *appreciating feedback* and *making judgement* in Carless and Boud (2018)) , emotional (the *ontological* dimension in Sutton (2012) and *managing affect* in Carless and Boud (2018)), and behavioural (the *practical* dimension in Sutton (2012) and *acting on feedback* in Carless and Boud (2018)). A discussion on the two feedback literacy frameworks is presented in Section 2.1.

opportunities for students to engage meaningfully with feedback (Winstone, Nash, Parker, & Rowntree, 2017, p. 18). Such inexperience is partially due to an absence of a well-established conceptual framework of feedback literacy to inform teachers' assessment and feedback practices because conceptualization of feedback literacy is still in its infancy; more primary data from naturalistic, classroom-based studies are needed to establish ecological validity of the framework. In view of the above, this thesis aims to expand the feedback literacy framework of Carless and Boud (2018) in two ways. First, informed by the notion of agency and sociocultural theory expounded in my papers , this thesis aims to contribute to the enrichment of the feedback literacy construct by incorporating three dimensions: the engagement dimension, the contextual dimension, and the personal dimension. In particular, it sheds light on how feedback is conceptualized by ESL learners. Second, through the findings reported in my primary research studies and 'theory-into-practice' papers, this thesis provides classroom-based data to establish ecological validity of and expand the notion of feedback literacy by examining how three feedback activities (teacher feedback, peer feedback, use of exemplars) can develop ESL students' feedback literacy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Feedback literacy

The notion of feedback literacy (FL) was first thoroughly discussed by Sutton (2012). Sutton defined FL as 'a set of generic practices, skills and attributes which… is a series of situated learning practices' (2012, p. 33). Specifically, FL consists of three dimensions: an *epistemological* dimension, an *ontological* dimension, and a *practical* dimension. The *epistemological* dimension refers to students' understanding of feedback. According to Sutton, students have to develop their capacity to understand two types of feedback: feedback *on* knowing and feedback *for* knowing. Feedback *on* knowing, which is corrective and evaluative in nature, addresses the question 'how am I going?' (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 87) and means 'a form of teaching in which academics comment upon the quality and quantity of knowledge learners have presented in their assessments' (Sutton, 2012, p. 33). Feedback *for* knowing, on the other hand, concerns the formative nature of feedback and is related to what Hattie and Timperley (2007) called 'feed forward' (where to next?) and 'feed up' (where am I going?) (p. 87). In other words, these comments include 'guidance concerning how learners can enhance the form and content of their mode of knowing' (Sutton, 2012, p. 34). Ontologically, FL is about students' self-identity and self-efficacy. Sutton (2012) contended that students' FL and self-efficacy are closely connected. Students who are confident about their academic ability are often able to accurately identify and interpret information in feedback which is conducive to their learning. Therefore, to develop students' FL, it is essential for teachers to develop students' 'educational being', a mental state which facilitates students' 'effective engagement in the complex and

uncertain world of higher education' (Sutton, 2012, p. 36). Sutton (2012) contended that a 'diminished academic self' which is characterized by fatigue, fragility, anxiety, and vulnerability is detrimental to students' engagement with feedback. To develop students' 'educational being', Sutton suggested teachers attend to the emotions of students and be sensitive with the language they use when giving feedback to avoid being personal and harsh. The last dimension of Sutton's (2012) notion of FL relates to the practical, that is, students' actions based on feedback. In addition to understanding feedback and feeling confident about their understanding, students have to develop their capacity to act on the feedback they receive. Referring to Hattie and Timperley's (2007) notion of 'feed forward', Sutton (2012) advocated the importance of preparing students to translate feedback information into feedback actions. That is to say, having read and interpreted the formative information in feedback, students are able to apply their understanding to their next piece of assignment. Carless (2019) suggested that these feedback actions take two forms: single-loop learning and double-loop learning. Single-loop learning refers to actions which focus on 'tackling a specific problem or task' (p. 708) while double-loop learning includes an additional dimension of actions which evaluates the effectiveness of single-loop learning.

Building on Sutton (2012)'s conceptualization of FL, Carless and Boud (2018) described three interrelated components of FL, namely appreciating feedback, making judgments, and managing emotions, reminiscent roughly of Sutton's (2012) epistemological, practical, and ontological dimensions of FL:

Students with well-developed feedback literacy appreciate their own active role in feedback processes; are continuously developing capacities in making sound judgments about academic work; and manage affect in positive ways… It is proposed that a combination of the three features… maximises potential for students to take action. (pp. 1318)

Essentially, FL is the understandings (related to knowledge) and capacities (related to actions) needed for students to engage meaningfully with feedback to improve learning (Winstone, Mathlin, & Nash, 2019). The premise of the FL construct is that when students are trained to be feedback literate, they become more empowered to take actions based on feedback, a capability known as 'proactive recipience' of feedback, which is defined by Winstone, Nash, Parker, and Rowntree (2017) as 'a state or activity of engaging actively with feedback processes' (p. 17).

The first component of FL is 'appreciating feedback', which Carless and Boud (2018) referred to as students' acknowledgement of 'the value of feedback and understanding their active role in its processes' (p. 1316). Students' appreciation of feedback concerns the declarative dimension of the FL construct, which relates to their conception of feedback. Referring to the discussion of feedback being defined on a continuum from information to process in Section 1, studies found that the majority of the students perceive feedback as delivery of information (McLean, Bond, & Nicholson, 2015) and fail to acknowledge the fact that messages embedded in feedback would only be conducive to their learning if they can be understood and acted upon. Students' misunderstanding or lack of understanding of the meaning of feedback and their roles in the feedback process lead to students' misinterpretations of feedback

and the instructors' intentions of giving feedback (Rae & Cochrane, 2008). In fact, students' disenchantment about feedback provided by instructors is detrimental to students' learning and instructors' incentive to give feedback. From the students' perspective, students' misplaced expectations that their instructors should provide detailed information in written form regarding their work turns feedback into 'a barrier that distorts the potential for learning' (Carless, 2006, p. 220); at the same time, because of students' disillusion about feedback, 'staff commitment to providing helpful feedback can therefore become increasingly undermined' because there is a dearth of evidence that students benefit from their feedback (Hounsell, 2007, p. 103). In order to increase students' motivation to engage with feedback, students need to understand the meaning and values of feedback and their responsibility in the process thereof.

The second component of FL in Carless and Boud's (2018) framework is 'making judgments'. With the idea that students learn best when serving as assessors, it is essential for students to develop a refined understanding about what 'good work' looks like with reference to a set of assessment rubrics (Dawson, 2017), a 'high-level cognitive ability' known as *evaluative judgment* (Tai, Ajjawi, Boud, Dawson, & Panadero, 2018, p. 470). Evaluative judgment, which is defined as 'the capacity to make decisions about the quality of work of oneself and others' (Tai et al., 2018, p. 467), has received a revived attention in higher education literature. Originally developed by Sadler (1989) and known as 'evaluative knowledge' (p. 135) and 'evaluative expertise' (p. 138), evaluative judgment is an important cognitive ability to university students not

only for their current studies but also for lifelong learning so that they can make informed decisions about the quality of work they undertake in a self-directed manner (Cowan, 2010). According to Nelson (2018), there are three types of evaluative judgment: *hard*, *soft*, and *dynamic*. *Hard evaluative judgment* is the objective evaluation concerning the correctness of features of an exemplar; in Nelson's own words, opportunities for hard evaluative judgment come to light 'when we discriminate on the basis of truth' (p. 51). In the context of ESL writing, hard evaluative judgment concerns areas related to grammatical (e.g. the use of correct verb tenses) and mechanical accuracy (e.g. the use of correct punctuations). *Soft evaluative judgment*, on the other hand, is judgment based on 'values and quality where the issue is not so much about right and wrong but how important things are' (p. 52). For instance, in ESL writing, soft evaluative judgment is demonstrated through students' use of a variety of vocabulary and sentence patterns. While it is not incorrect to use the same expressions or sentence patterns repeatedly, 'variety of expressions' is regarded as an important area of assessment in most writing rubrics. Lastly, *dynamic evaluative judgment* concerns 'how to manage content' (Nelson, 2018, p. 53). Nelson admitted that this dimension of evaluative judgment is the most 'esoteric' (p. 53) because it is related to 'writing, organizing ideas in a creative or persuasive way'. In other words, dynamic evaluative judgment is about how one communicates with the audience of the work through presentation of logical and structured ideas.

The third and last component in Carless and Bouds' (2018) FL framework is effective management of affect. It is important to develop students'

emotional readiness to engage with critical and negative feedback because 'student dispositions to engage with feedback are often not optimal' (Carless & Boud, 2018, p. 1318). Feedback literate students are capable of focusing on formative information in the feedback and maintain a positive outlook that feedback is helpful in achieving intellectual and academic advancement. On the contrary, students who do not possess a high degree of FL would feel offended by critical feedback (Forsythe & Johnson, 2017). Their defensiveness or their attempt to 'fake good' in front of others impedes their willingness to engage in feedback dialogues with teachers and peers (Gibbs, 2006, p. 26).

2.2 Activities which promote student feedback literacy

An array of FL-promoting activities has been documented in feedback literature in higher education, including the use of exemplars, peer feedback, and technology-mediated feedback.

Regarding the use of exemplars, recent assessment literature in higher education suggests that the use of exemplars is most effective in developing students' tacit knowledge of assessment criteria when accompanied with dialogues (Chong, 2019a; Polanyi, 1958, 1962). In their recent study, Carless and Chan (2017) summarized 16 dialogic moves by a faculty member in a university in Hong Kong who teaches teacher education courses to students of science specialism. These 16 movies can be categorized into three features: Scaffolding, Eliciting, and Giving (Table 2).

Table 2: Dialogue features and dialogic moves in Carless and Chan (2017)

Dialogue features	Dialogic moves
Scaffolding	1. Providing a structural scaffolding to the dialogue
Eliciting	2. Eliciting views from students as a group 3. Eliciting views from an individual student 4. Eliciting questions from students 5. Eliciting explanations from students 6. Eliciting examples from students
Giving	7. Giving a summary of students' views 8. Giving a paraphrased version of students' views 9. Giving an elaboration on students' views 10. Giving the teacher's own views 11. Giving wait time 12. Giving instructions to refer to rubrics 13. Giving instructions to refer to exemplars 14. Giving examples 15. Giving the teacher's own interpretation of exemplars 16. Giving compliments

From the 16 moves, Carless and Chan (2017) provided four principles to guide the practice of dialogic use of exemplars:

- Students' opinions, albeit divergent and developmental, should be valued.

- Students should be given the opportunities to verbalize and make explicit their thinking and reasoning.

- Students should engage in dialogues with their peers and the teacher through small-group and whole-class discussions.

- Students should be given scaffolding prior to analyzing exemplars.

While peer feedback is a contested practice, its effectiveness in promoting students' understanding of assessment criteria and increasing students' participation in the feedback process cannot be denied. In her study

on a group of UK university students, McConlogue (2012) found that after repeated practices of giving peer feedback, students' understanding of the assessment criteria became more precise and their evaluative judgment of their peers' work was more reliable; nonetheless, these students seemed to be sceptical about the grades given by their peers. On the other hand, students in Nicol, Thomson, and Breslin (2014) appeared to be more positive about their peer assessment experience. These students identified a number of benefits of giving feedback to peers. First, their evaluative judgment improved because they developed a better understanding of the quality of not only their peers' work but also their own. Second, they became more skilful at using the language of the rubrics to explain and support their judgments. Third, these students felt more empowered to evaluate the quality of their own work that they became less reliant on teacher feedback. To maximize the benefits of peer feedback in developing students' evaluative judgment, research suggests that teachers should keep the assessment exercise low-stakes by not having students give grades to their peers' work. When peer feedback is conducted in a summative manner, students' marking becomes biased: they will either give a higher mark to their peers in fear of losing their friendship or they will give a lower mark because of the contentious assessment culture (Sridharan, Tai, & Boud, 2019).

As far as technology-mediated feedback is concerned, Chong (2019b) (Appendix H) gave an overview of three types of technology-mediated feedback and how they can engage students more proactively in the feedback process:

Particularly, the increasing prominence of technology has given rise to new ways for writing teachers to give feedback electronically: feedback given using (online) word-processing software (e.g. Microsoft Word, Google Docs) (Kim, 2010), audio software (e.g. Audacity) (Lunt & Curran, 2010), and screen capture software (e.g. JING) (Stannard, 2017).

The written mode of feedback is often delivered electronically by utilizing the affordances of word-processing software, especially the editing functions. These editing features (e.g. track changes, commenting, highlighting) are perceived positively by university students and instructors because of the increased specificity and quantity of feedback as well as the convenience to read and respond to the feedback (McCabe, Doerflinger, & Fox, 2011). Some e-feedback is delivered online through self-developed systems which facilitate student-teacher and student-student collaboration in the writing process (Alvarez, Espasa, & Guasch, 2012). In their study, Alvarez et al. (2012) found that students responded more proactively to teacher's e-feedback because they not only address the concerns of teachers but also discuss their writing asynchronously using an online annotation system. When audio feedback is given using such software as Audacity, empirical evidence has shown that there is an increased likelihood for students to engage with the feedback, when compared to feedback given in written mode (Lunt & Curran, 2010). In a similar vein, Ice, Curtis, Phillips, and Wells (2007) noted that audio feedback, when compared with written feedback, is more effective in terms of student engagement and uptake. In a more recent study by Brearley and Cullen (2012), findings indicate that audio feedback which is given before students' final submission of assignments is the most helpful, as reflected from the students' improved performance in their terminal draft. As for the case of video feedback, which is regarded as 'the latest development in alternative methods for organizing feedback systems' (Denton, 2014, p. 53), studies have found that students valued video feedback because it is usually more useful, including not only information about their strengths and weaknesses, but also suggestions for improvement (Jones, Georghiades, & Gunson, 2012). From the teachers' perspective, video feedback given using screen capture technology empowers teachers to give feedback through a plethora of ways, including verbal explanations, written notes, display of online information which result in 'a higher level of effective communication and helps stimulate students to continually improve and modify action' (Jones et al., 2012, p. 593). (pp. 1090-1091)

3. Theoretical and conceptual underpinnings

3.1 Learner agency and an ecological perspective on language learning

Despite not being explicitly stated, Carless and Boud's (2018) FL framework is underpinned by the notion of learner agency by placing students at the centre of the feedback process. Agency is often defined as 'the ability or potential to act' (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015, Location 516). The difference between the actions by learners with a high and low degree of agency is the presence and absence of 'intentionality', the capacity to align actions with personal goals and contextual affordances (Priestley et al., 2015). Learner agency is not only socially-constructed but temporal. Priestley et al. (2015) suggested that there are three temporal dimensions of learner agency: *iterational*, *projective*, and *practical-evaluative*. While the iterational dimension of learner agency concerns the influences of students' learning experience (e.g., students' experience of receiving and responding to teacher feedback), the *projective* aspect of learner agency deals with students' future directions (e.g., students' learning goals). The iterational and projective facets of learner agency inform the practical-evaluative element of learner agency, which is about how students engage with learning opportunities at present. Agency is not a static construct and does not develop in a vacuum; instead, it is viewed as an 'emergent phenomenon' through the interplay between personal, contextual, and structural factors (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). Since learner agency is developmental and socially constructed, it is important to look at the notion from an ecological perspective (van Lier, 2004).

An ecological perspective of language learning and teaching perceives language learners as 'organisms interrelated with their surrounding environments' (Han, 2019, p. 289). Together with sociocultural theory, the ecological perspective on language learning takes a sociocognitive stance towards language learning which perceives language learning as 'emergent and situated' (Han & Hyland, 2019, p. 249). Van Lier (1997) gave a succinct definition of an ecological perspective on language learning:

> [It is] a conception of the learning environment as a complex adaptive system, of the mind as the totality of relationships between a developing person and the surrounding world, and of learning as the result of meaningful activity in an accessible environment (p.783)

Following van Lier's (1997) definition of an ecological perspective on language learning which underscores the interrelatedness between individuals and environments in contributing to the learning of a language, Halliday and Glaser (2011) regards a language classroom as a social-ecological system, which is 'a system composed of organized assemblages of humans and non-human life forms in a spatially determined geophysical setting' (p. 2). When learner-teacher, learner-material, and learner-context interactions take place in a language learning environment, which is perceived as a social-ecological system, there is the presence of 'affordances', or opportunities, which learners can seize to advance their learning (Kramsch, 2008). However, the availability of these affordances does not automatically entail successful learning. For such affordances to become learning opportunities, there should be a match between the opportunities available, the learners' intention to learn, and the learners' capacity to perceive such opportunities as useful (Gao, 2010).

It is important to define 'context' and 'individual differences'. Han (2019) proposed four dimensions of 'context' which potentially affect learners' uptake of WCF, including textual-level factors (e.g., features of WCF), interpersonal and interactional-level factors (e.g., learners' relationships with the teacher), instructional-level factors (e.g., curriculum materials), and sociocultural-level factors (e.g., roles of teachers and learners). As for 'individual differences', its effects on learners' engagement with feedback were explored in Storch and Wigglesworth (2010). In the study, two pairs of learners engaged with the feedback provided extensively because of their goal to improve their grammatical accuracy in writing, which led to high uptake. In contrast, another pair of learners dismissed the feedback because they aimed at 'improving their text as they saw fit' (p. 328). As a result, uptake and retention were absent from their subsequent writing. In another study by Han and Hyland (2015), they posited that 'individual differences' is a complex construct which includes 'students' L2 learning goals, beliefs about the effectiveness of WCF, about English writing…, and about their own writing abilities' (p. 40). These individual factors play an important mediating role in shaping learners' cognitive, behavioural, and affective engagement with feedback.

The notion of contextualized student agency has been increasingly referred to in recent feedback studies. 'Contexts' and 'individual differences' interact to shape learners' agency, which in turn, affects their engagement with feedback. Interactions between contextual and personal factors can take many forms. For instance, in a study conducted by Han and Hyland (2019), it was found that students' uptake of WCF was affected by their learning experience,

that is, the feedback practices adopted by their language teachers. One student found it difficult to understand coded WCF[2] (text-level context) because her previous teachers did not adopt this feedback strategy. In another case, seriousness of the teacher in giving feedback (interactional-level context) motivated a student to be more proactive in understanding and responding to her teacher's WCF.

3.2 Sociocultural theory

Two concepts of sociocultural theory (SCT) inform the construct of FL: *mediation* and *zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981). SCT postulates that 'all human behaviour is organized and controlled by material (e.g., computer) and symbolic (e.g., language) artifacts' (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015, p. 143). These 'materials and symbolic artifacts' serve as *mediational means* which regulate cognitive and emotional activities of humans (Vygotsky, 1978; 1981). The notion of mediation is further elaborated by Feuerstein and his colleagues (1988) in their theory of mediated learning experience (MLE) which highlights the mediational influence of symbolic artifacts (dialogues with students). MLE, which was originally developed for analysing children's cognitive development, posits that an effective way to develop human cognition is through purposeful interaction and instruction (Presseisen, 1992). Feuerstein, Rand, and Rynders (1988) suggested four qualities of MLE: (1) intentionality, (2) reciprocity, (3) transcendence, and (4) meaning. Interactions which contribute to the development of human cognition focus on a particular topic (*intentional*) and they have to be dialogic rather than

---

[2] For the definition of coded WCF, refer to Table 1.

didactic (*reciprocity*). Furthermore, the co-constructed information needs to be meaningful to the individuals (*meaning*) which helps them perform better in future tasks (*transcendence*). The burgeoning of students' FL is mediated by both material artifacts (e.g., students' written work, written feedback they receive, materials used in learning and assessment) and symbolic artifacts (e.g., language used in the feedback, learning culture, relationships with teachers and peers). For example, in Carless and Boud's (2018) FL framework, one of the characteristics of feedback literate student is that they are able to manage their emotions when receiving critical feedback. Drawing on the notion of mediation, students' success in managing their affect and upholding objectivity in face of criticisms is contingent on an amalgam of material and symbolic artifacts, including wordings used in the feedback (e.g., the use of hedging (Hyland & Hyland, 2001)), relationships between the teacher and student (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and the learning culture where students are situated in (Hu, 2019).

From a SCT perspective, development of ESL learners' FL is informed by the notion of zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is defined as 'the difference between what an individual achieves by herself and what she might achieve when assisted' (Swain et al., 2015, p.15). According to Vygotsky (1978; 1981), learning takes place through the confluence of mediating artifacts and expert assistance. 'Negotiated and dynamic assistance' from experts (usually teachers) is particularly necessary to empower students to improve their work and engage meaningfully with feedback – information which can only be made actionable by students with the assistance of experts i.e., ZPD (Storch, 2018, p. 264). Such expert assistance, as suggested by Carless and Boud (2018),

can take the form of engaging students in FL-promoting activities, such as analysing exemplars. In the context of language learning, these FL-promoting activities empower students to attend to macro and micro features in language learning tasks (e.g., writing). For instance, students develop a better understanding of such macro writing features as idea development, coherence and cohesion, which are regarded as forms of tacit knowledge (i.e., knowledge not effectively conveyed in verbal and written form), through discussing exemplars with their teacher and peers (Charney & Carlson, 1995). In relation to micro writing features, research has shown that students who are given ample opportunities to analyse exemplars collaboratively with teachers and peers are in a better position to locate and self-correct language errors in their written work (Brown, 2005). In another study which examines the usefulness of using exemplars to develop ESL university students' writing skills in IELTS, students were able to use more sophisticated vocabulary items and sentence structures to express complex ideas after engaging in critical and reflective dialogues with their teacher about some writing exemplars (Chong, Under Review). Non-linguistic gains from analysing exemplars include development of students' evaluative judgment, a 'higher-level cognitive ability' which empowers students to make judgment on the quality of a piece of work (Tai et al., 2018, p. 470). It is crucial for students, through their participation in these FL-promoting activities, to be immersed in the experience of giving, receiving, and interpreting four kinds of 'socially-mediated' feedback (Feuerstein et al., 1988). Additionally, Storch's (2018) notion of 'negotiated and dynamic assistance' can take place between learners, which provide opportunities for a type of languaging, collaborative dialogue. Swain (2006) defined languaging as

'a *process* of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language' (italics mine) (p. 98). It is argued that through engaging in collaborative dialogues, which refer to 'dialogues in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building' (Swain & Watanabe, 2013, p. 1), second language learners solve cognitive problems related to language learning and acquire new linguistic knowledge collectively (Kim, 2008; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007).

3.3 Conceptual framework of feedback literacy

Having reviewed literature on feedback, FL, student engagement with feedback and informed by the notion of agency and SCT, a three-dimensional framework of FL is proposed which guides the formulation of research questions, data collection, and analysis (Figure 1).
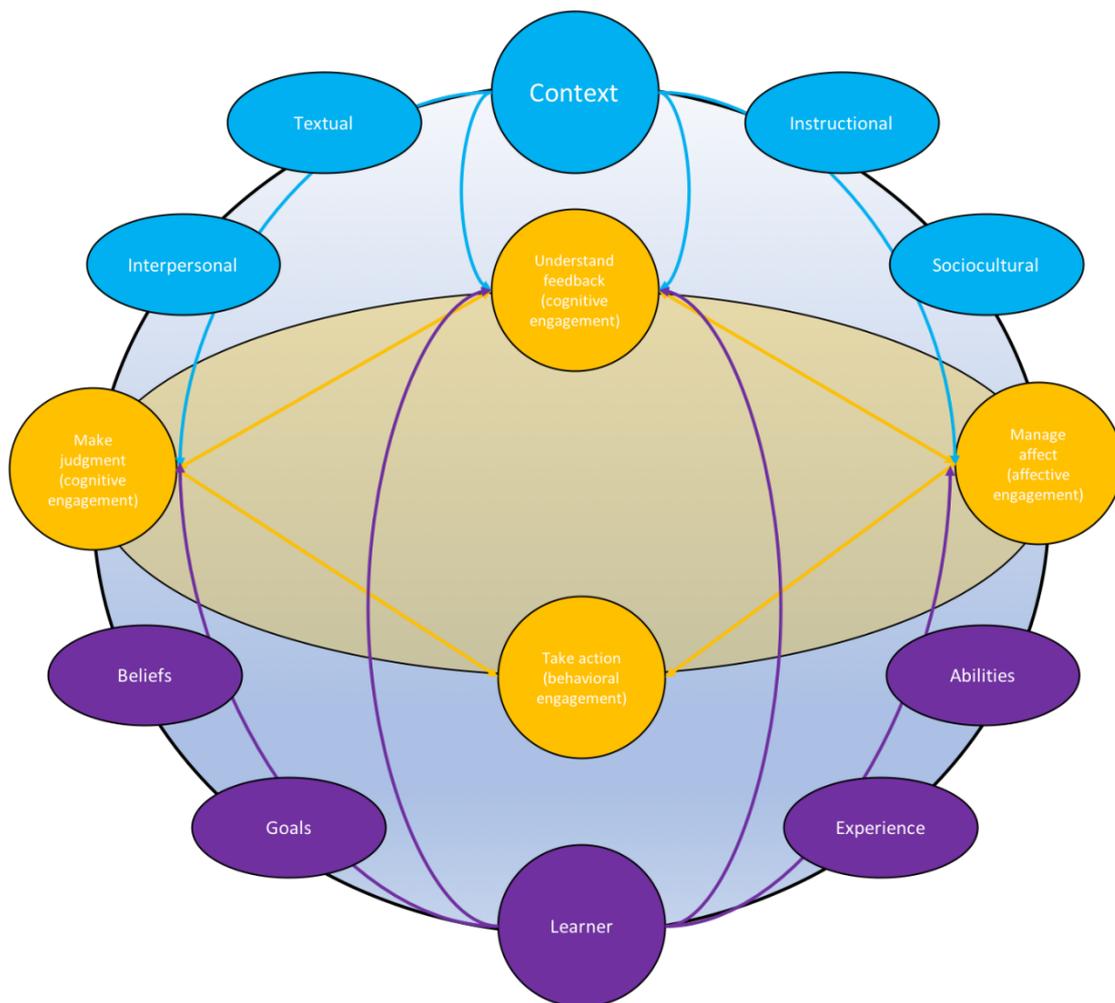
Figure 1: A three-dimensional conceptual framework of FL

This conceptual framework is built upon Carless and Boud's (2018) FL framework, as exemplified by the inclusion of four attributes of feedback literate students. The cognitive attributes include understanding feedback and students' role in the feedback process; making reliable judgment based on tacit knowledge of assessment criteria. The affective dimension of FL refers to how students carefully manage their emotions and attitudes towards feedback, especially how students focus on the usefulness of 'critical' and seemingly 'negative' feedback for their improvement. With successful cognitive and affective engagements with feedback, feedback literate students can become

behaviourally engaged with feedback by acting on feedback (e.g., revise their work or adjust learning strategies based on the feedback).

In addition to the inclusion of the three types of engagement with feedback, this three-dimensional model suggests that the extent to which students can become cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally engaged with feedback is contingent upon two groups of factors: contextual factors and individual factors. Informed by SCT and an ecological view of language learning, learning environments, or contexts, play a pivotal role in mediating students' engagement with feedback. Contextual factors are further divided into four levels, textual, interpersonal, instructional, and sociocultural (Han, 2019). Drawing upon the notion of learner agency, a number of individual factors are at play which influence students' perception and uptake of feedback. These individual factors include students' ESL learning goals, their beliefs concerning the usefulness of feedback, their experiences in engaging with feedback and ESL writing, and their writing abilities/English proficiencies (Han & Hyland, 2015).

3.3.1 The engagement dimension

The engagement dimension of this conceptual framework is modelled on Carless and Boud's (2018) student feedback literacy framework, comprising *cognitive engagement*, *affective engagement*, and *behavioural engagement*. The cognitive attributes include understanding feedback and students' role in the feedback process; making reliable judgment based on tacit knowledge of assessment criteria. The affective dimension of feedback literacy refers to how students carefully manage their emotions and attitudes towards feedback,

especially how students focus on the usefulness of 'critical' and seemingly 'negative' feedback for their improvement. With successful cognitive and affective engagements with feedback, feedback literate students can become behaviourally engaged with feedback by acting on feedback (e.g., revise their work or adjust learning strategies based on the feedback).

3.3.2 The contextual dimension

As discussed earlier, students' engagement with feedback is contingent upon a number of contextual factors. These contextual factors can be divided into four levels: *textual-level* (e.g., features of feedback), *interpersonal-level* (e.g., learners' relationships with the teacher), *instructional-level* (e.g., teacher, curriculum materials), and *sociocultural-level* (e.g., roles of teachers and learners) (Han, 2019). Research has shown that textual-level context such as modes and types of feedback affect how students engage with feedback. For instance, Chong (2019b) concluded that students prefer technology-mediated feedback, including audio and video feedback because of its depth and authenticity. Interpersonal-level context which has been identified in assessment feedback literature in higher education include power (Tan, 2004), trust (Carless, 2009; Gamlem & Smith, 2013), relationship (Chong, 2018d), emotions (Molloy, Borrell-Carrió, & Epstein, 2013). Research has shown that students are more likely to incorporate feedback in their learning when there is a 'synthesis of power' in the feedback process, meaning that the locus of control is evenly distributed between teachers and students (Dann, 2019, p. 11). Establishing a trusting teacher-student and student-student relationship is another key to ensure effective student engagement with feedback because it

is only in a trusting relationship would students reveal their vulnerability and engage in an honest and reflective dialogue with the teacher and peers, which is especially true in lower-ability students (Carless, 2009; Chong, 2018d; Lee & Schallert, 2008).

In a similar vein, the language learning and feedback literature suggests that feedback is not only a product but an interpersonal process. Allwright (2014) put forward a case for the promotion of a harmonious relationship between teachers and students. In his book focusing on the language classroom, Allwright (2014) offered a caveat that a learning environment which is filled with conflicts, distrust, and incompatibility is not conducive to language learning. When it comes to feedback practices in writing, feedback is regarded as 'a concrete expression of recognised social purposes… [with] assumptions about participant relationships' (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 207), which resonates with Allwright's (2014) argument of facilitating student-teacher rapport. In a more recent edition of their book, Hyland and Hyland (2019) argued that English-as-a-Second-Language students would only respond to their teacher's feedback if 'it [the feedback process] engages with the writer and gives him or her a sense that this is a response to a person rather than a script' (p. 165), demonstrating that interpersonal factors determine students' willingness to respond to teachers' feedback.

In terms of instructional context, teachers' feedback literacy plays a role in potentially affecting whether and how students engage with feedback. Winstone and Carless (2019) briefly discussed this novel concept in the

concluding chapter of their book and outlined some qualities of feedback literate teachers, including the capacity to develop assessment activities which develop students' feedback literacy and to collaborate with colleagues in experimenting on innovative and student-centered feedback practices. Socioculturally speaking, Winstone and Boud (2019) found that cultures play an important role in affecting students' attitudes and uptake of feedback. In their comparative study, university students in Australia were more willing to evaluate the effectiveness of feedback and incorporate feedback than students in the UK. Similarly, findings from a recent study on 49 countries by Eriksson, Lindvall, Helenius, and Ryve (2020) corroborated the claim that cultures influence how students understand their role in the feedback process. The study demonstrated that corrective feedback is mostly well-received by students in countries where teachers are perceived as figures of authority.

3.3.3 The individual dimension

Some individual learner differences are believed to be influential on how students perceive and use feedback, which include *beliefs and goals* (Han & Hyland, 2015), *feedback experience* (Beaumont, O'Doherty, & Shannon, 2011), and *abilities* (van der Kleij, 2019). Focusing on beliefs and goals, Han's (2019) case study on two English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Chinese university EFL learners' engagement with feedback showed that the students only engaged with feedback given by their teacher when learning opportunities offered by the feedback (i.e., the information) aligned with the learners' learning goals (i.e., the information in the feedback is appropriate for the learners' learning trajectory) and beliefs (i.e., the learners perceive the feedback to be

usable and useful). In contrast, information in feedback which 'misaligned with individual learners' willingness or capacity are not perceived or are discarded' (p. 298). In their case study focusing on four non-English major Chinese EFL learners, Han and Hyland (2015) concluded that students' engagement with feedback is partially affected by students' beliefs about feedback and writing, and their English learning goals.

Moreover, students' feedback experience is likely to shape students' expectations of feedback practices. For example, Beaumont et al. (2011) found that university students became dependent on teacher-input feedback because of their extensive experience of being 'spoon-fed' in pre-university courses. Furthermore, students' engagement with feedback is influenced by their abilities, specifically, language analytical ability and academic abilities. A study by Shintani and Ellis (2015) on a group of Japanese university students' uptake of two types of written corrective feedback (direct and metalinguistic) showed that students who were more capable of analyzing linguistic features were more successful in revising their written work. Furthermore, feedback research has shown that students' engagement with feedback is affected by their academic abilities (e.g., writing skills). For instance, in Sommers' study (1980) which examined how more and less proficient first-language writers revised their work based on teacher's feedback, the findings demonstrate that only the more proficient writers were able to respond to teacher's feedback at all levels, including micro-level feedback which targets grammatical features and macro-level feedback which focuses on coherence and cohesion. In her recent survey study, van der Kleij (2019) examined English and mathematics teachers' and

students' preference of feedback. Survey results show that students' high self-efficacy (e.g., 'I'm certain I can understand the ideas taught in this subject') and self-regulation (e.g., 'I ask myself questions to make sure I know the material I have been studying') are predictors of students' positive perception of and high engagement with feedback.

4. Method

4.1 Articles

My thesis, which comprises six articles published in international refereed journals indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and Scopus, is anchored on a coherent theme related to assessment feedback and students' engagement with feedback (for a summary of the six articles, refer to Appendix A). Among the six, two articles (Chong,2017a - Appendix C; 2019b – Appendix H) are primary studies, two are conceptual papers (Chong, 2017b – Appendix D; 2018b – Appendix F), and 'theory-into-practice' papers (Chong, 2018a – Appendix E; 2019a – Appendix G) respectively. The bibliographical information of the six articles is listed below:

1. Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017a). How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study. *Assessing Writing, 31*, 13-23. (Appendix C)

2. Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017b). Reconsidering teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback. *TESOL Journal, 8*(4), 886-893. (Appendix D)

3. Chong, S. W. (2018a). A three-stage model for implementing focused written corrective feedback. *TESL Canada Journal, 34*(2), 71-82. (Appendix E)

4. Chong, S. W. (2018b). Three paradigms of classroom assessment: Implications for written feedback research. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 15*(4), 330-347. (Appendix F)

5. Chong, S. W. (2019a). The use of exemplars in English writing classrooms: From theory to practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(5), 748-763. (Appendix G)

    Chong, S. W. (2019b). College students' perception of e-feedback: A grounded theory perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(7), 1090-1105. (Appendix H)

4.2 Research questions

Referring to the three-dimensional framework of FL in Figure 1, my thesis aims to contribute to the enrichment of the FL construct by answering the following research questions:

1. How is feedback conceptualized by ESL students?

2. How can feedback activities develop ESL students' FL?

    a) How can teacher feedback develop ESL students' FL?

    b) How can peer feedback develop ESL students' FL?

    c) How can the use of exemplars develop ESL students' FL?

4.3 Research paradigm

The approach to research which undergirds this thesis is Exploratory Practice (EP), a form of practitioner research (research-as-practice) alongside reflective practice (which focuses on the reflective process but not necessarily the scientific rigor), action research (which focuses on change), and lesson study (which focuses on teacher collaboration), which 'promotes trust and participation in research by all actors in specific educational contexts' (Ding, 2009, p. 71; Hanks, 2017). These 'actors' include educational researchers, teacher educators, teachers, and students. Although ambiguity exists regarding how the term is used (Borg, 2013; Dörnyei, 2007), EP differs from other forms of practitioner research in a sense that the former emphasizes the important role of students as co-researchers by underscoring the 'voice' of the students, which makes EP a type of 'fully inclusive practitioner research' (Hanks, 2019, p. 159). EP works on the premise that research and teaching are inseparable and inform one another (Hanks, 2019). Moreover, EP highlights and acknowledges the strength of collecting classroom-based data with high ecological validity to the educational context being investigated. In this sense, EP adopts an ecological perspective to language teaching and learning which puts emphasis on the interchange between individuals and contexts (Han, 2019; Priestle et al., 2015). To guide EP research, a number of EP frameworks have been proposed in the past decades (Allwright, 1993, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Lefstein & Snell, 2014). In short, EP is recognized as a form of teacher learning which is undergirded by four principles:

1. EP aims to promote collaborative and supportive dialogues within the professional community;

2. EP should be classroom-based and evidence-based;

3. Teachers should interpret evidence critically to construct new understanding;

4. EP should be ongoing and seamlessly infused into teachers' everyday work.

One of the popular topics of EP is teachers' exploration of their 'potentially exploitable pedagogic activities' (PEPAs) (Hanks, 2019, p. 159). PEPAs are defined as pedagogic activities which teachers adapt from those conventionally practiced. Some examples of PEPAs investigated in EP include students' preference for teaching styles (Carvalho, 2009), use of first or second language in class (Siqueiros, 2009), effects of written feedback (Costantino, 2018), learner autonomy (Salvi, 2017), and use of the Internet for academic writing (Chuk, 2009). EP researchers employed a wide range of predominantly qualitative research methods to put students' voice in the foreground in the research projects, such as learner diaries, interviews, (open-ended) questionnaires, and student written assignments.

In this thesis, qualitative findings collected from multiple sources together with narrative reviews of classroom-based studies provide a rich and in-depth description of understanding and perception of ESL students in secondary, community college, and university contexts about feedback and FL-promoting activities.

4.4 Data collection and analysis of the six publications

Grounded on a qualitative, interpretivist research paradigm, methodologies used in the two primary studies (Chong,2017a – Appendix C; 2019b – Appendix H) include grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and phenomenology (Dall'Alba, 2009). Grounded theory is a set of 'systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves' through an inductive and iterative coding process (Charmaz, 2014, p. 1). Chong and Reinders (forthcoming, p. 9-10) detail the process of implementing grounded theory in qualitative research:

(1) **Categories:** Groups of 'instances' or codes which encompass similar features or characteristics (Willig, 2013, p. 70). Categories can be analytical (high-level categories) and descriptive (low-level categories). They are formed as a result of emergent analysis of data through a coding process.

(2) **Initial coding:** At the early stage of fracturing data, speed, open-mindedness, and spontaneity are of paramount importance (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2006) argued that the task at hand in this initial stage of line-by-line coding is to get fresh insights from the data through scanning and skimming.

(3) **Focused coding:** It is defined by Charmaz (2006) as 'using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data' to form preliminary analytical categories (p. 57).

(4) **Axial coding:** To gradually build up an emergent theory, axial coding is essential because it allows researchers to investigate and

make explicit the relationships between high-level analytical categories and low-level descriptive categories, or 'properties and dimensions of a category' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60).

(5) **Memo writing:** It plays a crucial role in assisting the reflective and analytical process of the researchers. It is 'the fundamental process of researcher/data engagement that results in a "grounded" theory… [It] is the methodological link, the distillation process, through which the researcher transforms data into theory' (Lempert, 2007, p. 245).

(6) **Constant comparison method:** It is an inductive data analysis process which aims at generating concepts and theories progressively through comparing coded data with new data (Charmaz, 2006).
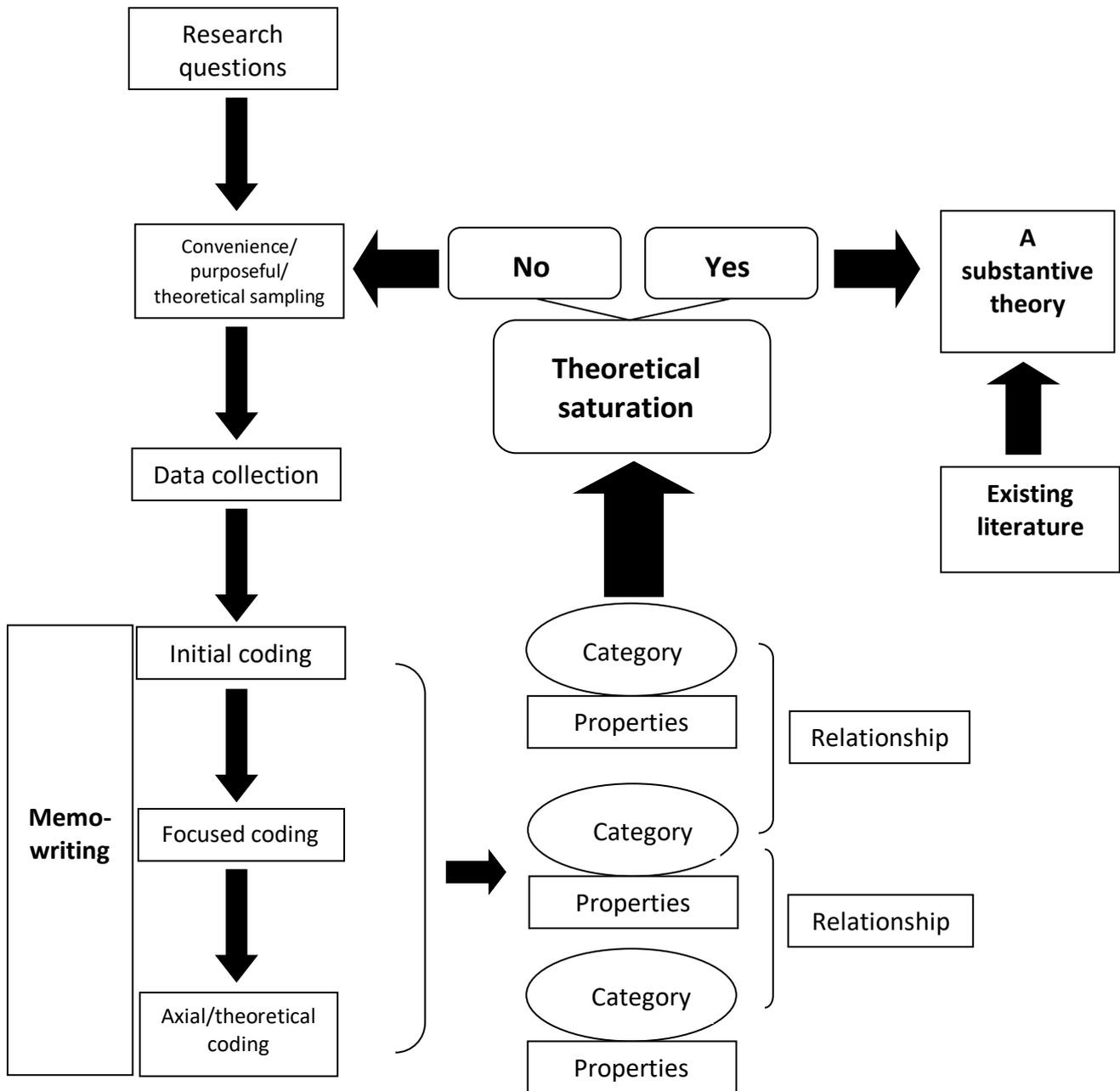
Figure 2: Data collection and analysis process (Chong & Reinders, forthcoming)

At the same time, these studies are phenomenological in nature. Phenomenology, which was first developed by a German mathematician, Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) in the twentieth century, is adopted as the research methodology of the present study. It is essential to define 'phenomenon' and 'phenomenology' at the outset. A 'phenomenon', as it is

commonly understood, is 'something that is observed to happen or exist' (Online Collins Dictionary). Following this rather positivist definition, a 'phenomenon' can refer to something which happens in the natural world (e.g., typhoon), or it can be social (e.g., a protest). In other words, a 'phenomenon' is often understood, using an objective lens, as an observable occurrence, event, experience, and circumstance. Nevertheless, the meaning of a 'phenomenon' in phenomenological studies is more encompassing than this. While 'phenomena' are still regarded as 'things in their natural setting' (Webb & Welsh, 2019, p. 170) or 'the things themselves' (Husserl, 1900/1970, p. 252), phenomenologists acknowledge that there is no single reality or 'truth' to a phenomenon. Meanings of a phenomenon can be multiple, subject to the interpretation of the experiencers (Moran, 2000). In Husserl's words, a 'phenomenon' comprises both the *noesis* and the *noema*. 'Noesis' refers to the 'acts of consciousness' while 'noema' describes 'the properties of the cogitatum' (Eberle, 2013, p. 185). To put simply, 'noesis' relates to the experiencer's impression on the 'phenomenon', which is based on subjective interpretation; on the other hand, 'noema' means the properties of the perceived phenomenon. Eberle (2013) illustrated the noetic and noematic facets of a phenomenon using a bird as an example. If a person observes a bird in his garden, the 'noesis' of this phenomenon may be the person saying to himself, 'what a beautiful bird'; simultaneously, the person observes factual information. For example, this is a bird but not an elephant, this is a bird with a red belly but not a blue belly.

