

Vietnamese secondary students' engagement in correcting their EFL writing: Using peer group and teacher feedback

Trang Thi Doan Dang, Janet Scull and Raqib Chowdhury

Monash University, Australia

Although the effect of teacher and peer feedback on writing improvement in the field of second language teaching has been discussed in scholarly research for several decades, student engagement with both forms of feedback integrated into a sequence of discovery, correction and revision remains under-researched. This study investigates the impact of feedback during a teaching sequence to support students' writing development, along with students' engagement in each phase of the teaching design. Drawing on Vygotsky's concept of guided learning, the teaching sequence was developed to prioritise collaborative group work and address students' limited engagement with feedback-correction and revision practices. The sequence was administered to 31 Vietnamese secondary students over eight weeks, from which an exploratory method was adopted. The analysis of data from audio recordings and groups' rewritten texts exhibited varied levels of student engagement. Importantly, the findings demonstrate the potential for integrating forms of feedback into the correcting sequence through group-based tasks to maximise students' learning.

Introduction

While feedback on aspects of writing is commonly used in second language (L2) writing classrooms, a growing body of research has debated its effectiveness (Ferris, 1999; Truscott, 1996, 2007). This has resulted in several newer studies that have examined the impact of teacher feedback and peer feedback upon L2 students' writing outcomes (Ruegg, 2015; Tai et al., 2015). There has also been discussion on students' engagement with feedback and how this is affected by the various types of feedback, students' language abilities, and their views on learning tasks (Han, 2017; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010; Zheng & Yu, 2018). Building on extant research, the study reported in this paper contextualises teacher and peer feedback within a designed-in (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005), scaffolded learning process. A learning design that integrated teacher and peer feedback within a sequence of discovering, correcting, and rewriting while engaging students in group work was implemented. Specifically, feedback in this sequence involved teacher's and peers' oral and/or written comments, and students' responses to feedback, to foster students' engagement in L2 writing letters and descriptions.

The process of feedback-correction and revision through a sociocultural lens offers insights for improving L2 teaching. As a scaffolded construct, the process offers students a certain degree of assistance for discovering, correcting, and rewriting practices through collaborative learning and teacher feedback and support to facilitate student engagement. As Jacobs (2006) has shown, collaborative learning is known to equip students with scaffolding strategies for learning. This is endorsed by students who acknowledged opportunities to work with and learn from peers through group correction, despite unequal contributions by group members (Dang, 2021). Similarly, collaborative learning

also enables students to gain confidence and skills in solving problems while they experience individual differences (Bui, 2019). Further, when socially engaged in learning, students have opportunities to negotiate and collaborate with peers (Storch, 2001), while also exercising learner autonomy and critical thinking (Yang et al., 2006). Such negotiated and collaborative processes are also useful for building aspects of social and cognitive learning (Fisher, 2005) as students work on identified language issues through a range of learning tasks. Drawing on understandings of scaffolding as a process for mediating learning (Wood et al., 1976), the present study involved students in mixed-ability group work alongside peer and teacher feedback, to explore student engagement within a learning sequence and how their engagement impacted the groups' rewritten texts.

Literature review

Feedback practices in the sociocultural framework

From a sociocultural perspective, learning occurs in a social context where those more knowledgeable, such as a teacher and/or advanced peers, facilitate the learning of another within his/her potential "zone" of proximal development (ZPD; Vygotsky, 1978). Wood et al. (1976) referred to this support as scaffolding, where an expert provides assistance to enable a child or novice to solve learning problems or carry out learning tasks that they cannot perform independently. All forms of feedback, according to this perspective, are "potentially relevant for learning, but their relevance depends on the learner's ZPD" (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994, p. 480). Accordingly, feedback can be of potential value if it is responsive to learners' needs in L2 learning and appropriate to an individual learner's developmental zone. Sociocultural approaches to corrective feedback support students to apply the knowledge achieved from corrections to new texts as evidence of language development (Storch, 2018).

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) later adopted Vygotsky's concept of ZPD to investigate the effect of corrective feedback on English as a second language (ESL) learners' writing development. Corrective feedback in this instructional study was operationalised by one-on-one tutorial conferences through a "regulatory scale" with varying levels of explicitness. The tutor, for example, used indirect feedback to guide students to notice and correct their own errors. If the student was unable to self-correct, the tutor then offered more direct feedback by locating the error and also denoting the type of error. The findings showed that corrective feedback needs to be graduated and contingent; that is, to be adjusted to an individual learner's ability to self-correct and to be responsive to the learner's linguistic errors, with support withdrawn when the learner performs independently.

Although responding to the tutor's forms of feedback enabled students to self-correct, one-on-one tutorial sessions have rarely been used in English as a foreign language (EFL) writing classrooms in Vietnam due to large class sizes. The present study addresses the one-on-one unique channel by operationalising the sequence through group work together with teacher's intervention. As a scaffolded correcting design, this sequence

offers students opportunities to act on specific issues in their written texts by working collaboratively with peers in groups and responding to teacher and peer feedback.

Other studies have also adopted the notion of ZPD to examine the effects of feedback practices (Erlam et al., 2013; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Rassaei, 2014). Although these studies utilised scaffolded feedback, this was provided through oral conferences between an interlocutor and an individual learner to solve linguistic issues. In these studies, the scaffolded feedback was initiated with less direct feedback moving to more direct forms in response to the learner's attempts. It was found that scaffolded feedback was more effective than other forms of feedback, including non-scaffolded feedback (Nassaji & Swain, 2000), recasts (Rassaei, 2014), and explicit feedback (Erlam et al., 2013). Research into oral scaffolded feedback has provided important insights for the present study; however, scaffolded feedback in this study involves peer collaboration together with the teacher's scaffolding strategies to facilitate students' responses to both linguistic and language issues or errors and gaps evident in the students' language learning repertoires (Appendix A).

Teacher and peer feedback practices

Despite recent acknowledgment of teacher and peer feedback as beneficial to L2 students' writing performance, its effectiveness remains debated. Previous studies have shown that teacher feedback or comments on a single draft resulted in little improvement in L2 students' writing (Polio et al., 1998; Truscott, 1996, 2007). However, other studies have demonstrated that teacher feedback on multiple drafts enabled students to improve their rewritten texts (Ferris, 1995) and prompted alternative revisions (Ferris, 1997). In addition, teacher feedback on either content or grammar was found useful for improving writing (Yang et al., 2006) and grammatical accuracy (Ruegg, 2015), and for producing correct revisions (Ruegg, 2017).

More recent studies have claimed that students who received teacher feedback on linguistic errors, content, and organisation demonstrated less improvement than students in teacher and peer feedback groups (Dang, 2019b; Tai et al., 2015). While the effect of peer feedback has been challenged, recent research has reported that it is beneficial for improving subsequent revisions (Yu & Lee, 2015), writing accuracy (Kim & Emeljanova, 2019), and gaining motivation and self-confidence (Hojeij & Baroudi, 2018). However, peer feedback practices are also impacted by individuals' beliefs and values, goals, feedback experience and training, teacher feedback, and learning and assessment (Yu & Hu, 2017). The conflicting outcomes from previous research have led to the question of how students engage with both teacher and peer feedback, and how their engagement impacts on the quality of their rewritten texts.

Engagement with feedback

Research on student engagement with feedback has been in the form of small-scale studies that examine varying dimensions of engagement. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010), for example, examined whether students' engagement with reformulations and editing

symbols through both direct (providing a correct form of an error) or indirect (indicating an error) feedback