Phenomenology, thus, is both a philosophy and a research methodology (Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009). It is 'an epistemology', 'a sociological paradigm',

and 'an empirical research procedure' (Eberle, 2013, p. 184). The philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology are fourfold: *description*, *reduction*, *essences*, and *intentionality* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). 'Description' refers to describing phenomena with regards to not only their 'noema' but also their 'noesis', which places the focus of the description on a person's experience. 'Reduction' means 'the need for individuals to temporarily suspend taken for granted assumptions and presuppositions about phenomena so the things themselves can be returned to' (Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009, p. 65). 'Essence' acknowledges 'the world is what we perceive' instead of questioning 'whether we really perceive a world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. xviii). Finally, 'intentionality' is reminiscent of the notion of 'noesis'. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), 'intentionality' adds another layer to the meaning of reality by taking into account the consciousness and interpretation of the experiencer:

Here the subject is no longer the universal thinker of a system of objects rigorously interrelated, the positing power who subjects the manifold to the law of the understanding, in so far as he is to be able to put together a world – he discovers and enjoys his own nature as spontaneously in harmony with the law of the understanding. (pp. xix)

Being understood as a research methodology, phenomenology, or sometimes called interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), aims to 'explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world' (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 53). Specifically, Webb and Welsh (2019) suggested some good practices of IPA:

- The focus of investigation is a phenomenon, perceived as an idea or concept.

- Data are mainly collected from interviews aiming to elicit the lived experience of the participants.

- Qualitative coding of data is conducted thematically, constructing broader themes based on codes.

When analyzing a phenomenon, Webb and Welsh (2019) underscored the importance of offering not only description but interpretation of the phenomenon. Instead of simply regurgitating the individual experiences of the participants, experienced phenomenologists would identify 'commonalities and differences in the individual subjective experiences' to unravel how participants make meaning and how those meanings affect their perception of experiences (ibid, p. 171). In other words, it is important that phenomenological interpretation is a joint venture of the participants and the researcher who will 'use their expert knowledge to guide the inquiry and make it meaningful' (ibid, p. 171).

Specific methods used in data collection of the two studies include content analysis of students' peer feedback (Chong, 2017a – Appendix C), open-ended questionnaire (Chong, 2019b – Appendix H), and semi-structured, focus group interviews (Chong, 2019b – Appendix H). Thematic analysis was conducted manually (Chong, 2017a – Appendix C) and using a qualitative coding software, *NVivo* (Chong, 2019b – Appendix H). Computer-assisted

coding was preferred to manual coding in Chong (2019b) (Appendix H) because of the large amount of data I had to handle. *NVivo* enables researchers to 'accommodate a rich and large amount of the data' using such functions as memos and annotations, visualization of data, and organization of information into themes and cases (Dollah, Abduh, & Rosmaladewi, 2017, p. 61). The purpose of thematic analysis is to 'identify themes i.e., patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue' (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3353). When conducting thematic analysis, I paid attention to both semantic and latent meanings. *Semantic meaning* refers to 'explicit or surface meanings of the data' while *latent meaning* means 'the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations – and ideologies – that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). Both deductive and inductive coding methods were used when analyzing the data to capture depth and complexity of meaning (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011).

Regarding the two conceptual papers (Chong, 2017b – Appendix D; 2018b – Appendix F) and 'theory-into-practice' papers (Chong, 2018a – Appendix E; 2019a – Appendix G), narrative literature review techniques are employed to summarize and interpret feedback-related literature. The goal of a literature review is to shed important light on a specific research area through an 'examination of recent or current literature' (Grant & Booth, 2009, p. 94). Depending on the nature of the literature review, its purpose can range from providing a historical development of the topic, developing a methodological framework for researching a topic, advancing theories and concepts, to

informing policy making and practice through synthesizing research evidence (Jahan et al., 2016). Specifically, narrative literature reviews are used in Chong (2017b) (Appendix D), Chong (2018a) (Appendix E), Chong (2018b) (Appendix F), and Chong (2019a) (Appendix G) to investigate a scholarly topic from a conceptual and theoretical perspective and examine effectiveness of a pedagogical intervention (i.e., different forms assessment feedback) (Gough, et al., 2012). The specific steps taken to conduct the narrative literature reviews include identifying publications for possible inclusion, selecting relevant publications for inclusion, synthesizing the included publications (in textual, tabular, and/or diagrammatical format), and critically examining the synthesized materials in light of the literature base (Grant & Booth, 2009).

4.5 Methodology of the commentary

In the commentary, the methodology used to synthesize qualitative findings and materials in the six publications is qualitative research synthesis. Qualitative research synthesis refers to 'systematic reviews of qualitative research' (Booth, 2001, p. 1) which synthesize findings from individual studies into 'a more abstract level in which multidimensions, varieties, and complexities are disclosed' (Çiftçi & Savas, 2017, p. 4). Since qualitative research synthesis is a type of systematic review, it follows a 'protocol-driven and quality-focused approach' to collating research evidence to inform research and practice (Bearman et al., 2012, p. 625). Following Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and Gough (2007), methodological steps taken to synthesize qualitative materials in the six publications are as follows (Figure 3):
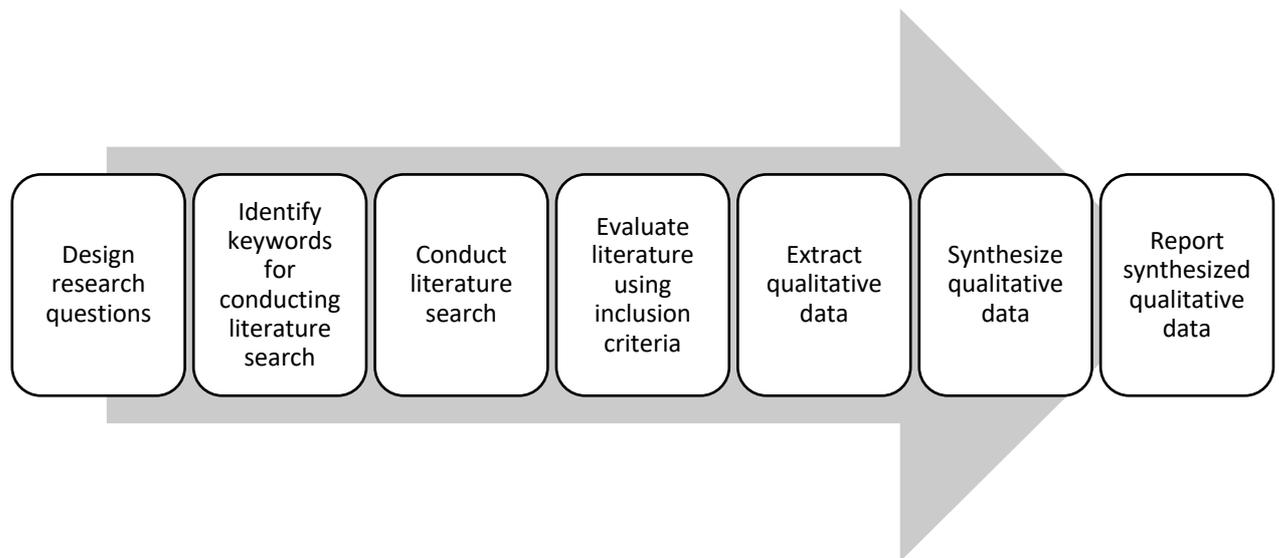
Figure 3: Methodological steps for conducting qualitative research synthesis

(1) **Design research questions:** Qualitative research synthesis, which is a type of secondary qualitative research, is suitable for answering contextualized research questions related to documenting observations of classroom practices and analyzing students' or teachers' perceptions towards pedagogical interventions. For instance, the research questions of this commentary focus on secondary school, community college, and university ESL learners' perception of assessment feedback in general and three specific types of feedback, namely teacher feedback, peer feedback, and feedback used to analyze exemplars.

(2) **Identify keywords for conducting literature search:** To identify relevant information from my six publications, a set of search terms were identified. To locate information related to students' perception, verbs used to express feelings or viewpoints were used; some examples include 'perceive', 'feel', 'remark', 'comment', 'express', 'argue', 'contend, 'believe', 'think', 'consider', 'observe', 'notice', and their noun forms.

More general search terms were also used such as 'feedback', 'comments' to ensure the inclusion of all relevant information.

(3) **Conduct literature search:** The search was performed by opening the PDF files of the six publications and entering the above keywords using the 'search' function of Adobe Acrobat Reader. The relevant sentences containing the keywords were highlighted using the 'highlight' function of Adobe Acrobat Reader to facilitate data extraction and synthesis.

(4) **Evaluate literature using inclusion criteria:** The highlighted sentences were reviewed using two inclusion criteria, which are the two research questions (Section 4.2). To enhance accuracy of evaluation, highlighted sentences were read twice. Only sentences which throw light on the two research questions were retained. The highlights of irrelevant sentences were removed.

(5) **Extract qualitative data:** The highlighted sentences were read repeatedly to identify their main ideas. Paraphrased main ideas were collated into a table on a word document to facilitate in-depth reflections and structuring of findings to be presented.

(6) **Report synthesized qualitative data:** The paraphrased main ideas were categorized according to the two research questions. Findings of the six publications are structured thematically and presented narratively. For instance, in response to the first research question about ESL learners' conceptualization of feedback, two feedback typologies are proposed: sources of feedback (Chong, 2017b – Appendix D) and feedback orientations (Chong, 2018b) (Appendix F). When necessary,

original sentences from the six publications are added in the commentary to substantiate the arguments.

5. Findings and Discussion

5.1 RQ1: How is feedback conceptualized by ESL students?

RQ 1 is answered by my two conceptual papers: Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) and Chong (2018b) (Appendix F). Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) attempts to unpack the complementary roles of teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback whereas Chong (2018b) (Appendix F) developed a conceptual framework of feedback oriented towards three assessment paradigms: assessment *of* learning (AoL), assessment *for* learning (AfL), and assessment *as* learning (AaL).

5.1.1 Sources of feedback in Chong (2017b)

In Chong (2017b) (Appendix D), I discussed three types of feedback ESL students commonly receive, namely teacher feedback, peer feedback, and computer-generated feedback. First, ESL students receive teacher feedback which focuses primarily on language accuracy. Different WCF strategies have been documented in the literature, the majority of which focus on how ESL teachers give WCF in a focused manner (Lee, 2019). In the article, I defined focused WCF as the decision of teachers to 'only mark the preselected language item(s) in students' work' (p. 887). Findings from quasi-experimental studies on focused WCF were collected from learners' performance in multiple writing tests before and after the feedback intervention. Writing test scores of learners from the control group (those who do not receive any WCF) were

compared with those in the treatment group(s) (those who receive a type of WCF). Empirical evidence from these published studies has shown that a focused approach to WCF is effective in improving ESL learners' linguistic accuracy in word-level items, including the English articles 'a', 'an', 'the' (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Farrokhi & Sattarpour, 2012; Shintani & Ellis, 2013; Shintani, Ellis, Suzuki, 2014). In addition to focusing on learners' linguistic accuracy, research has shown that teachers give feedback on learners' content and organization of their writing, especially in a process writing setting. In my short commentary, I identified a number of good features of content-focused feedback which are endorsed by learners, including being personalized (Ferguson, 2011), specific (Glover & Brown, 2006), and goal-directed (Busse, 2013).

While teacher feedback covers different areas of English writing, feedback given by peers is more limited in terms of scope. According to the literature I reviewed in Chong (2017b) (Appendix D), peer feedback is found to usually focus on word-level errors and surface-level features. These features may include spelling, mechanics (e.g., punctuations), verb tenses. Nevertheless, studies have found that ESL learners are not able to provide useful feedback on macro-level writing features, namely idea development, coherence and cohesion. One of the reasons discussed in the literature is that 'students were not capable linguistically of expressing their thoughts in these areas' (Chong, 2017b, p. 888) (Appendix D). I argued in Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) that even the foci of teacher and peer feedback may sometimes overlap, it is important to assign learners to comment on areas in which they feel more prepared; these areas are usually 'rule-governed areas in writing

such as structural elements (hook, thesis statement, topic sentence) and treatable errors (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, spelling, collocations)' (Chong, 2017b, p. 888) (Appendix D).

With the advancement of educational technology, it is increasingly common for ESL learners to receive feedback not only from their teacher and classmates, but also from computers. Computer-generated feedback is defined as feedback provided by 'automated writing evaluation (AWE) software (e.g., Criterion, My Access!, e-rater) to check for errors' (Chong, 2017b, p. 889) (Appendix D). Some benefits which I identified in my paper include timeliness of feedback (Laio, 2016) and enhanced student engagement with feedback through self-correction (Cotos, 2011). However, I also identified some drawbacks of feedback generated from AWE software: (1) based on algorithms, these comments are likely to be formulaic and text-dense which may adversely affect learners' comprehension; (2) the software detects mostly rule-governed grammatical errors; and (3) it lacks emotional response and is less effective when it comes to giving evaluative information on content and structure.

In addition to providing an overview of the usefulness and limitations of three types of feedback which ESL learners usually receive, the main message of Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) is how teachers should 'reconsider' the roles played by these three types of feedback – teacher feedback, peer feedback, and computer-generated feedback. They should serve a complementary role to each other and it is the responsibility of the teacher to 'design' different feedback opportunities in the writing process (Beaumont, O'Doherty, &

Shannon, 2011). Regarding the respective roles of the three types of feedback, a review of feedback literature in Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) shows that the role of teacher feedback is irreplaceable because it gives constructive and formative information on all areas of writing, including content, structure, and language. As for peer feedback, I contended in the article that it is important to 'scaffold' learners through conducting peer review workshops so that learners begin to appreciate the value of feedback provided by their peers and what good feedback looks like (Lam, 2010; Min, 2005, 2006). A caveat noted in peer review literature is to avoid having students give marks or grades to their peers because of the issue of trust and fairness (Sridharan, Tai, & Boud, 2019). Similar training should be provided to learners to prepare them for understanding and responding to computer-generated feedback. ESL learners have to realise the affordances and constraints of computer-generated feedback and how they should be cautious and exercise their judgment when reading feedback provided my AWE software. Learners need to be told the strategies to employ when doubts surface, such as confirming with their teacher or other learning resources (e.g., textbook).

5.1.2 Feedback orientations in Chong (2018b)

In another conceptual paper of mine (2018b) (Appendix F), I proposed another conceptual framework for understanding feedback, which comprises three orientations: *AoL-oriented feedback*, *AfL-oriented feedback*, and *AaL-oriented feedback*. Before I delve into the distinctions amongst the three types of feedback, it is important to understand the three language assessment paradigms: AoL, AfL, and AaL. Informed by Habermas' (1971) three human

interests (technical, practical (communicative), and emancipatory), Serafini's (2001) three assessment paradigms, and Earl's (2013) notion of AaL, I conceptualised the three types of language assessment with respect to their (1) purpose of assessment, (2) roles of teacher and student, (3) intended audience for assessment outcomes, (4) methods used to collect information, (5) knowledge view, and (6) philosophical underpinnings (Figure 2 in Chong, 2018b, p. 337 – Appendix F). While a detailed discussion on these six features is presented in Chong (2018b), I am going to define the three assessment paradigms succinctly here. AoL, also commonly known as summative assessment, is underpinned by a positivist world view and serves the purpose of certification and appraisal. To uphold fairness and accountability, they are usually administered and assessed by teachers. Quantitative information about students' learning progress or academic performance (e.g., test scores) is preferred because it is objective, observable, and measurable. AfL, on the other hand, is what Black and Wiliam (1998) called 'formative assessment'. Black and his associates (2004) defined AfL as 'any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting pupils' learning' (p. 2). Compared with AoL, teachers operating under the AfL paradigm collect information about learners' progress from a wide array of qualitative and quantitative methods (e.g., test scores, teachers' observations in class, learners' written reflections). Most importantly, what differentiates AfL from AoL is that the objective of AfL is to help learners learn better (Taras, 2012). Therefore, it is of paramount importance for teachers to not only possess the ability to collect a large amount of information about the learners, but also interpret and communicate the information to the learners. Using the words of

Hattie and Timperley (2007), AfL is not just about 'how am I going?' ('feed back') but 'where am I going?' ('feed up') and 'where to next?' ('feed forward) (p. 87). Being a more recent notion, AaL was first explicitly discussed by Earl (2013) who defined AaL as 'a subset of AfL' which underscores 'the important role of students as active agents in the assessment process' (Loc 553). As AaL is a subset of AfL, AaL embodies all essential features of AfL (e.g., its purpose to improve learners' learning) with the additional emphasis on learner autonomy and agency. In other words, AaL views learners playing a significant part in the assessment process. Their significance is often realized in the fact that they are positioned as not only receivers but givers of feedback. Advocates of AaL believe that learners learn in the process of giving feedback to peers, and through constant self-reflections.

With reference to these three language assessment paradigms, I conceptualized written feedback into three orientations in Chong (2018b) (Appendix F): *AoL-oriented*, *AfL-oriented*, and *AaL-oriented*. It should be pointed out that unlike the typology of WCF in Table 1 and the classification of feedback in Chong (2017b) (Appendix D), the emphasis of feedback orientations is not so much on the mechanical aspects of feedback, that is, how feedback is given (e.g., focused WCF, written commentaries, audio feedback) but on (1) the intention to give feedback and (2) the roles of students in the feedback process. *AoL-oriented feedback* focuses on 'the effectiveness of different types of WF [written feedback] through analysing whether students' writing performance improved in the revised draft or a new piece of writing' (p. 338). In other words, the intent to give feedback is to provide corrective

feedback which helps improve the quality of students' work. In my conceptual paper, I contended that the quality of AoL-oriented feedback is gauged according to the quality of students' revised work. In the context of ESL writing, feedback with this orientation is regarded as 'effective' if students revise their work based on the feedback and the quality of their final version is higher than that of their interim draft. One common form of AoL-oriented feedback is WCF, which serves as 'an instructional tool to help students improve their writing' (Lee, 2018, p. 2). In Table 1 of Chong (2018b) (Appendix F), I summarized 10 WCF studies which were designed with this orientation of feedback in mind (p. 339-340). AoL-oriented feedback implies a passive role of students in the feedback process. Students' engagement with feedback in this brief feedback process is limited to students reading the feedback and making changes to their work. Apart from being a recipient of feedback, students are deprived of the chance to raise questions about the feedback, select the area(s) which they would like to be commented on, and suggest alternative ways to respond to the feedback.

Underpinned by Habermas' practical-communicative interest (1971; 1984) which underscores the promotion of mutual understanding through dialogues, AfL-oriented feedback 'accentuates communication between teachers and students to achieve mutual understanding' (Chong, 2018b, p. 338 – Appendix F), a process which is otherwise called 'feedback/assessment dialogue' (Carless, 2006). Instead of viewing feedback as instructional information which students simply receive and act on, AfL-oriented feedback does more than that: it perceives feedback as a discursive process in which the givers and receivers of feedback have the opportunity to discuss their concerns,

negotiate meanings, and come to a co-constructed understanding. In my article published in *Language Assessment Quarterly*, I reviewed feedback studies which support this feedback orientation. These studies are interested in understanding the (mis)match between teachers' and students' perception of feedback to inform teachers' feedback practices. One of the major themes I identified in these studies is that students and teachers perceive the usefulness of feedback differently (Orsmond & Merry, 2011) which results in a conundrum that students often misread or misunderstand teacher's feedback despite teachers' commitment to give detailed feedback (Williams & Kane, 2009). Since the focus of AfL-oriented feedback is to facilitate feedback dialogues, the tone of feedback is as important as, if not more than, the substance (the content) of feedback. In Hyland and Hyland (2001), the teachers ventured to use a variety of strategies to make their feedback less offensive and more approachable to students, including pairing criticisms with praises, mitigating suggestions using hedging devices (e.g., may, can consider) and questions, using personal attribution (e.g., If I were to rewrite this, I would…). Feedback studies, like Hyland and Hyland (2001), do not focus on the outcome of feedback but the feedback process. With an AfL-orientation in mind, these studies unravel how different feedback strategies can increase students' understanding of feedback, improve student-teacher trust, and relationship. In Carless and Chan (2017) which focuses on a group of teacher education students, their objective was to understand how to involve students in the process of giving feedback to exemplars rather than whether the feedback has a positive impact on students' work.

The goal of AaL-oriented feedback is to develop students' 'critical reflective practice' so that students can 'make meaningful connection between the assessment information… and their own learning progress' (Chong, 2018b, p. 341 – Appendix F). AaL-oriented feedback helps students develop metacognitive knowledge and self-regulated skills. In the article, I briefly discussed three types of metacognitive knowledge, namely *person knowledge*, *task knowledge*, and *strategic knowledge* (Flavell, 1979). Person knowledge refers to belief about 'the nature of yourself and other people as cognitive processors' (p. 907). The task category of metacognitive knowledge describes students' understanding of the requirements and nature of a learning task. In Flavell's words, task knowledge refers to 'the information available to you during a cognitive enterprise' which is conceptualized in a dichotomized manner (e.g., familiar vs. unfamiliar, interesting or dull) (p. 907). Finally, strategic knowledge is defined straightforwardly as 'knowledge that could be acquired concerning what strategies are likely to be effective in achieving what subgoals and goals in what sorts of cognitive undertakings' (p. 907). Referring specifically to ESL writing, students' engagement with AaL-oriented feedback would facilitate the development of their understanding of themselves as learners (e.g., their strengths and weaknesses), requirements and nature of writing tasks (e.g., genres), and strategies they need to employ to complete the tasks successfully (e.g., use genre-specific vocabulary). At the same time, AaL-oriented feedback develops students' self-regulation. Self-regulation, or self-regulatory mechanism, is defined as 'a person's actual use of learning and thinking strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluative cognitive tasks such as learning' (Chong, 2018b, p. 335 – Appendix F); self-regulation comprises four

components: standards of desirable behaviour, motivation to attain the standards, and monitoring of the process of attaining the standard, and determination or grit to persist in the process of attainment (Baumeister, Schmeichel, & Vohs, 2007). To put it simply, AaL-oriented feedback targets students' knowledge and skills to plan, monitor, and evaluative their learning. For example, when an ESL teacher gives screencast feedback using *QuickTime*, instead of showing on the screen errors which a student made in his writing, the teacher would highlight the strategies and skills the student needs to complete the three stages of writing successfully: pre-writing stage, while-writing stage, and post-writing stage. In the pre-writing stage, the ESL teacher could suggest the student use a Venn diagram for a compare and contrast essay. For the while-writing stage, the teacher may remind the student to use phrases and expressions to highlight similarities and differences (e.g., similarly, conversely, while). The teacher could end the video by giving advice on how the student could proofread his work to minimize grammatical errors (e.g., using spell check, or *Grammarly*). Similar to a feedback process with an AfL-orientation, students in an AaL-oriented feedback process play an equally active role as their teacher. The difference, however, lies in the types of dialogues which the students engage in. For AfL-oriented feedback, the objective is to engage students in feedback dialogues with the giver of feedback (usually the teacher). On the contrary, AaL-oriented feedback activates students' capacity to engage in internal dialogues. Through processing AaL-oriented feedback, students reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses, devise appropriate strategies, and adopt task-specific and person-specific skills in order to complete a similar learning task more successfully in the future. In

Chong (2018b) (Appendix F), I introduced some feedback studies which delve into how ESL learners internalized feedback and used feedback to improve the ways they learn. A more recent study which I included is Ferris, Liu, Sinha, and Senna (2013). In the study, the researchers investigated how a group of ESL students engaged in reflections on how they monitor their revision process after reading their teachers' feedback. The study found that through reading feedback provided by their teachers, the students realized that some of the grammatical rules they learned in secondary schools were 'partially learned or misapplied' (p. 322).

5.1.3 Developing students' understanding of feedback

Taking into consideration the confluent influences of the learning environment and individual differences of learners (Figure 1), it is important for ESL teachers to provide opportunities for students to understand the meaning of feedback and appreciate their roles thereof. There are two strategies which teachers can employ to develop students' understanding of feedback: (1) feedback scaffolding (Section 5.1.3) and (2) diverse feedback experience (Section 5.2).

While feedback literature has documented a wide range of feedback activities employed by teachers to encourage students' engagement with feedback, not much has been said regarding how to develop students' readiness for engaging with different types of feedback. Taking an ecological perspective to understanding the feedback process, I contend that it is important for teachers to provide scaffolding to students before they engage

(receive, read, interpret, act on, give) with feedback. First, teachers can administer a survey which probes into students' conceptions of feedback or, more broadly, assessment at the beginning of a semester. The survey can be developed based on the two typologies of feedback which were introduced in Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. Specifically, the survey can be divided into two parts and comprise items which ask students to (1) rank their preference for the three sources of feedback (teacher, peer, computer-mediated) (Chong, 2017b) (Appendix D) and (2) describe the extent to which they agree with different purposes of feedback and roles of students in the feedback process (the three feedback orientations in Chong (2018b) (Appendix F)). Alternatively, instead of starting from scratch, teachers can adapt existing surveys, such as the Chinese Students Conceptions of Assessment Inventory developed by Gavin Brown and Zhenlin Wang in 2018 based on their previous work (Brown & Wang, 2016; Chen & Brown, 2016). In this inventory, survey items were categorized into different sections to look into how students understand assessment in relation to (1) its social function ('selection and societal', 'family obligation', 'social mobility'), (2) strategies for preparing for assessment ('gaming strategies'), (3) purposes of assessment ('useful for teachers' and 'improvement'), (4) students' emotions ('positive' and 'negative'), (5) students' self-efficacy ('effortful modesty' and 'personal worth'). Items under these sections can be easily modified to focus on students' perception of feedback.

Regardless of the fact that teachers choose to develop their own survey or adapt existing ones, it is important to include items which focus on the contextual and individual factors listed in the three-dimensional framework of

FL (Figure 1). Four levels of context can be included in the feedback conception survey: *textual context*, *instructional context*, *interpersonal context*, and *sociocultural context* (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Textual context includes characteristics of feedback (e.g., specificity, quantity, types) and focus of feedback (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). Instructional context involves support provided to students for them to understand feedback; such support can originate from teachers, curriculum materials, or online resources (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Interpersonal context denotes student-student and student-teacher relationships; feedback dialogues between students and the teacher (Espasa, Guasch, Mayordomo, Martinez, & Carless, 2018). Lastly, sociocultural context relates to social and cultural norms and beliefs (e.g., submissive image of students in Confucian-heritage educational settings) (Carless, 2011). Having administered the student conception of feedback survey, it is important for teachers to discuss survey results with their students. This kind of students-teacher assessment dialogue is useful for the teacher to share his view of feedback and explicate his expectations; at the same time, the discussion provides an opportunity for the students to share their (successful or less successful) feedback experience and co-construct understanding related to effective engagement with feedback.

The second feedback scaffolding activity which teachers can consider is 'Letter to the Reviewer' (Shvidko, 2015). A 'Letter to the Reviewer' is 'a memo that students attach to each draft, in which they provide a short reflective note to their reviewer by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their draft and ask for specific feedback on certain elements of the draft' (p. 55). In the letter,

students have a chance to collaborate with the teacher in the feedback process by stating the types of feedback they prefer to receive. Students play a more proactive role in the feedback process by reflecting on their needs and determining what the teacher would comment on their writing. Research has shown that this feedback scaffolding activity exerts 'a positive impact on students' confidence and self-esteem' because students know that their opinions are valued by their teacher (Shvidko, 2015, p. 67). As an alternative, students can include feedback examples collected from previous marked assignments in the letter to illustrate the types of feedback they prefer and the reason. Referring to the three-dimensional FL model in Figure 1, this feedback scaffolding activity provides the opportunity for students to make explicit their feedback preference which is closely associated with individual learner differences. These differences include students' beliefs about the usefulness of feedback, goals of learning English as a second language, feedback and writing experience, and English writing proficiency. For instance, a university freshman who is a proficient English writer and received unfocused WCF [3] in his secondary school English writing lessons would be more inclined towards receiving more grammar-focused feedback from his university writing instructor. It is because the student holds the belief that grammatical accuracy is an important indicator of writing excellence. Moreover, he may attribute his high writing proficiency to the error correction by his secondary English teacher.

---

[3] Refer to Table 1 for its definition.

5.2 RQ2: How can feedback activities develop ESL students' feedback literacy?

In addition to feedback scaffolding activities, the provision of diverse feedback experience is crucial to developing students' understanding of feedback as well as other features of FL, namely making judgment and managing affect. In the following sections, I will draw upon four of my published work to illustrate three FL-promoting activities and how they can develop ESL students' FL. These activities include teacher feedback (Chong, 2018a – Appendix E, 2019b – Appendix H), peer feedback (2017a) (Appendix C), and use of exemplars (2019a) (Appendix G).

5.2.1 How can teacher feedback develop ESL students' feedback literacy?

5.2.1.1 Three stages for implementing focused WCF (Chong, 2018a)

In my article published in *TESL Canada Journal* (Chong, 2018a) (Appendix E) which focuses on one type of teacher feedback (focused WCF), I gave suggestions on how teachers can engage ESL learners in the feedback process. In the article, I first justified the need to emphasize focused WCF (correcting specific types of language errors), as opposed to other types of WCF, including unfocused WCF (correcting all language errors), direct WCF (identifying and correcting language errors), and indirect WCF (identifying language errors). I discussed the conundrum faced by ESL writing teachers when they attempt to implement focused WCF. While teachers generally believe that focused WCF will make 'feedback less overwhelming, which makes revision more manageable' (Chong, 2018a, p. 72 – Appendix E), they face a lot

of pressure from colleagues, department chair, principal, and parents. Teachers who practice focused WCF are wrongly perceived to be less professional and 'laidback' because they are not able to identify all the errors in students' writing. The major contribution of this article is the introduction of the three-stage model for implementing focused WCF which includes 'student-centred strategies prior to, during, and after giving WCF' (Chong, 2018a, p. 73 – Appendix E). Underpinned by the notion of 'feedback as a new form of instruction', the model comprises three cyclical stages: *selecting the focus*, *teaching the focus*, and *reinforcing the focus*. In the subsequent paragraphs, I would illustrate how each of these stages help develop students' FL with reference to the FL framework (Figure 1).

In the 'selecting the focus' stage, I encouraged teachers to adopt strategies to give students a 'voice' in the selection of feedback foci. The first strategy I suggested is a language focus checklist (Figure 2 in Chong (2018a) – Appendix E). In the checklist, there are a range of common grammatical features for students to choose from (e.g., spelling, agreement, word choice, sentence structures). Before submitting their written work, students can check the grammatical features which they want their teacher to give feedback on. There is also some space on the checklist for students to put down other areas which they want their teachers to focus on when giving feedback. The second strategy which I included in my article is an error log, which is adapted from Ferris (2002) and Lee (2017) (Table 1 in Chong (2018a) – Appendix E). An error log is 'a table kept and completed by students regarding the distribution of the types of error in each piece of writing' (Chong, 2018a, p. 75 – Appendix

E). An error log documents students' number of errors under each type of error and calculates the error ratio. From the error ratio, error types are ranked according to 'error gravity'. For instance, referring to Table 1 in Chong (2018a) (Appendix E), this student made a total of 20 errors which spread across four error types, namely verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, spelling, and part of speech. Amongst the four types of errors, the error ratio of 'verb tenses' is the highest (number of errors (8) / total number of errors (20) = error ratio (0.4)). With the highest error ratio, 'verb tenses' is ranked first among the four types of errors, meaning that the student is the weakest in writing in correct tenses. Such simple calculation helps ESL writing teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses in their writing in order to decide on the feedback focuses. When implemented longitudinally in a writing portfolio, error log is a very effective tool to provide diagnostic information for the teacher to formulate the appropriate feedback strategy.

With reference to the three features of FL by Carless and Boud (2018), these two strategies are useful in developing students' understanding of feedback; students' capacity to make better judgment and manage their affect in the feedback process. By asking students to complete the language focus checklist, students have a chance to make decisions on their teacher's feedback focuses which gives them ownership and authority in the feedback process. Besides, since students are asked to select areas which they want their teacher to comment on, students are trained to read their written work critically and reflect on their weaknesses. Through engaging in internal dialogues, students are better trained to identify areas which they can easily

improve on with teachers' input and guidance, that is, Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD. Moreover, it is less likely for students to be defensive about teachers' feedback because the feedback addresses areas which the students identified as needing the teacher's support the most. In a similar vein, error logs, which document students' distribution of errors in each composition, facilitates students' self-reflection. By comparing the error log and the feedback they receive, students can understand the reasons why the teacher decides to comment more fervently on certain grammatical features than others. At the same time, if students keep track of their error distribution for a semester, they can begin to make an informed judgment on whether the feedback they receive is effective. For example, if a student who is weak in verb tenses makes less mistakes in this language feature at the end of the semester, the student will be appreciative of the feedback they received because the error logs indicate an improvement in accuracy in this language feature. Furthermore, the use of error logs helps students to make more accurate judgment regarding the quality of their written work in relation to grammatical accuracy by analysing error distribution of their work. Last but not least, students learn to remain objective when receiving feedback by adopting an analytical mindset rather than being offended by corrective feedback.

In the second stage, I contended in the article that it is imperative for ESL teachers to teach the relevant language focus prior to giving feedback on them. By teaching students the language focus through direct instruction or language tasks, students develop a better understanding of the grammatical rules pertaining to the feedback focus. Thus, they are in a better position to give

a more accurate evaluation of their written work in relation to the language focus. Additionally, since students now possess a more sophisticated understanding about these grammatical features, they are more capable of using the feedback to revise their work to increase linguistic accuracy. In my article, I suggested teachers employ a mixture of inductive and deductive approaches to language teaching to familiarize students with the language that they wish to focus on. Inductively, task-based language teaching can be adopted (Ellis, 2018). By designing consciousness-raising tasks, authentic language materials are presented for students to 'identify the form and induce the "rule" by noticing the similarities shared among the examples' (Chong, 2018a, p. 78 – Appendix E). For less proficient ESL learners, a deductive approach to grammar instruction may be more suitable. Instead of asking students to 'discover' grammatical rules, the teacher engages in 'direct instruction' and presents grammar rules and sentence examples to students. Regardless of the approach, it is important to provide ample opportunities for students to practice and apply their understanding of the language focus. In my article, I suggested teachers adopt a progressive approach, moving from controlled practices (e.g., fill in the blanks) to free responses (e.g., sentence making).

Lastly, in the post-feedback stage, it is essential for teachers to reinforce the feedback focus. In my article, I suggested two post-feedback activities which can help students engage with teachers' feedback cognitive, emotionally, and behaviourally. These two activities are: (1) self/peer evaluation and (2) mini grammar lessons. Focusing on my experience of conducting self and peer evaluation with young learners, I shared a technique which I used with my

Grade 7 ESL learners in a secondary school in Hong Kong. Since my students are young, I decided to ask them to conduct evaluations using highlighters instead of writing words. In a diary writing task, I asked students to use three different colours to highlight the important grammatical features in a diary, which includes description of feelings using adjectives, use of the past tense to recount events, and use of time connectives for a chronological presentation of events. Another strategy is conducting mini grammar lessons. In a mini grammar lesson, the teacher provides 'brief explanations of the target features and find good and bad examples from authentic texts (e.g., students' writing) for discovery and analysis activities' (Chong, 2018b, p. 80 – Appendix F). Usually, mini grammar lessons include short proofreading or sentence rewriting exercises after such explanations.

These two post-feedback activities reinforce students' understanding of the feedback focus and provides them with the necessary support to respond to the corrective feedback in their revised work. In addition, these two activities develop students' FL in three ways. First, students develop a more thorough understanding of grammatical knowledge vis-à-vis the feedback focus which will increase the likelihood for them to understand teachers' language feedback and metalinguistic explanations. Second, students are experienced in proofreading and rewriting sentences by their classmates with grammatical mistakes which develops their ability to evaluate their own work and incorporate the teacher feedback. Third, students will not view receiving error correction from their teacher negatively because they understand that their classmates

make similar mistakes and that making mistakes and correcting them are part of the learning process.

Aiming to develop ESL learners' FL, this three-stage approach to implementing focused WCF by teachers takes into account various contextual and individual variables presented in Figure 1. Contextually, this approach to giving feedback considers the influence of textual, instructional, and interpersonal contexts. Textual context concerns the characteristics of feedback, which includes the focus of feedback (Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Han, 2019; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). In the pre-feedback stage, students become the drivers of the feedback process by selecting the language items which they want their teachers to comment on. Besides, instructional support is provided by the teacher through in-class instruction and post-feedback mini grammar lessons focusing on the language features being commented on. Moreover, interpersonal context is observed at the pre-feedback and post-feedback stages when ESL learners expressed their preference for WCF and when they analysed sample sentences from classmates together with their teacher. In addition, the three-stage approach to implementing focused WCF emphasizes the inclusion of learner factors. Students' second language learning goals are taken into consideration by giving them an opportunity to select feedback focuses. Students' engagement with feedback is encouraged through aligning learning environments (contextual variables) with students' expectations and making students' and the teacher's perspective on feedback compatible (Goldstein, 2006).

In my latest article in the publication dossier, I conducted a qualitative study on a group of ESL community college students in Hong Kong where I implemented a dialogic electronic feedback innovation on Google Docs. Electronic feedback (e-feedback) is defined in the article as 'teachers' feedback in digital, written form that is transmitted via the web' (Tuzi, 2004, p. 217). Google Docs was selected as the platform on which my students and I participated in feedback dialogues using such functions as 'comment', 'reply', and 'comment history'. Data from open-ended student questionnaires and semi-structured, focus group interviews were collected and analysed to probe into students' perception of such feedback innovation. These qualitative data were analysed inductively following grounded theory procedures (for details, refer to Chong (2019b) – Appendix H and Section 4.5). Data pertaining to four themes were reported in Chong (2019b) (Appendix H), which includes giving feedback, discussing feedback, reading feedback, and responding to feedback. In the following paragraphs, I will summarize the findings reported in Chong (2019b) (Appendix H) and illustrate how online feedback dialogues can develop ESL learners' FL.

Regarding teacher's delivery of feedback on Google Docs, this group of ESL community college students preferred teachers giving feedback online because it is clearer and more detailed, when compared with handwritten feedback. To the students, the teacher was able to give more specific and more detailed feedback because the teacher could type faster and more accurately

on the computer and there is no space limit on Google Docs. Compared with feedback given on Microsoft Word, the students found electronic feedback on Google Docs more timely because the teacher could give synchronous feedback to students while they were writing. The second theme which Chong (2019b) (Appendix H) reported is 'discussing feedback'. Electronic feedback on Google Docs was perceived by the 93 ESL students as useful in facilitating assessment and feedback dialogues between students and the teacher. Specifically, the students mentioned that the 'reply' function of Google Docs enabled them to (1) ask questions related to the feedback, (2) explain changes they made, and (3) comment on the teacher's feedback. Additionally, electronic feedback on Google Docs made interactions between the teacher and students more flexible. Instead of using emails to communicate which may lead to delay and confusion, students can exchange their views with the teacher on Google Docs using the 'comment' and 'reply' functions which are clearly displayed on the side of the students' work.

From the students' perspective, another advantage for the teacher to give feedback on Google Docs is that feedback on Google Docs was pinned with specific parts of the text and was highlighted, which made the feedback more text-specific. Moreover, the use of more positive colours (e.g., yellow) to highlight specific parts of a text, as opposed to the use of red ink, made the students feel less negative about the feedback they received on Google Docs. Last but not least, this group of ESL higher diploma students were cognizant of the fact that electronic feedback on Google Docs made it easier for them to respond to the teacher's feedback. First and foremost, students could revise

their work immediately after the teacher has given feedback because students would receive an email notification from Google telling them that comments are added to their work. Besides, students were more motivated to respond to the teacher's feedback because they perceived the revision process as less time-consuming; students said that they could 'copy and paste' parts of the text which did not require any changes and focused on those areas where improvement was needed. Some students also found that doing revisions on Google Docs was a less messy process than when it was done on paper.

From the aforementioned findings, electronic feedback and online feedback dialogues are useful in developing ESL learners' FL in three aspects. First, through recursive feedback dialogues with their teacher on Google Docs, this group of students developed a broader understanding of what constitutes a successful feedback process. Instead of focusing on 'feedback as telling' (Carless & Boud, 2018, p. 1317), these students began to understand that feedback is personal and interactive. Instead of recognizing teacher feedback as absolute and instrumental, these students critically reflect on the meaning of teacher feedback, expressed their confusions and negotiated feedback messages using the 'comment' and 'reply' functions on Google Docs. Instead of being passive, these students vigorously seek feedback from the teacher and play an active role in the whole feedback process, from reading, interpreting, discussing, to responding to the teacher's electronic feedback. Referring to Sutton's (2012) two levels of knowing, online feedback dialogues develop students' understanding of 'feedback *on* knowing' (corrective and judgmental nature of feedback) and 'feedback *for* knowing' (formative nature of feedback).

Second, online feedback dialogues enable ESL learners, especially less proficient learners, to develop their evaluative judgment (Tai et al., 2017). Less capable students are often afraid to approach their teacher for clarifications because they would regard such 'confrontation' with the teacher as a sign of weakness. Nevertheless, when feedback is delivered online, these students feel more 'protected' because the feedback conversations happen virtually. Through interacting with their teacher using comment boxes, lower-achieving students become more proactive in discussing the quality of their work with their teacher and are more willing to ask teachers to clarify assessment standards. With a better understanding of assessment criteria, students are able to review the quality of their work more accurately through constant internal feedback in different writing stages (Butler & Winne, 2005; Carless, 2016). Third, electronic feedback on Google Docs helps students maintain emotional equilibrium in face of critical feedback (To, 2016). With the thoughtful manipulation of feedback colours, it avoids the problem of having negative feedback leading to students' 'diminished academic self', which may result in their perceived inability to understand and act on feedback (Sutton, 2012).

As demonstrated above, and referring to the proposed FL conceptual framework (Figure 1), electronic feedback and online feedback dialogues focus on not only the horizontal dimension of the FL framework, which includes developing students' appreciation of feedback, honing reliable judgment, and managing affect, but also the vertical dimension of FL – individual and contextual variables. Socioculturally, conducting feedback dialogues online weakens the students' ingrained cultural belief that the teacher is the authority

in the learning process. With the removal of the fear of approaching the teacher face-to-face, the students in my study, who are regarded as low achievers in English, became proactive in seeking feedback from the teacher (Ho & Crookall, 1995). Gradually, with timely responses from the teacher and the use of less offensive colours, a sense of trust was developed between the students and the teacher, leading to a higher likelihood for students to incorporate their teacher's feedback in their revision. Additionally, the study shows that web-based exchange between students and the teacher proved to be appropriate to the English proficiency level of these ESL community college students. As mentioned earlier, involvement in online dialogues with the teacher eradicates students' worries about losing 'face' by asking the teacher questions in front of their classmates and their fear of challenging or disagreeing with the teacher about the feedback (Eva, Armson, Holmboe, Lockyer, Loney, Mann, & Sargeant, 2012; Kerssen-Griep & Witt, 2012).

5.2.2 How can peer feedback develop ESL students' feedback literacy (Chong, 2017a)?

In my research article published in *Assessing Writing* (Chong, 2017a) (Appendix C), I provided a review of peer assessment literature focusing on the usefulness and limitations of peer assessment; at the same time, I underscored a number of factors which mediate the effectiveness of peer assessment. The study I reported in Chong (2017a) (Appendix C) focuses on a group of ESL Grade 7 students in Hong Kong whom I taught some years ago. As a teacher-researcher, I engaged in EP which examines an under-researched area of peer assessment, which is, 'students' writing ability and its influence on the quality of feedback given' (p. 14). Specifically, I looked into two aspects of students'

writing ability and how they affect the relevance and accuracy of their feedback: *levels of content development* and *linguistic accuracy*. Focusing on a writing unit on diary entry, 'levels of content development' is defined as students' ability to give detailed descriptions of events, describe feelings and provide explanation. Students' 'linguistic accuracy' refers to students' ability to use the past tense to recount events accurately. Data were collected from two sources: students' first drafts of writing and students' feedback to peers, which were analysed deductively and thematically. Students' first drafts of writing were examined to determine their writing abilities in terms of levels of content development and linguistic accuracy (high, average, low). Students' peer feedback (68 feedback points) was analysed to probe into the relationship between students writing abilities and quality of feedback, that is, (1) whether students with a higher level of content development gave more relevant feedback and (2) whether students with a higher linguistic accuracy gave more accurate feedback. 'Relevance' concerns content-focused feedback; a feedback point is considered 'relevant' when it is related to the experience being described in the diary entry. 'Accuracy' in peer feedback is assessed in terms of students' ability to identify language errors in their peer's work correctly. Findings from this small-scale, classroom-based study suggest that ESL young learners who possess a higher levels of content development and linguistic accuracy were able to give more relevant and accurate feedback. In particular, students who were better at developing ideas asked more relevant prompting questions concerning 'missing information gaps in the description' and 'justification of descriptions'; likewise, students who wrote more accurately 'had a higher accuracy rate of identifying grammatical errors related to the learning

goal (the use of the past tense) and general grammatical errors' (Chong, 2017a, p. 21 – Appendix C). This article ends with a suggestion for teachers: when implementing peer assessment in junior ESL writing classrooms, students should be asked to give feedback on areas they feel confident in.

According to Carless and Boud (2018), peer assessment is a viable assessment activity which develops students' FL by providing students with the opportunity to constantly engage in evaluations of their peers' work in relation to a set of assessment standards. In peer assessment, students are expected to give formative feedback and/or grades to their classmates on the quality of their outputs of learning (e.g., essay, presentation) (Falchikov, 2007). In addition to developing students' evaluative judgment, ESL research on peer assessment has shown that engaging in peer assessment increases students' ownership of the writing process because 'students are responsible for setting assessment criteria, making judgments and giving suggestions about the quality of the product against the stipulated criteria' (Chong, 2017a, p. 14 – Appendix C). Furthermore, students develop such transferrable 21st-century skills as communication skills, collaboration skills, and critical thinking (Topping, 2003). Comparing givers and receivers of peer feedback, peer assessment studies have found that students benefit more from the act of giving feedback than from receiving feedback from peers. For instance, Lundstrom and Baker (2009) found that the writing performance of students who gave feedback to their peers improved more significantly than those who received feedback concerning global aspects of writing (e.g., content, coherence) because they developed a better sense of what good quality of writing looks like.

Findings from my peer feedback article illustrate the ecological perspective on conceptualizing FL. Specifically, the study illustrates the importance of learner agency and context in mediating the effectiveness of feedback activities in developing students' FL. In the conceptual framework which I proposed in Section 4.1, I argue that the effectiveness of FL-promoting activities (e.g., peer assessment) is contingent upon four contextual factors, textual, instructional, interpersonal, and sociocultural. Despite not being the focus of the investigation of Chong (2017a) (Appendix C), when describing the context of the study in my article in Section 3.3, I explained the reason for choosing this group of students to participate in this peer feedback study:

> Prior to the study, which was conducted in November 2015, the class had already undergone 2 rounds of peer assessment, one on reading and one on writing. This provided a favourable ground for the study because more revealing data could be collected through analysing students' work because students were accustomed to this assessment activity (pp. 15).

This quote sheds light on the vital influence of feedback 'experience' of students (Figure 1) on the success of peer assessment activities. This group of Grade 7 students had sufficient experience in giving and receiving feedback from their classmates because peer assessment was integrated into English lessons focusing on reading and writing skills. In the prior peer feedback experiences, I explained to the students the purpose of conducting peer assessment, their role in the process, and the benefits of such form of student-centred assessment practice. Moreover, I provided training to the students following Lam's (2010) advice by explaining and showing the four steps to giving useful feedback: clarifying, identify, explaining, and giving suggestions

(p. 118). Most importantly, through two rounds of peer feedback training focusing on reading and writing, my students had the opportunity to give peer feedback following the four-step procedure of Lam (2010). The importance of providing constant opportunities to give and receive peer feedback is confirmed by studies on peer assessment training. In Sluijsmans, Brand-Gruwel, & van Merriënboer (2002), university students received peer assessment training on understanding assessment standards, giving feedback, and writing assessment reports. The findings suggest that those who received such training gave higher quality feedback to peers and performed significantly better in the final assessment task than those who did not. Rollinson (2005), focusing on implementing peer assessment in ESL writing classes, underscored the importance of establishing 'a positive context for effective peer group response by organizing proper procedures and training' (p. 23). Rollinson (2005) suggested that pre-feedback training should be provided to ESL learners which focuses on three areas: awareness raising, productive group interaction, and productive response and revision (p. 27). Such training, in Rollinson's opinion, can prepare ESL learners for giving peer feedback by understanding the rationales of peer assessments, techniques and etiquettes of giving peer feedback, and ways to incorporate peer feedback in students' revisions.

Additionally, it was suggested in my peer feedback article that it is of high priority for ESL writing teachers to cultivate a supportive and trusting learning environment in order to maximize students' participation in peer assessment:

Moreover, a supportive learning environment was developed because students formed close relationships with each

other through participating in regular group activities and discussions; thus, students were comfortable with perceiving their peers as learning resources (pp. 15).

In relation to the 'interpersonal context' component of my proposed FL framework, success in developing students' FL through peer assessment depends on a range of relational factors, including relationship (Beaumont, O'Doherty, & Shannon, 2011), trust (Carless, 2009; Tsui & Ng, 2000), impression (Chong, 2018d), and emotion (To, 2016). In terms of relationship, students' relationships with their peers and teacher play a vital role in affecting students' involvement in the feedback process because feedback is 'socially constructed' and effectiveness of these FL-promoting activities is mediated by 'the learner's reciprocal contributions to the [feedback] process' (Lee & Schallert, 2008, p. 168). Regarding trust, Carless' (2009) study on university students in Hong Kong found that 'trust is an important dimension of feedback because without it, students may not want to confront threats to face or the emotions implicit in peer and teacher critique' (p. 101). Focusing on second language writing, Hyland and Hyland (2019) recognized that feedback involves not only pedagogical or instructional purposes but also social functions. In particular, they contended that the tone of feedback can significantly affect how they react and respond to it.

5.2.3 How can the use of exemplars develop ESL students' feedback literacy (Chong, 2019a)?

Exemplars 'are not model answers but samples to be analysed and compared with work in progress' (Carless & Boud, 2018, p. 1321). Exemplars are authentic work produced by students which are sometimes modified by

teachers to 'illustrate dimensions of quality' (Carless, Chan, To, Lo, & Barrett, 2018, p. 108). The use of exemplars, or 'exemplar-based instruction' (Chong, 2019a – Appendix G), refers to teachers' strategic and deliberate use of exemplars to develop students' tacit knowledge about assessment standards and evaluative judgment of the quality of their and others' work. In my 'theory-into-practice' article on the use of exemplars in English writing classrooms (Chong, 2019a – Appendix G), I define 'tacit knowledge' as 'aspects of knowledge that are difficult to transmit through speaking and writing' (p. 752). Such knowledge cannot be 'told' but 'shown' through systematic analysis of examples of work. According to Polanyi (1958, 1962), students develop 'connoisseurship' (p. 56) of quality and an emergent 'interpretative framework' (p. 78) through repeated practice of exemplar analysis and judgment making. In the context of ESL writing, understanding levels of accomplishment in assessment rubrics is an example of tacit knowledge. More often than not, students find the language used in writing rubrics confounding because the rubric is filled with jargon and ambiguous adjectives and adverbs. Moreover, the language used to differentiate different levels of achievement is very similar; without actual examples of students' work, students may have difficulties reading and understanding teachers' writing requirements.

The purpose of writing a 'theory-into-practice' paper on the use of exemplars is twofold: First, to clarify theoretical underpinnings which inform the use of exemplars; second, to suggest strategies for ESL writing teachers to incorporate exemplar-based instruction in their own classrooms. At the outset of Chong (2019a) (Appendix G), I introduced the three approaches of ESL

writing instruction, based on the conceptualization of writing as a product, a process, and a genre. By comparing the three instructional approaches, I argued that the use of writing exemplars is not something innovative because samples of student writing are often used in ESL writing classrooms. Nonetheless, I differentiate 'exemplar-based writing instruction' from how writing exemplars are conventionally used in the writing classroom. While exemplars are used in traditional writing classrooms as sample texts to illustrate language and genre-specific features (writing as a product and a genre) and materials for peer assessment (writing as a process), in an exemplar-based approach to writing, the primary objective of using exemplars is to help students develop their understanding of assessment standards and cultivate their evaluative judgment (Carless & Chan, 2017; Carless & Boud, 2018; Yucel, Bird, Young, & Blanksby, 2014). The next section of Chong (2019a) (Appendix G) discusses theoretical underpinnings of 'exemplar-based instruction', namely tacit knowledge, assessment *as* learning, and dialogic feedback[4]. Referring to my experience of developing an exemplar-based writing textbook for IELTS candidates (Chong & Ye, forthcoming), I shared four strategies for using exemplars in ESL writing classrooms: (1) developing writing assessment standards, (2) adopting a reflective and dialogic approach, (3) selecting and modifying writing exemplars to demonstrate a continuum of quality, and (4) designing exemplar-based tasks in accordance with the selected writing instructional approach(es). In the following paragraphs, I will briefly introduce these four strategies and illustrate how the use of exemplars can develop ESL

---

[4] For a discussion on these concepts, please refer to Chong (2019a) and Sections 1.3, 5.1.2, and 5.2.3 of this thesis.

learners' FL through taking into consideration contextual affordances and individual differences (Figure 1).

The first fundamental step towards successful implementation of exemplar-based instruction is to develop clear writing assessment standards. Since students will make use of assessment rubrics to evaluate quality of sample texts and their own work, it is important that the rubrics are relevant to the course objectives and learning outcomes, and easily understood by students. In the article, I suggested that in the case where the students are lower achievers, the teacher may want to rewrite the rubrics using simple language, simplify the rubrics using visual aids, or even provide a bilingual version of the rubrics. If the rubrics are centrally prepared (e.g., IELTS), it is of paramount importance that the teacher develops a comprehensive understanding of the different levels and requirements in the rubrics to assist students in developing their tacit knowledge in the long run. Second, regarding the design of exemplar-based pedagogic tasks, these tasks have to be reflective and dialogic. In other words, tasks should be designed in a way which promotes students' reflective thinking and development of evaluative judgment. An example I included in Chong (2019a) (Appendix G) is the use of evidence-based evaluative questions. After students read an exemplar, the teacher can ask students to notice aspects of the work and offer their opinions. When students respond, it is important for the teacher to ask students to use the keywords in the rubrics and give examples from the exemplar as evidence to support their claims. The third strategy concerns how teachers should select and, if needs be, modify writing exemplars to help students understand a

continuum of quality. Despite the general belief that students can learn more from high-level samples, exposing students to exemplars of different levels of quality is effective in developing students' evaluative judgment. For instance, through identifying weaknesses in an exemplar, students develop a better understanding of the requirements of the rubric and are able to make useful comparison between their own work, the exemplar, and the rubric. A suggestion for teachers who teach low-proficiency students is to provide exemplars of different lengths. For instance, sentence-level exemplars are useful materials for lead-in activities when students do not have a sophisticated understanding of the rubric; paragraph-level exemplars are appropriate for students' analysis of an aspect of the rubric (e.g., sentence structures); essay-level exemplars can be used as a consolidation activity for students to apply their holistic understanding of the rubric. Additionally, to help weaker students reap the benefits of using exemplars to their fullest, it is recommended in the article that certain words or phrases in the exemplars are highlighted so that the attention of the students is drawn to these features. The last strategy discussed in my article is to design exemplar-based tasks in alignment with the selected writing instructional approach(es). The writing instructional approach(es) teachers adopt (product, process, and/or genre) determines the focus of exemplar analysis. Exemplars are usually analysed with reference to linguistic accuracy in a product-based approach whilst the focus of analysis is on content and organization in a process-based approach. When a genre-based approach is adopted, the teacher should guide their students to evaluate communicative functions of language and genre features (e.g., addressing the recipient of an email and phrases used to close an email) in a writing sample.

Focusing on ways to interact with students using exemplars, O'Donovan, Price, & Rust's (2008) framework outlines four approaches to developing students' understanding of assessment standards through the use of exemplars: (1) a 'laissez-faire' approach, (2) an 'explicit' approach, (3) a 'social constructivist' approach, and (4) a 'community of practice approach' (Figure 4). In this framework, assessment dialogues between the teacher and students about the exemplars is key to facilitate students' understanding of assessment standards of assessment tasks (Ajjawi & Boud, 2016). In the 'laissez-faire approach', only internal dialogues take place within students because there is no opportunity for students to engage in discussions with the teacher regarding the quality of the exemplars given. A 'laissez-faire approach' is said to be adopted when teachers simply distribute an exemplar or 'model essay' before or after an assessment task for students to self-study. There may be a better chance for internal dialogues to take place if students are more motivated, of higher ability, and annotations are provided next to the exemplar. An 'explicit approach' to using exemplars refers to a more teacher-fronted approach to analysing exemplars. In such cases, the teacher explains his or her judgment of the exemplar without eliciting students' opinions. A 'social constructivist' approach, on the other hand, resembles the dialogic use of exemplars documented in Carless and Chan (2017) in which students' divergent opinions about an exemplar is prioritised over the teacher's. Last but not least, a 'community of practice' approach is said to be the 'strongest' form of dialogic use of exemplars because, instead of the teacher, discussions on the exemplar are guided by students. A typical scenario of this approach includes students discussing an exemplar with a rubric in small groups and they give verbal

comments on the exemplar on areas they choose to focus on. In the meantime, the teacher acts as a facilitator to support discussion of each group. It is only after each group has reported their own evaluation of the exemplar does the teacher provide his or her own evaluation of the work.
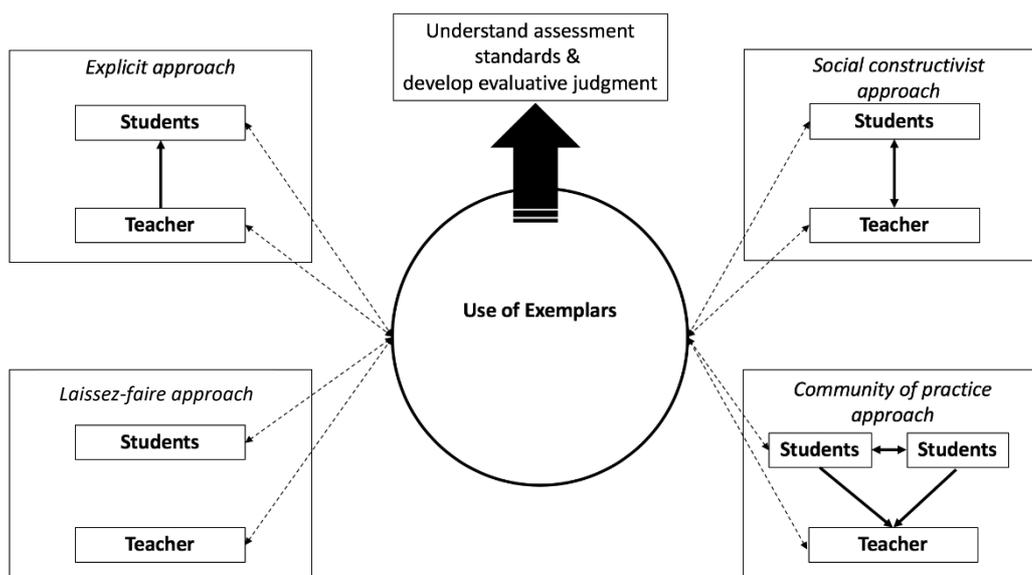
Figure 4: Four approaches to dialogic use of exemplars (adapted from O'Donovan et al. (2008))

Referring to the FL conceptual framework (Figure 1), the use of exemplars has the potential to develop ESL learners' FL by aligning learning opportunities with students' capacity and willingness (van Lier, 2000, 2004; Thoms, 2014). It is important to take into account contextual factors and individual factors when designing FL-promoting activities because these factors mediate the feedback 'which learners receive and their engagement with… [the feedback] and thereby influencing learning outcomes' (Ellis, 2010, p. 339). Students will not be motivated to engage with feedback, for example, if the textual context (characteristics and focus of feedback) does not align with

students' beliefs about feedback and goals in second language learning. Such a case was noted in Hyland (2000): in the study, there was a mismatch between the teachers' feedback strategy and students' expectation for feedback. While the teachers focused on the corrective and summative aspects of feedback because they perceived the students' writing as a finished product, the students perceived feedback as a tool to help improve their English writing skills. Due to the fact that the teachers ignored students' goals and beliefs about feedback, students' engagement with feedback was limited.

Returning to the argument that the use of exemplars is an effective FL-promoting activity, it is the flexibility and adaptability of ways which ESL writing teachers utilize students' samples to engage students in reflective and judgment-sharping dialogues which gives exemplars the niche to take account of both individual and contextual variables. The four strategies for using exemplars effectively in ESL writing classrooms (Chong, 2019a – Appendix G) and O'Donovan et al.'s (2008) four approaches to engaging students in dialogues with exemplars present a flexible approach for ESL teachers to design exemplar analysis tasks to promote feedback dialogues among students and between students and the teacher. I will use an example in my own context to illustrate the adaptability of exemplar analysis activities. When teaching a class of undergraduates in an IELTS writing preparation course, I knew very clearly that these students were preparing for this high-stakes language test which is the language exit requirement of my university. I also understood that these undergraduates do not have any prior knowledge of IELTS writing assessment requirements. Given the stakes and lack of understanding of the

exam, I decided to adopt an explicit approach to using exemplars, which involves more teacher-led analysis of writing exemplars. At the end of the course, I received comments from the students saying that they appreciate this 'less dialogic' approach to using exemplars because they feel more secure when the teacher, whom they perceive as the authority, gives definitive analysis to the exemplars. I felt curious about this answer and asked why. The students explained that they are accustomed to being 'attentive listeners' rather than 'trouble-makers' who challenge the teacher in their primary and secondary education in the Asian context. Moreover, the students elucidated that their goal is to get a high enough band score to pass the language exit requirement. Therefore, they think the lesson time is better spent by having the teacher give his expert opinion on the exemplars than having students share their opinions.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to explore two dimensions of FL, following the FL frameworks proposed by Sutton (2012) and Carless and Boud (2018). FL comprises the epistemological dimension (students' understanding and appreciation of feedback) and the practical dimension (students' capacity and disposition to make accurate judgment and maintain emotional equilibrium). Grounded in Carless and Boud's (2018) FL framework and an ecological perspective on learning, I proposed a three-dimensional FL framework (Figure 1) which serves as the analytical lens for interpreting materials and research findings from six of my articles published in international refereed journals. Taking an interdisciplinary view on feedback and informed by a qualitative and interpretative EP research paradigm, this thesis answers two research

questions: (1) How do ESL learners conceptualize their understanding of feedback? and (2) How do feedback practices (teacher feedback, peer feedback, use of exemplars) develop ESL learners' FL?

The first research question was answered by referring to Chong (2017b) (Appendix D) which suggests three sources of feedback (teacher, peer, computer-mediated) and Chong (2018b) (Appendix F) which conceptualizes three feedback orientations (AoL-oriented, AfL-oriented, AaL-oriented). The second research question focuses on three FL-promoting activities. First, focusing on a type of teacher feedback, Chong (2018a) (Appendix E) recommends an evidence-based, three-stage model for implementing focused WCF. Chong (2019a) (Appendix G) focuses on another kind of teacher feedback, electronic feedback and online feedback dialogues on Google Docs. The findings indicate that students developed willingness to read and respond to teacher's electronic feedback because they could engage in online discussions with their teacher, which serves as a face-saving mechanism and an inhibitor of students' fear. Second, Chong (2017a) (Appendix C) summarizes the affordances of peer assessment in developing young ESL learners' evaluative judgment. The findings of Chong (2017a) (Appendix C) point to the significance of taking into account students' abilities when designing peer assessment activities, which echoes with one of the individual difference factors in the conceptual framework. Third, Chong (2019b) (Appendix H) discusses the theoretical underpinnings of exemplar-based instruction and suggests practical strategies for ESL teachers to incorporate students' writing exemplars into their teaching. The literature review in this paper highlights students' positive

response towards using exemplars to develop their understanding of assessment standards and hone their evaluative judgment. Pedagogical suggestions in the thesis are in line with the ecological framework of FL which takes into account learning contexts and learner differences. For instance, in my article which suggests a three-stage model for implementing focused WCF, I highlight how this feedback practice takes into consideration both contextual and personal variables. In terms of context, this approach to giving feedback considers four levels of context (textual, instructional, interpersonal, sociocultural). At the same time, it caters for individual differences of language learners by addressing their language learning needs and goals. This thesis fills an important gap in the feedback literature and bridges the chasm between feedback research and practice.

Theoretically, this thesis draws upon higher education assessment and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) literature to further enrich the existing FL framework which is relatively recent and rudimentary. Practically, this thesis documents and analyzes an array of evidence-based FL-promoting activities which ESL writing teachers can adopt in their own classrooms to promote students' engagement with feedback. Future research can focus on strengthening the ecological validity of the FL framework by conducting ethnographic and narrative inquiry studies to unravel students' feedback experiences. Another research direction concerns the development of a FL questionnaire which itemizes attributes of feedback literate students. More interdisciplinary studies can be conducted to facilitate the development of the notion of FL. For instance, a systematic or scoping review can be conducted

to develop a discipline-specific FL framework (e.g., a FL framework or questionnaire for language learners) by taking into consideration literature on feedback in language classrooms, language assessment, language testing, assessment literacy, and assessment in higher education.

7. References

Ajjawi, R., & Regehr, G. (2019). When I say… feedback. *Medical Education, 53*, 652-654.

Ajjawi, R., & Boud, D. (2016). Researching feedback dialogue: An interactional analysis approach. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(2), 252-265.

Allwright, D. (1993). Integrating 'research' and 'pedagogy': Appropriate criteria and practical possibilities. In J. Edge & K. Richards (Eds.), *Teachers develop teachers research* (pp. 125-135). Oxford: Heinemann.

Allwright, D. (2003). Exploratory Practice: Rethinking practitioner research in language teaching. *Language Teaching Research 7*(2), 113–141.

Allwright, D. (2014). *Observation in the Language Classroom*. New York: Routledge.

Alwright, D., & J. Hanks (2009). *The developing language learner: An introduction to Exploratory Practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *8*(1), 19–32.

Baumeister, R. F., Schmeichel, B. J., & Vohs, K. D. (2007). Self-regulation and the executive function: The self as controlling agent. In A. W. Kruglanski & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 516-   539). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Bearman, M., Smith, C. D., Carbone, A., Slade, S., Baik, C., Hughes-Warrington, M., & Neumann, D. L. (2012). Systematic review methodology in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *31*(5), 625–640.

Beaumont, C., O'Doherty, M., & Shannon, L. (2011). Reconceptualising assessment feedback: A key to improving student learning? *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(6), 671-687.

Biesta, G. J. J., Tedder, M. (2007). Agency and learning in the lifecourse: Towards an ecological perspective. *Studies in the Education of Adults, 39*, 132-149.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 19*(4), 207–217.

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004). *The nature and value of formative assessment for learning* (Unpublished

manuscript). Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ. Retrieved from http://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c4/73/57/formative.pdf

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education, 5*(1), 7–74.

Booth, A. (2001, May). *Cochrane or cock-eyed? How should we conduct systematic reviews of qualitative research?* Paper presented at the Qualitative Evidence-Based Practice Conference, Taking a Critical Stance, Coventry, UK. Retrieved from www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001724.htm

Borg, S. (2013). *Teacher research in language teaching: A critical analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boud, D., & Molloy, E. (2013). Rethinking models of feedback for learning: The challenge of design. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 38*(6), 698-712.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993). The ecology of cognitive development: Research models and fugitive findings. In R. H. Wozniak & K. W. Fischer (Eds.), *The Jean Piaget symposium series. Development in context: Acting and thinking in specific environments* (pp. 3-44). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Brown, A. L. (1987). Metacognition, executive control, self-regulation, and other more mysterious mechanisms. In F. E. Weinert, & R. H. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation, and understanding* (pp. 65–116). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brown, A. (2005). Self-assessment of writing in independent language learning programs: The value of annotated samples. *Assessing Writing, 10*, 174-191.

Brown, G. T. L., & Wang, Z. (2016). Understanding Chinese university student conceptions of assessment: Cultural similarities and jurisdictional differences between Hong Kong and China. *Social Psychology of Education, 19*(1), 151-173.

Brown, G. T. L., & Wang, Z. (2018). *Chinese students' conceptions of assessment inventory*. Retrieved from https://auckland.figshare.com/articles/Chinese_Students_Conceptions_of_A ssessment_Inventory/5971384

Burke, D. (2009). Strategies for using feedback students bring to higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 34*, 41-50.

Busse, V. (2013). How do students of German perceive feedback practices at university? A motivational exploration. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(4), 406-424.

Butler, D. L., & Winne, P. H. (1995). Feedback and self-regulated learning: A theoretical synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 65*, 245-281.

Carless, D. (2006). Differing perceptions in the feedback process. *Studies in Higher Education, 31*(2), 219-233.

Carless, D. (2009). Trust, distrust and their impact on assessment reform. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 34*(1), 79-89.

Carless, D. (2011). *From testing to productive student learning: Implementing formative assessment in Confucian-heritage settings*. New York: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2013). Trust and its role in facilitating dialogic feedback. In D. Boud & E. Molloy (Eds.), *Feedback in higher and professional education: Understanding it and doing it well* (pp. 90-103). London: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2015). *Excellence in university assessment: Learning from award-winning practice*. London: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2016). Feedback as dialogue. *Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory* (p. 1–6). Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_389-1

Carless, D. (2019). Feedback loops and the longer-term: Towards feedback spirals. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(5), 705-714.

Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(8), 1315-1325.

Carless, D., & Chan, K. K. H. (2017). Managing dialogic use of exemplars. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(6), 930–941.

Carless, D., Chan, K. K. H., To, J., Lo, M. & Barrett, E. (2018). Developing students' capacities for evaluative judgement through analyzing exemplars. In D. Boud, R. Ajjawi, P. Dawson & J. Tai (Eds.), *Developing Evaluative Judgement in Higher Education: Assessment for knowing and producing quality work* (pp. 108-116). London: Routledge.

Carless, D., Salter, D., Yang, M., & Lam, J. (2011). Developing sustainable feedback practices. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(4), 395-407.

Carvalho, A. (2009). Ana Paula's story: Why do learners seem to like some teachers better than others? In D. Allwright & J. Hanks (Eds.), *Exploratory Practice in language teaching: Puzzling about principles and practices* (pp. 187–188). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chacón-Beltrán, R. (2017). Free-form writing: computerized feedback for self-correction. *ELT Journal, 71*(2), 141-149.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Charney, D. H., Carlson, R. A. (1995). Learning to write in a genre: What student writers take from model texts. *Research in the Teaching of English, 29*(1), 88-125.

Chen, J., & Brown, G. T. L. (2016). Tensions between knowledge transmission and student-focused teaching approaches to assessment purposes: Helping   students improve through transmission. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 22*(3), 350-367.

Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017a). How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study. *Assessing Writing, 31*, 13-23.

Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017b). Reconsidering teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback. *TESOL Journal, 8*(4), 886-893.

Chong, S. W. (2018a). A three-stage model for implementing focused written corrective feedback. *TESL Canada Journal, 34*(2), 71-82.

Chong, S. W. (2018b). Three paradigms of classroom assessment: Implications for written feedback research. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 15*(4), 330-347.

Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2018c). Interplay among technical, socio-emotional and personal factors in written feedback research. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(2), 185-196.

Chong, S. W. (2018d). Interpersonal aspect of written feedback: A community college students' perspective. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education, 23*(4), 499-519.

Chong, S. W. (2019a). The use of exemplars in English writing classrooms: From theory to practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(5), 748-763.

Chong, S. W. (2019b). College students' perception of e-feedback: A grounded theory perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(7), 1090-1105.

Chong, S. W. (2019c). A systematic review of written corrective feedback research in ESL/EFL contexts. *Language Education & Assessment, 2*(2), 70-95.

Chong, S. W. (2020). Reconsidering student feedback literacy from an ecological perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. Advanced online publication.

Chong, S. W., & Reinders, H. (forthcoming). Technology-mediated task-based language teaching: A qualitative research synthesis. *Language Learning & Technology.*

Chong, S. W., & Ye, X. (forthcoming). *Developing writing skills for IELTS: A research-based approach*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.

Chong, S. W. (Under Review). Dialogic use of exemplars to develop students' evaluative judgement: The case of IELTS writing.

Chuk, J. (2009). Joanne's web use story. In D. Allwright & J. Hanks (Eds.), *Exploratory Practice in language teaching: Puzzling about principles and practices* (pp. 251–252). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Çiftçi, E. Y., & Savaş, P. (2017). The role of tellecollaboration in language and intercultural learning: A synthesis of studies published between 2010 and 2015. *ReCALL*, 1–27.

Collins Dictionary. (2020). Phenomenon. Retrieved from https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/phenomenon

Costantino, A. (2018). Understanding 'Local' pedagogy: A written feedback puzzle. In A. Slimani-Rolls & R. Kiely (Eds.), *Exploratory Practice for continuing professional development: An innovative approach for language teachers* (pp. 119-133). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cotos, E. (2011). Potential of automated writing evaluation feedback. *CALICO Journal, 28*, 420–459.

Cowan, J. (2010). Developing the ability for making evaluative judgements. *Teaching in Higher Education, 15*(3), 323–334.

Dall'Alba, G. (2009). Phenomenology and Education: An introduction. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*(1), 7-9.

Dann, R. (2019). Feedback as a relational concept in the classroom. *The Curriculum Journal*. Advanced online publication, 1-23.

Dawson, P. (2017). Assessment rubrics: Towards clearer and more replicable design, research and practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(3),   347-360.

Ding, A. (2009). Tensions and struggles in fostering collaborative teacher autonomy online. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 3*(1), 65-81.

Dinsmore, D. L., Alexander, P. A., & Loughlin, S. M. (2008). Focusing the conceptual lens on metacognition, self-regulation, and self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychology Review, 20*(4), 391–409.

Dollah, S., Abduh, A., & Rosmaladewi., M. (2017). Benefits and drawbacks of NVivo QSR application. *Advances in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities Research (ASSEHR)*, 149, 61-63.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Earl, L. (2013). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning* (2nd ed.). [E-reader version]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Eberle, T. S. (2013). Phenomenology as a research method. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 184-202). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Ellis, R. (2010). A framework for investigating oral and written corrective feedback. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 32*, 335-349.

Ellis, R. (2018). *Reflections on task-based language teaching*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Eriksson, K., Lindvall, J., Helenius, O., & Ryve, A. (2020). Cultural variation in the effectiveness of feedback on students' mistakes. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Advanced online publication.

Espasa, A., Guasch, T., Mayordomo, R. M., Martínez-Melo, M., & Carless, D. (2018). A dialogic feedback index measuring key aspects of feedback processes in online learning environments. *Higher Education Research & Development, 37*(3), 499-513.

Eva, K. W., Armson, H., Holmboe, E., Lockyer, J., Loney, E., Mann, K., & Sargeant, J. (2012). Factors influencing responsiveness to feedback: On the interplay between fear, confidence, and reasoning processes. *Advances in Health Sciences Education, 17*(1), 15-26.

Evans, N. W., James Hartshorn, K., & Strong-Krause, D. (2011). The efficacy of dynamic written corrective feedback for university-matriculated ESL learners. *System, 39*(2), 229–239.

Evans, C. (2013). Making sense of assessment feedback in higher education. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(1), 70-120.

Falchikov, N. (2007). The place of peers in learning and assessment. In D. Boud, & N. Falchikov (Eds.), *Rethinking assessment in higher education* (pp.128–143). New York: Routledge.

Farrokhi, F., & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The effects of direct written corrective feedback on improvement of grammatical accuracy of high-proficient L2 learners. *World Journal of Education, 2*(2), 49.

Ferguson, P. (2011). Student perceptions of quality feedback in teacher education. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 36*(1), 51–62.

Ferris, D. R. (1997). The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(2), 315-339.

Ferris, D. R. (2002). *Treatment of error in second language student writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Ferris, D. R., Liu, H., Sinha, A., & Senna, M. (2013). Written corrective feedback for individual L2 writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(3), 307–329.

Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Rynders, J. (1988). *Don't accept me as I am*. New York, NY: Plenum.

Fisher, R. (1998). Thinking about thinking: Developing metacognition in children. *Early Child Development and Care, 141*(1), 1-15.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive–developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*(10), 906–911.

Forsythe, A., & Johnson, S. (2017). Thanks, but no-thanks for the feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(6), 850-859.

Gamlem, S. M., & Smith, K. (2013). Student perceptions of classroom feedback. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 20*(2), 150-169.

Ganeson, K., & Ehrich, L. C. (2009). Transition into high school: A phenomenological study. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*(1), 60-78.

Gao, X. (2010). *Strategic language learning: The roles of agency and context*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Gibbs, G., & Simpson, C. (2005). Conditions under which assessment supports students' learning. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, 1*, 3-31.

Gibbs, G. (2006). How assessment frames student learning. In C. Bryan & K. Clegg (Eds.), *Innovative assessment in higher education* (pp. 23-36). London: Routledge.

Glover, C., & Brown, E. (2006). Written feedback for students: Too much, too detailed or too incomprehensible to be effective? *Bioscience Education, 7*(1), 1-16.

Goldstein, L. (2006). Feedback and revision in second language writing: Contextual, teacher, and student variables. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (pp. 185-205). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Gough, D. (2007). Weight of evidence: a framework for the appraisal of the quality and relevance of evidence. *Research Papers in Education*, *22*(2), 213–228.

Gough, D., Thomas, J., & Oliver, S. (2012). Clarifying differences between review designs and methods. *Systematic Reviews, 1*(28), 1-9.

Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: An analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information and Libraries Journal, 26*, 91-108.

Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and human interests*. trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro. London, UK: Heinemann.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action: Vol. 1. Reason and the rationalization of society*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Halliday, A., & Glaser, M. (2011). A management perspective on social ecological systems: A generic system model and its application to a case study from Peru. *Human Ecology Review, 18*(1), 1-18.

Han, Y., & Hyland, F. (2015). Exploring learner engagement with written corrective feedback in a Chinese tertiary EFL classroom. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 30*, 31-44.

Han, Y., & Hyland, F. (2019). Learner engagement with written feedback: A sociocognitive perspective. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (2nd ed.) (pp. 247-264). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Han, Y. (2019). Written corrective feedback from an ecological perspective: The interaction between the context and individual learners. *System, 80*, 288-303.

Hanks, J. (2017). Integrating research and pedagogy: An exploratory practice approach. *System, 68*, 38-49.

Hanks, J. (2019). From research-as-practice to exploratory practice-as-research in language teaching and beyond. *Language Teaching, 52*(2), 143-187.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 81-112.

Hattie, J., & Clarke, S. (2019). *Visible learning feedback*. London: Routledge.

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ho, J., & Crookall, D. (1995). Breaking with Chinese cultural traditions: Learner autonomy in English language teaching. *System, 23*(2), 235-243.

Hounsell, D. (2007). Towards more sustainable feedback to students. In N. Falchikov & D. Boud (Eds.), *Rethinking assessment in higher education* (pp. 101-113). London: Routledge.

Huisman, B., Saab, N., van Driel, J., & van den Broek, P. (2018). Peer feedback on academic writing: Undergraduate students' peer feedback role, peer feedback perceptions and essay performance. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(6), 955-968.

Husserl, E. (1900/1970). *Logical investigations*. New York: Humanities Press.

Hyland, F. (1998). The impact of teacher written feedback on individual writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 7*(3), 255-286.

Hyland, F. (2000). ESL writers and feedback: Giving more autonomy to students. *Language Teaching Research, 4*(1), 33-54.

Hyland, F., & Hyland, K. (2001). Sugaring the pill: Praise and criticism in written feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 10*(3), 185-212.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2019). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Jahan, N., Naveed, S., Zeshan, M., & Tahir, M. A. (2016). How to conduct a systematic review: A narrative literature review. *Cureus, 8*(11), e864.

Kerssen-Griep, J., & Witt, P. L. (2012). Instructional Feedback II: How do instructor immediacy cues and facework tactics interact to predict student motivation and fairness perceptions? *Communication Studies*, *63*, 498–517.

Kim, Y. (2008). The contribution of collaborative and individual tasks to the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. *Modern Language Journal, 92*, 114-130.

Kramsch, C. (2008). Ecological perspectives on foreign language education. *Language Teaching, 41*(3), 389-408.

Lam, R. (2010). A peer review training workshop: Coaching students to give and evaluate peer feedback. *TESL Canada Journal, 27*(2), 114-127.

Lam, R. (2015). Feedback about self-regulation: Does it remain an 'unfinished business' in portfolio assessment of writing? *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(2), 402-413.

Lee, G., & Schallert, D. L. (2008). Meeting in the margins: Effects of the teacher-student relationship on revision processes of EFL college students taking a composition course. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*(3), 165-182.

Lee, I. (2008). Understanding teachers' written feedback practices in Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*, 69-85.

Lee, I. (2017). *Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts*. New York, NY: Springer.

Lee, I. (2019). Teachers' frequently asked questions about focused written corrective feedback. *TESOL Journal, 10*(3), 1-15.

Lefstein, A., & J. Snell (2014) *Better than best practice: Developing teaching and learning through dialogue*. London: Routledge.

Lempert, L.B. (2007). Asking questions of the data: memo writing in the grounded theory tradition. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 245-264). London: Sage.

Liao, H. (2016). Using automated writing evaluation to reduce grammar errors in writing. *ELT Journal, 70*(3), 308–319.

Lundstrom, K., & Baker, W. (2009). To give is better than to receive: The benefits of peer review to the reviewer's own writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 18*(1), 30–43.

Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *The All Ireland*

Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 9(3), 3351-3364.

McConlogue, T. (2012). But is it fair? Developing students' understanding of grading complex written work through peer assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 37*(1), 113-123.

McLean, A. J., Bond, C. H., & Nicholson, H. D. (2015). An anatomy of feedback: A phenomenographic investigation of undergraduate students' conceptions of feedback. *Studies in Higher Education, 40*(5), 921-932.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of perception.* Atlantic Highlands, NJ: The Humanities Press.

Min, H.T. (2005). Training students to become successful peer reviewers. *System, 33*, 293-308.

Min, H.T. (2006). The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 15*, 118-141.

Molloy, E., Borrell-Carrió, F., & Epstein, R. (2013). The impact of emotions in feedback. In S. Merry, M. Price, D. Carless, & M. Taras (Eds.), *Reconceptualising Feedback in Higher Education* (pp. 50–71). London: Routledge.

Molloy, E., & Boud, D. (2013). Changing conceptions of feedback. In D. Boud & E. Molloy (Eds.), *Feedback in higher and professional education: Understanding it and doing it well* (pp. 11-33). London: Routledge.

Montgomery, J. L., & Baker, W. (2007). Teacher-written feedback: Student perceptions, teacher self-assessment, and actual teacher performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*(2), 82-99.

Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Mulliner, E., & Tucker, M. (2017). Feedback on feedback practice: Perceptions of students and academics. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(2), 266-288.

Nelson, R. (2018). Barriers to the cultivation of evaluative judgement: A critical and historical perspective. In D. Boud, R. Ajjawi, P. Dawson, & J. Tai (Eds.), *Developing evaluative judgement in higher education: Assessment for knowing and producing quality work* (pp. 51-59). London: Routledge.

Nicol, D. (2010). From monologue to dialogue: Improving written feedback processes in mass higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(5), 501-517.

Nicol, D., Thomson, A., & Breslin, C. (2014). Rethinking feedback practices in higher education: A peer review perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 39*(1), 102-122.

O'Donovan, B., Price, M., & Rust, C. (2008). Developing student understanding of assessment standards: A nested hierarchy of approaches. *Teaching in Higher Education, 13*(2), 205-217.

Office for Students. (2019). National Student Survey – NSS. Retrieved from https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss/

Orsmond, P., & Merry, S. (2011). Feedback alignment: Effective and ineffective links between tutors' and students' understanding of coursework feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 36*(2), 125-136.

Polanyi, M. (1958, 1962). *Personal knowledge: Towards a post-critical philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Porte, G. K. (1997). The etiology of poor second language writing: The influence of perceived teacher preferences on second language revision strategies. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 6*(1), 61-78.

Presseisen, B. Z. (1992). *Implementing thinking in the school's curriculum*. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Association for Cognitive Education, Riverside, CA.

Price, M., Handley, K., & Millar, J. (2011). Feedback: focusing attention on engagement. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(8), 879-896.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. London, UK: Bloomsbury (e-book).

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching. (2019). 2018 Student experience survey. Retrieved from https://www.qilt.edu.au/docs/default-source/ses/ses2018/2018-ses-national-report75e58791b1e86477b58fff00006709da.pdf?sfvrsn=d733e33c_4

Rae, A. M., & Cochrane, D. K. (2008). Listening to students, how to make written assessment feedback useful. *Active Learning in Higher Education, 9*, 217-230.

Rand, J. (2017). Misunderstandings and mismatches: The collective disillusionment of written summative assessment feedback. *Research in Education, 97*(1), 33-48.

Rollinson, P. (2005). Using peer feedback in the ESL writing class. *ELT Journal, 59*(1), 23-30.

Rust, O'Donovan, & Price. (2005). A social constructivist assessment process model: How the research literature shows us this could be best practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 30*(3), 231-240.

Sadler, D. R. (1989). Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science, 18*(2), 119–144.

Salvi, A. I. (2017). The integration of a pedagogy for autonomy into practitioner research via exploratory practice. In J. Hanks (Ed.), *Exploratory Practice in language teaching: Puzzling about principles and practices* (pp. 181–184). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schraw, G., & Moshman, D. (1995). Metacognitive theories. *Educational Psychology Review, 7*(4), 351-371.

Serafini, F. (2001). Three paradigms of assessment: Measurement, procedure, and inquiry. *The Reading Teacher, 54*(4), 384–393.

Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2013). The comparative effect of direct written corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation on learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the English indefinite article. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(3), 286–306.

Shintani, N., Ellis, R., & Suzuki, W. (2014). Effects of written feedback and revision on learners' accuracy in using two English grammatical structures. *Language Learning, 64*(1), 103–131.

Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2015). Does language analytical ability mediate the effect of written feedback on grammatical accuracy in second language writing? *System, 49*, 110-119.

Shintani, N. (2016). The effects of computer-mediated synchronous and asynchronous direct corrective feedback on writing: a case study. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 29*(3), 517–538.

Shvidko, E. (2015). Beyond 'giver-receiver' relationships: Facilitating an interactive revision process. *Journal of Response to Writing, 1*(2), 55-74.

Sinclair, H. K., & Cleland, J. A. (2007). Undergraduate medical students: Who seeks formative feedback? *Medical Education, 41*, 580-582.

Siqueiros, R. (2009). Rute's story. In D. Allwright & J. Hanks (Eds.), *Exploratory Practice in language teaching: Puzzling about principles and practices* (pp. 256–257). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sluijsmans, D. M. A., Brand-Gruwel, S., & van Merriënboer, J. J. G. (2002). Peer assessment training in teacher education: Effects on performance and perceptions. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 27*(5), 443-454.

Smith, J., & Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. qualitative psychology: A practical guide to methods. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 53-80). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Sommers, N. (1980). Revision strategies of student writers and experienced adult writers. *College Composition and Communication, 31*(4), 378-388.

Sridharan, B., Tai, J., & Boud, D. (2019). Does the use of summative peer assessment in collaborative group work inhibit good judgement? *Higher Education, 77*, 853-870.

Storch, N., & Wigglestwoth, G. (2007). Writing tasks: The effects of collaboration. In M. P. García Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 157-177). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Storch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2010). Learners' processing, uptake, and retention of corrective feedback on writing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 32*, 303-334.

Storch, N. (2018). Written corrective feedback from sociocultural theoretical perspectives: A research agenda. *Language Teaching, 51*(2), 262-277.

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage Publications.

Sutton, P. (2012). Conceptualizing feedback literacy: Knowing, being, and acting. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 49*(1), 31-40.

Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language learning. In H. Byrnes (Ed.), *Advanced language learning: The contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London, England: Continuum.

Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2013). Languaging: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language learning. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopaedia of applied linguistics* (pp. 1-8). BHoboken, NJ: lackwell Publishing Ltd.

Swain, M., Kinnear, P., & Steinman, L. (2015). *Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives* (2nd ed.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tai, J., Ajjawi, R., Boud, D., Dawson, P., & Panadero, E. (2018). Developing evaluative judgement: Enabling students to make decisions about the quality of work. *Higher Education, 76*(3), 467-481.

Tan, K. H. K. (2004). Does student self-assessment empower or discipline students? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 29*(6), 651-662.

Taras, M. (2012). Assessing assessment theories. *Online Educational Research Journal, 3*(12), 1-13.

Thoms, J. J. (2014). An ecological view of whole-class discussions in a second language literature classroom: Teacher reformulations as affordances for learning. *The Modern Language Journal, 98*(3), 724-741.

To, J. (2016). 'This is not what I need': Conflicting assessment feedback beliefs in a post-secondary institution in Hong Kong. *Research in Post-compulsory Education, 21* (4), 447-467.

Topping, K. (2003). Self and peer assessment in school and university: Reliability, validity and utility. In L. Schuwirth (Ed.), *Optimising new modes of assessment: In search of qualities and standards* (pp. 55–87). Springer: Netherlands.

Tsui, A. B., & Ng, M. (2000). Do secondary L2 writers benefit from peer comments? *Journal of Second Language Writing, 9*(2), 147-170.

Tuzi, F. (2004). The impact of e-feedback on the revisions of L2 writers in an academic course. *Computers and Composition, 21*, 217-235.

van der Kleij, F. M. (2019). Comparison of teacher and student perceptions of formative assessment feedback practices and association with individual student characteristics. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 85*, 175-189.

van Lier, L. (2000). From input to affordance: Social interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning: Recent advances* (pp. 245-259). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Lier, L. (2004). The semiotics and ecology of language learning: Perception, svoice, identity and democracy. *Utbildning & Demokrati, 13*(3), 79-103.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: *The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1981). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (pp. 144-188). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Walker, M. (2015). The quality of written peer feedback on undergraduates' draft answers to an assignment, and the use made of the feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 40*(2), 232-247.

Webb, A., & Welsh, A. J. (2019). Phenomenology as a methodology for scholarship of teaching and learning research. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal, 7*(1), 168-181.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Wiliam, D. (2013). Feedback and instructional correctives. In J. H. McMillan (Ed.), *SAGE Handbook of Research on Classroom Assessment* (pp. 196-214). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Williams, J., Kane, D. (2009). Assessment & feedback: Institutional experiences of student feedback, 1996-2007. *Higher Education Quarterly, 63*(3), 264-286.

Winstone, N., & Boud, D. (2019). Exploring cultures of feedback practice: The adoption of learning-focused feedback practices in the UK and Australia. *Higher Education Research & Development, 38*(2), 411-425.

Winstone, N., & Carless, D. (2019). *Designing effective feedback processes in higher education: A learning-focused approach*. London, UK: Routledge.

Winstone, N. E., Mathlin, G., & Nash, R. A. (2019). Building feedback literacy: Students' perceptions of developing engagement with feedback toolkit. *Frontiers in Education, 4*, 1-11.

Winstone, N. E., Nash, R. A., Parker, M., & Rowntree, J. (2017). Supporting learners' agentic engagement with feedback: A systematic review and a taxonomy of recipience processes. *Educational Psychologist, 52*(1), 17-37.

Winstone, N., & Pitt, E. (2017). Feedback is a two-way street, so why does the NSS only look one way? *Times Higher Education, 2332*, 30.

Yang, M. & Carless, D. (2013). The feedback triangle and the enhancement of dialogic feedback processes. *Teaching in Higher Education, 18*(3), 285-297.

Yeh, S. W., Lo, J. J., & Chu, H. M. (2014). Application of online annotations to develop a web-based error correction practice system for English writing instruction. *System, 47*, 39–52.

Yucel, R., Bird, F. L., Young, J., & Blanksby, T. (2014). The road to self-assessment: Exemplar marking before peer review develops first-year

students' capacity to judge the quality of a scientific report. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 39*(8), 971-986.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Summary of the six articles

Article	Journal	Article Type	Summary	Impact
Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017a). How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study. *Assessing Writing, 31*, 13-23.	*Assessing Writing* – It is one of the leading journals in writing and language assessment published by Elsevier. It has a 5-year Impact Factor of 2.265. Its current Impact Factor is 1.841. According to the Journal Citation Report, it is ranked 25/184 in Linguistics in 2018.	Primary study	This study explores the influences of students' writing abilities on the quality of their peer feedback in the context of a Hong Kong Grade 7 English classroom. Findings show that there is a strong and positive relationship between students' writing abilities and the relevance and accuracy of their written feedback to peers.	According to Google Scholar, this article has been cited 6 times since its publication in 2017. It was tweeted 3 times.
Chong, I. (Chong, S. W.) (2017b). Reconsidering teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback. *TESOL Journal, 8*(4), 886-893.	*TESOL Journal* – It is a peer-reviewed, practitioner-focused electronic journal on TESOL research and practice published by Wiley. In 2018, its CiteScore is 0.72 and it is ranked 174/702 in Language and Linguistics. It is also indexed in the	Conceptual paper	This conceptual paper reconsiders the complementing roles of three types of feedback, namely teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback. The paper ends with a call for writing teachers to exercise their assessment literacy to implement the right type of feedback at the right time.	According to Google Scholar, this article has been cited 3 times since its publication in 2017.

	Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI).			
Chong, S. W. (2018a). A three-stage model for implementing focused written corrective feedback. *TESL Canada Journal, 34*(2), 71-82.	*TESL Canada Journal* – It is a refereed, open-access journal based in Canada which publishes articles on the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language (ESL). It is indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI).	'Theory-into-practice' paper	This paper introduces a three-stage model for implementing focused written corrective feedback which focuses on the needs of the learners. Examples of materials used by the author were used to illustrate the model.	According to Google Scholar, this article has been cited 1 time since its publication in 2018.
Chong, S. W. (2018b). Three paradigms of classroom assessment: Implications for written feedback research. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 15*(4), 330-347.	*Language Assessment Quarterly* – It is one of the leading journals in language assessment published by Taylor & Francis. It has a 5-year Impact Factor of 1.353. Its current Impact Factor is 0.976. According to the Journal Citation Report, it is ranked 84/184 in Linguistics in 2018.	Conceptual paper	This conceptual paper reconceptualizes summative and formative assessment into assessment of, for, and as learning by drawing upon Serafini's (2001) assessment model and Habermas's (1971) three human interests. Implications related written feedback research are discussed.	According to Google Scholar, this article has been cited 8 times since its publication in 2017, which makes it my most cited paper. As of 15 October 2019, it has 1,063 views, making it the most viewed article in the issue.
Chong, S. W. (2019a). The use of exemplars in English writing	*Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* - It is one of	'Theory-into-practice' paper	This paper discusses the theoretical underpinnings of using exemplars in English	This article has not received any citation yet. As of 15 October

			writing classrooms, including sociocultural theory, tacit knowledge, assessment as learning, and dialogic feedback. In the second section of this article, an IELTS writing textbook project (Routledge) which is in preparation is shared to give practical insights into how exemplars can be used in English writing classrooms.	2019, it has 487 views and 8 tweets.
classrooms: From theory to practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(5), 748-763.	the leading journals in higher education published by Taylor & Francis. It has a 5-year Impact Factor of 2.834. Its current Impact Factor is 2.473. According to the Journal Citation Report, it is ranked 38/243 in Education & Educational Research in 2018.			
Chong, S. W. (2019b). College students' perception of e-feedback: A grounded theory perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 44*(7), 1090-1105.		Primary study	This research paper probes into the perception of a group of ESL community college students towards a teacher's electronic feedback delivered using Google Docs. Findings suggest that these students were positive about using Google Docs to read and respond to the teacher's feedback because it facilitates the ways they read, discussed, and responded to the teacher's electronic feedback.	According to Google Scholar, this article has been cited 2 times since its publication in 2019. As of 15 October 2019, it has 674 views.

8.2 Appendix B: Glossary of acronyms

Term	Acronym	Definition
Assessment as learning	AaL	Assessment tasks which primarily aim to encourage students to generate formative information about their own learning.
Assessment for learning	AfL	Assessment tasks which primarily aim to provide formative information about students' learning.
Assessment of learning	AoL	Assessment tasks which primarily aim to provide summative information about students' learning.
Automated writing evaluation	AWE	Software which provides computer-generated feedback on students' compositions.
English-as-a-Foreign-Language	EFL	Contexts where English is learned by students in their home country.
English-as-a-Second-Language	ESL	Contexts where English is learned by students who are not native English speakers.
Exploratory Practice	EP	A form of inclusive practitioner research aiming to underscore viewpoints of stakeholders in a classroom (e.g., students).
Feedback literacy	FL	Students' capacity and disposition to attend to feedback, including their cognitive and emotional readiness, which potentially leads to students' uptake and response to feedback.
Mediated learning experience	MLE	Learning experiences which are mediated by symbolic artifacts, including interactions between teachers and students.
Potentially exploitable pedagogic activities	PEPAs	Commonly practiced pedagogic activities which teachers adapt for use in their classrooms.
Sociocultural theory	SCT	A theory by Lev Vygotsky which postulates that all human activities (including learning) are mediated by material and symbolic artifacts.
Written corrective feedback	WCF	Error correction on students' use of grammatical items, usually by the teacher.
Written feedback	WF	Comments given to students by teachers about aspects of students' writing performance.
Zone of proximal development	ZPD	The difference between what a learner can achieve on his/her own and what can be attained with experts' assistance (e.g., a teacher).

8.3 Appendix C: How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study (Chong, 2017a)

Abstract

Traditionally, teachers play a central role in creating a learning environment that favors the implementation of peer assessment in writing. Nevertheless, students' writing ability and how it factors into students' provision of relevant (content-related) and accurate (language-related) written feedback is not considered. This is due to the fact that most studies about peer assessment were conducted in a tertiary setting and researchers assume university students have attained a basic level of cognitive and linguistic developments that would empower them to make judgments about their peers' work. The present study, which was conducted in a Hong Kong secondary school, investigated this research gap by analyzing first drafts produced by a class of 16 Secondary 1 (Grade 7) students in a writing unit. The first section of the study reports students' writing abilities in terms of content development and linguistic accuracy; findings in the subsequent section suggest that there is a strong and positive relationship between students' writing abilities and the relevance and accuracy of their written feedback. This paper ends with two pedagogical implications for implementing peer assessment: Alignment with pre-writing instruction and the development of marking focuses based on students' abilities.

1. Introduction

Peer assessment, peer evaluation, peer editing, peer response, or peer review is a method of assessment which capitalizes on the active involvement of students (Murau, 1993; Caulk, 1994; Duke & Sanchez, 1994; Topping, 1998; Omelicheva, 2005; Kaufman

and Schunn, 2010; Mok, 2011). Under the premise of assessment *for* learning (Manitoba Education, 2006) and assessment *as* learning (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010; Earl, 2013), students' learning is facilitated in the process of commenting on each other's work because teachers could elicit information about students' needs to modify their instruction; on the other hand, students become more motivated and self-driven in the learning process because they could construct the assessment criteria for assessing their peers' work (Boud, 1995; Cutler and Price, 1995). Moreover, critical thinking and problem-solving skills involved in this feedback practice are regarded as important skills for students' life-long learning in the 21st century (Boud and Falchikov, 2006; Lundstrom and Baker, 2009).

2. Literature review

Researchers of peer assessment have attributed the role of teachers as the most important factor in bringing about the successful implementation of peer assessment (Thomas, Martin, and Pleasants, 2011). Specifically, they have exerted much effort into investigating how teachers cultivate a learning environment that maximizes the effectiveness of peer assessment (Zariski, 1996). For instance, Falchikov (2007) discusses three strategies that teachers should employ to increase students' readiness for peer assessment: *modeling*, *scaffolding*, and *fading*. The three strategies are essential for incorporating peer assessment into the daily classroom routine. In the modeling stage, students are given examples and instructions of how peer assessment is to be conducted. Having understood the expectations, students receive scaffolded instruction by knowing the assessment tools (for example, assessment rubrics, exemplars) available and how

these could be used to make judgments of their peers' work. When first implemented, teachers should provide a clear and relevant set of assessment criteria or rubrics for students; gradually, teachers could allow more flexibility (the fading of responsibility) in the design of marking criteria when students become more apt and experienced in conducting this kind of assessment. Moreover, some studies reveal that peer assessment is more effective if teachers do not tie it to awards in the form of grades because students generally express fear and anxiety when judging their peers' writing summatively (Omelicheva, 2005). Omelicheva's study also reveals that students either underrate or overmark their peers' work. There is also a higher chance for students to internalize the marking criteria and increase their sense of ownership when teachers provide assessment rubrics for students to evaluate each other's performance (Goodrich, 1997; Bruce, 2001). Extending the role of teachers in peer assessment, several studies have reported that teachers should organize several cycles of peer assessment to increase the accuracy of feedback given by peers and teachers should moderate the grades given by students to raise their reliability (Cole, Coffey, and Goldman, 1999; Kaufman, Felder, and Fuller, 1999; Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray, 2000).

When discussing the role of students, Falchikov (2007, p. 132) outlines the expectations for students in the process of peer assessment:

Peer assessment requires students to provide either feedback or grades (or both) to their peers on a product or a performance, based

on the criteria of excellence for that product or event which students

may have been involved in determining.

Essentially, students are responsible for setting assessment criteria, making judgments and giving suggestions about the quality of the product against the stipulated criteria (Boud, 1995). Since students are held responsible for the feedback they give to their peers, students' ownership and motivation to learn is greatly enhanced (Topping, 2003; Brown, 2004). One reason that contributes to students' increased ownership is that students' voice, which is more often than not ignored in traditional summative assessment, is taken into consideration when judging the quality of a product (Cook-Sather, 2002). Another benefit pertains to the development of transferrable life skills in the assessment process. Transferrable skills, attitude, and values such as 'social and communication skills, negotiation and diplomacy,… giving and handling criticism, self-justification and assertion' (Topping, 2003, p. 7) are fostered because students are required to support the claims they make about their peers' work and they practice the skills of communication and handling power relations in the process of presenting and sharing their opinions; when their comments are not accepted by their peers, they learn to negotiate meaning and provide explanations to substantiate their arguments. In their study examining the benefits of peer assessment to givers and receivers of feedback, Lundstrom and Baker (2009) contend that students who give feedback show greater improvement in global aspects of writing than those who receive the feedback because they are trained to evaluate a piece of writing more critically.

Nevertheless, peer assessment is criticized because the feedback given by peers is subjective and students are not motivated to give feedback because of low self-efficacy (Bostock, 2000; Brown, 2004; Kaufman, et al., 2010; Mok, 2011). Other studies examining the limitations of peer assessment highlight students' language proficiency and classroom culture as two inhibiting factors. Braine (2003) contends that students who are exposed to a teacher-fronted classroom may feel uneasy to engage in peer assessment activities. Despite its constraints, peer assessment has continued to receive much attention, especially in the tertiary sector, as an effective method to promote self-directed learning, because of its long-term benefits to students. When discussing the role of students and what teachers could do to help them become acute assessors, students' writing ability is not considered as a possible variable that would impede or assist students to give relevant and accurate feedback to peers. The current research direction seems to suggest that students' perception and ability to assess others' work could be changed and developed when there is appropriate teacher intervention. This raises a question, which is the focus of the present exploratory study: Is the writing ability (in terms of levels of content development and linguistic accuracy) of a student/peer assessor a crucial factor in effective (in terms of relevance and accuracy) peer feedback?

3. The study

3.1 Research questions

This exploratory study offers a new perspective to look into an under-explored area of peer assessment research, that is, students' writing ability and its influence on the

quality of feedback given. Specifically, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do the students' levels of content development influence the relevance of written feedback they provide?
2. How does the students' linguistic accuracy influence the accuracy of written feedback they provide?

3.2 Conceptual framework for analyzing Hong Kong students' writing abilities

In Hong Kong, learning targets for each grade level are stipulated in the curriculum guides published by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) (2002, 2004). These learning targets are progressively planned according to four Key Stages, (KSs) i.e. KS1-4 and teachers have to develop school-based curricula in accordance with these learning targets. As the participants of the present study are 16 Secondary 1 (Grade 7) students (10 males and 6 females), they are expected to master the learning targets stipulated in KS3. Table 1 shows the skills and knowledge KS3 students are expected to master related to English writing; these learning targets serve as the construct through which students' writing ability is assessed. In Table 1, the learning targets are exemplified using descriptors and guiding questions under two domains: levels of content development and linguistic accuracy for evaluating KS 3 students' writing ability.

Table 1: Writing-related learning targets of KS3 students

	Writing-related Learning Targets of KS3 Students		
Strands	**Interpersonal Strand**	**Experience Strand**	**Knowledge Strand**
Learning targets	Students are expected to: • share and write about their experience, interest, and feeling	Students are expected to: • describe the setting, situation, events, and one's feelings in stories	Students are expected to: • possess basic grammatical knowledge and how the knowledge is applied to from meaning
Descriptors and guiding questions	**Domain 1: Levels of content development** 1. Describe an imagined situation or a series of events in detail *e.g. Who was in the story?* *e.g. Where did the events take place?* *e.g. What happened in the events?* *e.g. When did the events happen?* 2. Describe his/her own feelings in the situation/events *e.g. How did the character or the writer feel amid or after the events?*		**Domain 2: Linguistic accuracy** Apply grammatical knowledge to form meaning *e.g. Use adjectives to describe feelings* *e.g. Use past tense to describe actions done in the past*

In the study, the two domains were employed as the framework to investigate: 1) the Secondary 1 students' writing abilities and 2) the relevance and accuracy of written feedback provided by students in the peer assessment activity. Albeit being heavily context-bound, the learning targets delineated above can encompass the basic requirements of writing in a second language; therefore, this conceptual framework could be reproduced and utilized, with slight alteration, in a variety of secondary-level milieus.

3.3 Context

The present study was conducted in a local secondary school in Hong Kong which uses English as the medium of instruction. The participants were 16 students in a Secondary 1 class, whom were taught by the researcher. They were chosen as the participants of the study because of two reasons: First, in order to collect data in a naturalistic setting, it is necessary to select a class in which the teacher and students are accustomed to the practice of peer assessment. This class taught by the researcher had adopted process writing and peer assessment as part of the writing instruction routine and both the teacher and students perceived the practice of peer assessment as a regular activity of the writing lessons. Prior to the study, which was conducted in November 2015, the class had already undergone 2 rounds of peer assessment, one on reading and one on writing. This provided a favorable ground for the study because more revealing data could be collected through analyzing students' work because students were accustomed to this assessment activity.

The class size and learning environment are two other factors conducive to the incorporation of peer assessment into regular lessons. Given the size of 16, students in the class were given adequate time and opportunity to provide both verbal and written feedback to their peers. Moreover, a supportive learning environment was developed because students formed close relationships with each other through participating in regular group activities and discussions; thus, students were comfortable with perceiving their peers as learning resources. Regarding students' perception of peer assessment activities in writing lessons, they were willing to critically comment on others' work and listen to feedback provided by their peers. In short, with this class of students who held a

positive perception of cooperative learning and social construction of knowledge, the implementation of peer assessment was favored.

3.4 Target writing unit and learning activities

The unit examined was the second writing unit in the Secondary 1 teaching plan about writing a diary entry. Students took on an imaginative role of a pet shop owner and were asked to write a 120-word diary entry describing an unforgettable day in their pet shop. Adhering to the learning targets proposed by the CDC, students were expected to achieve the following learning goals:

Domain 1 - Level of content development:

- *Describe your unforgettable experience in detail*
- *Describe your feelings*

Domain 2 - Linguistic accuracy:

- *Use the past tense to recount events*

The teacher spent seven 55-minute lessons to complete the whole unit and the learning activities of the lessons were divided into the following stages*: pre-writing (brainstorming), outlining, writing, self and peer assessing, and rewriting/editing* (Liu and Hansen, 2002). In the pre-writing (brainstorming) stage, the teacher conducted a series of learning activities to check students' understanding of the learning goals and provided

support to students in achieving these goals. In particular, group activities and discussions were employed as a predominant mode of learning in these 7 lessons (the teacher-researcher included at least one group task in every lesson). Then, students wrote a brief outline on a template, which would then be marked and commented on by the teacher-researcher. After the outlining stage, students wrote their first draft and completed a self-assessment by using different highlighters to underline parts of their work that fulfilled the requirements of the learning goals. The teacher then collected the work and commented on students' content by asking prompting questions. The purpose of this teacher feedback was to provide a model for students to complete their peer assessment in the lesson. To prepare students to be effective peer assessors, the teacher explained the direction for asking prompting questions to address content-related problems while two samples were analyzed collectively in the lesson to demonstrate to students the coding method they should use to identify the language-related errors (for example, 't' was used to mark tense errors, 'sp' was used to mark spelling errors, 'ag' was used to mark subject-verb agreement errors, 'prep' was used to mark preposition errors). After exchanging their work, students completed their peer assessment in the lesson. The students then finished doing the second drafts at home, taking into consideration both the teacher's and students' feedback.

3.5 Instruments and procedures

The students' 16 first drafts of the target writing unit were analyzed to yield insight into the research questions about the relevance and accuracy of peer feedback in relation

126

to students' writing abilities. When analyzing the drafts, the first focus was to categorize students' writing abilities in terms of levels of content development (LCD) and linguistic accuracy (LA) into three ability groups – high, average, and low – by employing an assessment rubric developed from the learning targets stipulated by the CDC (Table 2). Based on the degree of elaboration on content and the range of the number of past tense errors (0 to 11) of all students, Table 2 was developed to show the criteria for a student to be included in an ability group.

Table 2: Assessment rubric for analyzing students' writing ability

	Level of content development	Linguistic accuracy
High	• In addition to specific details about the events, attempts to provide explanation and justification (why) are demonstrated	• 0 - 3 past tense errors
Average	• Some specific details about the events are included including what, when, where, who, and how	• 4 - 7 past tense errors
Low	• Basic information about the events including what, when, where, who, and how is included in the description	• 8 - 11 past tense errors

The second focus of analysis was about the feedback provided by students in the peer assessment activity. A total of 68 feedback points were noted in this stage of analysis, in which 19 of them were related to content development whilst 49 were language-related.

In the activity, students were asked to exchange their work with their peers and give written comments according to the learning goals of the unit. Through analyzing the relevance and accuracy of the written peer feedback, a correlation was drawn between students' writing ability and written peer feedback. Then, I examined whether students who possessed a high LCD and LA were those who give the most relevant and accurate feedback. In this stage of analysis, *relevance* of students' written feedback was defined as relatedness between the feedback and the development of the experience described in the diary (content-related). *Accuracy* of students' written feedback was perceived as writing with accurate grammar; students gave accurate written feedback when they could identify the errors (related to the use of the past tense and other general grammatical errors) made by their peers correctly.

3.6 Participants and their writing abilities

3.6.1 Students' levels of content development

The distribution of the 16 students' LCD is summarized in Table 3 with examples written by students:

Table 3: Students' levels of content development

Level of content development	No. of students	Criteria and example
High	3	In addition to specific details about the events, attempts to provide explanation and justification (why) are demonstrated *e.g. In the morning, I got up early in order to decorate my pet shop.* *e.g. All the customers and breeders were very afraid because the tarantulas were very scary.*
Average	9	Some specific details about the events are included including what, when, where, who, and how *e.g. Then a customer <u>who name[d] Padog</u> went to my pet shop, <u>he was messy looking</u>.* *e.g. There were different breeds of dogs <u>such as golden retriever[s], husky[ies], Dalmatian[s], collie[s]…</u>*
Low	4	Basic information about the events including what, when, where, who, and how is included in the description *e.g. I saw a man [who] want[ed] to steal my things and in the afternoon had a man [who] want[ed] to loot me.* *e.g. I unexpected the first time opened my shop, had many people came. [I was surprised to see that so many people came on my first day of opening.]*

Referring to Table 3, the majority of the students (9 out of 16) in the class were able to provide specific details to the description of unforgettable events that happened in the pet shop with an attempt to elaborate on the setting and development of the events by answering such informative questions as: What happened? When did it happen? Who was there? Where did it take place? How did it end? Below is an excerpt written by one of the students with an average LCD:

Example 1

It was a sunny day (when did it happen?). I cleaned my pet shop as usual. One of my cats Kitty was pregnant (who were there?). It was bad-tempered and got tired easily (what happened?).

When I was cleaning, I heard very loud meow from the cage. We were afraid and we didn't know what happened. Finally, we found that Kitty was ready to give birth to its babies. We prepared a towel and some warm water. There was nothing else we could do. We could only cheer it up and stayed with it. After an hour, the baby kittens finally borned (sic) (how did it end?).

Apart from answering some basic informative questions (questions in parentheses marked by the researcher), this student was capable of developing the unforgettable event of a cat giving birth. She included details related to how she and her staff supported the cat: They prepared the towel and warm water, and they cheered the cat up by staying with it until it finally gave birth.

On the other hand, three outstanding students did more than provide elaborate information about the development of events; their descriptions revealed a high awareness of providing justification and explanation to the descriptions:

Example 2

In the morning, <u>I got up early in order to decorate my pet shop</u>. I bought some pet delicacies <u>for the wedding party</u>. After I finished my decorating, the pet couples and their masters arrived. Also, some guests arrived. The pet wedding party began. I helped the pet couples to take a wedding photo. Moreover, I helped them to take videos. <u>Their masters satisfied (sic) very much. They said, 'the photo and video is (sic) very nice!'</u> I was very excited to hear about that.

In the afternoon, I held a pet outfit fashion show in my shop. I invited a lot of guests to join the fashion show. I was the host of the fashion show. The fashion show began. Many pets wore beautiful clothes. They also wore some accessories. I was very busy because I needed to take photos with them.

The student demonstrated her strong awareness of providing reasons to support her description (as underlined by the researcher). In the first paragraph, she explained that she needed to wake up early in order to decorate her pet shop. She further explained the reason for her to decorate her shop was to prepare for a pet wedding party. Moreover, she was able to justify her description of the owners' positive response ('Their masters satisfied (sic) very much.') by quoting what they said in the party. In the second paragraph, she consistently showed her ability to provide explanation by telling the reader that the reason she was busy was because she 'needed to take photos with them'.

The remaining four students belonged to the low LCD group because the information they included in their diary entry was piecemeal and disconnected. They could neither include details nor provide explanations for their description:

Example 3

First, the customer bought the pet in my shop because today is [was his] birthday. Then, some guest's (sic) dog (sic) fought each other in the pet playground. Next, we called the security guard to solve this problem.

Although two events were described in the paragraph (a customer bought a pet on his birthday and some dogs fought with each other), this student did not include details of the two events described. For example, the student could have explained why the customer chose to buy a pet as his birthday gift or who bought the pet with him. Moreover, he could have provided a reason for the dog fight and how the security guard put an end to the violence.

3.6.2 Students' linguistic accuracy

Table 4 reports findings related to the LA of the 16 Secondary 1 students:

Table 4: Students' linguistic accuracy

Linguistic accuracy	No. of students	No. of past tense errors made
High	7	0 to 3
Average	6	4 to 7
Low	3	8 to 11

The language focus of this writing unit was the correct use of the past tense to describe events that happened in the past in a diary entry. The seven high-achievers in

the language domain made three or less past tense errors. Some of their mistakes (underlined in the examples) were related to the use of past tense in passive voice (Example 4), and some had to do with the wrong use of past participles in the past tense (Example 5).

Example 4

a. After an hour, the baby kittens <u>was</u> finally <u>borned</u>.

b. the first event <u>was perform</u> a musical.

c. First the customer <u>was went</u> into my pet shop.

Example 5

a. Next, the dog <u>bitten</u> the castomer (sic).

As for the remaining 11 students in the class who belonged to the average and low ability groups in the language domain, their mistakes were mainly related to the use of the present tense to describe past events (Example 6) and wrong spelling of verbs in past tense form (Example 7):

Example 6

a. When the fashion show <u>end</u>, I was giving some souvenirs to the guests.

b. I <u>am</u> so scare (sic) when he wanted to kill me.

Example 7

a. After that, he <u>holded</u> the dog and went away the pet shop!

b. We saw three mens (sic) who <u>weared</u> the headgear…

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 RQ 1 – How do the students' levels of content development influence the relevance of written feedback they provide?

When students were asked to give written feedback related to the content domain of their peers' work, they were required to follow the teacher's examples of asking prompting questions to elicit more information from the writer. Prompting questions take the form of short wh-questions (Example 8):

Example 8

a. Why did you feel excited?

b. Who were 'they'?

c. What happened in the fashion show?

On the other hand, *relevant* prompting questions were described as questions asked by peer assessors to elicit more information that was related to the major ideas or events in the description and that the information asked was not mentioned in the writing. Table 5 reports the number of prompting questions and relevant prompting questions asked by students with high, average, and low LCD:

Table 5: Relationship between students' levels of content development and relevance of written feedback

Level of content development	No. of prompting questions* asked	No. of questions asked/student	No. of relevant prompting questions# asked	No. of relevant questions asked/student
High	4	1.3	3	0.8
Average	8	0.9	7	0.8
Low	7	1.8	1	0.3

* Prompting questions refer to questions asked by students to elicit more information from the writer
 # Relevant prompting questions refer to questions asked by students to elicit more information that is related to the important ideas in the description and that the information asked was not mentioned in the writing

As shown in Table 5, students who had a high LCD were able to ask more prompting questions (1.3 questions/student) than average students (0.9 question/student); nevertheless, students who did not elaborate the most in their first drafts were those who wrote the most prompting questions (1.8 questions/student). As for the number of relevant prompting questions asked, students with high and average LCD (0.8 question/student) were able to ask more relevant questions than students with low LCD (0.3 question/student). Examples 9 and 10 demonstrate questions asked by students which were regarded as relevant and irrelevant respectively:

Example 9 (relevant prompting question)

First Draft: …The fashion show began. Many pets worn [wore] beautiful clothes. They also worn (sic) some accessories. I was very busy because I needed to take photos with them.

Relevant prompting question: What things happened in the fashion show? You can write more.

Example 10 (irrelevant prompting question)

First Draft: Then, we saw one old man (sic) want (sic) to buy the dog but he didn't pay the money, so, we called the police…

Irrelevant prompting question: Why you (sic) saw (sic) the old man?

Example 9 illustrates how a high LCD student asked a relevant prompting question. This question was regarded as relevant because it was related to the main event being described, i.e. the pet fashion show and that the question was asked based on the assessor's lack of understanding of what actually happened in the pet fashion show because the writer only described what the pets wore and how busy he was. Referring to the assessment rubric (Table 2), this question could allow the writer to add more specific details to the event(s) being described. On the contrary, the question asked in Example 10 was irrelevant because it was not related to the main event described and it was meaningless to ask why somebody could see another person. More relevant questions related to the event of an old man taking away a dog without paying would be 'What did you do to stop him before calling the police?' or 'What did this old man look like?"

In Table 5, despite asking the highest number of prompting questions per student, low-LCD students asked the lowest number of relevant prompting questions per student (0.3 question). One possible explanation to this phenomenon is that low-LCD students asked prompting questions when they could not comprehend the description of events or when they failed to locate certain information in the paragraphs, rendering their questions redundant or not meaningful. As for students with high and average LCD, they asked the

same number of relevant prompting questions per student, i.e. 0.8 question. This revealed that both groups of students demonstrated a better understanding of the main ideas in each paragraph and they were better readers in a sense that they could critically reflect on the information received by identifying the 'gaps' in the description. In this way, they were able to ask relevant prompting questions that helped the writers to add more specific details to their recount. Even though the number of relevant prompting questions per student was the same, high-LCD students were more eager to ask for justifications and explanations of a particular piece of information ('why' questions) (Example 11) while questions asked by average-LCD students centered around how certain actions were executed ('how' questions) (Example 12):

Example 11 ('why' questions)

First Draft: Then all of the pet (sic) ran out of their rooms, cats. Dogs, birds, … all of the animal (sic) ran out and made trouble in anyway (sic). One of them climbed up on the cashier desk and bit the money… I wasn't very grieved because I think today is (sic) a great day!

Relevant prompting question: Why you (sic) think today was a great day?

Example 12 ('how questions)

First Draft: In the afternoon, I saw a man wear (sic) a (sic) sunglasses. He used a knife pointed (sic) to (sic) me. I am (sic) scare (sic). When he wanted to kill me, a policeman came and caught him.

Relevant prompting question: (asked after the phrase 'a policeman came and caught him') How did you feel?

From the two examples above, the question raised by the high-LCD student in Example 11 concerned a very crucial information gap because the description of the writer focused primarily on the misfortune that he encountered in his pet shop but he concluded 'today was a great day!' in his diary entry. Being able to identify this inconsistency between the facts and feeling described, this high-LCD student prompted the writer to explain why such a hapless day would be regarded as 'great' in the conclusion. In Example 12, this average-LCD student was more concerned about the amount of information given in the description. Seeing that the student described his feeling as 'scared' when the man pointed a knife at him, he asked the writer to describe his changed feeling after the man was arrested by the police. Nevertheless, unlike the high-LCD student in Example 11, he did not seem to notice the information gap that was missing 'behind the scene', i.e. why a man would rob a pet shop? Why didn't he rob a jewelry shop? Moreover, another piece of information 'behind the scene' was 'why the man would want to kill the pet owner? Did they have a conflict before?'

As far as students' LCD is concerned, the data collected seemed to suggest that there was a close and positive relationship between students' LCD and the quality of written feedback that they provided. Students with low LCD were not able to ask many relevant prompting questions because they only included brief descriptions of events in their first drafts. This suggests that they were mainly concerned about the summary of

the events and they failed to pay attention to the details in the events. As for students with average LCD, they were able to pinpoint the information gap in the elaboration of the events described because, as writers, they included information related to specific details of events; therefore, they were accustomed to paying attention to the micro-level information provided in the description. Finally, high-LCD students asked prompting questions that focused more on what was 'behind the scene' than what was described 'in the scene'. Their prompting questions were mostly about the logical development of happenings and why such events would happen in the pet shop. This habit of critical and reflective reading was fostered because they had the practice of including justifications in their description of events. After their description, they would write a reason using the connective 'because' to make sense of their description.

4.2 RQ 2 – How does the students' linguistic accuracy influence the accuracy of written feedback they provide?

This section reports the accuracy of written feedback provided by students and how their accuracy in feedback was associated with their LA. When analyzing students' LA, students were put into three ability groups based on the number of past tense errors they made because past tense was the language-related learning goal of this writing unit. Nevertheless, not wanting to restrict students' written feedback to one grammar item, the teacher-researcher invited students to identify other grammatical errors using codes and some examples of codes were given, for example, 'sp' for spelling errors, and 'prep' for preposition errors. The percentage and number of correct errors identified were collated in Table 6

Table 6: Relationship between students' linguistic accuracy and accuracy of written feedback

Linguistic accuracy	No. of past tense errors identified	No. of accurate past tense errors identified (%)	No. of general grammatical errors identified	No. of accurate general grammatical errors identified (%)	Total no. of errors identified	Total no. of accurate errors identified (%)	Total no. of accurate errors identified/ student
High	21	13 (62%)	8	7 (88%)	29	20 (69%)	2.9
Average	6	3 (50%)	3	2 (67%)	9	5 (56%)	0.8
Low	6	3 (50%)	5	4 (80%)	11	7 (64%)	2.3

As for the errors related to the use of the past tense, 62% of the errors identified by high-LA students were accurate, compared with 50% accuracy rate attained by the average- and low-LA groups. Nonetheless, an interesting phenomenon was noted in the accuracy rate of average- and low-LA students identifying general grammatical errors (errors excluding the past tense errors). While students with high LA were still the most accurate in identifying general grammatical errors (88%), low-LA students (80%) outperformed average-LA students (67%) in their accurate identification of other grammatical errors. Individually speaking, each low-LA student was able to identify 2.3 errors accurately as opposed to 0.8 errors for the

average students; on the other hand, the high-LA group demonstrated a much stronger ability of identifying errors in general (2.9 errors/student).

Regarding the past tense errors identified by students, average- and low-LA students were able to identify 50% of the errors accurately, these students were able to identify errors related to the wrong use of verb forms in the past tense (Example 13) but they sometimes wrongly identified other types of errors as related to the wrong use of the past tense (Example 14):

Example 13

a. When the fashion show <u>end</u>, I was giving some souvenirs to guests to thank them…

b. Today <u>is</u> an unforgettable day for me.

Example 14

a. There were different <u>breed</u> of dogs such as… *(this mistake underlined should be related to plurality of noun)*

b. I pressed the button which <u>is</u> open all the door (sic) of the pet rooms. *(this student treated 'is' as an error related to past tense but the correct interpretation of the error should be the deletion of 'is' and addition of '-ed' to the verb 'open')*

As for the high-LA students, more errors associated with the past tense were identified accurately because, when compared with average- and low-LA groups, this

group of students was able to take into consideration the different verb forms needed in a sentence (Example 15) without blindly treating verbs that were not in the past tense form as errors:

Example 15

a. I felt scare (sic) because the tarantulas ran away! Luckily we <u>can caught</u> them! *(This student was able to identify the underlined verb as an error because he had an understanding that the modal verb 'can' should be changed to the past tense instead of the verb followed)*

b. When I saw this event, I called him to <u>stoped</u>, but he <u>couldn't listened</u> (sic) my order. (*This student had the knowledge that the verb after the preposition 'to' should be a bare infinitive while verb after a modal verb 'couldn't' should also be a bare infinitive*)

As far as the percentage of general grammatical errors identified correctly is concerned, it was noted that low-LA students (80%) identified more errors than the average-LA students (67%). The general grammatical errors that low- and average-LA students identified were all errors related to spelling. One explanation as to why low-LA students performed better than average-LA students was that students who were weak in tenses were not necessarily weak in other aspects of grammar such as spelling. As for the high-LA students, they were the strongest in identifying accurately both errors related to the past tense (62%) and general grammatical errors (88%). To answer the research question of whether students who exhibited a stronger LA were able to give more accurate

written feedback, it was clearly shown that students with high LA were able to locate more errors accurately than the other two ability groups. The data concerning average- and low-LA students also offered insight into how students who had a better understanding in general grammatical rules could identify more errors of different kinds accurately.

5. Implications and conclusion

While a plethora of research related to peer assessment undertaken in the tertiary level focuses on what teachers could do to maximize the benefits of peer assessment, not much is known about how the LCD and LA of students affect the quality of written feedback they give to their peers. Though it has been well-documented in literature that much could be done on the part of teachers to scaffold and demonstrate in order to make students more ready and acquainted with this practice to yield the most advantages, no study carried out in the secondary level has investigated how students' writing abilities would limit or empower students to provide feedback that is both relevant and accurate. The present exploratory study, which focused on analyzing 16 first drafts written by a group of Secondary 1 students and how students who possessed high LCD and LA were able to ask more relevant prompting questions and give more accurate feedback about grammatical errors, throws important light on this research gap. The major findings of the present study suggest that students who were stronger in LCD were able to ask meaningful prompting questions that were related to the missing information gaps in the description ('how' questions) or even the justification of descriptions ('why' questions). Furthermore, students with high LA had a higher accuracy rate of identifying grammatical errors related to the learning goal (the use of the past tense) and general grammatical

errors. Based on the above findings, two pedagogical implications could be drawn vis-à-vis alignment between peer assessment focuses and pre-writing instruction, and the focus of feedback assigned to the students.

5.1 Alignment between peer assessment focuses and pre-writing instruction

The findings of the present study revealed that students possessing high LCD and LA were able to give more relevant and accurate feedback to their peers. Based on this positive correlation between students' writing ability and quality of peer feedback, teachers should conduct pre-writing instruction with clearly stipulated learning goals to strengthen students' performance in LCD and LA. For example, in the writing unit studied, students were asked to evaluate their peers' diary entries in terms of the details of description and the use of the past tense. In order to scaffold students to provide relevant and accurate feedback in peer assessment, pre-writing instruction should include teaching tasks that hone students' ability in writing with elaboration by providing detailed description of events (by using the cognitive model of what, when, where, who, how, and why questions). To develop students' LA, tasks related to the use of the past tense should be designed. In the study, students with average- and low-LA inaccurately identified other types of errors as related to the wrong use of the past tense (Example 14). In response to this language weakness, teachers should include tasks that facilitate students' awareness of using the past tense. For example, contextualized grammar exercise in the text-type of a diary entry could be used for this purpose. In the exercise, students' attention should be drawn to the markers that warrant the use of the past tense (e.g. last

week, today) and situations where the past tense should not be used (e.g. after the preposition 'to' and such modal verbs as 'can' or 'will').

5.2 The focus of feedback assigned to the students

As exemplified in the findings of the study, students' LCD and LA were factors as important as teachers' scaffolding and modeling which would lead to effective implementation of peer assessment. As such, it is of paramount importance for teachers to analyze students' first drafts in order to understand their strengths before peer assessment is conducted. Upon understanding students' performance in LCD and LA, teachers could assign students to give feedback on areas demonstrating students' strengths. For example, students who demonstrate a strong LCD in their writing should be allocated to comment on the relevance of their peers' work whilst those who exhibit stronger LA should focus on evaluating the grammatical accuracy of their peers' work. This division of labor informed by students' performance could benefit both the feedback givers and receivers: On the one hand, students who are given the opportunity to assess their peers using their strengths would feel more confident when giving feedback; on the other hand, those who are assessed would think that the peer assessors are more knowledgeable than they are in the area; thus, students who receive the feedback are likely to act on them, eradicating the problem of students ignoring feedback given by their peers because of the lack of expert knowledge (Kaufman et al., 2011).

Second, assessment rubrics for peer assessment should be designed in a way that caters to the needs of students. As shown in the findings, there is a strong relationship

between students' writing ability and the quality of written feedback given; teachers should be able to modify the assessment rubrics based on the strengths of the class. If a class of students demonstrates a stronger LCD than LA in general, teachers could consider including more content-related assessment criteria. Although students could still be asked to comment on the language domain in a bid to raise their awareness of language accuracy, written feedback given by teachers could play a complementary role, that is, teacher feedback could focus on language accuracy while student feedback is mostly related to idea development.

Despite gaining insight into the importance of students' LCD and LA in raising the standard of written feedback given in peer assessment, the findings could hardly be generalized because a class of only 16 Secondary 1 students participated in this study. While the qualitative nature of the study allows a thick description of a complex phenomenon (Stake, 2010), future and larger-scale research endeavors could examine longitudinally the extent of the influence of students' LCD and LA on peer feedback in different text-types. Another research direction could be to investigate the implementation and effectiveness of teaching activities for developing students' LCD and LA, which could lead to more relevant and accurate peer feedback.

References

Bostock, S. (2000). *Student peer assessment.* Retrieved from http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/engageinassessment/Student_peer_assessment_-_Stephen_Bostock.pdf

Boud, D. (1995). Assessment and learning: contradictory or complementary. *Assessment for Learning in Higher Education*, 35-48.

Boud, D., & Falchikov, N. (2006). Aligning assessment with long-term learning. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 31*(4), 399-413.

Braine, G. (2003). From a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach: A study of peer feedback in Hong Kong writing classes. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 13*(2), 269-288.

Brown, H.D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principle and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.

Bruce, L. B. (2001). Student self-assessment: Making standards come alive. *Classroom Leadership. 5* (1), 1-6. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/publications/class_lead/200109/bruce.html.

Caulk, N. (1994). Comparing teacher and student responses to written work. *TESOL Quarterly, 28*(1), 181-188.

Cole, K., Coffey, J., & Goldman, S. (1999). Using assessments to improve equity in Mathematics. *Educational Leadership, 56*(6), 56-58.

Cook-Sather, A. (2002). Authorizing students' perspectives: Toward trust, dialogue, and change in education. *Educational Researcher, 31*(4), 3-14.

Curriculum Development Council. (2002). *Key learning area curriculum guide (Primary 1 to Secondary 3)*. Hong Kong: Government Printer.

Curriculum Development Council. (2004). *English Language curriculum guide (Primary 1 to 6)*. Hong Kong: Government Printer.

Cutler, H., & Price, J. (1995). The development of skills through peer assessment. *Assessing Competence in Higher Education*, 150-159.

Duke, C. R., & Sanchez, R. (1994). Giving students control over writing assessment. *English Journal*, 47-53.

Earl, L. (2013). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning*. London: Corwin.

Falchikov, N. (2007). The place of peers in learning and assessment. In D. Boud & N. Falchikov (Eds.), *Rethinking assessment in higher education* (pp. 128–143). New York: Routledge.

Kaufman, D. B., Felder, R. M., & Fuller, H. (1999). *Peer ratings in cooperative learning teams*. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual ASEE Meeting.

Kaufman, Julia H., and Christian D. S. (2011). Students' perceptions about peer assessment for writing: Their origin and impact on revision work. *Instructional Science, 39*(3), 387-406.

Liu, J. & Hansen, J. G. (2002). *Peer response in second language writing classrooms*. USA: The University of Michigan.

Lundstrom, K., & Baker, W. (2009). To give is better than to receive: The benefits of peer review to the reviewer's own writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *18*(1), 30-43.

Manitoba Education. (2006). *Rethinking classroom assessment: Assessment for learning, assessment as learning, assessment of learning*. Manitoba Education. Retrieved from https://www.wncp.ca/media/40539/rethink.pdf .

Mariya Y. Omelicheva. (2005). Self and peer evaluation in undergraduate education: Structuring conditions that maximize its promises and minimize the perils. *Journal of Political Science Education, 1*(2), 191-205.

Mok, J. (2011). A case study of students' perceptions of peer assessment in Hong Kong. *ELT Journal, 65*(3), 230-239.

Murau, A. M. (1993). Shared writing: Students' perceptions and attitudes of peer review. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics, 9*(2), 71-79.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2010). *Growing success: Assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Ontario's schools: First edition, covering grades 1 to 12*. Retrieved from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf.

Ross, J. A., Rolheiser, C., & Hogaboam-Gray, A. (1999). Effects of self-evaluation training on narrative writing. *Assessing Writing, 6*(1), 107-132.
Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. New York: Guilford Press.
Thomas, G., Martin, D., & Pleasants, K. (2011). Using self-and peer-assessment to enhance students' future-learning in higher education. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 8*(1), 5.

Topping, K. (1998). Peer assessment between students in colleges and universities. *Review of Educational Research, 68*(3), 249-276.

Topping, K. (2003). Self and peer assessment in school and university: Reliability, validity and utility. In L. Schuwirth (Ed.), *Optimising new modes of assessment: In search of qualities and standards* (pp. 55-87). Springer: Netherlands.

Zariski, A. (1996). Student peer assessment in tertiary education: Promise, perils and practice. In Abbott, J. and Willcoxson, L. (Eds.), *Teaching and Learning Within and Across Disciplines* (pp. 189-200). Paper presented at the 5th Annual Teaching and Learning Forum, Murdoch University. Perth: Murdoch University.

8.4 Appendix D: Reconsidering teacher, peer, and computer-generated feedback (Chong, 2017b)

Introduction

In the context of higher education, research findings have attested to the formative values of feedback (Chong, 2017a; Carless, 2016; Hattie and Timperley, 2007; Hyland, 2016; Merry, Price, Carless, & Taras, 2013; Mulliner & Tucker, 2015). Feedback researchers have found that teachers give feedback vigorously and students are eager to read teachers' feedback (Ferguson, 2011; Pulos and Mahony, 2008). Due to the plethora of potential benefits of written feedback on students, innovative feedback practices have been gaining momentum in L2 university language classrooms (Carless, 2006; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). For example, students receive formative and diagnostic feedback from teachers to improve their compositions, students give feedback to their peers to become meta-cognitively aware about the success criteria of a piece of writing, and students receive feedback from automated writing evaluation (AWE) tools such as *Criterion*, *My Access!*, and *e-rater* to cultivate their self-monitoring and self-regulated skills. Feedback research conducted in L2 higher education context has reported innovative practices of written feedback provided by teachers, students, and that generated from AWE tools separately; nonetheless, few articles attempt to compare the three types of feedback to inform teachers' feedback practice holistically. The understanding of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of these feedback types is important because writing instructors often employ more than one type of written feedback in their classrooms (for example, teacher feedback alongside peer feedback). In this article, I aim to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the three types of feedback. Then, I will

discuss how the three types of written feedback can be used as complements to each other in writing classrooms to better cater for the needs of L2 university students.

Written feedback by teachers

It is a common practice for teachers to give written feedback on language errors. There is a long line of research on teachers' practice of written corrective feedback (WCF) (Ellis, 2009; Ferris, 2010). WCF research in the last ten years has shown that teachers have been adopting a focused approach to WCF, that means, teachers only mark the pre-selected language item(s) in students' work (e.g. the English definite and indefinite articles) (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Farrokhi & Sattarpour, 2012; Shintani & Ellis, 2013; Shintani, Ellis, & Suzuki, 2014). Findings from these studies suggested that students' accuracy in the focused item(s) improved in the immediate and delayed post-tests, especially when meta-linguistic explanations were provided (Shintani et al., 2013; Shintani et al., 2014). For example, in the study conducted by Shintani et al. (2014) on five groups of pre-intermediate Japanese university students, findings indicated that the four treatment groups which received focused WCF and meta-linguistic explanations showed improvement in using the hypothetical conditional sentence in the delayed post-test while no change was noted in the control group. Although findings in these studies showed that students' linguistic accuracy on a pre-determined language item improved when teachers gave WCF in a focused manner, the majority of these studies adopted a quasi-experimental design (with a pre-test, post-test, and some, a delayed post-test), rendering the findings not easily transferrable to teachers' classroom practice. Moreover, findings remained inconclusive when it comes to whether a focused and direct approach

of WCF is more conducive to students' linguistic development than a comprehensive and indirect approach. It is because the studies were situated in different educational milieus and students' experience and writing proficiencies varied significantly (Ferris, 2010). In another line of research which focuses on process writing, researchers contend that writing teachers should give formative feedback on content and structure in initial drafts while WCF should only be given in the later drafts. It is found that content-focused feedback is most effective when it is personalized (Ferguson, 2011), specific (Glover & Brown, 2006), and goal-oriented (Busse, 2013). Judging from research on teachers' written feedback, it can be concluded that the value of this kind of feedback lies in selecting feedback focus in language and giving formative comments on students' ideas and organization.

Written feedback by peers

Building on the tenet of collaborative learning, researchers are more interested in examining the effectiveness of peer assessment on feedback givers than that on feedback receivers (Chong, 2017b). Hyland and Hyland (2006) contended that peer feedback is useful for students to discuss their texts and understand others' interpretations. In the studies focusing on how students give feedback to their peers, it was found that peer feedback has a primary focus on surface-level features and word-level errors; as for macro-level mistakes namely content and organization, some research has found that students were not capable linguistically of expressing their thoughts in these areas (Alnasser & Alyousef, 2015). In other studies on peer feedback (Min, 2006; Lundstrom et al., 2009), students were able to give comments on global aspects of writing

such as commenting on the quality of a thesis statement with ample scaffolding from teachers in the forms of peer review training and in-class modelling. Different from teachers' written feedback, the focus of peer feedback should not be on idea development, word choice, and coherence of writing which can be subtle, subjective, and text-specific; the pedagogical value of peer feedback can be maximized when teachers assign students to comment on 'rule-governed' areas in writing such as structural elements (hook, thesis statement, topic sentence) and treatable errors (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, spelling, collocations) (Ferris, 1999, p. 6).

Computer-generated feedback

In recent years, writing teachers hold a positive view towards computer-generated feedback because it can address students' individual needs (Ware, 2011). Before turning in their compositions, students can upload their work to an automated writing evaluation (AWE) software (e.g. *Criterion*, *My Access!*, *e-rater*) to check for errors. Nowadays, computer-generated feedback does not comprise only direct indications of language errors but also meta-linguistic explanations (Dikli, 2006). In this way, students can develop a habit of critically reading and evaluating their work before submission, cultivating their self-regulating skills in the writing process (Dinsmore, Alexander, & Loughlin, 2008). Although benefits of computer-generated feedback are reported in recent studies namely timeliness of feedback (Liao, 2016) and the provision of intrinsic motivation for students to self-correct (Cotos, 2010), little is known about its effectiveness in improving students' accuracy in writing. It is because computer-generated feedback is largely formulaic and can mostly detect rule-governed errors. Some researchers

questioned the transferability of the linguistic knowledge acquired through computer-assisted feedback while others showed concerns about how well students comprehend the feedback which is text-based and dense (Ware, 2011). Given its mechanical nature, technology-assisted feedback should best be used by students in the pre-writing and drafting stages of writing to check their language accuracy (Chen & Cheng, 2006); however, it should not replace the role of teacher to give feedback to students' work because it 'cannot provide an emotional response to students' writing' and it fails to provide accurate feedback 'on content and the rhetorical aspects of… writing' (Hyland, 2016, p. 68-69).

Conclusion

The three types of written feedback: teacher feedback, peer feedback, and computer-generated feedback are potentially beneficial to developing students' writing proficiency in different ways. While all types of feedback help students identify grammatical errors, the types of errors pointed out by students and computers are more limited. Teachers' feedback takes on a unique role in giving commentaries vis-à-vis the content and structure of students' work. Summarizing studies on these three types of feedback, it informs L2 writing instructors' feedback practices holistically; in particular, it crystalizes the irreplaceable role of teachers' feedback. In a process writing approach, it is suggested that students can upload their work to an AWE tool to check for treatable and rule-governed grammatical errors to make corrections before submission. Then, students can comment on each other's work in terms of treatable and rule-governed features (e.g. verb tenses, topic sentence). Since some responsibility of giving feedback

is offloaded to the computer and students, teachers can focus on areas which involve subtlety namely idea development, coherence, and audience awareness in their feedback. These areas can seldom be pointed out by students and software because they are affective and rhetorical features which are indistinct and mechanical.

In addition, a caveat to writing instructors who intend to incorporate computer-generated feedback is that it should be used in tandem with, but not replace, teacher feedback, and it is the teachers' responsibility to 'manage' the use of AWE tools skillfully and thoughtfully (Educational Testing Service, 2017). Future research can investigate the relative effectiveness of the three types of written feedback when implemented as complements in a variety of L2 contexts including primary, secondary, and tertiary settings.

References

Alnasser, S. M., & Alyousef, H. S. (2015). Investigating Saudi learners' preferences for giving and receiving macro and/or micro level peer feedback on their writing. *English Language Teaching*, *8*(6), 57.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 19*(4), 207-217*.

Busse, V. (2013). How do students of German perceive feedback practices at university? A motivational exploration. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(4), 406-424.

Carless, D. (2006). Differing perceptions in the feedback process. *Studies in Higher Education*, *31*(2), 219-233.

Carless, D. (2016). Feedback as dialogue. *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory* (p. 1-6). Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_389-1

Chong, I. (2017a). Interplay among technical, socio-emotional and personal factors in written feedback research. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. Online publication.

Chong, I. (2017b). How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study. *Assessing Writing, 31*, 13-23.

Cotos, E. (2011). Potential of automated writing evaluation feedback. *CALICO Journal, 28*(2), 420-459.

Dikli, S. (2006). An overview of automated scoring of essays. *Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment, 5*(1), 1-35.

Dinsmore, D. L., Alexander, P. A., & Loughlin, S. M. (2008). Focusing the conceptual lens on metacognition, self-regulation, and self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychology Review*, *20*(4), 391-409.

Ellis, R. (2009). A typology of written corrective feedback types. *ELT Journal*, *63*(2), 97-107.

Educational Testing Service. (2017). *The e-rater engine in the Criterion online writing evaluation service*. Retrieved from https://www.ets.org/erater/criterion/

Farrokhi, F., & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The effects of direct written corrective feedback on improvement of grammatical accuracy of high-proficient L2 learners. *World Journal of Education*, *2*(2), 49.

Ferguson, P. (2011). Student perceptions of quality feedback in teacher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 36*(1), 51-62.

Ferris, D. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of second language writing*, *8*(1), 1-11.

Ferris, D. R. (2010). Second language writing research and written corrective feedback in SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *32*(2), 181-201.

Glover, C., & Brown, E. (2006). Written feedback for students: too much, too detailed or too incomprehensible to be effective?. *Bioscience Education*, *7*(1), 1-16.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 81-112.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2016). *Teaching and researching writing* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Merry, S., Price, M., Carless, D., & Taras, M. (Eds.). (2013). *Reconceptualising feedback in higher education: Developing dialogue with students*. New York: Routledge.

Min, H. T. (2006). The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 15*, 118-141.

Mulliner, E., & Tucker, M. (2015). Feedback on feedback practice: perceptions of students and academics. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1-23. Lundstrom, K., & Baker, W. (2009). To give is better than to receive: The benefits of peer review to the reviewer's own writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *18*(1), 30-43.

Poulos, A., & Mahony, M. J. (2008). Effectiveness of feedback: The students' perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *33*(2), 143-154.

Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2013). The comparative effect of direct written corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation on learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the English indefinite article. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(3), 286-306.

Shintani, N., Ellis, R., & Suzuki, W. (2014). Effects of written feedback and revision on learners' accuracy in using two English grammatical structures. *Language Learning*, *64*(1), 103-131.

Ware, P. (2011). Computer-generated feedback on student writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, *45*(4), 769-774.

8.5 Appendix E: A three-stage model for implementing focused written corrective feedback (Chong, 2018a)

Abstract

This article aims at narrowing the divide between written corrective feedback (WCF) research and its practice. In particular, one kind of WCF, focused WCF, is brought in the limelight. The first section of the article summarizes major findings from focused WCF research to reveal the potential advantages of marking a few pre-selected language items instead of marking all errors. At the same time, it was argued that the majority of the focused WCF research, which adopted an experimental or quasi-experimental design, had little pedagogical implications for writing teachers. It is, therefore, the purpose of the second section to put forward a three-stage model for operationalizing focused WCF, which includes selecting the focus, teaching the focus, and reinforcing the focus. Pedagogical ideas will be included in each of the stages to give writing teachers a vivid idea of how to justify the selection of language focuses and implement WCF in a systematic manner.

Introduction

Correcting errors in students' compositions is never an easy task. Although writing teachers burn their midnight oil giving written feedback on language errors, research has shown that students rarely pay attention to and act on those comments, especially when feedback is given alongside scores (Lee, 2017). Worse still, the effort of those teachers who diligently point out students' errors is sometimes viewed negatively. For example, teachers are sometimes labelled as 'composition slaves' and 'paternalistic figures' (Lee,

2009, p. 13). Without doubt, responding to students' language errors in writing is a daunting and challenging task to many teachers.

Not only teachers but also researchers debate the effectiveness of written feedback on error correction, or written corrective feedback (WCF). Since Truscott's (1996) controversial claim that WCF is ineffective and even detrimental to L2 students' acquisition, writing researchers have been investigating different practices of WCF, in particular, direct (indication of errors and provision of correct form) and indirect WCF (indication of errors), focused (correction on specific error types) and unfocused WCF (correction on all error types), to refute Truscott's conclusion (Ferris, 2011). Although some of these attempts were criticized because of their limitations in research design, the plethora of studies on this topic have gathered an array of evidence to indicate that, in general, students who received WCF in any form achieve a higher standard of linguistic accuracy than those who did not receive any feedback from teachers. Moving ahead, the current debate has been shifted to whether focused WCF exerts a greater positive impact on students than unfocused WCF (Ferris, Liu, Sinha, and Senna, 2013). One argument in 159avour of focused WCF is that students will find the feedback less overwhelming, which makes revision more manageable since the teacher focuses on certain language features (Bitchener, 2008). While this remains an area without conclusive evidence, and therefore, worth exploring, a more pressing issue (especially to frontline writing teachers) is how to implement WCF in their own classrooms. One of the issues close to the heart of the writing teachers is related to the practice of focused WCF. Focused WCF, as opposed to 'comprehensive' or 'unfocused' WCF, is defined as 'correction that is provided

for specific error types' by teachers or researchers (Ferris et al., 2013, p. 309). In particular, research does not offer much insight into a 'tried-and-tested' way of selecting appropriate language focuses to mark that will benefit students' linguistic development. In this article, I will summarize major findings in focused WCF studies conducted in the last ten years and point out their limitations to inform practice. Next, I will introduce a pedagogical approach to implement focused WCF which comprises three stages: selecting the focus, teaching the focus, and reinforcing the focus.

What research tells (does not tell) us about focused WCF

Recent studies on focused WCF has examined the effectiveness of WCF on the English articles (definite and indefinite) except the one conducted by Shintani, Ellis, and Suzuki (2014), which included hypothetical conditional as another target item (Bitchener, Young, and Cameron, 2005; Bitchener and Knoch, 2009; Bitchener and Knoch, 2010; Ellis, Sheen, Murakai, and Takashima, 2008; Farrokhi and Sattarpour, 2012; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, Wright, and Moldawa, 2009; Shintani and Ellis, 2013; Shintani et al., 2014; Stefanou and Révész, 2015).

In terms of research design, all the studies cited above included a control group in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of WCF (the treatment groups). Moreover, most of these studies measured effectiveness of WCF in terms of how well students transferred the acquired linguistic knowledge to the next piece of writing. These recent studies on focused WCF are able to garnered conclusive findings in favor of responding to language errors in a focused manner. From the findings, focused WCF exerts a greater positive

influence in terms of the acquisition of English articles (a, an) on more mature L2 students (university students) than unfocused WCF and the absence of WCF.

WCF in the real world

Given the different goals of researchers and teachers, the findings from existing WCF literature can hardly be translated into practice. For example, in the above findings, researchers selected definite/indefinite articles as the target language feature because they can be readily measured. Nevertheless, some important concerns of frontline writing teachers were not addressed in these studies namely student factor (e.g. students' preference of WCF, the effectiveness of focused WCF on students' acquisition of other language features), school factor (e.g. school's expectation and culture), and system (exam-oriented systems which place a premium on students' linguistic accuracy) (Carless, 2011). In a lot of ESL contexts in which these studies were conducted, the school, students, and parents have high expectations for writing teachers. Teachers are expected to mark and correct all errors in students' composition. In some extreme situations, how 'diligent' teachers mark is taken into consideration in teacher appraisal. Moreover, students prefer to receive more teacher feedback even though they do not always revise accordingly because it is a sign that the teacher has read their work seriously. In a study conducted in Hong Kong, even students with a lower writing proficiency want their teachers to mark all of their errors (Lee, 2008). Other studies conducted in multilingual classrooms in North America also indicated similar findings. Schulz (2001) conducted a survey on over 1,000 Columbian and U.S. students to elicit their perception of grammar instruction and error correction. Over 90% of both groups of students preferred teachers

to focus on correcting their errors. With such a heavy demand on writing teachers to mark in a comprehensive manner, teachers need a very strong reason to convince the school and students that a focused approach to WCF is more effective. Nevertheless, findings from these studies, which focus mainly on one word-level grammatical item (articles), fail to provide a sound empirical support for teachers to implement focused WCF in their own educational milieus.

A three-stage model of implementing focused WCF

Despite reaching a consensus that students' acquisition of linguistic item as a result of focused WCF is transferrable to the next piece of writing, the studies did not take into account broader issues such as maturity of students, selection of language focuses, and alignment between instruction and feedback focus (Lee & Coniam, 2013; Lee, 2017; Shepard, 2000). In all of the studies, the participants were either adult students or university students. There is not much information from research to inform how writing teachers teaching in a primary and secondary school setting can implement focused WCF effectively. Ironically, primary and secondary school principals and parents are those who demand the most from writing teachers to mark all errors because they believe it can facilitate the acquisition of the accurate use of language features before the errors fossilize (Lee, 2009). Secondly, none of the studies have provided concrete evidence for choosing the appropriate language focus for the students. In this way, the research findings reported cannot be considered as 'recipes' for pedagogy. To address the practical needs of writing teachers teaching in the secondary education context, I am going to propose a three-stage model for implementing focused WCF in order to

maximize the effectiveness of this feedback practice shown in research; most importantly, I aim to provide a pedagogical approach which aligns feedback with instruction, and in turn, provides a stronger justification for teachers to adopt a focused approach in marking errors in their own schools. Grounded in the notion of 'feedback as a new form of instruction' (Kulhavy, 1977; Bitchener & Ferris, 2012), these three cyclical stages include: selecting the focus, teaching the focus, and reinforcing the focus (Figure 1).

Although the materials used to exemplify this three-stage model are drawn from a secondary school in Hong Kong (the junior secondary curriculum), the generic nature of this model enables college and university writing instructors to apply it to their own teaching contexts.   For writing instructors who are teaching general ESL courses (to teenage and adult learners), this model can mingle well with the process-approach of writing that is often adopted in university writing courses. For example, the instructor could implement several rounds of the model in a writing task in which students are asked to write multiple drafts. The instructor can guide students to complete the select-teach-reinforce cycle in the first draft and initiate another cycle for the second draft.
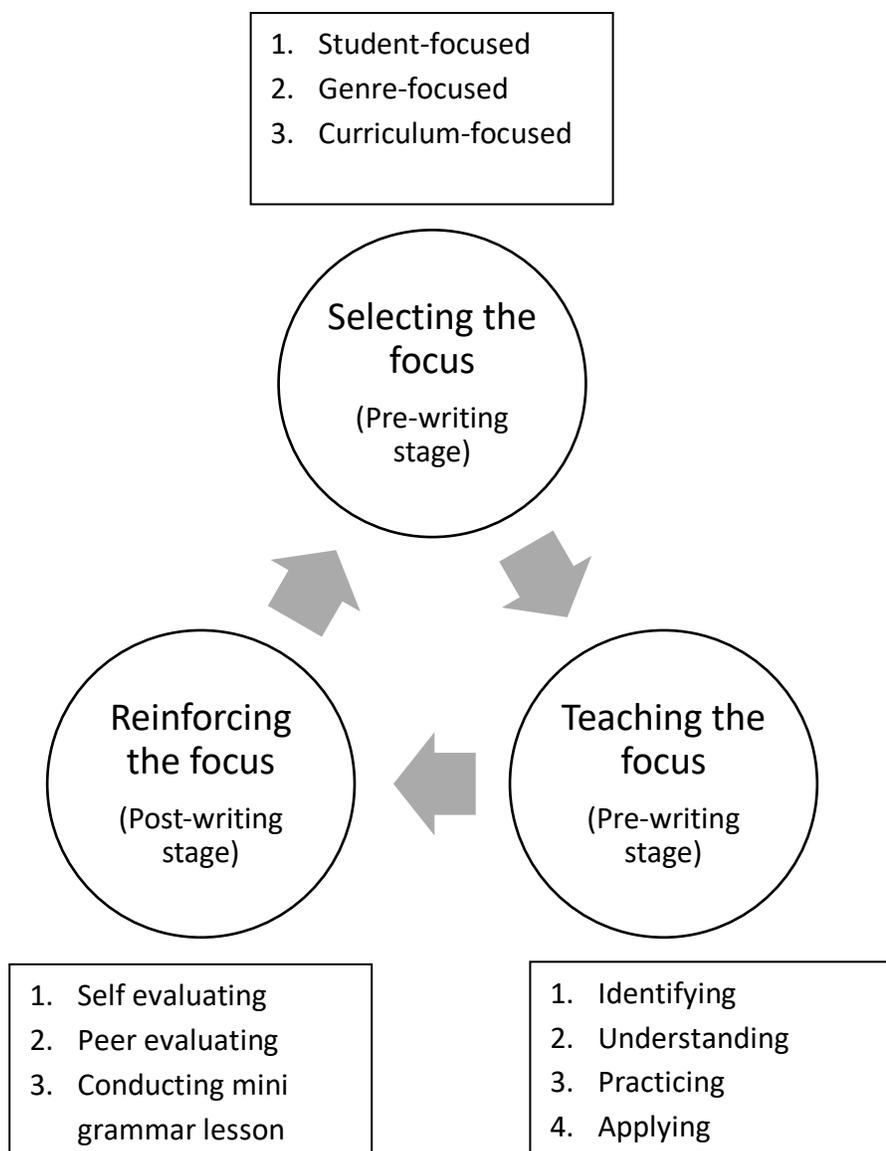
Figure 1: A three-stage model for implementing focused WCF

Selecting the focus

Student-focused

There are two ways to select one or more language focuses for a student. One way is more student-directed: The teacher gives a checklist of important grammatical items to students. Upon completing their writing, students evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and check the items which they want the teacher to comment on the most.

Accordingly, teachers give feedback only to those items checked by the students. Figure 2 provides a checklist used by a secondary school teacher. It is also possible for teachers to negotiate the items to be listed on the checklist with students. Alternatively, teachers can leave one of the boxes blank for students to write down any linguistic item that poses challenge to them.

Marking focuses			
Put at least 2 ticks next to the grammar focuses that you want me to respond to:			
✓	Words and phrases for making arguments		Prepositions
	Tenses, gerunds, infinitives		Word choice
	spelling		Sentence structures
	Agreement		_____

Figure 2: An example of language focus checklist for students

Another time-saving strategy is to ask students to keep an error log (Ferris, 2002). An error log is a table kept and completed by the students regarding the distribution of the types of error in each piece of writing. Longitudinally, the error logs can provide 'valuable assessment information' for teachers to develop a focus for giving feedback (Lee, 2017, p. 21) (Figure 3)

Type of error	Error code	No. of errors	Error ratio*	Error gravity ranking#
Verb tenses	v.	8	0.4	1
Subject-verb agreement	ag.	5	0.25	2
Spelling	sp.	4	0.2	3
Part of speech	p.o.s	3	0.15	4
Total no. of errors		20		

Figure 3: An error log (adapted from Lee, 2017, p. 21)

* the number of errors in each type of error is divided by the total number of errors. The larger ratio indicates that the error is more serious and teachers should pay attention to it)

Error types are ranked from the most serious (marked by '1') to the least serious (marked by '4').

Genre-focused

Another approach to selecting language focuses to respond to is to make reference to the genre at hand. Hyland (2010) defined genre as 'abstract, socially recognized ways of using language' (p. 149). In each genre or text-type, there may be an obligatory use of certain language items. For example, in one of the studies discussed earlier, Ellis et al. (2008) claimed that the selection of articles as the language focus was justified because the subsequent writing task was a narrative, in which articles were prevalent. In a similar vein, writing teachers can justify their selection of language focus

by referring to the significance of such language feature in the target genre or text-type. Below are some of the writing units in a Hong Kong secondary school writing curriculum for Secondary 4 to 5 (Grades 10 to 11) students (Table 1) and their target language focuses.

Level	Writing unit	Language focus
4	Picture description	The use of the present tense
	Description/Recount	The use of time connectives
	Persuasion	The use of rhetorical devices
	Discussion	The use of expressions to present and contrast different viewpoints
	Article with headings	The use of sentence pattern 'not only… but also…'
5	Information (report)	The use of reporting verbs and phrases
	Description/Recount	The use of reported speech
	Exposition (proposal)	The use of expressions for writing a proposal
	Story	The use of relative clauses
	Review	The use of participle phrases

Table 1: A writing curriculum of a Hong Kong secondary school with genre-related language focuses

Progression-focused

The third approach to selecting a language focus is to develop a curriculum plan which helps teachers to start with more treatable language focuses to less treatable errors. A 'treatable error' is defined as 'a linguistic structure that occurs in a rule-governed way' while an 'untreatable error' refers to an error that is 'idiosyncratic, and the student will need to utilize acquired knowledge of the language to self-correct it' (Ferris, 2011, p. 35). Examples of 'treatable errors' include verb tenses and forms, definite and indefinite articles, subject-verb agreement, spelling, pronouns. They also include such sentence-level errors namely run-ons, comma splices, and fragments and other errors which 'student writer can be pointed to a grammar book or set or rules to resolve the problem' (ibid). As for 'untreatable errors', there are errors which pertain to word choice and sentence structures (e.g. word order problem, missing words). With this understanding, teachers can develop a progression chart of a per-determined list of language features in order to include the features which are of appropriate difficulty to the students at a particular stage of learning. Table 2 is a progression chart of some of the language features covered in a secondary school in Hong Kong (Grade 7).

Treatable/untreatable error	Language feature	Description
Treatable error	1. Subject-verb agreement	Ensure the verb form in a sentence matches with the subject

	2. Verb tense	Use the present, past ,and future tenses accurately by changing the verb forms
	3. Comma splice	Refrain from using commas to connect unrelated sentence. Learn to use periods correctly.
Untreatable error	4. Word choice	Choose words to convey ideas precisely
	5. Compound and complex sentences	Place phrases and clauses within a sentence

Table 2: A progression chart of language features

Teaching the focus

Identifying the focus

   Instead of telling students the language focus, teachers can explain to students that the focus they chose are prevalent in the genre by asking students to identify some repetitive language features or patterns found in a sample text. For example, to help students identify the importance of using the past tense when writing a story, teachers can show students a short story and ask them to highlight and identify the verb tense used in story writing. Below is a sample story used by a secondary teacher with a group of Grade 8 students.

One autumn evening, Charles and Beth went to the theater. They attended a play. The

play started at 7:00. Charles and Beth enjoyed the theater.

After the play, Charles and Beth walked together in the park. They walked beside the

lake. The moon was bright. The talked about their future.

When Charles and Beth went home, their children were not asleep. They waited for

Charles and Beth to return. They were excited to hear about the theater.

Charles told the children about the play. Then, Beth put the children to bed. Charles

and Beth were very tired. It was a good night!

Source: http://www.really-learn-english.com/simple-past.html

Understanding the focus

Having identified and agreed with the students the prevalent language feature(s) in the genre, teachers can explain some grammar rules that govern how the feature is used (deductive grammar instruction) (Thornbury, 2005). For instance, referring to the above example, teachers can explain to students that past tenses (in particular, the simple past tense) are often used in storytelling because the writer is retelling a story that happened in the past. Deductive grammar instruction can be facilitated by referring students to rules and explanations in grammar books. Nevertheless, deductive instruction of language focus is not always effective, especially in the case when the grammar rule is less explicit to students. For instance, the use of irregular verb. The rules that students need to remember when thinking about how to change the verb form are subtle. In this case, teachers can help students to understand more about this focus through another kind of conscious-raising tasks, inductive grammar tasks. In inductive

grammar tasks, students are presented with an authentic language context (e.g. a real story with a lot of irregular verbs) (Erlam, 2003). In the tasks, instead of explaining to students the prevalent feature, students are asked to identify the feature and deduce the 'rule' by noticing the similarities shared among the examples. Below is an example of an inductive grammar task which was designed to help students understand how the vowels in the verbs are changed to 'a'.

Instruction: Read the following extract from a short story and discuss with your partner the italic verbs (in your discussion, you may want to focus on the similarities/patterns of the verb form).

In the princess's wedding, everyone was very happy and they were enjoying themselves very much. The guests *drank* the nice wines served in the banquet and the famous opera singer *sang* a beautiful aria. There were children who *ran* around and *swam* in the pool.

Practicing the focus

   After students understand the rules that govern the language focus or have enough exposure to examples of a non-rule governed language focus, teachers can give students a controlled practice on how the language focus is used. The example below shows a controlled practice to have students practice using irregular verbs. This controlled practice takes the form of a gap filling exercise:

An extract from a controlled practice

I _____ (fly) to Vancouver yesterday. My grandchildren _____(grow) up there and I hadn't _____ (see) them in years. I hadn't _____ (write) to them or _____ (speak) on the phone with them in years. At the Vancouver airport, I _____ (put) my suitcase to a rental car and _____ (drive) to their home to surprise them.

Applying the focus

The last teaching step concerns an application writing task. Different from a controlled practice, an application task allows students to freely express their ideas by employing the target language focus (Badger and White, 2000). Continuing with the two examples before about the use of irregular verbs, students can be asked to complete the following task:

An application writing task

Write four sentences related to the princess story. Try to use the verbs given below.

| Bring | Feed | Give |
| Keep | Lend | Pay |

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Reinforcing the focus

Self and peer evaluation

In order to deepen students' understanding of the target language focus and raise their awareness, teachers can guide students to conduct self and peer evaluation to highlighting the target focus used in their writing. The purpose of this evaluation task is twofold: On the one hand, students can proofread whether the target language focus is used accurately in all the examples highlighted. On the other hand, if students fail to highlight any example of the language focus, it may mean that the students did not use any of the language features and they should revise their work by adding the target feature. In a Grade 7 class I taught, I asked students to highlight three target language focuses in one of their writing tasks, diary entry, using different colors: the use of adjectives to describe feelings (in yellow), the use of the past tense to recount events (in green), and the use of time connectives to present events chronologically (in purple). This was done before the writing was submitted to the teacher for feedback (handwritten feedback in red by the teacher) to raise students' awareness of the target language features.

Mini grammar lessons

Teachers can identify common errors in the target language focuses and prepare some short exercises such as proofreading or sentence rewrite after returning the marked compositions to students. A mini grammar lesson is different from pre-writing grammar instruction because a mini grammar lesson is more student-centered. In designing a mini grammar lesson, the teacher needs to identify and narrow the target language features

that a specific group of students need the most help. Then, the teacher can provide brief explanations of the target features and find good and bad examples from authentic texts (e.g. students' writing) for discovery and analysis activities (Ferris, 2011).

Conclusion

Having identified the research-practice divide in WCF and the limitations of WCF research to inform practice, this article proposes a three-stage model as a systematic pedagogical approach to implement WCF. This three-stage model (selecting the focus, teaching the focus, and reinforcing the focus) attempts to consolidate the alignment between instruction and assessment. In addition, writing teachers are offered some practical strategies to select the marking focuses (by students' needs, by genres, and by difficulties), to teach the focuses (inductive and deductive grammar instruction), and to consolidate the focuses (through self, peer evaluation, and mini grammar lesson). Through employing this model and keeping abreast of WCF research development, writing teachers can better explain their focused approach to giving feedback to the students, parents, and the school. Moreover, since there is a stronger alignment between instruction and assessment, it is more likely to facilitate students' acquisition of the target language features. While research has presented some arguments in favor of focused WCF (e.g. more manageable to students), this article provides a practical solution for writing teachers to implement WCF in their classrooms in a systematic way. Despite focusing on teachers teaching in junior secondary levels (Grades 7-8), this generic model can be easily adapted by writing instructors teaching in a postsecondary context. It is suggested that university instructors can incorporate this model into the various writing

stages in a process approach so that they can respond to different error types in different

drafts.

References

Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, *54*(2), 153-160. doi:10.1093/elt/54.2.153

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2009). The value of a focused approach to written corrective feedback. *ELT Journal*, *63*(3), 204-211. doi:10.1093/elt/ccn043

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *19*(4), 207-217. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2010.10.002

Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *14*(3), 191-205. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2005.08.001

Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. (2012). *Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing*. New York: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2011). *From testing to productive student learning: Implementing formative assessment in Confucian-heritage settings*. New York: Routledge.

Ellis, R., Sheen, Y., Murakami, M., & Takashima. (2008). The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in an English as a foreign language context. *System, 36*(3), 353-371. doi:10.1016/j.system.2008.02.001

Erlam, R. (2003). The effects of deductive and inductive instruction on the acquisition of direct object pronouns in French as a second language. *The Modern Language Journal, 87*, 242-260.

Farrokhi, F., & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The effects of direct written corrective feedback on improvement of grammatical accuracy of high-proficient L2 learners. *World Journal of Education*, *2*(2), 49. doi:10.5430/wje.v2n2p49

Ferris, D. (2011). *Treatment of error in second language student writing*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Ferris, D. R., Liu, H., Sinha, A., & Senna, M. (2013). Written corrective feedback for individual L2 writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(3), 307-329. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2012.09.009

Kulhavy, R. W. (1977). Feedback in written instruction. *Review of Educational Research, 47*(1), 211-232. doi:10.2307/1170128

Lee, I. (2008). Student reactions to teacher feedback in two Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *17*(3), 144-164. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2007.12.001

Lee, I. (2009). Ten mismatches between teachers' beliefs and written feedback practice. *ELT Journal*, *63*(1), 13-22. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccn010

Lee, I. (2017). *Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts.* New York: Springer.

Lee, I., & Coniam, D. (2013). Introducing assessment for learning for EFL writing in an assessment of learning examination-driven system in Hong Kong. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(1), 34–50.

Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(2), 255-283. doi: 10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00059.x

Sheen, Y., Wright, D., & Moldawa, A. (2009). Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. *System*, *37*(4), 556-569. doi:10.1016/j.system.2009.09.002
Shepard, L. A. (2000). The role of assessment in a learning culture. *Educational Researcher, 29*(7), 4–14.

Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2013). The comparative effect of direct written corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation on learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the English indefinite article. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(3), 286-306. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2013.03.011

Shintani, N., Ellis, R., & Suzuki, W. (2014). Effects of written feedback and revision on learners' accuracy in using two English grammatical structures. *Language Learning*, *64*(1), 103-131. doi:10.1111/lang.12029

Stefanou, C., & Révész, A. (2015). Direct written corrective feedback, learner differences, and the acquisition of second language article use for generic and specific plural reference. *The Modern Language Journal*, *99*(2), 263-282. doi:10.1111/modl.12212

Thornbury, S. (2005). Uncovering grammar: How to help grammar emerge. Mexico: MacMillan.
Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning, 46*(2), 327-369. doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1996.tb01238.

8.6 Appendix F: Three paradigms of classroom assessment: Implications for written feedback research (Chong, 2018b)

Abstract

Classroom assessment has always been an indispensable and integral part of any curriculum. In particular, assessment plays the role of reporting students' learning summatively (assessment of learning), providing diagnostic and formative information for teachers to inform their instruction (assessment for learning); more recently, Earl (2013) proposed the notion of assessment as learning, which puts students at the center of assessment. Students in this assessment paradigm act as critical connecters between assessment and learning through self-reflection and self-regulation. The first section of this article reconceptualizes summative and formative assessments into three assessment paradigms: assessment of, for, and as learning through incorporating Serafini's assessment models and Habermas's three human interests. In so doing, our understanding of the three paradigms is consolidated and enriched to encompass not only the pedagogical implications but also their philosophical and epistemological underpinnings. The second section of the article focuses on one particular kind of assessment method commonly used in language classrooms, which is written feedback. I summarize and categorize recent written feedback research with reference to the three assessment paradigms and suggest directions for future research.

Introduction

Black and William's (1998) seminal work on the role of assessment in catalyzing students' learning marked a tipping point in classroom assessment research. Traditionally, assessment has been viewed as shouldering the summative role of certification, measurement and accountability (this kind of assessment is also called 'assessment of learning' (AoL) (Earl, 2013; Serafini, 2001) with a primary focus on technical interests, which highlights the control of environment, dominance of rules and standards, and effectiveness and efficiency (Ewert, 1991; Habermas, 1971; Mezirow, 1981); however, Black and his colleagues (1998; 2004) suggested otherwise: the top priority of any assessment should be 'formative', in which learning outcomes of students are analyzed critically to inform teachers of their instruction to help students achieve their learning needs. In particular, teachers play a prominent role in establishing this communicative process with the students to understand students' learning needs (Serafini, 2001). Since then, there has been a proliferation of research into how this kind of formative assessment, or assessment for learning (AfL), could be implemented at the teaching-learning interface effectively. Researchers looking into AfL have garnered an array of evidence affirming the positive impact AfL has on students' learning (Black & William, 2006; Clarke, 2005); This body of work also suggests that more research into the issues related to practical implementation at the institutional level is needed. It is especially evident in studies situated in East Asian regions where high-stakes assessments dominate (Lee, 2007; Lee & Coniam, 2013). Educators in these areas focus primarily on the reliability and validity of assessment and they face an educational system that prefers AoL over AfL.

Scholars came to realize that when teachers implement AfL, they are affected by four key factors, which include the teacher factor (teacher beliefs), the student factor (students' readiness to take an active role in their learning), the school factor (school culture, appraisal policies), and the system factor (educational policies, curriculum orientation, and examination) (Carless, 2011).

Paradigmatic developments

In response to these potential constraining factors faced by teachers, scholars have embarked on conceptualizing a new kind of assessment orientation, which places students in the limelight of the assessment process, called 'assessment as learning' (AaL) (Earl, 2013; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). AaL, which is essentially, a subset of AfL, differs from AfL because students, instead of teachers, serve as the critical connector between assessment and learning. Contrary to the backward-looking orientation of AoL, which summarizes students' performance, AaL empowers students to be self-reflective and self-regulated to set personal learning goals and narrow the gap between their current learning and their future learning – the zone of proximal development (Vygostsky, 1978). AaL accentuates students' ability to do self-reflection and self-determination through utilizing their own 'historical situations' (Mezirow, 1981, p. 6) (past learning experience) to solve current problems.

Summative assessment (AoL) and formative assessment (AfL) are often conceptualized as a dichotomy; their potential for complementarity has been underplayed.Two factors have contributed to this: First, the majority of the articles on AoL and AfL focused on the operational level, that is, how teachers

put into practice these two paradigms of assessment; there is not an in-depth understanding of the philosophical and epistemological underpinnings of these paradigms, resulting in the widespread perception that AfL is the default approach and the 'standard' practice. Second, AfL is generally regarded in the professional literature as an umbrella term to describe all forms of assessment that are used to promote students' learning. However, a closer look at the relative importance in terms of the roles played by teachers and students in an assessment sheds light on a subset of AfL, AaL, which is more student-directed. Being a relatively new notion of assessment, research on AaL remains scant and a more thorough understanding of this new assessment paradigm is warranted. This paper first conceptualizes summative and formative assessments into three paradigms of assessment: AoL, AfL, and AaL (Earl, 2013). Instead of focusing on the operational level of assessments, the discussion will center on the undergirding philosophical and epistemological foundations of the three paradigms. In the discussion of these theoretical underpinnings, the three human interests (technical, practical (communicative), and emancipatory interests) proposed by a German sociologist and philosopher, Jürgen Habermas (1971), and the three assessment paradigms (assessment as measurement, assessment as a process, and assessment as inquiry) put forward by Frank Serafini (2001) will be constantly referred to. Habermas's knowledge-constitutive interests is a critical theory that 'tries to understand why the social world is the way it is and… through a process of critique, strives to know how it should be' (Ewert, 1991, p. 346). The three human interests of Habermas are often employed in educational research to analyze such issues as the orientations of curriculum and its components including assessment

(Cornbleth, 1990; Grundy, 1987; Kemmis & Fitzclarence, 1986); Murhy, 2013; Terry, 1997). Terry (1997) argued that Habermas' three human interests represent three areas of knowledge: natural sciences and mathematics as represented in the technical interest, social sciences and humanities in the realm of practical interest, and the emancipatory interest is a way to conceptualize knowledge in political theory and psychoanalysis (cf see Barwell 2009 for a less bounded view of these areas of knowledge). These types of knowledge are useful, in Terry's words, to '[provide] us with a key to examining education structures, in which analytical knowledge comprises the content of education (the curriculum), hermeneutics inform educational methodologies (praxi) and critical modes of thought are brought to bear upon questions of policy' (p. 271). This discussion also draws on the ideas in Serafini's (2001) article as they relate to 'the nature of knowledge, the level of teacher and student involvement, the criteria for evaluating student achievement, and the effects of these assessment frameworks on classroom instruction' (ibid, p. 384). It is still the case that in the current literature on classroom assessment in language education tends to focus on the different methods and technologies rather than the theoretical underpinnings of the assessment paradigms (cf see James, 2006; 2008 for a discussion on the epistemological and practical aspects of assessment). For example, in writing assessment, much discussion on formative assessment is related to portfolio assessment (Lam, 2015), computer-generated feedback (Ware, 2011), and peer feedback (Chong, 2017).

A conceptual framework of assessment

Assessment of learning (AoL)

AoL refers to 'the predominant kind of assessment in schools… [that is] summative, intended to certify learning and report to parents and students about their progress in school, usually by signaling students' relative position' (Earl, 2013, Loc, 572). AoL provides reliable and valid ways to measure, summarize, and evaluate students' acquired skills and knowledge instead of how assessment can be implemented in a way to improve learning and instruction. The certifying and benchmarking purpose of AoL is most evidently seen in examination-oriented education milieus, where the design of the assessment is at the discretion of government bodies and school administrators instead of teachers to achieve control and consistency in terms of difficulty and format (Huot, 2002). Regarding the role of teachers, they are merely administers and markers of the assessment (Lee, et al., 2013). Teachers seldom have the autonomy to set the test and examination papers and develop their own marking guidelines. In some examination-oriented areas (e.g. Hong Kong), even though school teachers have to shoulder the responsibility to set test and examination papers, the content to be tested and format of those assessments are predetermined by the central government bodies and the management of the school. In higher education, instructors are also expected to set their final examination in alignment with the intended learning outcomes in the course outline. The quality of these summative assessments is gauged not on how accurately they reflect students' learning in a given period of time but on how faithfully they adhere to the established examination system, social

expectations, and expectations of the school administrators. As for the students, they are merely hapless test takers who go through examinations on a predetermined scope. In addition to familiarizing the content of the assessments through drills and other repeated exercises, students have to develop a clear understanding of the requirements of these assessments, often high-stakes, usually through analyzing and practicing past exam questions and tasks. The reward for this kind of learning is measured by their performance in the form of grades or scores; to many of them, learning is equivalent to getting higher grades.

AoL bears resemblance to the first paradigm put forward by Serafini (2001), *assessment as measurement*. Serafini contended that AoL holds a positivist or modernist perspective of knowledge. Under AoL, 'knowledge is believed to exist separately from the learner, and students work to acquire it, not construct it' (ibid, p. 385). The process of learning is regarded as teachers-ed, that is, teachers as the knowledge transmitters and upholders of positivist values, AoL does not allow multiple interpretations or judgments and believes in absolute rights and wrongs. s.

The idea of technical interest proposed by Habermas (1971), which capitalizes prediction, effectiveness and control, provides a philosophical underpinning of AoL. Under the technical human interest, the world is perceived as objective and it is 'the sum total of what is the case and clarifies the conditions of rational behavior on this basis' (Habermas, 1984, p.11). This positivist view of the 'objective world' or external reality is governed by 'law-like

regularities' (Ewert, 1991, p. 349) which direct individual human actions. When these regularities or rules are observed and followed, effectiveness is achieved and efficiency is improved. In order to understand these observable regularities, data have to be reliable and should be collected empirically to solve societal difficulties (Fisher, 1980). When applied to curriculum, its function is to 'define and control student learning' and the curriculum outcomes are perceived as 'tangible products' (Fisher & Bosanquet, 2006, p. 279). This 'tangible product' is realized in the students' performance in the large-scale standardized tests and examinations. With this rational premise, the learning experience and environment are meticulously constructed by the one who holds power (e.g. school administrators, government bodies). Since curriculum matters (including the format of assessment) are thoroughly planned in advance, the interests of teachers and students are not at the foreground of the assessments that stem from this orientation.

Assessment for learning (AfL)

AfL is assessment designed to provide diagnostic information for teachers to modify and adjust their instruction in response to students' needs (Earl, 2013). The modification and adjustment of instruction can include slowing down or accelerating the pace of instruction, revisiting and consolidating past knowledge, providing additional support in the forms of materials, and sometimes fine-tuning (simplifying or deepening) of learning goals. Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and William (2004) defined AfL as 'any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting pupils' learning' (p. 2). In this kind of formative assessment, the role

of feedback is brought to the foreground because assessment information (e.g. strengths and weaknesses of students) should be communicated to the students and teachers have to devise strategies to help students clarify their learning goals and understand the assessment criteria they are judged against. Ultimately, with the facilitations provided by teachers, students are empowered to gradually work towards their goals individually (Jones, 2010). Although students play an important role in AfL in reflecting on their own learning, Carless (2007) argued that teacher actions are of paramount importance in bringing about the effective implementation of AfL because teachers are the mediators 'in enhancing student learning; improvements in the implementation of formative assessment depend largely on teachers' understandings of principles and practice in formative assessment' (p. 172).

Serafini's (2001) second paradigm, *assessment as procedure*, is helpful for elaborateing on the principles of AfL. While this procedural or methodological paradigm of assessment was perceived by Serafini as being very similar to assessment as measurement, that is AoL, the emphasis on the use of an array of methods to collect information which reports students' learning in the classroom closely resembles the cornerstone of AfL.

Habermas' idea of practical interest throws important light on the very nature of the process of how teachers make use of assessment information to adjust instruction in terms of communication and dialogue. As suggested by Habermas, practical knowledge aims at promoting mutual understanding in terms of intention and actions through the use of language (Hoffman, 1987). In

stark contrast with the technical interest which adopts an empirical-analytical approach of information collection, practical interest prefers to use hermeneutic or interpretive methods to inquire into meaning and action (Ewert, 1991). Being essentially interpretive, the practical interest shifts away from the observation of an objective world to the interpretation of actions. As Carr and Kemmis (1986) contended, actions can only be understood through the actor's intentions, meaning that actions are subjectively interpreted in relation to the actor instead of objectively understood. In order to convey assessment information to students and help students take ownership of their own learning, teachers have to interact constantly with students to make meaning of assessment. Carless (2006) described this process as 'assessment dialogue' in which teachers clarify to students assessment criteria known to lecturers but less clearly to students. This 'assessment dialogue' can be formal and informal. Formally, teachers can write down their expectations, the strengths and weaknesses of the students in written form (e.g. written feedback); alternatively, less formal channels such as sharing in class and face-to-face consultation sessions are also conducive to developing students' understanding of teachers' expectations. Moreover, the notion of interpretation stresses the importance for teachers to interpret the information collected about students' learning and make sense of this information in relation to the teachers' knowledge of learners and their characteristics (Shulman, 1987). Lastly, based on their interpretation, teachers take appropriate actions to modify instruction and help students adjust their own pace of learning. In short, in order to facilitate this student-teacher dialogue about assessment expectations which leads to informed instructional decision-making, a heavy emphasis is put on the reflective ability of the teacher to

synthesize and interpret the assessment information. Schwab (1969) claimed that teachers who possess this practical side of educational knowledge must 'weigh alternatives and their costs and consequences against one another, and choose, not the right alternative, for there is no such thing, but the best one' (p. 36).

Assessment as learning (AaL)

Further extending the role of formative assessment and putting students at the center of assessment, Earl (2013) proposed the notion of *assessment as learning* (AaL) and gave her definition as follows:

> It is a subset of AfL but it emphasizes the important role of students as active agents in the assessment process. Students not only contribute but also connect assessment with their previous learning to set up individualized goals for progress. (Loc 553)

As a subset of AfL, AaL continues to highlight the formative nature of assessment in which assessment information is employed to promote student learning. Nevertheless, unlike AfL which emphasizes the active role of teachers in improving learning and teaching by designing appropriate assessment tasks, AaL puts students at the center of assessment. Students are empowered to be reflective learners who can critically evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses in learning, set up personal goals, regulate and monitor their learning progress through employing a variety of self-regulated strategies

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). In AaL, students not only contribute to the process of learning and assessment under the guidance of teachers as in AfL, students are 'active agents' who connect their current performance in assessments with their own learning. The key to effectively realize this form of student-centered assessment lies in the development of students' metacognition. The construct of metacognition is elaborated in great detail in this section because it is the catalyst for AaL to be effectively implemented.

A commonly adopted definition of metacognition is 'how one monitors or thinks about one's own cognition' (Dinsmore et al., 2008, p. 393) or simply, 'thinking about thinking' (Miller, Kessel, Flavell, 1970). In his framework of metacognition, Flavell (1979) proposed that the monitoring system of cognition comprises four interactive variables: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, goals/tasks, and actions/strategies. Among the four components, Flavell contended that metacognitive knowledge (MK) plays the most significant role in the whole cognitive monitoring process because it deals with "knowledge or beliefs about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises" (Flavell, 1979, p. 907).
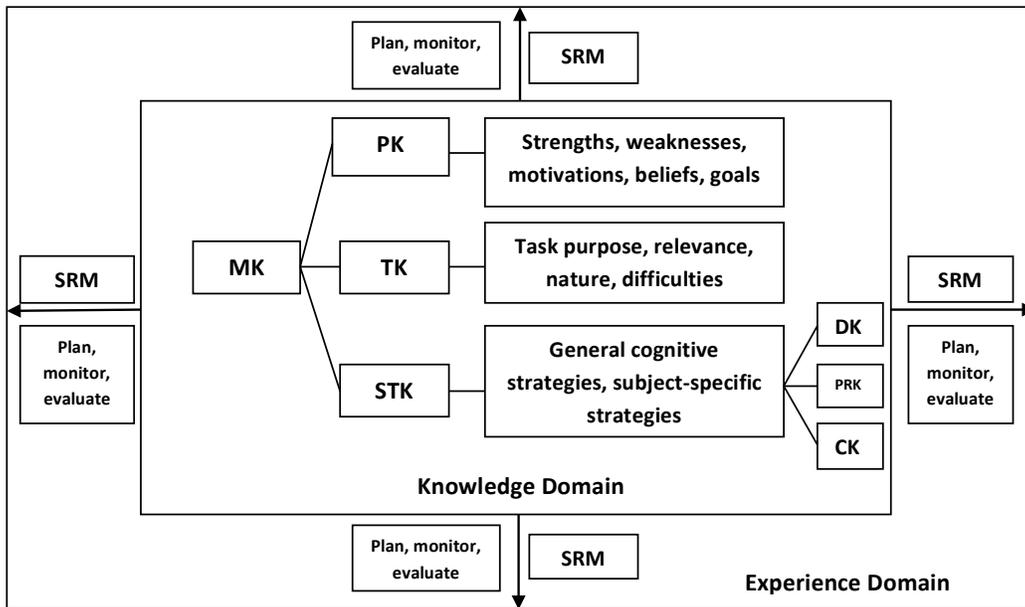
Figure 1: A conceptualization of metacognition

In Figure 1, I conceptualize metacognition into two domains: knowledge and experience. While the *experience domain* refers to what Flavell called 'metacognitive experiences', the *knowledge domain* is equivalent to 'metacognitive knowledge' (MK) mentioned in work by Flavell (1979), Wenden (1998), Brown (1987), and Schraw (2009) which includes person knowledge (PK) (knowledge about one's self-concept, confidence, and belief in a learning task and activity), task knowledge (TK) (knowledge related to perceiving the purpose, requirements, and relevance of a learning task to one's learning), and strategic knowledge (STK) (knowledge about learning and cognitive strategies to monitor and regulate learning). STK is further conceptualized into three specific knowledge types of knowledge namely declarative knowledge (DK) (the knowledge about what strategies to use), procedural knowledge (PRK) (the knowledge about how the strategies are to be used), and conditional knowledge (CK) (the knowledge about when the strategies are to be used). Following

Flavell's definition of 'metacognitive experiences', the experience domain is defined as:

> …situations that stimulate a lot of careful, highly conscious thinking: in a job or school task that expressly demands that kind of thinking; in novel roles or situations, where every major step requires planning beforehand and evaluation afterwards; where decisions and actions are at once weighty and risky; where high affective arousal or other inhibitors or reflective thinking are absent. Such situations provide many opportunities for thoughts and feelings about your own thinking to arise and, in many cases, call for the kind of quality control that metacognitive experiences can help apply. (pp. 908)

While MK primarily concerns a person's understanding and awareness of one's cognition, which is essentially endogenous (Dinsmore et al., 2008; Ruan, 2014), *self-regulatory mechanism* (SRM) entails a person's actual use of learning and thinking strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluate cognitive tasks such as learning and highlights the behavioral and emotional responses of learners in the experience domain (Bandura, 1977), which is exogenous in nature. These strategies are particularly useful in metacognitive experiences which require learners to be active and reflective thinkers, namely AaL. In addition to the cognitive strategies employed by students to complete a learning task, SRM also includes students' regulation of one's emotions. For example, upon receiving teachers' feedback, whether students take the comments as

personal criticisms or constructive advice will affect students' motivation to revise and improve their work (Pekrun, Goetz, and Titz, 2002).

This understanding of metacognition also involves the role of teachers in AaL. Instead of only giving students the summative information about how they perform in an assessment task (AoL) or adjust their instructions to cater for the learning needs of students (AfL), teachers who adopt AaL are advised to help develop students' metacognition by providing opportunities for students to develop their self-regulated skills which can be used by students to monitor their own learning. Specifically, teachers should provide ample metacognitive experiences for students by engaging them in reflective assessment tasks such as self and peer evaluation to enrich their MK. For instance, teachers are advised to allocate lesson time to guide students to set appropriate and individual goals (Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl, & Shore, 2010) and to promote cognitive strategies to monitor their learning (Zimmerman, 2002). Apart from giving support to students to develop their cognitive strategies to monitor and evaluate their learning, Voerman, Korthagen, Meijer, and Simons (2014) suggested that teachers should pay attention to the ways students regulate their emotions when attempting a learning task. For example, feedback that focuses on the student's character strengths is important to students' learning progress, especially when the learning task is challenging to the student. Students' regulation of their emotions is interrelated to their learning because emotions are an indispensable part of learning (ibid, 2014; Meriam, 2008) and they are 'integral to one's sense of self' (Dirkx, 2008, p. 13).

Sharing the same student-centered and constructivist orientation as AaL, Serafini's (2001) third paradigm, *assessment as inquiry*, advocates the process of inquiry to 'promote reflection concerning students' understandings, attitudes, and literate abilities' (p. 387). In this paradigm, assessment is related to individual students and bound to a particular educational context. As opposed to the other two paradigms, the view of knowledge and knowledge construction is viewed in the assessment as inquiry paradigm as a social and highly contextualized activity. Similar to the assessment as procedure paradigm, assessment as inquiry relies on the use of appropriate methods or procedures to collect information about students' learning; however, assessment as inquiry refers to how teachers and students interpret the information to improve learning and teaching. Despite bearing resemblance to AfL because of the formative use of assessment information, assessment as inquiry highlights the central role of students. For example, when discussing how portfolios can be used to implement this assessment paradigm, Serafini (ibid) stressed that these portfolios should be learner-referenced (Johnston, 1997, as cited in Serafini, 2001, p. 388) to incorporate elements of on-going self-evaluation and document students' interests, characters, abilities, values, and needs. Ultimately, the students should make use of the information documented in their own portfolios to reflect on their academic progress and growth. Taken as a whole, assessment as inquiry attempts to record the voice of students in the assessment process and the meaning ascribed to assessment by students to further their learning.

The emancipatory interest of Habermas resonates with the central notion of self-reflection and metacognition in AaL. To Habermas, self-reflection is a means through which humans are empowered to be freed from distorted communication and imbalanced social relationships to transcend and grow (Bullough & Goldstein, 1984; Kemmis & Fitzclarence, 1986). In essence, self-reflection entails a renewed interest in one's self; this self-knowledge includes knowledge of the past and the critical connection between the past and the present. Self-reflection is the gateway through which humans rediscover themselves to achieve a state of relational autonomy freed from social and institutional constraints (Ewert, 1991). Through self-reflection, humans are *enlightened* and empowered to *act* freely and make sense of the world in relation to themselves. Applying the emancipatory interest to education, students are perceived as active agents who create new knowledge and learning as dialogic rather than didactic. In the words of Fraser et al. (2006), 'the students are the final authorities on what is "authentic knowledge", as they judge it by whether it is generally true and whether it is also true for them' (p. 281). Consistent with this understanding of the emancipatory human interest, AaL can help identify the 'authentic knowledge' students gained in assessment through critical reflective practice – the knowledge about their learning and academic progress (enlightenment), the knowledge that helps students plan their next stage of learning (action).

In this section, the three paradigms of assessment: AoL, AfL, and AaL are conceptualized in light of the three human interests by Habermas (1971) and

the three assessment paradigms put forward by Serafini (2001). Figure 2

summarizes the discussion diagrammatically.

	Assessment of learning (AoL)	Assessment for learning (AfL)	Assessment for learning (AfL)
Earl's three forms of assessment	**Purpose of assessment:** Certification of student achievement, sorting, teacher appraisal	**Purpose of assessment:** Modification of instruction and learning	**Purpose of assessment:** Promote students' self-reflection and metacognition about their learning
	Roles of teacher and student: Test administrator/ marker and test taker	**Roles of teacher and student:** Teachers guide students to make use of the assessment task to improve their learning	**Roles of teacher and student:** Students as active agents while teachers provide explicit instruction on self-regulated strategies
	Intended audience for assessment outcomes: Government bodies, school administrators, parents	**Intended audience for assessment outcomes:** Teachers (and students)	**Intended audience for assessment outcomes:** Students (and teachers)
Serafini's three paradigms of assessment	**Methods used to gather information:** Test scores (marks or letter grades)	**Methods used to gather information:** An array of qualitative and quantitative assessment methods to inform instruction	**Methods used to gather information:** An array of qualitative and quantitative assessment methods to promote reflection
	Knowledge view: Objective, observable, measurable, and is separated from humans	**Knowledge view:** Objective, observable but is subject to interpretation	**Knowledge view:** Knowledge as social construction
Habermas' human interests	**Philosophical underpinning:** Emphasize control of student learning and effectiveness of educational programs	**Philosophical underpinning:** Emphasize communication and interpretation as a means to achieve mutuality	**Philosophical underpinning:** Emphasize self-knowledge and self-reflection to attain relational autonomy

Figure 2: Conceptualization of AoL, AfL, and AaL

Written feedback (WF) research

This section of the paper focuses on one particular form of formative assessment, WF, and summarizes current research through the lens of the conceptual framework of assessment paradigms in the first section. Written feedback (WF), which is defined 'as information provided by an agent (e.g. teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding' (Hattie & Timperley, 2007 p. 81), has been regarded as one of the most effective formative assessment tools to improve students' learning (Hattie, 1999), and thus, one of the most researched areas in formative assessment in the writing classroom in secondary and higher education (Lee, 2014; McGarrell & Verbeem, 2007). Research on WF has tended to focus on the *effectiveness* of different feedback types on students' uptake and transferability of information conveyed in teacher comments to the next piece of writing by students (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Sheen, 2007; Shintani, Ellis, & Suzuki, 2014). Another line of WF research has its focus on students' perception of teachers' WF in order to inform how teachers should go about giving WF. The underlying purpose is to establish an *assessment dialogue* between teachers and students to make WF conducive to students' learning (Carless, 2006). There is also research that views students as assessors/feedback givers for peers (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2006; Porto, 2001) and self (Lam, 2013; Ross, Rolheiser, & Hogaboam-Gray, 1999). Students, in these studies, were viewed as *active agents* who took ownership of their learning through exercising self-reflection and autonomy in learning.

The issues related to purposes, topic and design in WF research will now be viewed through the lens of the three assessment paradigms (AoL, AfL, and AaL)

discussed earlier. Among the studies reviewed, it is shown that the majority of the research focuses on the effectiveness of WF in improving linguistic accuracy of students, which is heavily influenced by the AoL paradigm, while WF research adopting AfL and AaL orientations has been modest. In the last section, I will suggest future directions for WF research; specifically, I will highlight the importance of investigating the role of teachers in assisting students to become more reflective and self-regulated, and the inclusion of the notion of metacognition in WF research. Different from other articles on feedback which often describe it in practical terms, this discussion foregrounds the theoretical underpinnings of the three assessment paradigms and the research designs of WF research and thus contributes to the research base on language assessment and WF.

Research with an AoL orientation

WF research with an AoL orientation focuses on the effectiveness of different types of WF through analyzing whether students' writing performance improved in the revised draft or a new piece of writing. From these insights, researchers attempted to reach a conclusion regarding the most effect form of WF. This line of WF research has focused predominately on grammatical error corrections through the use of a particular form of WF called written corrective feedback (WCF) (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010; Ellis, Farrokhi & Sattarpour, 2012; Sheen, Murakai, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, Wright, & Moldawa, 2009; Shintani & Ellis, 2013; Shintani, Ellis, & Suzuki, 2014; Stefanou & Révész, 2015).

These studies looked into the effects of focused and direct WCF on L2 university students' acquisition of word-level grammatical items such as definite and indefinite articles, prepositions, the past simple tense. In particular, the quasi-experimental research design of these studies (which included a pre-test, treatment, post-test, and sometimes delayed post-test with one control group and at least one treatment group) and the predetermined grammatical items to be studied by the researchers, strongly resonates with the AoL paradigm and Habermas' technical interest. In Table 1, I summarize 10 studies on focused WCF conducted in the last decade. The research design of these studies is highlighted to suggest their research orientation value control and effectiveness of WCF.

Study	Focused WCF on…	Direct/ Indirect WCF	Participants	Treatment and control groups	Effectiveness	Effectiveness measured by…
Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005)	Prepositions, The past simple, Definite articles	Direct	Post-intermediate adult ESL learners	• Two treatment groups (direct WCF on target features and direct WCF with 5-minute student-researcher conference) • One control group	• Students in the WCF and conference group achieved a better performance of simple past tense and definite articles but not prepositions	Four different pieces of writing within 12 weeks
Sheen (2007)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct	Adult intermediate ESL learners	• Two treatment groups (direct-only correction group and direct metalinguistic correction group) • One control group	• Both treatment groups outperformed the control group on the immediate post-test. • The group with direct metalinguistic correction performed better than the group with direct-only correction	Immediate and delayed post-tests (a speeded dictation test, a writing test, and an error correction test in each testing session)
Ellis, Sheen, Murakai, and Takashima (2008)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct	Japanese university students (ESL)	• Two treatment groups (focused WCF and unfocused WCF) • One control group	• CF was equally effective for the focused and unfocused groups. • Both treatment groups outperformed the control group.	Narrative writing tests (3 different picture compositions)

Sheen, Wright, and Moldawa (2009)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct	Adult ESL intermediate students	• Three treatment groups (focused WCF, unfocused WCF, written practice) • One control group	• The group which received focused WCF achieved higher accuracy gain scores on all the grammatical items than the two other groups (one which received unfocused WCF and a control group)	Pre-test, treatment, post-test, delayed post-test (all tests were written narrative tasks)
Bitchener and Knoch (2009)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct	Low intermediate ESL students	• One treatment group (focused WCF) • One control group	• The treatment group outperformed the control group in all post-tests	Five pieces of writing (pre-test, immediate post-test, and three delayed post-tests)
Bitchener and Knoch (2010)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct and indirect	Advanced L2 learners in a university	• Three treatment groups (written metalinguistic explanation, indirect circling, and written metalinguistic feedback with oral instruction) • One control group	• The three treatment groups outperformed the control group in the immediate post-test • There was no difference between the three treatment groups on the immediate post-test	Three picture description tasks (Pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test)
Farrokhi and Sattarpour (2012)	Definite and indefinite articles	Direct	Advanced L2 learners in a university	• Two treatment groups (focused corrective feedback and	• The two treatment groups outperformed the control group in	Pre-test and post-test (picture compositions)

				- unfocused corrective feedback) - One control group	the accurate use of articles Focused corrective feedback had a more positive impact on target structure accuracy than its unfocused counterpart	

Study	Focused WCF on…	Direct/ Indirect WCF	Participants	Treatment and control groups	Effectiveness	Effectiveness measured by…
Shintani and Ellis (2013)	Indefinite article	Direct	Low-intermediate ESL students	- Two treatment groups (directive corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation) - One control group	- Direct corrective feedback had no effect on accuracy - Students who received metalinguistic explanation improved in accuracy	- Time 1: Completed the Error Correction Test and the first writing task - Time 2: Revision on the first writing task and completed the second writing task - Time 3: Completed the same Error Correction Test and the third writing task
Shintani, Ellis, and	Indefinite article and	Direct	Pre-intermediate	Four treatment	All treatment groups	Time 1: All groups completed the first writing task

Suzuki (2014)	the hypothetical conditional		Japanese university students	groups (metalinguistic explanation, direct corrective feedback, metalinguistic explanation with revision, direct corrective feedback with revision) • One control group	showed an improved accuracy in using the hypothetical condition while there was no change in the control group • No differences between the treatment groups were noted for the indefinite article • Direct corrective feedback had a more long-term effectiveness than metalinguistic explanation	• Time 2: Groups without revision read teacher's feedback and completed a new writing task • Time 2: Groups with revision were asked to revise the first writing task based on teacher's feedback • Time 3: All groups completed the third writing task (delayed post-test)

| Stefanou and Révész (2015) | Article with specific and generic plural referents | Direct | Intermediate ESL students | • Two treatment groups (direct feedback, direct feedback with metalinguistic comments) • One control group (only spelling errors were corrected) | • Direct feedback had a positive effect on students' accuracy • No conclusive evidence on the benefit of including metalinguistic explanation | Pre-test, post-test (a text summary test), and delayed post-test (a truth value judgment test) |

Table 1: Summary of studies on focused WCF

Findings from these studies showed that students who receive WCF in any form (especially direct WCF) achieve a higher standard of linguistic accuracy than those who do not receive any feedback from teachers. For instance, in the study conducted by Shintani et al. (2014) on 214 Japanese university students, four treatment groups who received WCF in different forms (2 groups with metalinguistic explanation and 2 groups with direct WCF) were compared with the control group who did not receive any feedback from the teacher. The results indicated that while all treatment groups performed much better in the post-writing test and delayed post-writing test in terms of the use of target language features (indefinite article 'a/an' and hypothetical conditional sentence), those groups which received direct WCF outperformed those who received teachers' WCF in the form of metalinguistic explanation.

Research with an AfL orientation

The AfL paradigm accentuates communication between teachers and students in order to achieve mutual understanding. With this practical-communicative interest, WF researchers were interested in investigating teachers' and students' perceptions about WF – the interpretive meaning of WF to teachers and students (Carless, 2006; Hamp-Lyons & Chen, 1999; Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Lea & Street, 2000; Orsmond & Merry, 2011; Straub, 1997). Among this body of WF research, the majority has focused on students' perspective. For instance, it has been found that that students do not respond to teachers' written comments because they misread and misunderstand teachers' WF (Lea et al., 2000; Hamp-Lyons et al., 1999; Straub, 1997). One area of teachers' WF that has been positively received by students is teachers'

WCF. Although some scholars dismissed the effectiveness of correcting students' errors on students' acquisition of linguistic knowledge (e.g. Truscott, 1996), others found that, from the students' perspective, WCF was useful to them (e.g. Lee, 2008). Some other studies, such as the one conducted by Hyland et al. (2001), focused on the teachers' perception of WF. In their study, Hyland et al. analyzed three types of teacher WF (praise, criticism, and suggestions) given to six ESL writers with various language backgrounds on a 14-week full-time English proficiency course at a university in New Zealand. In the study, qualitative and interpretive research instruments such as lesson observation (to obtain contextual information), teacher interviews, and think-aloud protocol with teachers when they were giving feedback to a piece of writing (to understand teachers' perception). Results showed that praise was often used to soften criticism while most of the criticisms and suggests were mitigated by hedging devices ('you *may* consider…'), questions ('Is this statement clear enough?'), and personal attribution ('If I were you, I would…'). Hyland et al. concluded that while mitigation strategies were useful in improving student-teacher relationships, these strategies made the WF more indirect and might result in misunderstanding on the part of the students.

To establish the mutual teacher-student understanding in the AfL paradigm, a few of these studies investigated students' perception alongside teachers' (Carless, 2006; Orsmond et al., 2011; Straub, 1997). In his large-scale study examining how tutors and students in eight Hong Kong universities perceived the usefulness of feedback, Carless (2006) contended that WF were more useful from the tutors' perspective than from that of the students. In a

more recent study by Orsmond et al. (2011), their findings suggested that biological science students preferred teachers' WF to include guidance which facilitates learning, while teachers were more concerned about giving praises and 'correcting misunderstandings in the present assignment' (p. 125). In these two studies, it was concluded that there were discrepancies between the conception of WF by teachers and students.

Adopting a different research design from the WF research with an AoL orientation, AfL-oriented WF researchers employed a phenomenological approach which included such research instruments as interviews (Carless, 2006; Orsmond et al., 2011), open-ended questionnaires (Carless, 2006; Straub, 1997), stimulated recall (Hyland et al., 2001), and lesson observations (Hyland et al., 2001). This phenomenological and qualitative approach of research puts people's feelings, thoughts, and experiences to the foreground. Researchers who adopted this approach did not aim at drawing a solid conclusion about the 'correct' way to give WF; instead, they were interested in teachers' and students' experience in the feedback process and they perceived WF as a practice that is highly contextualized and the understanding of WF as subjective, personal, and interpretive. To this end, researchers contended that WF practice can only serve AfL purpose when a mutual understanding is reached through teacher-student dialogues regarding the types, quantity, specificity, tone, and focuses of WF (Carless, 2016). Nevertheless, to date, there has been a paucity of research looking into how such dialogue is made possible in classroom setting and the process of negotiation of meaning in these dialogues.

Research with an AaL orientation

The AaL paradigm puts students at the center of assessment and students are perceived as the critical connectors between assessment and learning. Central to AaL is students' self-reflection and self-regulatory skills; it is only through critical reflective practice can students make meaningful connection between the assessment information (WF provided by teachers and peers) and their own learning progress (how they respond to the WF). Contextualized in WF research, AaL-oriented studies focused on how students responded to teachers' WF (Hyland, 1998; Ferris, Liu, Sinha, & Senna, 2013), the impact of peer assessment on students' writing performance (Lundstrom et al,. 2009; Min, 2006; Porto, 2001), and impact of self assessment on students' writing performance and self-regulation (Lam, 2013, 2015; McDonlad & Boud, 2010; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). In these studies, in common with many of the AfL studies, a phenomenological and qualitative approach was adopted with the use of interviews, classroom observations, and text analysis of students' revision, they were much more focused on achieving a thick description of how students internalize and act on WF and what kinds of WF facilitated this internalization. Most of these studies adopted a case-study approach. For example, in Lam's investigation (2015) of how WF was given in a portfolio assessment setting focused on two classrooms: a Grade 10 classroom and a university writing course. Lam analyzed how WF was given in these two classrooms in terms of focus, form, and process in the various stages of the 'iterative portfolio development process' (p. 405) to promote students' self-regulation and agency in their revised written assignments. In another of his study on portfolio assessment, Lam (2013) focused on one academic writing

course and investigated how the two portfolio approaches namely working portfolio and showcase portfolio influenced two groups of students' perception and response to the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in promoting self-regulation. In his investigation, Lam utilized multiple data sources including semi-structured interviews, students' reflective journals, classroom observations, and text analysis of students' revisions to provide a thick and rich description of how students made use of assessment to improve their learning. In his study about how ESL students responded to teachers' WF, Hyland (1998) focused on only two students and how they utilized teachers' WF to do revision. To provide a rich description of the context and highlight the voice of the participants, Hyland collected and analyzed both the WF given by the teacher and contextual data such as students' learning routines, their attitude towards writing, and their experience with writing. Results suggested that how the teacher's WF was utilized highly dependent on individual students and their attitudes to and experience with writing.

Other studies with an AaL orientation adopted a longitudinal approach to investigate the changes and cumulative effects of teachers' WF on students' revision because how students make use of teachers' WF through self-reflection often takes time to develop, become mature and noticeable. Ferris et al. (2013) examined how 40 student participants reflected on their own self-monitoring processes when revising their essays based on teachers' WF in a 16-week semester. Throughout the semester, students were given three revision tasks and semi-structured interviews were conducted with students after each revision task to understand how they make use of teachers' WF to

improve their own writing. Findings indicated that while students were positive about teachers' WF, the use of technical linguistic terms in the feedback hindered their self-editing and composing process. The study by Lundstrom et al. (2009) on peer assessment spanned across a semester. The researchers were interested in understanding how the 91 students made use of the experience of 'giving' and 'receiving' feedback to improve their own learning. Adopting an intervention study design with a pre-test and post-test, it was found that students who were feedback givers outperformed those students who only received peer feedback. Results also suggested that feedback givers who had a low writing proficiency benefited more significantly than those with a higher proficiency. In terms of the areas of improvement, Lundstrom et al. (2009) concluded that students gained more in global aspects (content, organization) than local aspects of writing (grammar).

Suggestions for future research

      In this section, I would outline two research directions for WF researchers to consider in their future studies to encompass the notion of AaL and put students at the center of writing assessment. These directions include a dialogic approach to feedback and feedback practice from a sociocultural perspective.

      The notion of dialogic feedback has been put forward by WF researchers as a conceptual framework or implications from feedback studies but is never thoroughly researched (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Carless, 2006, 2011, 2016; Nicol,

2010). 'Dialogic feedback' is defined by Mulliner and Tucker (2015) as 'an ongoing dialogic approach that engages students more meaningfully in the assessment and feedback process, and facilitates the development of student self-regulation' (p. 2). In the dialogic approach to feedback, a closer relationship between the teacher and students needs to be forged and students have to take ownership of the feedback they receive and transfer it into learning resources which benefit their learning. In current research, much emphasis has been put on investigating how teachers and students perceive WF separately; even though some of the studies I mentioned earlier examined teachers' and students' perception in tandem, not much constructive insight was garnered because what findings repeatedly suggested was the different beliefs held by teachers and students about WF. Future research can consider focusing on the communicative process between teachers and students in resolving conflicting areas in WF and agreeing on common grounds for WF practice. In particular, the ways teachers give WF which include the *feed back* (what the student did in this task?), *feedback up* (what the student can do better in the same task?), and *feedback forward* (what the student can do better in the next task?) elements which help clarify the teacher's expectations and provide guidance to students on their future learning is worth exploring. Regarding students' ownership and uptake of WF, while some studies reviewed in this article focused on students' uptake of WF (e.g. how WF developed students' self-regulation), there is a paucity of research which investigates the process in which students engage with and understand the WF they receive. In order to report how students reflect on their own writing performance through engaging with WF, future studies should be longitudinal and focus on changes in how

students make use of WF from teachers and peers, and the cumulative effect of WF on students' self-reflection. Furthermore, the effectiveness of dialogic feedback for teachers in gathering information related to students' emotional response to a learning task (Voerman, et al., 2014).

Another research direction which takes into consideration the AaL orientation is the investigation on teachers' WF practice and students' response and engagement with WF from a sociocultural and sociohistorical perspective (Vygotsky, 1987). Under the AaL paradigm, past knowledge and experience of students are perceived to carry significant impact on how students understand and engage with WF. WF research can adopt an activity theory perspective, which emphasizes the sociocultural influences of human actions and practices, to unveil the contextual factors which facilitate or hinder students' engagement with WF from teachers and peers. Specifically, perceiving giving WF as actions in an activity system which comprises rules (conventions), community (participants), and division of labor (roles) can offer richer insights into students' diverse responses (Ferris et al., 2013).

Conclusion

This article conceptualized summative and formative assessments into three assessment paradigms: AoL, AfL, and AaL. With AaL being a relatively new notion, the first section provided a framework to conceptualize AaL and its difference with the more traditional paradigms of assessment: AoL and AfL. Drawing on Serafini's three assessment paradigms and Habermas' three human interests, our understanding of these three paradigms is consolidated

and enriched to encompass not only the pedagogical implications (what teachers can do to promote AoL, AfL, and AaL) but also philosophical and theoretical underpinnings (why teachers need to assess students in this way). In the second section, I focused on one particular kind of assessment method commonly found in language classroom, which is WF, and summarized and categorized recent research with reference to the three assessment paradigms. Lastly, suggestions for future WF research was made in light of the conceptual framework that WF should not only have an emphasis on effectiveness, but in a more sustainable manner, it should consider how students engage with WF through self-reflection and the factors that affect such critical and reflective practice.

The discussion on the three assessment paradigms is not intended to suggest that there is an 'advancement' of classroom assessment from AoL to AaL; in other words, it is not my intention to argue that AoL is to be discarded and AaL should be fully embraced. Relating to the practice of giving feedback, it is not suggested that correcting errors in a student's work is an 'ineffective' form of assessment because it only provides summative information while students' self-regulated skills in reflecting on their writing from teachers' feedback is the 'ideal' type of assessment because students are taking ownership of their own learning (Lee, 2014). In fact, there are values in all three orientations to assessment (AoL, AfL, and AaL) in the language classroom, and teachers should develop their 'assessment literacy' to identify the type(s) assessment that is the most appropriate to the readiness and maturity of students, the nature of the knowledge being assessed, and the ways

assessment information is utilized (see Inbar-Lourie, 2012; Kahl, Hofman and Bryan, 2013,; Leung, 2013 for a further discussion on this point). Language teachers should feel professionally empowered to be flexible and eclectic in the form(s) of assessment to adopt in their classroom. This 'eclectic' approach of assessment was elaborated by Lam and Lee (2010) in their article about assessing students' writing. They contended that the most effective model of assessment should serve both summative and formative functions:

> While summative grades can provide students with an idea about where they are in their writing development, the formative aspects of classroom [assessment] can render summative grades more meaningful by making students understand their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve their writing. (pp. 62-63)

References

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191-215.

Barwell, R. (Ed.) (2009). *Multilingualism in mathematics classrooms: Global perspectives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2009). The value of a focused approach to written corrective feedback. *ELT Journal*, *63*(3), 204-211.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *19*(4), 207-217.

Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *14*(3), 191-205.

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education, 5*(1), 7–74.

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004*). The nature and value of formative assessment for learning*. Unpublished manuscript, Educational Testing Service. Princeton, NJ. Retrieved from http://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c4/73/57/formative.pdf

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2006). Assessment for learning in the classroom. In J. Gardner (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (pp. 9–25). London: Sage Publications.

Boud, D., & Molloy, E. (2013). *Feedback in higher and professional education: Understanding it and doing it well*. London: Routledge.

Brown, A. L. (1987). Metacognition, executive control, self-regulation, and other more mysterious mechanisms. In F. E. Weinert & R. H. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation, and understanding* (pp. 65-116). Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bullough, R. V., Goldstein, S. L., & Holt, L. A. (1984). *Human interests in the curriculum: Teaching and learning in a technological society*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Carless, D. (2006). Differing perceptions in the feedback process. *Studies in Higher Education*, *31*(2), 219-233.

Carless, D. (2007). Learning-oriented assessment: conceptual bases and practical implications. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *44*(1), 57-66.

Carless, D. (2011). *From testing to productive student learning: Implementing formative assessment in Confucian-heritage settings*. New York: Routledge.

Carless, D., Salter, D., Yang, M., & Lam, J. (2011). Developing sustainable feedback practices. *Studies in Higher Education*, *36*(4), 395-407.

Carless, D. (2016). Feedback as dialogue. *Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory* (p. 1-6). Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_389-1.

Chong, I. (2017). How students' ability levels influence the relevance and accuracy of their feedback to peers: A case study. *Assessing Writing*, *31*, 13-23.

Clarke, S. (2005). *Formative assessment in action: Weaving the elements together*. London: Hodder Murray.

Cornbleth, C. (1990). *Curriculum in context*. Michigan: Falmer Press.

Dinsmore, D. L., Alexander, P. A., & Loughlin, S. M. (2008). Focusing the conceptual lens on metacognition, self-regulation, and self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychology Review*, *20*(4), 391-409.

Dirkx, J.M. (2008). The meaning and role of emotions in adult learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 120*, 7-18.

Earl, L. (2013). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning* (2nd ed.) [E-reader version]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Ellis, R. (2009). A typology of written corrective feedback types. *ELT Journal*, *63*(2), 97-107.

Ellis, R., Sheen, Y., Murakami, M., & Takashima. (2008). The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in an English as a foreign language context. *System, 36*(3), 353-371.

Ewert, G. D. (1991). Habermas and education: A comprehensive overview of the influence of Habermas in educational literature. *Review of Educational Research*, *61*(3), 345-378.

Farrokhi, F., & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The effects of direct written corrective feedback on improvement of grammatical accuracy of high-proficient L2 learners. *World Journal of Education*, *2*(2), 49.

Ferris, D. R., Liu, H., Sinha, A., & Senna, M. (2013). Written corrective feedback for individual L2 writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(3), 307-329.

Fisher, F. (1980)*. Politics, values, and public theory – the problem of methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive–developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist*, *34*(10), 906-911.

Fraser, S. P., & Bosanquet, A. M. (2006). The curriculum? That's just a unit outline, isn't it?. *Studies in Higher Education, 31*(3), 269-284.

Giroux, H. A. (1980). Critical theory and rationality in citizenship education. *Curriculum Inquiry, 10*(4), 329-366.

Grundy, S. (1987). *Curriculum product or praxis*. Michigan: Falmer Press.

Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro. London: Heinemann.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action: Vol. 1. Reason and the rationalization of society*. Boston: Beacon.

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Chen, J. (1999). An investigation into the effectiveness of teacher feedback on student writing. *English Language Teaching and Learning*, 3, 207-219*.*

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, *77*(1), 81-112.

Hattie, J. (2008). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge.

Huot, B. (2002). *(Re)-Articulating writing assessment for teaching and learning*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

Hyland, F. (1998). The impact of teacher written feedback on individual writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7(3), 255-286.

Hyland, F., & Hyland, K. (2001). Sugaring the pill: Praise and criticism in written feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *10*(3), 185-212.

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2012). Language assessment literacy.   Retrieved from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0605/full

James, M. (2006). Assessment, teaching and theories of learning. In J. Gardner (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (pp. 47-60). London: Sage.

James, M. (2008). Assessment and learning. In S. Swaffield (Ed.), Unlocking assessment: *Understanding for reflection and application* (pp. 20-25). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Jones, J. (2010). The role of assessment for learning in the management of primary to secondary transition: Implications for language teachers. *Language Learning Journal, 35*(2), 175–191.

Kahl, S. R., Hofman, P., & Bryant, S. (2013). *Assessment literacy standards and performance measures for teacher candidates and practicing teachers*. Retrieved from http://www.memphis.edu/caep/caep/assessment-literacy-in-teacher-preparati.pdf

Kemmis, S., & Fitzclarence, L. (1986). *Curriculum theorising: Beyond reproduction theory*. New York: Hyperion Books.

Lam, R. (2013). Two portfolio systems: EFL students' perceptions of writing ability, text improvement, and feedback. *Assessing Writing, 18*(2), 132-153.

Lam, R. (2015). Feedback about self-regulation: Does it remain an 'unfinished business' in portfolio assessment of writing? *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(2), 402-413.

Lea, M., & Street, B. V. (2000). Student writing and staff feedback in higher education. *Student writing in higher education: New contexts*, 32-46.

Lee, I. (2007). Assessment for learning: Integrating assessment, teaching, and learning in the ESL/EFL writing classroom. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 64*(1), 199–213.

Lee, I. (2008). Student reactions to teacher feedback in two Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *17*(3), 144-164.

Lee, I. (2014). Revisiting teacher feedback in EFL writing from sociocultural perspectives. *TESOL Quarterly*, *48*(1), 201-213.

Lee, I. (2016). Putting Students at the Centre of Classroom L2 Writing Assessment. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *72*(2), 258-280.

Lee, I., & Coniam, D. (2013). Introducing assessment for learning for EFL writing in an assessment of learning examination-driven system in Hong Kong. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(1), 34-50.

Leung, C. (2013). Classroom-based Assessment: Issues for Language TeacherEducation. In A. Kunnan (Ed.), *Companion to Language Assessment* (Vol. III, pp. 1510-1519). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley -Blackwell.

Lundstrom, K., & Baker, W. (2009). To give is better than to receive: The benefits of peer review to the reviewer's own writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *18*(1), 30-43.

Meriam, S.B. (2008). Adult learning theory for the twenty-first century. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 119*, 93-98.

Mezirow, J. (1981). A critical theory of adult learning and education. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *32*(1), 3-24.

Miller, P. H., Kessel, F. S., & Flavell, J. H. (1970). Thinking about people thinking about people thinking about...: A study of social cognitive development. *Child Development*, 613-623.

Min, H. T. (2006). The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *15*(2), 118-141.

Morisano, D., Hirsh, J. B., Peterson, J. B., Pihl, R. O., & Shore, B. M. (2010). Setting, elaborating, and reflecting on personal goals improves academic performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *95*(2), 255-264.

Mulliner, E., & Tucker, M. (2015). Feedback on feedback practice: perceptions of students and academics. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1-23.

Nicol, D., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education, 31*(2), 199-218.

Nicol, D. (2010). From monologue to dialogue: Improving written feedback processes in mass higher education. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(5), 501-517.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2010). *Growing success: Assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Ontario's schools: First Edition, Covering grades 1 to 12*. Retrieved from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf

Orsmond, P., & Merry, S. (2011). Feedback alignment: effective and ineffective links between tutors' and students' understanding of coursework feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *36*(2), 125-136.

Porto, M. (2001). Cooperative writing response groups and self-evaluation. *ELT Journal*, *55*(1), 38-46.

Ross, J. A., Rolheiser, C., & Hogaboam-Gray, A. (1999). Effects of self-evaluation training on narrative writing. *Assessing Writing*, *6*(1), 107-132.

Ruan, Z. (2014). Metacognitive awareness of EFL student writers in a Chinese ELT context. *Language Awareness*, *23*(1-2), 76-91.

Schraw, G. (2009). A conceptual analysis of five measures of metacognitive monitoring. *Metacognition and Learning, 4*(1), 33-45.

Serafini, F. (2001). Three paradigms of assessment: Measurement, procedure, and inquiry. *The Reading Teacher*, *54*(4), 384-393.

Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(2), 255-283.

Sheen, Y., Wright, D., & Moldawa, A. (2009). Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. *System*, *37*(4), 556-569.

Shintani, N., Ellis, R., & Suzuki, W. (2014). Effects of written feedback and revision on learners' accuracy in using two English grammatical structures. *Language Learning*, *64*(1), 103-131.

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, *57*(1), 1-23.

Stefanou, C., & Révész, A. (2015). Direct written corrective feedback, learner differences, and the acquisition of second language article use for generic and specific plural reference. *The Modern Language Journal*, *99*(2), 263-282.

Straub, R. (1997). Students' reactions to teacher comments: An exploratory study. *Research in the Teaching of English, 31*(1), 91-119.

Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, *46*(2), 327-369.

van Manen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *6*(3), 205-228.

Voerman, L., Korthagen, F., Meijer, P. C., Simons, P. R. J.(2014). Feedback revisited: Adding perspectives based on positive psychology. Implications for theory and classroom practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 43*, 91–98.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ware, P. (2011). Computer-generated feedback on student writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, *45*(4), 769-774.

Wenden, A. L. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *19*(4), 515-537.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice, 41*(2), 64-70.

8.7 Appendix G: The use of exemplars in English writing classrooms: From theory to practice (Chong, 2019a)

Abstract

Recent literature on the use of exemplars in the context of higher education has shown that exemplar-based instruction is implemented in various disciplines; nevertheless, how exemplar-based instruction can be implemented in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing classrooms in higher education institutions remains under-explored. In this connection, this article reports on a textbook development project which adopts an exemplar-based instruction approach to be used by university English instructors to prepare students for IELTS writing (academic module). The goal of the textbook is to cultivate students' understanding of the assessment standards of the two IELTS writing tasks through the design and use of exemplar-based dialogic and reflective activities. In this article, theoretical underpinnings of the use of exemplars, namely tacit knowledge, assessment as learning, and dialogic feedback will first be discussed in detail. Then, an overview of an ongoing grant project which aims to develop an exemplar-based IELTS writing textbook will be given. The last section of this article suggests practical strategies for ESL writing teachers who are interested in using exemplars to develop students' understanding of assessment standards.

Introduction

Three traditional approaches to ESL writing instruction

In the past three to four decades, three approaches to English-as-a-second-language (ESL) writing instruction have influenced the classroom practices of teachers, namely *a product approach*, *a process approach*, and more recently, *a genre approach*. Although the following paragraphs discuss the three approaches in isolation, it must be acknowledged that the three approaches are often used in combination in reality and there are overlaps in terms of instructional focuses (Hyland, 2015).

The product approach, which emphasizes the instruction of language system knowledge (Tribble, 1996), was popular in the early 1980s in ESL writing instruction. Under such approach, writing is taught in a way that emphasizes the 'quality' of the final product. The 'quality' of a piece of writing is often defined narrowly to entail accuracy in grammar, mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation), and style (Young, 1978). Teachers who adopt a product approach to writing instruction often divide their lessons into four linear stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing (Badger & White, 2000). In the stage of 'familiarization', students review sample texts of the same text-type and teachers pinpoint the surface features of the text. Then, students engage in 'controlled writing' and 'guided writing' practices to apply the skills needed for the final writing task in the form of filling in blanks and writing short sentences. After rounds of practice, students write on a given topic

('free writing') and teachers give summative feedback on their performance with a particular focus on language errors (Lee, 2007).

Unlike the product approach, *a process approach* puts the teaching of writing steps at the foreground (Pennington, Brock, and Yue, 1996). In particular, it highlights the cyclical nature of writing from planning, writing, to editing with a heightened emphasis on developing students' awareness through timely intervention in the form of feedback in a bid to 'maximize each student's intellectual participation in the writing process' (Susser, 1994, p. 4). Typically, the planning stage of the process approach involves students brainstorming ideas on a given topic and developing their content knowledge on the topic. At the writing stage, students complete an outline or 'writing frame' (Wray and Lewis, 1997) before producing the first draft of writing. Afterwards, they may exchange their work with their peers and receive feedback from them. As for the role of teachers, the teacher provides less direct input but more facilitation in the form of formative feedback than in the product approach (Wingate, 2010; Lee, 2017).

More recently, there has been the advent of a *genre approach* which originates from functional linguistics and communicative sociocultural approaches to language teaching (Halliday, 1994; Hyland, 2004). 'Genre' is defined as 'a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes' (Swales, 1990, p. 58). To proponents of the genre approach, writing should be taught with strong reference to the social contexts and purposes. For example, it is very different to write a report and a

sales letter because of their divergent purposes (Flowerdew, 1993). Hyland (2007) argued that this knowledge of genre plays an important role in developing students' ability to connect language, content, and contexts. In a similar vein, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) referred to this genre knowledge as 'an individual's repertoire of situationally appropriate responses to recurrent situations' (p. ix). While the genre approach assimilates the product approach with its emphasis on language system knowledge, its focus is on the variety of texts produced in different social situations, discarding the notion of 'paradigm', that is, a set of context-free assumptions against which students' work is gauged (Matsuda, 2003).

Table 1 summarizes the three traditional approaches to ESL writing instruction with reference to their respective goals, learners' role, teachers' role, and a typical teaching sequence.

Table 1: The three traditional approaches to ESL writing instruction

Approach	Goals	Learners' role	Teachers' role	A typical teaching sequence
Product	• Students produce error-free writing	• Imitate, copy, transform writing samples provided by the teacher and/or the textbook	• Explain structural and grammatical elements using model texts • Give summative, corrective feedback	1. T provides and explains a model text 2. T gives out a writing question similar to the model text 3. Ss complete the writing task within a given duration by modelling on the model text 4. T grades Ss' writing and gives language-focused feedback 5. Ss do corrections
Process	• Students are exposed to the steps involved in drafting and redrafting of a piece of written work	• Produce, discuss, reflect on, and revise successive drafts of a text	• Facilitate students' discussions and reflections on drafts of a text • Give timely, formative and descriptive feedback for students to improve on their drafts • Focus equally on grammatical accuracy and content	1. Prewriting 2. Drafting (focus on coherence and quality of idea; peer assessment; formative feedback by T) 3. Editing (focus on language accuracy) 4. Publishing
Genre	• Students write in the	• Recognize how language,	• Be explicit about	1. T provides and explains

	target language appropriately (with reference to the context, purpose of writing, and audience) and effectively (focusing on communicative functions of specific linguistic features)	content, and contexts work hand in hand • Recognize how language is used to shape meaning	communicative functions of grammar; grammar instruction is integrated into the analysis of texts and contexts rather than taught as a discrete component	a model text, focusing on the context, purpose, and audience of the model text 2. T highlights the linguistic features prevalent in the model text, focusing on form and function 3. Ss complete a writing question in the same genre

The role of writing exemplars in the three ESL writing instructional approaches

From the perspective of curriculum materials development, a similarity that is shared among the three instructional approaches is the use of sample texts, or writing exemplars. Referring to Table 1, exemplars (either student-generated or teacher-provided) are used in the typical teaching sequence of the three writing instructional approaches. In a product approach, exemplars are provided by the teacher or textbook which serve as sample texts on which students model their writing. In a process approach, writing exemplars produced by students are used to facilitate peer review among students. In a genre approach, exemplars are carefully chosen by teachers to illustrate the communicative functions of linguistic features in relation to the purpose, context, and target audience of a particular text-type.

'Exemplars' are defined as samples produced by students (and sometimes teachers) and used to 'illustrate dimensions of quality' (Carless, Chan, To, Lo, & Barrett, 2018, p. 1); the use of exemplars is regarded as one of the promising ways to develop students' understanding of the ambiguous criteria of 'good work'. 'Exemplar-based instruction', or sometimes being referred to as 'the use of exemplars' in literature, is defined as the use of exemplars by teachers to illustrate 'a "quality continuum" of authentic student work [or sometimes student work modified by the teacher] to help them make judgements about what constitutes quality' (Scoles, Huxham, & McArthur, 2013, p. 632; words in brackets mine).

While the use of exemplars in ESL writing instruction has been in place for a long time, how writing exemplars can be utilized to develop students' evaluative judgement of the quality of a text and understanding of assessment standards of high-stakes language tests (e.g. IELTS) has not been adequately researched and practiced. Recent assessment research in higher education has found that understanding of assessment standards, which is a type of 'tacit knowledge', is 'difficult to transfer verbally or in writing' (Carless & Chan, 2017), but is best illustrated through the use of exemplars. Research has found that exemplar-based instruction in the higher education context helps clarify teacher expectations to students, simplify the process of assignment preparation (Carless, 2015), illustrate different approaches to tackle an assignment (Orsmond, Merry, & Reiling, 2002), minimize students' assessment-related stress (Yucel, Bird, Young, & Blanksby, 2014), and make students more

confident in completing an assignment (Hendry & Anderson, 2013). From the perspective of teachers, the use of exemplars is a student-centered pedagogical approach which requires little preparation (Smith, Worsfold, Fisher, & McPhail, 2013). In the context of ESL writing classrooms, exemplars can be used to exemplify a spectrum of quality (high, mediocre, low) described in the assessment standards or rubrics. In addition, the use of exemplars facilitates students' understanding of the assessment standards which are often expressed in a generic and opaque manner by focusing on a specific writing genre or task. Through the analysis of and discussion about the exemplars, students are expected to 'engage in feedforward to better understand the disciplinary discourse and its expectations' (Scoles et al., 2013, p. 632). The use of exemplars in the writing classroom not only benefits instruction, but contributes to standardizing teachers' understanding of the assessment standards, which is likely to lead to fairer and more objective grading.

Recent literature on the use of exemplars in the context of higher education has shown that exemplar-based instruction is implemented in various disciplines, including life sciences (Scoles et al., 2013), teacher education (Carless et al., 2018), design education (Hendry & Tomitsch, 2014), animal science (Hendry, White, & Herbert, 2016); nevertheless, how exemplar-based instruction can be implemented in ESL writing classrooms in higher education institutions remains under-explored. In this connection, this article reports on a textbook development project which adopts an exemplar-based instruction approach to be used by university English instructors to prepare students for IELTS writing. The goal of the textbook is to cultivate students' understanding

of the assessment standards of the two IELTS writing tasks (academic module) through the design of exemplar-based dialogic and reflective activities. In this article, I will first present the theoretical underpinnings of exemplar-based instruction, namely tacit knowledge, assessment as learning, and dialogic feedback. Then, I will give an overview of an ongoing grant project which aims to develop an IELTS writing textbook which adopts an exemplar-based instructional approach (the textbook proposal is currently under review by Routledge). The last section of this article concerns practical strategies for ESL writing teachers who are interested in using exemplars to develop students' understanding of assessment standards.

Theoretical background

Exemplar-based instruction: Evidence from higher education research

Recent studies in higher education research document an array of exemplar-based instructional practices. Below are some examples (Table 2):

Table 2: Three approaches to using exemplars

Approaches to using exemplars	Description
Inductive use of exemplars	• Students are involved in judging the quality of the exemplars by using a marking rubric provided by the teacher. Teachers then explain the assessment standards in relation to the rubric and the exemplars (Hendry, et al., 2016).
Scaffolded use of exemplars	• Students are involved in a pre-task (e.g. producing a part of a writing task reminiscent of the exemplar) before being introduced to high quality exemplars (Carless et al., 2018).

Dialogic use of exemplars	• Students' opinions are elicited and divergent viewpoints are encouraged (Carless, et al., 2018). • Students are encouraged to discuss their viewpoints with their classmates before teachers explicate the assessment standards (Hendry et al., 2016). • Students are asked to verbalize their judgements and provide suggestions for improving the exemplars (Sadler, 2010). • Students compare exemplars with their own work and reflect on their own performance through self-reflective questioning (Hounsell, 2008).

O'Donovan, Price, & Rust (2008) proposed a framework comprising four approaches to developing students' understanding of assessment standards: (1) a 'laissez faire' approach, (2) an 'explicit' approach, (3) a 'social constructivist' approach, and (4) a 'community of practice approach'.

In the 'laissez faire' approach, assessment standards are only communicated to students 'informally and serendipitously' (O'Donovan et al., 2008, p. 206). Such informal and serendipitous channels include teachers' feedback and informal discussions with teachers.

An 'explicit' approach to sharing assessment standards to students refers to the use of 'learning outcomes, disciplinary benchmark statements' by teachers to explicitly articulate their expectations in order for students to improve their performance along this trajectory (O'Donovan et al., 2008, p. 207).

A 'social constructivist' approach to sharing assessment standards is a student-centered approach which aims to 'actively engage learners (and/or other stakeholders) in using and applying the standards enabling them to make meaning within their own personal and cognitive constructs' (O'Donovan et al., 2008, p. 207).

The fourth approach, the 'community of practice' approach, accentuates the importance of collaboration among students when understanding and utilizing the assessment standards. In this approach, learning (in this case, the understanding of assessment standards) is regarded as a collaborative and interactive process rather than an individual process. To facilitate such collaborative learning environment, students must be mutually engaged through informal activities, develop a sense of joint ownership of the activities, and a shared repertoire of interactive practices (O'Donovan et al., 2008, p. 209).

Relating O'Donovan et al.'s (2008) framework to the textbook project that I am currently involved in, Table 3 describes the framework in relation to how exemplars can be used to promote students' understanding of IELTS writing assessment standards.

Table 3: A framework of approaches to sharing meaningful knowledge of assessment standards with students in higher education (adapted from O'Donovan et al., 2008)

	The 'laissez faire' approach	The 'explicit' approach	The 'social constructivist' approach	The 'community of practice' approach
Role of the teacher	*Passive* (wait for students to approach them)	*Active* (explicitly explain to students the assessment standards)	*Active* (lead dialogues with students to develop their understanding of assessment standards)	*Active* (facilitate dialogues amongst students to develop their understanding of assessment standards)
Role of the student	*Passive* (wait for opportunities to approach the teacher)	*Passive* (listen to teachers' explanations of assessment standards)	*Active* (engage in dialogues with teachers to better understand assessment standards)	*Active* (engage in dialogues with peers to better understand assessment standards)
The use of exemplars in IELTS writing	Exemplars distributed in the form of model essays without teacher input or discussions with students	Exemplars distributed in the form of model essays with teachers highlighting the strengths of the exemplars with reference to the IELTS writing descriptors	Essays and IELTS writing descriptors are distributed to students. The teacher guides students' understanding of the 'quality' of the exemplars through the use of a range of interactive and questioning strategies (e.g. Carless & Chan, 2017)	Essays and IELTS writing descriptors are distributed to students. Students discuss with peers in small groups (sometimes with the teacher's facilitation) about the 'quality' of the exemplars interactively.

Tacit knowledge

One of the theoretical underpinnings of exemplar-based instruction is the notion of tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge refers to aspects of knowledge that are difficult to transmit through speaking and writing (Sadler, 2010; Carless et al., 2018). There have been debates about whether it is possible to make tacit knowledge explicit, i.e. whether they are distinct types of knowledge or whether they exist on a continuum, Polanyi (1958, 1962) adopted the latter position and explicated the linkage between the 'articulated' and 'unarticulated' forms of

knowledge. To Polanyi, the more complex and sophisticated understanding students develop regarding the knowledge and skills they initially acquired, the more likely students are able to 'articulate' such understanding using language. To deepen students' understanding in order to make the tacit knowledge explicit (to be able to articulate the knowledge), students must go through two developmental stages: a stage of 'systematic exploration' of 'examples' of such knowledge or understanding using dialogic and reflective tasks and a stage where students gradually construct their own 'interpretative framework' about the knowledge (ibid, p. 78).

The notions of the 'tacit' and 'explicit' facets of knowledge were first thoroughly discussed in Polanyi's (1958, 1962) work on personal knowledge. To Polanyi (ibid), tacit knowledge is compared to 'connoisseurship', which 'can be communicated only by example, not by percept' (p. 56). In other words, it is not effective for teachers to explain tacit knowledge, such as the assessment standards of IELTS writing, in the forms of lectures and handouts, because the wordings and expressions used in the assessment standards remain abstract to students. Instead, it is argued that students acquire tacit knowledge through their active involvement in dialogic and reflective activities (e.g. discussion of writing exemplars with peers and teacher with reference to the assessment standards) (Bloxham & Campbell, 2010). Through such engagement, students begin to notice the essential features of what constitute a good text by 'making visible some of the expert thinking and judgements of the teacher' (Carless et al., 2018, p. 1). With such a 'systematic exploration' of writing exemplars, students gradually develop their 'evaluative judgement', which is 'the capability

to make decisions about the quality of work of oneself and others' and to articulate and discuss such understanding with peers and teachers (Tai, Ajjawi, Boud, Dawson, & Panadero, 2018, p. 467).

Assessment as learning

Assessment as learning (AaL) is 'a subset of assessment for learning that emphasizes using assessment as a process of developing and supporting metacognition for students' (Earl, 2013, p.3). Adhering to the spirit of student-centeredness of assessment for learning (AfL), AaL aims to promote 'the active engagement of students in setting goals for their learning and growth, monitoring their progress toward these goals, and determining how to address any gaps' (Andrade, Huff, & Brooke, 2012, p. 8). Instead of the teacher, students take up the role of 'the critical connector between assessment and their own learning' (Earl, 2013, p.3).

As mentioned by Earl (2013), to empower students to be 'critical connectors' between assessment and learning, their metacognition needs to be developed. 'Metacognition', which is often referred to as 'thinking about thinking', was first conceptualized by Flavell (1979) as a self-monitoring system of cognition which consists of four domains: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, goals/tasks, and actions/strategies (for a detailed discussion of the construct of metacognition, please see Chong, 2017). Amongst the four domains, much educational research in the context of higher education has examined the knowledge domain of metacognition. Initially defined by Flavell (1979, p. 907) as 'knowledge or beliefs about what factors or

variables act and interact in ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises', the construct of metacognitive knowledge is expanded by later educational researchers to include three interrelated variables: person knowledge (learners' understanding of their learning styles, beliefs about learning, strengths, and weaknesses), task knowledge (learners' understanding of the requirements and skills needed to complete a learning task), and strategic knowledge (declarative and procedural knowledge about the self-regulated strategies necessary to complete a learning task) (Schraw, 2009; Wenden, 1998).

The use of writing exemplars helps develop students' person, task, and strategic knowledge. Students' person knowledge is enriched through engaging in activities associated with scaffolded use of exemplars in which students first complete a writing task before being given an exemplar to analyze and compare with their own with reference to a set of assessment standards. In so doing, students become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in the writing task. Regarding students' task knowledge, the use of exemplars offers tremendous help because students develop a more solid understanding of the task requirements (expressed in the form of assessment standards) through analyzing exemplars which illustrate different dimensions of quality. Lastly, students' strategic knowledge is burgeoned because they become more assessment literate and develop a more accurate evaluative judgement vis-à-vis the quality of a written work. With a more acute evaluative judgment, students are able to self-regulate and monitor their writing process in a more effective manner through employing a range of metacognitive strategies.

Dialogic feedback

In the context of higher education, there has been an exponential growth in the number of assessment and feedback studies which conceptualize feedback from a constructivist and sociocultural point of view (Carless, 2016; Chong, 2018). Such conceptualization of feedback is often referred to as 'dialogic feedback'. Studies which examine dialogic feedback look into the various relational factors at work that influence how students interpret and utilize feedback. Such social factors examined in recent feedback studies in higher education include trust (Carless, 2013) and emotions (Molloy, Borrell-Carrió, & Epstein, 2013) which positively or negatively affect students' motivation and confidence in interpreting and utilizing the feedback provided. Another research direction of dialogic feedback is closely associated with the use of exemplars. Adopting a discourse analysis approach, researchers attempt to analyze the teacher-students and student-student discussions of writing exemplars in order to identify the effective communicative moves which facilitate the development of students' understanding of assessment standards and evaluative judgement. For example, Carless and Chan (2017) reported how a teacher engaged in feedback dialogue with students and identified 16 dialogic moves which facilitate students' understanding of assessment standards.

The notion of dialogic feedback is built upon the tenet of sociocultural theory (SCT) (Figure 1). SCT suggests that human cognitive development takes place during social interaction. Originally developed by Vygotsky (1987), SCT and its related constructs have been increasingly applied in educational

research to account for the various factors at work that influence effectiveness of pedagogical approaches (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015). According to Storch (2018), there are two connected constructs in SCT: (1) zone of proximal development (ZPD) and (2) the notion of mediation. I shall first give an overview of the two constructs and illustrate how these constructs inform the dialogic use of exemplars.
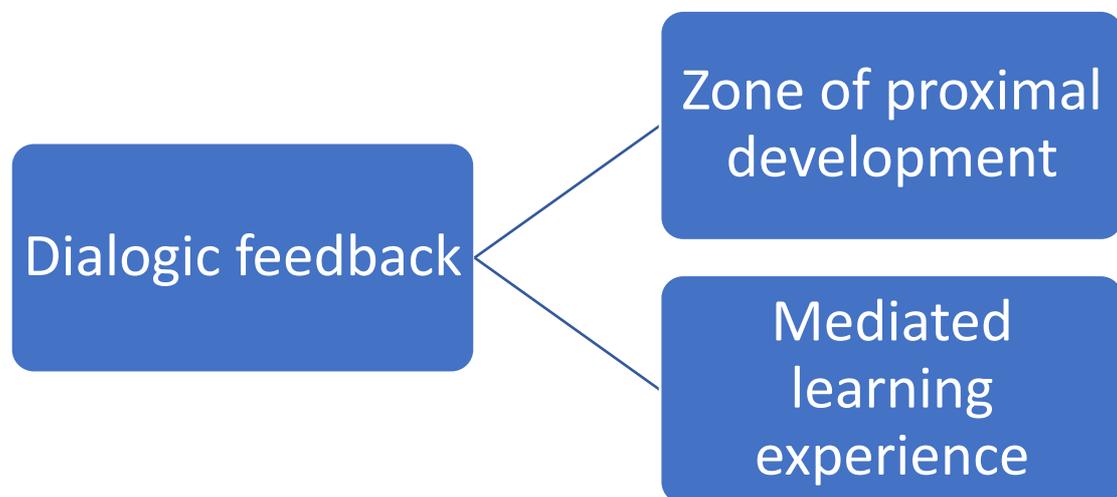
Figure 1: Dialogic feedback informed by sociocultural theory

Zone of proximal development (ZPD)

Vygotsky viewed the construction and development of learners' knowledge as being facilitated by the assistance of an 'expert'. ZPD is defined as 'the difference between what an individual achieves by herself and what she might achieve when assisted' (Swain et al., 2015, p. 17). ZPD is sometimes conceptualized as similar to Krashen's $i + 1$ (Krashen, 1985). Krashen's (1985)

i + 1 suggests that language development occurs when the level of difficulty of language input is pitched slightly higher (+ 1) than the current language proficiency level of an individual (*i*). Nevertheless, ZPD and Krashen's *i* + 1 differ because ZPD considers 'all dimensions of the activity' while *i* + 1 focuses on language acquisition (Swain et al., 2015, p. 21). The comparison with Krashen's *i* + 1 helps explain the nature of assistance that the 'expert' (the teacher) is expected to provide to the 'novice' (the learner) – the assistance provided needs to be learner-centered that responds to the dynamic needs of the learners. Storch (2018) commented that such assistance provided to learners should be 'graduated and contingent' (p. 264). Applying to feedback practice, dialogic feedback provided to learners should be dynamic rather than static to scaffold the changing needs of the learners.

<u>Mediated learning experience (MLE)</u>

According to Vygotsky, 'mediation' entails that human activities and relationships are mediated by material and symbolic tools. The notion of mediation is further developed by Feuerstein and his associates in their theory of MLE. Originally developed to account for differences in cognitive development of children, MLE suggests that human cognition is not static but can be developed through meaningful interaction and instruction (Presseisen, 1992). Recently, MLE has been utilized as 'an intervention approach intended to improve learning' in educational and L2 studies (Lee, 2014, p. 203).

Feuerstein, Rand, & Rynders (1988) suggest four criteria for interactions to be qualified as mediated learning interaction: (1) *intentionality*, (2) *reciprocity*,

(3) *transcendence*, and (4) *meaning*. Lee (2014; 2017) explains these criteria in relation to teacher's feedback:

- *Intentionality*: Feedback should be intentional in directing students' attention to particular areas (e.g. content, coherence, language) rather than giving feedback in an unfocused manner.

- *Reciprocity*: Feedback should be interactional rather than unidirectional in which students play a passive role.

- *Transcendence*: Feedback should facilitate 'feed-up' and 'feed-forward' in which students are able to transfer what they have gained from the feedback to their future writing tasks (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

- *Meaning*: Feedback should provide students with a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in a piece of writing and actions that can be done to close the feedback loop.

Informed by SCT, dialogic use of exemplars is regarded as a kind of MLE where students analyze the given exemplars with reference to the given assessment standards (intentionality), discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the exemplars with their peers and teacher (reciprocity), reflect on ways that the strengths and weaknesses of the exemplars could inform their own writing (transcendence and meaning). Through the provision of dialogic feedback on the given exemplars, teachers develop a better understanding of students' current state of knowledge of the assessment standards which helps teachers provide more effective scaffolding to expand students' understanding of assessment standards (zone of proximal development).

Figure 2 summarizes the pedagogical framework of exemplar-based instruction reported in higher education research and its theoretical underpinnings discussed in this section. In the next section, an ongoing grant project which aims to develop a textbook for teaching IELTS writing using an exemplar-based writing instructional approach will be introduced to illustrate how the pedagogical framework (Figure 2) informs the design of tasks in this textbook and the ways these tasks can be used. Despite not reporting any data at this stage, the introduction of this project sheds important light on how exemplars can be used in ESL writing classrooms, which remains an under-explored area in exemplar literature in higher education. In addition, different from current exemplar studies which focus on analyzing the spoken discourse of student-teacher dialogues, the emphasis of this project report is on how pedagogic tasks can be designed based on writing exemplars to promote students' evaluative judgement and understanding of IELTS assessment standards.

Pedagogical framework	Four approaches to exemplar-based instruction	Pre-dialogic activity	Dialogic use of exemplars	Post-dialogic activity
	The 'laissez faire' approach	Distribution of exemplars	Nil (for motivated students, internal dialogue may take place; dialogue happens incidentally and informally)	Nil
	The 'explicit' approach	**Inductive use of exemplars:** Assessment standards and an exemplar are given to students to evaluate	Teacher-initiated, teacher-led dialogue on given exemplars	Teacher summarizes dialogic outcomes, highlights the diverse viewpoints of students, provides his/her understanding of the assessment standards by referring to the exemplars
	The 'social constructivist' approach		Teacher-facilitated, student-led dialogue on given exemplars	
	The 'community of practice' approach	**Scaffolded use of exemplars:** Students are asked to complete a similar writing task before being given an exemplar	Student-facilitated, student-led dialogue on given exemplars	

Increase in student-centeredness

Theoretical underpinnings		*Internal dialogic feedback on exemplars as MLE to achieve ZPD*	*Teacher-student, student-student dialogic feedback on exemplars as MLE to achieve ZPD through enriching metacognitive knowledge*	*Consolidate students' understanding of tacit knowledge (assessment standards) and metacognitive knowledge*

Figure 2: Pedagogical framework and theoretical underpinnings of exemplar-based instruction

A textbook project

Overview and theoretical underpinnings of the project

With the support of a Teaching Development Grant at The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) (HK$327,000), a textbook is being written by the author and his colleague to prepare undergraduate students for the two tasks in IELTS writing examination (academic stream) (Task 1: data report and Task 2: essay). Several steps have been taken to ensure the effective adoption

of research-informed, exemplar-based writing instruction in the textbook. Each content chapter in the textbook introduces students to one of the four assessment domains of IELTS writing (academic module) namely task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy, and facilitate students' understanding of these requirements through engaging them in tasks which analyze authentic exemplars written by university students.

In terms of ESL writing instructional approach, this textbook is grounded on the process writing and genre writing paradigms, which adheres to the pedagogical framework which informs the delivery of an IELTS writing course offered to all sophomores at EdUHK. In the IELTS writing course which this textbook intends to be used, the course is informed by a process approach to writing instruction because it focuses not only on the language requirements of IELTS writing but also criteria pertaining to content and organization. Moreover, the course is designed to include individual consultation sessions to enable teachers to provide personalized and timely feedback to students regarding their written work. Equally important in the course is the combination with a genre approach to writing instruction. Since students at EdUHK are going to take the academic stream of IELTS, one of the foci of this writing course is to develop students' understanding of language features which contribute to 'academic writing' as a genre.

With respect to the pedagogical framework proposed in this paper (Figure 2), this textbook adopts a combination of the 'explicit' and 'social constructivist'

approaches of exemplar-based writing instruction. Figure 3 summarizes the pedagogical framework which informs the task design of this textbook:

A balanced focus on:
- Language features
- Content development
- Organization
- Genre knowledge

MLE & metacognitive knowledge

Process & genre approaches to writing

Explicit and social constructivist approaches to exemplar use

- Intentionality, reciprocity, transcendence, meaning
- Person knowledge, task knowledge, strategic knowledge

- Inductive use of exemplars
- Scaffolded use of exemplars
- Dialogic use of exemplars

**Figure 3: Pedagogical framework of the textbook**

Lesson plan of a sample unit on 'lexical resource'

The following lesson plan (Table 4) serves as an example to provide a preliminary understanding of how the pedagogical framework in Figure 3 informs the design and delivery of the tasks in the textbook. Given the focus of this article on use of exemplars and in order to appeal to a wider group of

audience in the field of higher education, the focus will be on the three approaches of exemplar use, MLE and metacognitive knowledge rather than the ESL writing instructional paradigms. In particular, this lesson illustrates important aspects of exemplar use including peer review, feedback, role of teacher and learners.

Table 4: Lesson plan of a sample unit on 'lexical resource'

Lesson Activity	Description of Activity	Theoretical underpinning
1 (30 mins)	• T asks Ss to read the "Lexical Resource" domain of the full IELTS writing descriptors (Task 2). • Ss can read 2-3 bands of descriptors (e.g. Bands 5-6) and circle the words they find important. • Based on the circled words, T asks Ss to discuss in groups/pairs the meaning of "Lexical Resource". • T elicits opinions from Ss. It is important at this point that the T does not reveal his/her opinion and directs Ss' attention to the descriptors for the key words identified. • T asks Ss to compare the key words they identified with the concept map in Activity 1. Explain new words shown in the concept map that are closely associated with those in the full descriptors e.g. "suffixes", "affixes", "conversion", "compound". • Ss are divided into three groups. Each group is assigned to complete one exercise: "Aspect 1: Variety of vocabulary", "Aspect 2: Difficulty of vocabulary", or "Aspect 3: Accuracy of vocabulary". • Individually, Ss complete the assigned exercise. Then, Ss sit with a partner in the same group to check answers or clarify misconceptions. • T instructs Ss to form groups of three with Ss who complete a different exercise. That means, each group should comprise Ss who completed the three exercises. • Ss in each group take turns to be a student-teacher to introduce the definitions and examples of key words in the concept map.	Inductive and dialogic use of exemplars Develop students' task knowledge Intentional feedback (focus on a particular standard of ILETS writing) Reciprocal feedback (T elicits feedback from Ss)

	• As a summary, T can check Ss' understanding of the key words by referring Ss to one of the exemplars in this chapter. To check Ss' understanding of variety of vocabulary, T can invite Ss to identify words that are formed using suffixes, prefixes, conversion, and compounding. To check Ss' understanding of difficulty of vocabulary, T can refer Ss to the "Headwords of the Academic Word List" PDF file and invite Ss to locate words that appear in AWL in the exemplar. To check Ss' understanding of accuracy of vocabulary, select a weaker exemplar from this chapter and invite Ss to identify errors related to collocation, spelling, and part of speech.	
2 (60 mins)	• T divides the class into groups of 3-4. Each group is responsible for completing one exemplar analysis activity in the chapter (Activities 2 to 4). • Taking up the role of assessors of writing, Ss from each group will present their analysis of the exemplars in the assigned activity, focusing on one aspect of "Lexical Resource" in the ILETS descriptors. • While each group is presenting, it is important for the T to act as a facilitator to elicit questions from the presenters and the audience to clarify misunderstanding and consolidate understanding. Again, it is of utmost importance to refer Ss to the actual descriptors and the concept map. Encourage Ss to use terms used in the descriptors and the concept map.	Dialogic use of exemplars Develop students' task knowledge Intentional feedback (focus on a particular standard of ILETS writing) Reciprocal feedback (Ss as generators of feedback, assessment dialogues between the T and Ss) Transcendent feedback (Ss apply their understanding of IELTS assessment standards to analyse the exemplar)
3 (50 mins)	• In this peer assessment activity, Ss are expected to put together the understanding they have developed regarding "Lexical Resource" for Task 2. For higher ability Ss, they can be asked to work individually on the task. These high achievers can also be encouraged to focus on the other domain, "Task Achievement", which they learned in the previous chapter. For less-abled Ss, they can work with four groupmates, focusing on use of vocabulary.	Dialogic use of exemplars Develop students' task knowledge Intentional feedback (focus on a particular standard of ILETS writing)

	• For group work, T can assign one S to be responsible for answering the questions of one paragraph (Activity 5). • At the end of each group's presentation, T elicits opinions from the floor, encouraging both convergent and divergent opinions. • T can supplement by giving his/her own judgements. When giving his/her own opinion, T should always refer to the descriptors or concept map and make use of the terms in the descriptors and concept map. • At the end of the activity, T can ask Ss to rate the exemplar: low (Bands 4-5), average (Bands 6-7), or high (Bands 7+). • This activity can be easily turned into a workshop activity with fewer S participants. In a workshop setting, T can give out Exemplar 9.11 (Activity 5) but not the guiding questions. Instead, T guides Ss to analyse the exemplar by asking the guiding questions. To promote meaningful and student-focused interaction, T is encouraged to ask follow-up questions and deviate from the guiding questions when needs arise.	Reciprocal feedback (Ss as generators of feedback, assessment dialogues between the T and Ss) Transcendent feedback (Ss apply their understanding of IELTS assessment standards to analyse the exemplar)	
4 (40 mins)	• T selects one Task 2 question from the online question bank and gives Ss 40 minutes to complete the question.	Scaffolded use of exemplars Develop students' task and strategic knowledge	

5
(Extended Blended Learning Task)
	• As a post-lesson activity, T can set a discussion forum task on the learning management system (e.g. Moodle or Blackboard).
	• Ss are asked to post their writing done in Lesson Activity 4 and give brief comments (focusing on "Lexical Resource") on a peer's work. It is important to remind Ss to give evidence and suggestions when giving feedback e.g. quote specific words and expressions used by their peers.
	• The following guiding questions can help Ss write their feedback:
	
	   o Did the student form new words through the use of prefixes?
	   o Did the student form new words through the use of suffixes?
	   o Did the student form new words through the use of conversion?
	   o Did the student form new words through the use of compounding?
		Scaffolded and dialogic use of exemplars
		
		Develop students' personal, task, and strategic knowledge
		
		Intentional feedback (focus on a particular standard of ILETS writing)
		
		Reciprocal feedback (Ss as generators of feedback)
		
		Transcendent feedback (Ss apply their understanding of IELTS	

		assessment standards to analyse their peer's work)
	- Did the student use academic vocabulary? - Did the student use collocations accurately? - Did the student spell words accurately? - Did the student use parts of speech accurately?	Meaningful feedback (Ss reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their writing)

Strategies for using exemplars in ESL writing classrooms

Having discussed the theoretical tenets of using exemplars in the context of ESL writing classrooms in higher education institutions, an ongoing textbook development project conducted in a Hong Kong university focusing on IELTS writing (academic module) was reported to throw light on how evidence-based practices of using exemplars and the associated theories can be translated into practice. This last section of the article summarizes practical strategies for ESL writing instructors who wish to incorporate the use of exemplars in their lessons.

Developing writing assessment standards

A fundamental step towards using exemplars in the writing classroom is the development of a clear set of assessment standards or writing rubrics (Carless & Boud, 2018; Tai et al., 2018). Similar to the IELTS writing assessment standards, these descriptors can encompass different domains of writing (e.g. content, language, organization, style) with clear descriptive statements differentiating various levels of achievement. The creation of such rubrics should be informed by such considerations as the course objectives, the

course content, learners' needs. It is important that the assessment standards be written in an accessible way to students because students will be evaluating and analyzing writing exemplars using the assessment standards. In addition, in situations where the rubrics are centrally-prepared, it is essential for the writing teacher to study the rubrics closely and develop a coherent understanding of the assessment standards. For teachers who are teaching students with a lower English proficiency, they are advised to provide the assessment standards in the first language of the students to facilitate their understanding of the statements and analysis of writing exemplars using the assessment standards.

Adopting a reflective and dialogic approach

Informed by evidence-based practices of using exemplars in other disciplines of higher education, the creation of exemplar-based pedagogic tasks should be reflective and dialogic in nature (Hendry et al., 2016; Carless et al., 2018; Hounsell, 2008). Tasks can be designed to promote students' reflective thinking by asking students to respond to evaluative questions. To facilitate students' understanding of different dimensions of quality in relation to the assessment standards, the evaluative questions should be phrased using the keywords found in the assessment standards. At the same time, students, when responding to such questions, should be asked to give examples from the exemplars as evidence. For instance, when students are asked whether new words are formed using prefixes, suffixes, conversion, and compounding, students are asked to provide examples from the exemplars.

The design of dialogic tasks involves the setting of prompting questions which draw students' attention to particular features in an exemplar. The selection of the salient features in the exemplar should be based on the assessment standards in the rubrics. Referring to the sample lesson plan (Table 4), teachers can provide students with only the exemplar without the guiding questions. Instead, teachers can facilitate students' discussion on the exemplar by asking them these questions. In such situation, however, teachers may want to avoid having a 'scripted' dialogue by asking students questions following the suggestions strictly; a better approach is to be flexible and start with the open-ended question: 'What do you notice about the use of vocabulary in this exemplar?'. Teachers can then ask follow-up questions based on the students' responses.

Selecting and modifying writing exemplars to demonstrate a continuum of quality

With reference to Carless et al.'s (2018) reminder, exemplars are different from 'model essays' because they illustrate a continuum of quality (low, mediocre, high). It is a misconception of some teachers that students can only benefit from reading exemplars illustrating a high level of performance. In spite of the insights from high quality exemplars, it is equally important for teachers to select writing exemplars of different qualities to illustrate the differences and gaps between different levels of achievement. In this connection, writing exemplars need to be carefully selected to enable students to identify the similarities and differences between exemplars illustrating low, mediocre, and high levels of competence. To facilitate students' evaluation of writing

exemplars, three ways of modifying the exemplars can be considered: (1) varying the length of the exemplar to make students' evaluation more focused or including exemplars of different lengths (e.g. sentence-level, paragraph-level, essay-level), (2) for weaker students, sentences in an exemplar which are important can be highlighted or underlined so that students can concentrate on the salient features, and (3) wordings or phrases that may cause confusion or misunderstanding need to be revised in order not to get students distracted.

Designing exemplar-based tasks in accordance with the selected writing instructional approach(es)

Since this article concerns the use of exemplars in ESL writing classrooms, teachers should design exemplar-based tasks with reference to the writing instructional approaches they adopt (product, process, genre, or a combination of the above). In a product approach, dialogic and evaluative tasks should focus on analyzing the linguistic accuracy and target grammatical features of exemplars. Teachers who adopt a process approach to writing instruction should include tasks which elicit students' opinions regarding both content and language. It is important for teachers to prompt students to give more formative and diagnostic feedback to the exemplars because of the 'feed forward' nature of feedback in the process approach. In other words, students should be able to give reasons to support your opinions and provide concrete suggestions for improvement. Lastly, in a writing classroom where a genre approach is adopted, teachers' questions should focus on the communicative

functions of grammatical items, purpose of writing, context, and audience (Hyland, 2015).

Conclusion

With the increasing discussions and conceptualizations of associated notions namely 'evaluative judgment', 'tacit knowledge', 'feedback literacy', numerous ways are proposed to develop such capacity and ability of students in higher education literature. One of the most frequently discussed ways is the use of exemplars. Although the affordances of using exemplars to develop the aforesaid capacities have been affirmed, there is a dearth of discussions and reports on practical examinations of how exemplars are utilized and how exemplar-related tasks are designed in language education. This article addresses this gap by introducing an IELST writing textbook and how the design of exemplar-based tasks is grounded on recent literature on exemplar use. Moreover, practical strategies for ESL university teachers to implement exemplar-based writing instruction are suggested. To frontline teachers, this article showcases how a textbook has been constructed to support student learning about writing using an exemplar-based instructional approach. At the same time, this textbook development project sheds light on how the involvement of academics in curriculum materials development can contribute to staff development in the area of exemplar use, namely the development of assessment standards, the selection of exemplars, the design of dialogic and evaluative tasks based on exemplars.

An added contribution of this article is the in-depth discussions of the theoretical underpinnings of the use of exemplars, which include concepts drawn from philosophy e.g., 'tacit knowledge', language assessment e.g., 'assessment as learning', and educational psychology e.g., 'metacognitive knowledge', 'mediated learning experience'. The pedagogical frameworks proposed in this article, which are based on the review of these theoretical constructs, can serve as conceptual frameworks for future research on the use and effectiveness of exemplars, especially in language education in the higher education context.

References

Andrade, H., Huff, K., & Brooke, G. (2012). *Assessing learning: The students at the center series*. New England: The Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, *54*(2), 153-160.

Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bloxham, S., & Campbell., L. (2010). Generating dialogue in assessment feedback: Exploring the use of interactive cover sheets. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(3), 291–300.

Carless, D. (2013). Sustainable feedback and the development of student self-evaluative capacities. In S. Merry, M. Price, D. Carless, & M. Taras (Eds.), *Reconceptualising feedback in higher education* (pp. 117–126). New York: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2015). *Excellence in University Assessment: Learning from Award-winning Practice*. London: Routledge.

Carless, D. (2016). Feedback as Dialogue. *Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1–6. Retrieved at http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_389-1

Carless, D., & Chan, K. K. H. (2017). Managing dialogic use of exemplars. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(6), 930-941.

Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. Advanced online publication.

Carless, D., Chan, K. K. H., To, J., Lo, M., & Barrett, E. (2018). Developing students' capacities for evaluative judgement through analysing exemplars. In D. Boud, R. Ajjawi, P. Dawson and J. Tai (Eds), *Developing Evaluative Judgement in Higher Education: Assessment for knowing and producing quality work* (pp. 1- 18). London: Routledge.

Chong, S. W. (2017). Three paradigms of classroom assessment: Implications for written feedback research. *Language Assessment Quarterly*. Advanced online publication.

Chong, I. (2018). Interplay among technical, socio-emotional and personal factors in written feedback research. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(2), 185-196.

Earl, L. M. (2013). Assessment for learning; Assessment as learning: Changing practices means changing beliefs. In Hong Kong Education Bureau (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (Issue 2) (pp. 1–5). Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Government Printer.

Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Rynders, J. (1988). *Don't accept me as I am*. New York, NY: Plenum.

Flavell, J. H. (1979).Metacognition and cognitive monitoring:A new area of cognitive–developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*(10), 906–911.

Flowerdew, J. (1993). An educational, or process, approach to the teaching of professional genres. *ELT Journal*, *47*(4), 305-316.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar (2nd ed.)*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, *77*(1), 81-112.

Hendry, G., & Anderson, J. (2013). Helping students understand the standards of work expected in an essay: Using exemplars in mathematics pre-service education classes. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 38*(6), 754-768.

Hendry, G. D., & Tomitsch, M. (2014). Implementing an exemplar-based approach in an interaction design subject: Enhancing students' awareness of the need to be creative. *International Journal of Technology and Design Education, 24*(3), 337-348.

Hendry, G. D., White, P., & Herbert, C. (2016). Providing exemplar-based 'feedforward' before an assessment: The role of teacher explanation. *Active Learning in Higher Education, 17*(2), 99-109.

Hounsell, D. (2008). *The trouble with feedback: New challenges, emerging strategies*. International change, Spring. www.tla.ed.ac.uk/interchange.

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *16*(3), 148-164.

Hyland, K. (2015). *Teaching and researching writing*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. New York, NY: Longman.

Lee, I. (2007). Feedback in Hong Kong secondary writing classrooms: Assessment for learning or assessment of learning?. *Assessing Writing*, *12*(3), 180-198.

Lee, I. (2014). Revisiting teacher feedback in EFL writing from sociocultural perspectives. *TESOL Quarterly, 48*(1), 201–213.

Lee, I. (2017). *Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts*. Singapore: Springer.

Matsuda, P. K. (2003). Process and post-process: A discursive history. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *12*(1), 65-83.

Molloy, E., Borrell-Carrió, F., & Epstein, R. (2013). The impact of emotions in feedback. In S. Merry, M. Price, D. Carless, & M. Taras (Eds.), *Reconceptualising feedback in higher education* (pp. 50-71). New York: Routledge.

O'Donovan, B., Price, M., & Rust, C. (2008). Developing student understanding of assessment standards: A nested hierarchy of approaches. *Teaching in Higher Education, 13*(2), 205-217.

Orsmond, P., S. Merry, and K. Reiling.(2002). The use of exemplars and formative feedback when using student derived marking criteria in peer and self-assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *27*(4), 309–323.

Pennington, M. C., Brock, M. N., & Yue, F. (1996). Explaining Hong Kong students' response to process writing: An exploration of causes and outcomes. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *5*(3), 227-252.

Polanyi, M. (1958, 1962). *Personal knowledge: Towards a post-critical philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Presseisen, B. Z. (1992, February). *Implementing thinking in the school's curriculum*. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Association for Cognitive Education, Riverside, CA.

Sadler, D. R. (2010). Beyond feedback: Developing student capability in complex appraisal. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(5), 535-550.

Schraw, G. (2009). A conceptual analysis of five measures of metacognitive monitoring. *Metacognition and Learning, 4*(1), 33–45.

Scoles, J., Huxham, M., & McArthur, J. (2013). No longer exempt from good practice: Using exemplars to close the feedback gap for exams. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 38*(6), 631-645.

Smith, C., K., Worsfold, L. D., Fisher, R., & McPhail., R. (2013). Assessment literacy and student learning: The case for explicitly developing students' 'assessment literacy'. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 38*(1), 44–60.

Storch, N. (2018). Written corrective feedback from sociocultural theoretical perspectives: A research agenda. *Language Teaching, 51*(02), 262–277.

Susser, B. (1994). Process approaches in ESL/EFL writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3, 31–47.

Swain, M., Kinnear, P., & Steinman, L. (2015). *Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives* (2nd ed.). Bristol, HK: Multilingual Matters

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tai, J., Ajjawi, R., Boud, D., Dawson, P., & Panadero, E. (2018). Developing evaluative judgement: Enabling students to make decisions about the quality of work. *Higher Education, 76*, 467-481.

Tribble, C. (1996). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Thinking and speech*. New York, NY: Plenum.

Wenden, A.L.(1998).Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 19*(4), 515–537.

Wingate, U. (2010). The impact of formative feedback on the development of academic writing. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *35*(5), 519-533.

Wray, D., & Lewis, M. (1997). *Extending literacy: Children reading and writing non-fiction*. Psychology Press.

Young, R. E. (1978). Paradigms and problems: Needed research in rhetorical invention. In C. R. Cooper & L. Odell (Eds.), *Research on composing: Points of departure* (pp. 29–48). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Yucel, R., F., Bird, J. Y., & Blanksby, T. (2014). The road to self-assessment: Exemplar marking before peer review develops first year students' capacity to judge the quality of a scientific report. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education 39*,(8), 971–986.

8.8 Appendix H: College students' perception of e-feedback: A grounded theory perspective (Chong, 2019b)

Abstract

The increasing prominence of technology has given rise to new ways for writing teachers to give feedback electronically. Specifically, this article focuses on electronic written feedback (e-feedback) given to a group of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) community college students. Although previous studies have investigated the effectiveness of different computer-mediated feedback practices (e.g., video feedback, audio feedback, multimodal feedback), there is a dearth of research which examines the effectiveness of e-feedback and lower-ability students' perception of e-feedback in ESL post-compulsory writing classrooms which adopt a process writing approach. The present study, which aims to shed light on this research gap and inform ESL writing teachers' feedback practices, investigates how feedback is given and attended to online by 93 students from an international community college in Hong Kong. Adopting grounded theory as the methodology and a tripartite definition of written feedback as the conceptual framework, the present study reports students' perception of e-feedback on Google Docs from two sources: students' written reflections and semi-structured, focus group interviews. Implications related to e-feedback practices will be discussed.

Introduction

A new dimension in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing instruction and assessment is made available through the incorporation of technology. Particularly, the increasing prominence of technology has given

rise to new ways for writing teachers to give feedback electronically: feedback given using (online) word-processing software (e.g. Microsoft Word, Google Docs) (Kim, 2010), audio software (e.g. Audacity) (Lunt & Curran, 2010), and screen capture software (e.g. JING) (Stannard, 2017).

The written mode of feedback is often delivered electronically by utilizing the affordances of word-processing software, especially the editing functions. These editing features (e.g. track changes, commenting, highlighting) are perceived positively by university students and instructors because of the increased specificity and quantity of feedback as well as the convenience to read and respond to the feedback (McCabe, Doerflinger, & Fox, 2011). Some e-feedback is delivered online through self-developed systems which facilitate student-teacher and student-student collaboration in the writing process (Alvarez, Espasa, & Guasch, 2012). In their study, Alvarez et al. (2012) found that students responded more proactively to teacher's e-feedback because they not only address the concerns of teachers but also discuss their writing asynchronously using an online annotation system. When audio feedback is given using such software as Audacity, empirical evidence has shown that there is an increased likelihood for students to engage with the feedback, when compared to feedback given in written mode (Lunt & Curran, 2010). In a similar vein, Ice, Curtis, Phillips, and Wells (2007) noted that audio feedback, when compared with written feedback, is more effective in terms of student engagement and uptake. In a more recent study by Brearley and Cullen (2012), findings indicate that audio feedback which is given before students' final submission of assignments is the most helpful, as reflected from the students'

improved performance in their terminal draft. As for the case of video feedback, which is regarded as 'the latest development in alternative methods for organizing feedback systems' (Denton, 2014, p. 53), studies have found that students valued video feedback because it is usually more useful, including not only information about their strengths and weaknesses, but also suggestions for improvement (Jones, Georghiades, & Gunson, 2012). From the teachers' perspective, video feedback given using screen capture technology empowers teachers to give feedback through a plethora of ways, including verbal explanations, written notes, display of online information which result in 'a higher level of effective communication and helps stimulate students to continually improve and modify action' (Jones et al., 2012, p. 593).

In this article, 'teacher feedback' is defined as written summative and formative information given by the teacher which is related to students' writing performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie & Clarke, 2019). Specifically, this article focuses on electronic feedback (e-feedback), which refers to 'teacher's feedback in digital, written form that is transmitted via the web' (Tuzi, 2004, p. 217), as opposed to 'handwritten feedback', given to a group of ESL community college students. E-feedback given on Google Docs is used as an example to represent e-feedback in general because Google Docs is a popular web-based word-process tool given its similar features to Microsoft Word. Moreover, the adoption of such a generic approach enables the discussion of findings to be more transferrable and applicable to teachers who want to use other online word-editing tools (e.g. Turnitin Studio, Microsoft OneNote). The purpose of the present study is to shed light on the affordances and limitations

of e-feedback provided on Google Docs as perceived by a group of less-proficient student-writers; it is, however, not the aim of this article to provide a detailed evaluation of a specific product (Google Docs) in comparison with other similar ones.

Literature review

E-feedback practices

E-feedback has been used by writing teachers to give both synchronous and asynchronous feedback to students (Shintani, 2016; Ene & Upton, 2018). Studies have shown that writing teachers give synchronous feedback (immediate feedback) on web-based word-processing programs namely Google Docs (Kim, 2010). Synchronous e-feedback is given when both the teacher and students are online at the same time. While the students are composing their texts online, the teacher monitor the students' writing process and provide instant feedback, for instance, using the 'comment' function on Google Docs.

On the other hand, asynchronous e-feedback is given to students after they have submitted their writing, which is reminiscent of handwritten feedback in terms of timing. Studies have reported numerous asynchronous e-feedback practices. For example, in a study conducted by Denton (2001), a combination of Microsoft Excel and Word was used by teachers to give feedback after students upload their work online. Teachers can give feedback by either

selecting some standard comments from a statement bank or typing their own feedback.

Effectiveness of e-feedback

Findings from e-feedback research indicated that synchronous feedback can be potentially beneficial to students' writing because 'it conveys needed information about the target language *in context*' (Long, 2007, p.77, italicized in original), which can result in a higher chance of students attending to the feedback. In the case of error correction, synchronous e-feedback allows students to compare their own language production with the appropriate form, which facilitates students' cognitive process and retention (Long, 2007). As for asynchronous e-feedback, despite given after students' writing process, students prefer this kind of feedback to handwritten feedback because the former carries more details and is delivered in a more timely and legible manner. Some students also found this kind of e-feedback fairer because some of the feedback is selected from a statement bank (Denton, Madden, Roberts, & Rowe, 2008). More recently, Shang (2017) found that asynchronous e-feedback is more effective than its counterpart to facilitate the writing of more complex sentences by English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) university students. Nevertheless, Ene and Upton (2018) acknowledged that the effectiveness of asynchronous e-feedback is due to the positive reinforcement of synchronous feedback.

Nevertheless, e-feedback has its limitations. In the study conducted by Samburskiy and Quah (2014), asynchronous corrective feedback was given on

an online knowledge management platform, Moodle. Despite the employment of such feedback strategies as recast and textual enhancement, evidence was lacking regarding how the students had attended to the teachers' e-feedback or used the correct forms in subsequent posts. Moreover, e-feedback sometimes falls short of emotional and personal response, especially when feedback is selected from a statement bank (Hyland, 2016).

Although studies have been conducted to examine the effectiveness of different computer-mediated feedback practices (e.g., video feedback, audio feedback, multimodal feedback), there is a dearth of research which examines the effectiveness of e-feedback (written feedback given online) and lower-ability students' perception of e-feedback in ESL post-compulsory writing classrooms which adopt a process writing approach. The present study, which aims to shed light on this research gap and inform writing teachers' feedback practices, investigates how feedback is given and attended to online by 93 students from an international community college in Hong Kong.

The study

Conceptual framework

While grounded theorists claim that data analysis begins with inductive coding with no pre-conceived coding scheme in order to construct an emergent theory 'grounded' on rich data, such kind of 'pure' grounded theory studies are seldom published because of the criticism of being detached from current research and theories (Mitchell, 2014). Moreover, qualitative methodologists

argued that conceptual frameworks exist in all grounded theory studies, despite not always explicitly stated, because 'researchers bring their views, assumptions, and biases into the study' (Mitchell, 2014, p. 3); these 'views, assumptions, and biases' constitute the 'theoretical orientation' of the study, which is essential to qualitative inquiries (Merriam, 2009). It should also be noted that some grounded theories studies published in different fields serve the purpose of developing new and emergent conceptual frameworks (Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011). With the above reasons, the present study, albeit its adoption of grounded theory as the methodology, is informed by a recent conceptual framework still in its infancy (Chong, 2018). It is expected that the emergent themes from the data could shed new light on the advancement of this conceptual framework.

A tripartite definition of written feedback (in this case, written feedback in digital form) is adopted as the conceptual framework of the current study (Chong, 2018). In this conceptual framework, written feedback is defined as a *product*, an *interactive process*, and an *internal process* (Figure 1). This conceptual framework is selected because it is the latest framework proposed after reviewing recent post-compulsory and higher education literature on written feedback, which matches with the context of the current study i.e. ESL community college students. Moreover, to the best knowledge of the author, there is not a comprehensive conceptual framework for analyzing e-feedback proposed thus far. Another reason for adopting this conceptual framework is because of its generic nature which makes it a suitable framework for such methodology as grounded theory. The generic nature of this framework

complements the emergent nature of grounded theory. The tripartite definition of written feedback enables further exploration, through inductive qualitative coding, the components under each definition.

Feedback is defined as a *product* or 'knowledge of results' (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004, p. 17) from a cognitive perspective. Written feedback refers to the 'evaluative and summative information about how students perform in a learning task', usually given by the teacher and submissively received by the students (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Nicol, 2010). From a recent search of feedback literature in the higher education context underpinned by the notion of 'feedback as product', studies have investigated how technical factors, including focus, specificity, and type of feedback affect students' engagement with feedback. Taking into consideration the Vygotskian notion of 'mediation', written feedback is conceptualized as a mediated learning experience (MLE) (i.e. an *interactive process*) in which 'students engage in assessment dialogues with the teacher and their peers' (Chong, 2018, p. 186). Feedback researchers in higher education refer to this more student-centered and sustainable approach to giving written feedback as 'dialogic feedback', which is subject to the influence of relational and emotional factors including trust (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Carless, 2016; Carless & Chan, 2017; Espasa, Guasch, Mayordomo, Martínez-Melo, & Carless, 2018; Nicol, 2010; Yang & Carless, 2013). In addition to being conceptualized as a product and an interactive process, from a critical-emancipatory perspective (Habermas, 1971, 1984), written feedback given by teachers is understood as an *internal process* in which students are regarded as 'active agents who make use of feedback to connect their present

performance and future expected performance' and such student factors as prior and current knowledge, self-regulations and self-efficacy come into play (Chong, 2018, p.191).
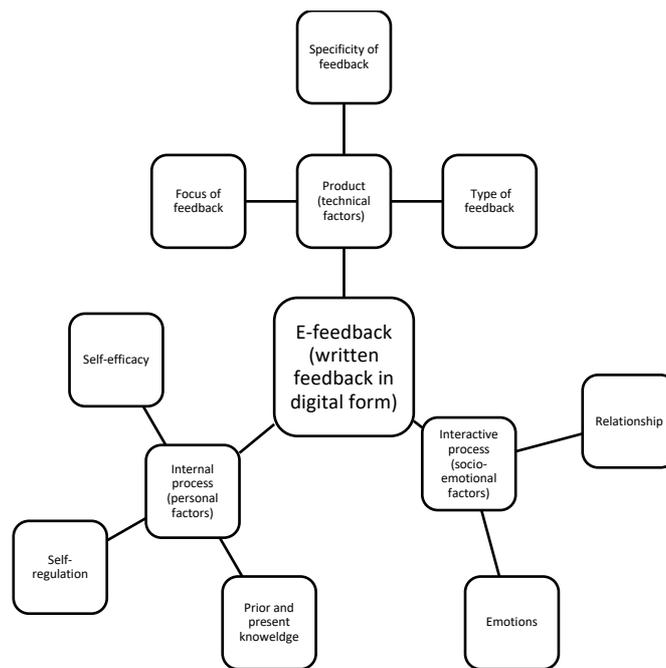
Figure 1: A tripartite conceptualization of e-feedback

Context and participants

The findings reported in this article originate from a larger-scale, year-long study which I conducted at an international community college in Hong Kong where I previously taught at. Being an international community college specializing in Early Childhood Education, the medium of instruction there is English. At the time when this study was conducted (2016-17), the community college offered two programs: Diploma of University Foundation Studies and Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Education (HDECE). The participants of this study were 93 Year 2 students in the HDECE program who signed and returned

an informed consent form. In general, students who were admitted in the HDECE program scored a Level 2 or below in English Language in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination (Level 2 of English Language in HKDSE is equivalent to Band 4.79 – 5.07 in IELTS). With reference to their English proficiency levels, this group of students were regarded as low-achievers. In particular, their scores in the writing paper of HKDSE Examination were the lowest among the four English Language papers (Reading, Writing, Listening and Integrated Skills, and Speaking).

Both purposeful and convenient sampling methods were adopted when selecting student participants for this research project. The sampling was purposeful because this group of students were in their last year of study and they had had plenty of experience reading and responding to teacher e-feedback in different courses (e.g., on Moodle Forum, on Turnitin Studio). At the same time, convenient sampling was adopted which was reflected by the fact that the researcher was also the teacher of the students.

Focusing on a group of ESL students who exhibited weak English proficiency in the post-compulsory education context, this small-scale, classroom-based study aims to throw important light on their perception of reading and responding to the teacher-researcher's e-feedback in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing course by answering the following research question:

- What are the students' perceptions of e-feedback given by the teacher-researcher on Google Docs?

E-feedback practice on Google Docs

This innovative feedback practice using Google Docs was implemented in an EAP writing course which was taught by the teacher-researcher to all Year 2 HDECE students. In the academic writing course, students were required to write an essay related to their major (Early Childhood Education) following a process approach on Google Docs. After receiving feedback from the instructor about the essay, students responded to the e-feedback in a redraft of their previously submitted work. Students responded to the e-feedback in two ways: (1) make changes in their redraft and highlight them, and/or (2) write a response to the feedback using the 'reply' function to clarify or justify. No feedback was given to the redraft but a mark. When responding to the teacher-researcher's e-feedback on Google Docs, students were encouraged to interact with their instructor using the 'comment', 'reply', and 'comment history' features on Google Docs whenever they needed assistance (Examples 1 and 2). A workshop was conducted by the instructor to familiarize students with the communicative features of Google Docs (Table 1). For a detailed description of this e-feedback practice on Google Docs, refer to Chong (2017).

Table 1: Google Docs features related to feedback

Feature	Description
The 'comment' feature	The 'comment' feature allows the user to highlight a specific part of the document and type feedback on the side of it.
The 'reply' feature	The 'reply' feature is activated when the user clicks on the comment box next to the document. By clicking on 'reply', the user can type his response to or question about the comment.
The 'comment history' feature	At the top right of the interface, there is a 'comment' button. By clicking the button, it reveals the commenting history (including the comments and the responses).

school can form their brain's connections successfully (NIFL, n.d., p.3). "By given this right kind of stimulation through early experiences, each of these brain cells is capable of sprouting up to 20,000 different synapses between them" (Ford, n.d., p.2), which stimulates children's brain development, forms the basis of future learning, and develops their cognitive and language abilities efficiently. Another important justification of teaching early literacy to children in early childhood setting aims to develop young children's language abilities that link to their academic success in school (Zinsser, n.d., p.1). For instances, when young children learn to read at an early age in kindergarten, they develop their early literacy and language skills further (Rangel, 2009, p.1), such as "paying attention to pictures in storybooks and talking about the story fluently" (Ford, n.d., p.2). Additionally, children are also improved their attention spans and developed better concentration in reading that lead to higher grades in every subject (Ford, n.d., p.2). Consequently, by teaching early literacy to children in kindergarten, it develops children's language abilities necessarily and succeeds their academic success in school. Having discussed
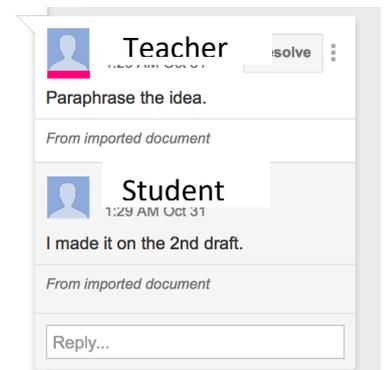
Example 1: The 'comment' and 'reply' functions
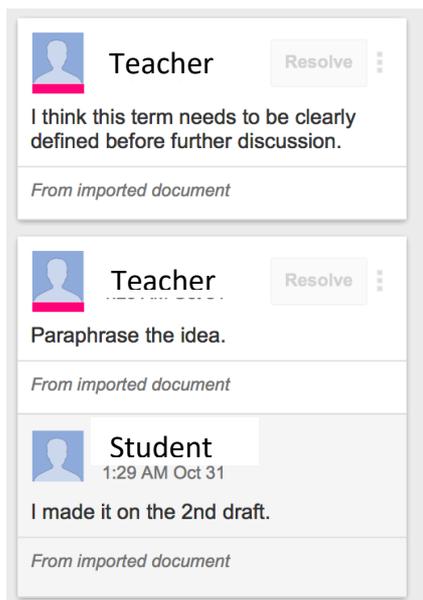
Example 2: The 'comment history' function

Data collection and analysis

To probe into students' perception of teacher's e-feedback, data were collected from two sources: (1) a reflection sheet completed by the 93 students and (2) semi-structured focus group interviews with 12 student participants. In the reflection sheet, students were asked to reflect on their experiences in writing, reading and responding to teacher's e-feedback on Google Docs in either Chinese or English. In addition, three semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with 12 student participants, with four participants interviewed in each round. The interview protocol could be found in Appendix A. For data collected through (1), a research assistant typed the students' reflection on a Word file, making changes only when there were grammatical errors and when a translation to English was needed. Then, the author analyzed the data using a qualitative data analysis software called *NVivo* using an inductive thematic analysis method, *grounded theory* (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory is defined by Charmaz (2014) as:

systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves… Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis. (p. 1)

Specifically, three stages of coding were conducted: initial line-by-line coding to identify emergent categories (themes), focused coding to merge and

re-categorize the categories identified in the initial coding stage, and axial coding to identify the relationships between categories and enrich the properties (themes) of each category. In total, 17 categories were identified based on the inductive coding and analysis of students' written reflections, in which four of them were related to the research question of the present study (Figure 2).

Reading e-feedback (20)		Responding to e-feedback (15)		Giving e-feedback (13)		Dialogic e-feedback (5)	
read timely feedback	easy to understand	make immediate changes	easy to respond	give detailed and clear feedback	give timely feedback	ask questions about feedback	a flexible mode of communication
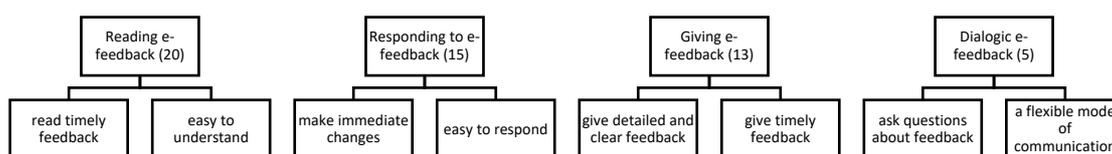
Figure 2: Initial and focused coding of students' reflection sheet responses (the number of codes which endorses each category is in parentheses)

With reference to the 17 categories identified, 12 student participants were selected based on the theoretical sampling method of grounded theory. Theoretical sampling, which is usually adopted in a later stage of data collection and analysis, refers to the selection of participants on the ground that the 'participants… [are] experts in the experience or the phenomenon under investigation' (Morse, 2007, p. 231), which aims to 'elaborate and refine your

theoretical categories' (Charmaz, 2006, p. 103). These student participants were invited to attend an interview because their reflections shed light on the majority of the categories identified in the coding of students' reflective responses as shown in Figure 2. Each focus group interview lasted for approximately two hours although some of the questions asked in the interviews were related to other aspects of the year-long study focusing on theorizing students' perception of teachers' written feedback. The interview data were transcribed and, in some instances, translated by a research assistant. A hard copy of the transcription was given to each student interviewee for member checking to ensure the accuracy of the transcription and translation (Koelsch, 2013). No requests for changes in the transcription were received. The interview data were analyzed in the same manner as the student reflections using *NVivo*. The categories and properties identified initially in Figure 1 were modified and enriched, adhering to the iterative spirit of grounded theory which advocates a 'constant comparison method' for analyzing qualitative data (Charmaz, 2006) (Figure 3). In addition, axial coding was done to underscore the relationships amongst the categories (Figure 4). In total, 59,838 words of data were transcribed and analyzed.

Figure 3 hierarchy content:

Responding to e-feedback (25)
- make immediate changes
  - email notification
- easy to respond
  - comment textbox
  - highlight

Reading e-feedback (24)
- read timely feedback
  - email notification
- easy to understand
  - legible feedback
  - text-specific feedback
  - pin comments with specific parts of the text

Giving e-feedback (22)
- give detailed and clear feedback
  - typing speed
  - no space limits
- give timely feedback
  - less work for teachers

Dialogic e-feedback (11)
- student-initiated response
  - ask questions
  - explain changes made
  - comment on teacher's feedback
- a flexible mode of communication
  - anytime, anywhere
  - more convenient than email exchanges

Colors of e-feedback (15)
- Clarity
  - different colors for different areas
- emotional responses
  - less negative

Figure 3: Initial and focused coding of students' reflection sheet responses and focus group interviews (the number of codes which endorses each category is in parentheses)


Figure 4 content:

Left column (bottom to top, with upward arrow):
- Giving feedback
- Discussing feedback
- Reading feedback
- Responding to feedback

Nested circles (innermost to outermost):
- Google Docs enables teachers to give more timely, detailed, clear and specific e-feedback
- Google Docs encourages student-teacher dialogues on the work/feedback given
- Students are more motivated (with less negative emotions) to read the e-feedback and more likely to understand the e-feedback
- It is easier for students to respond to the e-feedback and make timely changes

Figure 4: Axial coding of students' reflection sheet responses and focus group interviews

Since the article reports on a qualitative study, excellence in research is exemplified by credibility and richness of data rather than validity, reliability, and generalizability (Savin-Baden & Major, 2012). Three measures were taken to ensure that students' reflections and opinions were genuine and rich. Firstly, the collection of data was done in late November 2016 when all course assessments were completed and graded. In this way, students could openly express their feelings and opinions without worrying that some of their comments would adversely affect their grades. Secondly, the teacher-researcher established a very positive rapport with the students, as illustrated by the fact that the teacher-researcher would elicit students' opinions regarding the lesson arrangement and design regularly; in this way, the students were used to giving their opinions candidly. There were multiple instances in the focus group interviews when the student participants openly criticized the teacher-researcher in a friendly and constructive manner (e.g., they commented that the handwriting of the teacher-researcher was illegible which made note-taking difficult in lessons). Thirdly, before students started writing the reflections and doing the interviews, they were reminded the importance of sharing their own experience and stories to support their viewpoints. In addition, the teacher-researcher repeatedly underscored that there was no definite answer to the questions.

Findings

Giving e-feedback

From the students' perspective, there is a higher likelihood that the teacher would give more detailed and clearer feedback on Google Docs than on paper:

It does make a difference actually, even on the Google Docs you do give more comments on different paragraphs, and even on the paper you did, but I think in the Google Docs, it's more descriptive and has more in-depth details of what I've been doing all along, as compared to the paper. (focus group interview)

Such difference in terms of depth and clarity of feedback, as noted by the students, is due to two reasons: (1) the teacher can type faster and more accurately on the computer and (2) there is no space limit for the teacher to give feedback. Regarding (1), a student commented:

I find that your typing speed is very fast, so I think this is also a good method for you… a better method, and the comments. (focus group interview)

As for (2), another student noted that it is more flexible for the teacher to type longer feedback because, unlike giving feedback on paper, there is no space limit:

I do think that in the electronic one the teacher has more flexibility and convenience of giving feedback as compared to the paper one. (focus group interview)

Another theme noted under the category of 'giving e-feedback' is that, compared to giving feedback on a Word document, Google Docs enables the teacher to give more timely feedback because it involves less work for the teacher to do so:

Because I think there may be less workload for teachers to work on because when [teachers give feedback on a Word document,] teachers have to type each of us comments and print it out and attach it to the article, compared to teachers just highlighting a sentence and giving feedback. The time saved can let the teachers do other work so… so it encourages the teachers to give better feedback. (focus group interview)

Discussing e-feedback

The category 'dialogic e-feedback' underscores how e-feedback given on Google Docs facilitates assessment and feedback dialogues between students and the teacher (Chong, 2018; Carless, 2006):

Google Docs help[s] us to interact with our teacher in our writing journey. (reflection sheet)

I can have interaction with the lecturer on how to improve my writing

through the net which enables me to understand my mistakes and how

to avoid them next time. (reflection sheet)

Fully utilizing the 'reply' function of Google Docs (see Table 1), students

interacted with the lecturer in three ways: (1) asking questions related to the

feedback, (2) explaining changes they made in response to the feedback, and

(3) commenting on the teacher's feedback.

(1) <u>Asking questions related to the feedback</u>

For example, students can use the note function [the reply function] when he

or she has extra questions. At the same time, the teacher can also do this

way. (reflection sheet)

(2) <u>Explaining changes students make in response to the feedback</u>

… like there's a small box and then the teacher writes it down and you reply

straight to it if you want to and you think that there's something that you want

the teacher to know, so I think that's one of the useful tools I found. (focus

group interview)

(3) <u>Commenting on the teacher's feedback</u>

Interviewer: So the major difference is you can comment on my comment,

right?

Student: Yeah, in the end you will read back my comment in the Google Docs.

But if it's on paper, we will not write comments on it for the teacher to read.

You cannot do this. (focus group interview)

The second theme which emerged under the category of 'dialogic e-feedback' is 'a flexible mode of communication. To the students, the interactions between the teacher and students can be done anytime and anywhere on Google Docs, so that they can extend way beyond the lesson time ("Google Docs can enable both the teachers and students to communicate elastically in terms of time and place." (reflection sheet)). Moreover, compared with student-teacher email exchanges, students preferred interacting with their teacher on Google Docs:

> Just write it and then yeah you know now, so if you use the Word document, then I will send an email to you, and then you will get back to me, and then I'll send it to you to the second draft and then you get back to me… after for a few emails you will feel confused which is the last version, so I think Google Doc serves a good purpose for this part. (focus group interview)

Reading e-feedback

From the perspective of the students, because of the built-in email notification of Google Docs, students would be notified when the teacher has added a comment to their work ("After our teacher gave some comments of

essay we will receive an email for telling us what the teacher said". (reflection sheet)). In this way, it enables students to read teacher's feedback in a timely manner ("It makes me look at the teachers' feedback immediately." (reflection sheet)).

At the same time, students expressed their favoritism to reading e-feedback given on Google Docs because of three reasons: (1) legible feedback, (2) text-specific feedback, and (3) pining comments with specific parts of the text.

Firstly, students found it easier to read and understand teacher's e-feedback because unlike handwritten feedback, the former is clearer and more legible ("There is a plus point as both teacher and student will understand each other's handwriting." (reflection sheet)). Secondly, students preferred e-feedback given on Google Docs to handwritten feedback because the feedback is more text-specific:

Writing on Google doc was very convenient especially when one click the teachers feedback, it will show which part of your essay is he particularly referring to. (reflection sheet)

Student: The feedback teachers give is like a dialogue bubble…

Interviewer: Okay.

Student: What is it? It's next to where the problem is, so it's better for me.

Interviewer: Why better with the speech bubble or text box?

Student: Cause then I can know, "okay, I have problems for this part", but then if the feedback is at the bottom of the whole passage, then I won't know which part you are talking about, maybe the feedback does not clearly indicate which part of the essay it is referring to, so it's much better to place the comments next to the said parts. (focus group interview)

The third affordance of Google Docs regarding students' reading of teacher's e-feedback is its 'comment' function. In addition to the fact that the 'comment boxes' are placed on the right of the student text, when students click on the 'comment box', Google Docs shows and highlights the sentence(s) which is pinned with the 'comment box'. This saves the students time to figure out which part of the text the feedback is related to:

I can see the comments of teachers with the highlights and because the comments are right next to the sentence the teachers highlight so I can refer to the comments on my work and I can make changes and improvements more easily. (focus group interview)

Additionally, quite a lot of students discussed how the teacher used colors when giving e-feedback. The first comment that students had vis-à-vis colors is that it increases the clarity of the feedback because the teacher used different colors to highlight different areas of students' work. Below is an excerpt from one of the focus group interviews where three students discussed the advantages of using different colors when giving feedback:

Student 1: Like when you are using Google Document, you can use different colors, like different highlighters to represent different areas, maybe…

Student 2: functions.

Student 1: Yeah, functions. So maybe that part is grammatically correct or that part is…

Interviewer: Content, use different color, so it's better?

Student 1: Yeah, yeah.

Student 3: But the teachers can also use highlight pen.

Student 2: Yeah, they can use highlight pen.

Interviewer: How often do they use it?

Student: They rarely.

One interesting emergent theme under the category is students' emotional responses to teacher's e-feedback given on Google Docs. Specifically, students preferred e-feedback to handwritten feedback because they found the former more encouraging:

…because on the online document you only highlight the words, like when we study we highlight it's like positive but not negative, but if you use the red pen you just highlight the things like in our secondary school and that's too negative. (focus group interview)

On the contrary, students held a more negative emotional response to teacher's handwritten feedback which is very often given in red color in the Asian context:

I think the handwriting has emotions unlike the Google Docs, because like, if you highlight the part that has mistakes in the Google Docs using yellow color…, it seems neutral, but when I receive the paper with red color and highlights and question marks, I feel "oh this is the worst scenario, I don't even want to read it" because of the emotions. (focus group interview)

I mean the color is too sharp that it will like affect me negatively and I feel uncomfortable. (focus group interview)

Some students attributed their negative emotional response to teacher's feedback written in red ink to the traditional Chinese culture that it is impolite to write something to another person in red because the color represents 'warning' and 'criticism':

Yes I totally agree with you, because you know, how to say, in Cantonese, we say "要 d 面子咁" (dignity). If the teacher writes everything in red color and then your classmate will see it and will feel shocked and will say, "Wow, so many problems?" I prefer Google Docs. (focus group interview)

I think teachers may feel disappointed and angry about the work so they mark very roughly and it's quite challenging to see all the red colors. In my age, red colors are not good and too much will scare the students, but Google Docs doesn't show these emotions so I feel more calm to see comments without emotions. (focus group interview)

Another cultural factor which was pointed out by another student is related to the 'cynical' culture in Hong Kong:

The society in Hong Kong likes criticism, so usually the teacher marks your shortcomings using the red pen, so I think it's not very pleasant. (focus group interview)

Responding to e-feedback

Referring to the email notification function of Google Docs, students perceived it positively because it allows them to make changes to their work immediately which facilitates in-between draft revisions:

I think it's a really good idea for every teacher also. Moreover, it lets teacher give feedback so easily and helps us make changes immediately. (reflection sheet)

Responding to the feedback on Google Docs has also been really helpful since I am able to directly relate to the feedback that has been given and make immediate changes for my essay. (reflection sheet)

It is more comfortable for you and me, no need to email or submit every time when making changes. (reflection sheet)

With reference to the 'comment' and 'highlight' functions of Google Docs, students found it more convenient to respond to teacher's e-feedback. Another major reason why students became more motivated to respond to teacher's e-feedback is because teacher gave more text-specific feedback on Google Docs:

Google Docs such as a good helper which can allow the teacher to write the feedback or comments on the right hand side. Therefore, I can make improvement easily. (reflection sheet)

Students can revise their assignments and they can also share teachers' and the students' comments. The teacher can make suggestions about certain paragraphs or sentences and ask students to reply to it. (reflection sheet)

…because it shows that the specific area I have to improve. (focus group interview)

Another reason which motivates students to respond to teacher's e-feedback on Google Docs is because it takes less effort for students to revise their work, thanks to the 'copy and paste' function. This function is especially helpful for students to focus on the changes which need to be made and save students' time of doing revisions:

I think it's good to do it online because I don't need to copy anything word by word the second time. (focus group interview)

Copy and paste and then delete something and rewrite something. It's faster than when we need to write whole essay again. (focus group interview)

Last but not least, students reflected that they were more willing to respond to the e-feedback given by the teacher because the layout of Google Docs makes the writing process 'more tidy':

I think because working on the computer makes the layout more tidy. If the homework was handwritten, no matter if the handwriting is good-looking or not… for example, I have ugly handwriting, the teacher will also have a hard time reading it. Using computer also has its benefit, which is tidiness. (focus group interview)

The comments on Google Doc are very convenient for me to respond and it is easier to respond than on paper work, because on paper work I can't even read my words and so I can make amendments on Google Docs more easily. (focus group interview)

Discussion and implications

Adopting a tripartite conceptual framework of written feedback and grounded theory as the methodology, this qualitative study explores the perception of 93 ESL community college students in Hong Kong towards e-feedback on Google Docs. The emergent categories and themes suggest that generally speaking, this group of students preferred e-feedback given on Google Docs to written feedback on paper by their teacher because of a number of reasons which correspond to the conceptual framework adopted for the current study.

Feedback as a product: Technical factors identified in the current study concern the various ways which teachers should go about giving e-feedback. To the students, the feedback functions on Google Docs, including the 'comment', 'reply', and 'email notification' functions helped them read and understand teacher's e-feedback. In addition, from the students' perspective, the teacher gave more detailed and timely feedback than when feedback was given on paper because teachers usually have a faster typing speed; moreover, unlike giving feedback on paper, there is no space limit in a Google Docs file which restricts the depth and length of teacher's feedback. Furthermore, students found the teacher's e-feedback clearer because the teacher utilized different colors to highlight different aspects of students' work. The students' viewpoints reported in the current study corroborate findings in feedback research in higher education (Busse, 2013; Glover & Brown, 2006). Contrary to previous studies focusing on university students (Carless, 2006), however, ESL community college students seem to treasure more detailed and specific feedback. From the findings above, ESL writing teachers who attempt to give e-feedback can harness the affordances of the editing functions and colors to give more text-specific feedback. Since these functions are not exclusively for Google Docs (except the 'email notification' function), teachers who give feedback on word-processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word) can give e-feedback in a similar manner.

Feedback as an interactive process: Conceptualizing e-feedback as an interactive process, a number of socio-emotional factors have emerged from the qualitative data analysis. In particular, the 'comment', 'reply', and 'email

notification' functions motivated students to become more proactive in interacting with the teacher online regarding their work. Students made effective use of these functions to ask the teacher questions, explain the changes they made, and comment on the teacher's feedback when students share a divergent point of view. One reason why students were more willing to engage in this 'feedback dialogue' with the teacher was due to the flexible mode of communication. Some students remarked that they could communicate with the teacher regardless of time and place, which is more convenient than email exchanges. Regarding emotional factors, students had a positive emotional response to e-feedback given on Google Docs because of the use of yellow color for highlighting and the avoidance of using red ink. Similar to previous studies on students' perception of teacher's feedback, students not only respond to feedback cognitively and behaviorally, but also emotionally. Such emotional response of students is usually long-term (Ende, Pomerantz, & Erickson, 1995; Molloy, Borrell-Carrió, & Epstein, 2013). Unlike findings from previous feedback studies which repeatedly show that teacher feedback exerted negative emotions to students (Ilgen & Davis, 2000), findings from the current study show that students felt less intimidated by the e-feedback given on Google Docs because of the color of the feedback. To ESL writing teachers, the findings suggest a promising way to giving feedback to students which is less emotionally disturbing and more encouraging – highlight using a more positive color (e.g., yellow) and avoid writing with a red pen. As for relational factors, e-feedback given on Google Docs facilitated student-teacher interactions about the feedback online. Such timely and dialogic nature of feedback, which is essential to students' uptake of feedback, development of

evaluative judgement (Tai, Ajjawi, Boud, Dawson, & Panadero, 2018), and feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018), is difficult to be achieved in handwritten feedback because students can only interact with the teacher during lesson time or via email, both of which implies a delay in the response time. The instant comment and reply function of Google Docs is its strongest forte when compared to other word-processing software and email correspondence.

Feedback as an internal process: When e-feedback is understood as an internal process, personal factors related to students' motivation to respond to the teacher's feedback have been identified. The findings indicate that students are more engaged in the feedback process by taking an active role in responding to the teacher's e-feedback (either by asking for clarifications or making changes in the revised draft). Compared with handwritten feedback, students expressed that they were more eager to respond to e-feedback because they understood the feedback better and there are functions on Google Docs which made responding to the teacher's e-feedback easier, including the comment textbox and the use of highlighting. Additionally, the increased eagerness of students to respond to the e-feedback stemmed from the fact that students could make immediate changes to the teacher's feedback because of the email notification function. Findings of previous feedback studies which investigated students' response to teacher's written feedback suggest that less proficient writers would respond to teacher's feedback in a more superficial way than more proficient ones because they could not understand the feedback and they possessed limited linguistic knowledge to

address the problems (Porte, 1997). Nevertheless, contrary of previous studies, lower-ability students who responded to e-feedback in the current study displayed strong enthusiasm in revising their work based on the feedback given by the teacher. To motivate students to respond to their written feedback, ESL writing teachers can facilitate synchronous and asynchronous communications with students using the interactive features on Google Docs and other word-processing software. With constant communications, students' understanding of the feedback would increase, which in turn, contributes to a higher likelihood for them to utilize feedback to improve their work (i.e. closing the feedback loop).

Conclusion

The present study contributes to the research base of teacher feedback in the ESL context by exploring a group of community college students' perception of e-feedback given on Google Docs. Adopting grounded theory as the methodology, the study presents a thick description of ESL students' viewpoints through a systematic and iterative method of inductive coding; such insights are applicable and useful to writing teachers teaching in similar ESL/EFL contexts. Despite gathering rich insights, this study has a number of limitations, First, similar to other qualitative studies, the relatively small sample size restricts the generalizability of the findings. Second, the actual e-feedback and students' responses to the feedback were not analyzed because of the limited scope of one paper. Future studies can build on the current study to analyze the e-feedback given by teachers and students' responses using a discourse analysis approach to triangulate with the findings related to students' and teachers' perception. Another worth-pursuing research direction is to compare the effectiveness of e-feedback and handwritten feedback by adopting

a quasi-experimental design which divides students into a control group (no feedback) and two treatment groups (one group using e-feedback and one group using handwritten feedback). Through the use of pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test, effectiveness of receiving no feedback and the two kinds of written feedback can be compared to provide empirical evidence in favour of or against the adoption of e-feedback.

References

Alvarez, I., Espasa, A., & Guasch, T. (2012). The value of feedback in improving collaborative writing assignments in an online learning environment. *Studies in Higher Education, 37*(4), 387-400.

Boud, D., & Molloy, E. (Eds.). (2013). *Feedback in higher and professional education: Understanding it and doing it well*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Brearley, F. Q., & Cullen, W. R. (2012). Providing students with formative audio feedback. *Bioscience Education, 20*(1), 22-36.

Busse, V. (2013). How do students of German perceive feedback practices at university? A motivational exploration. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(4), 406-424.

Carless, D. (2006). Differing perceptions in the feedback process. *Studies in Higher Education, 31*(2), 219-233.

Carless, D. (2016). Feedback as Dialogue. *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1–6. Retrieved at http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_389-1

Carless, D., & Chan, K. K. H. (2017). Managing dialogic use of exemplars. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*(6), 930-941.

Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(8), 1315-1325.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Chong, I. (2017). Assessment dialogues between teachers and students in e-writing portfolios. *TESOL Journal, 8*(1), 240-243.

Chong, I. (2018a). Interplay among technical, socio-emotional and personal factors in written feedback research, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 43*(2), 185-196.

Chong, S. W. (2018b). Interpersonal aspect of written feedback: A community college students' perspective. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education, 23*(4), 499-519.

Denton, P. (2001). Generating coursework feedback for large groups of students using MS Excel & MS Word. *University Chemistry Education, 5*, 1-8.

Denton, D. W. (2014). Using screen capture feedback to improve academic performance. *TechTrends, 58*(6), 51-56.

Denton, P., Madden, J., Roberts, M., & Rowe, P. (2008). Students' response to traditional and computer-assisted formative feedback: A comparative case study. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 39*(3), 486-500.

Ende, J., Pomerantz, A., & Erickson, F. (1995). Preceptors' strategies for correcting residents in an ambulatory care medicine setting. *Academic Medicine, 70*(3), 224-229.

Ene, E., & Upton, T. A. (2018). Synchronous and asynchronous teacher electronic feedback and learner uptake in ESL composition. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 41*, 1-13.

Espasa, A., Guasch, T., Mayordomo, R. M., Martínez-Melo, & Carless, D. (2018). A dialogic feedback index measuring key aspects of feedback processes in online learning environments. *Higher Education Research & Development, 37*(3), 499-513.

Gibbs, G., & Simpson, C. (2004). Does your assessment support your students' learning. *Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 1*(1), 3-31.

Glover, C., & Brown, E. (2006). Written feedback for students: Too much, too detailed or too incomprehensible to be effective? *Bioscience Education, 7*(1), 1-16.

Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and human interests*. Trans. Jeremy J. Shaprio. London, UK: Heinemann.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action: Vol 1. Reason and the rationalization of society*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational   Research, 77*(1), 81-112.

Hattie, J., & Clarke, S. (2019). *Visible learning feedback*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hyland, K. (2016). *Teaching and researching writing* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Ice, P., Curtis, R., Phillips, P., & Wells, J. (2007). Using asynchronous audio feedback to enhance teaching presence and students sense of community. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 11(2) http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/JALN/v11n2/index.asp.

Ilgen, D., & Davis, C. (2000). Bearing bad news: Reactions to negative performance feedback. *Applied Psychology, 49*(3), 550-565.

Jones, N., Georghiades, P., & Gunson, J. (2012). Student feedback via screen capture digital video: Stimulating student's modified action. *Higher Education, 64*(5), 593-607.

Kim, S. (2010). Revising the revision process with Google Docs. In Kasten, S. (Ed.), *TESOL classroom practice series* (Effective Second Language Writing Chapter 18). Alexandria, VA: TESOL Publications.

Koelsch, L. E. (2013). Reconceptualizing the member check interview. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 12*, 168-179.

Long, M. H. (2007). *Problems in SLA*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Lumsdon, L. M., & McGrath, P. (2011). Developing a conceptual framework for slow travel: A grounded theory approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*(3), 265-279.

Lunt, T., & Curran, J. (2010). 'Are you listening please?' The advantages of electronic audio feedback compared to written feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(7), 759-769.

McCabe, J., Doerflinger, A., & Fox, R. (2011). Student and faculty perceptions of e-feedback. *Teaching of Psychology, 38*(3), 173-179.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mitchell, D. (2014). Advancing grounded theory: Using theoretical frameworks within grounded theory studies. *The Qualitative Report*, *19*(36), 1-11.

Molloy, E., Borrell-Carrió, F., & Epstein, R. (2013). The impact of emotions in feedback. In S. Merry, M. Price, D. Carless, & M. Taras (Eds.),

Reconceptualising feedback in higher education (pp. 50-71). New York, NY: Routledge.

Morse, J. M. (2007). Sampling in grounded theory. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 229-244). London: Sage.

Nicol, D. (2010). From monologue to dialogue: Improving written feedback processes in mass higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(5), 501-517.

Porte, G. K. (1997). The etiology of poor second language writing: The influence of perceived teacher preferences on second language revision strategies. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 6*(1), 61-78.

Samburskiy, D., & Quah, J. (2014). Corrective feedback in asynchronous online interaction: Developing novice online language instructors. *CALICO Journal, 31*(2), 158-178.

Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (2012). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Shang, H. (2017). An exploration of asynchronous and synchronous feedback modes in EFL Writing. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 29*(3), 496-513.

Shintani, N. (2016). The effects of computer-mediated synchronous and asynchronous direct corrective feedback on writing: a case study. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 29*(3), 517-538.

Stannard, R. (2017). A genuine innovation in the delivery and form of feedback on students' written work. In M. Carrie, R. M. Damerow, & K. M. Bailey (Eds.), *Digital language learning and teaching: Research, theory, and practice* (pp. 179-187). New York, NY: Routledge.

Tai, J., Ajjawi, R., Boud, D., Dawson, P., & Panadero, E. (2018). Developing evaluative judgement: Enabling students to make decisions about the quality of work. *Higher Education, 76*(3), 467-481.

Tuzi, F. (2004). The impact of e-feedback on the revisions of L2 writers in an academic course. *Computers and Composition, 21*, 217-235.

Yang, M., Carless, D. (2013). The feedback triangle and the enhancement of dialogic feedback processes. *Teaching in Higher Education, 18*(3), 285-297.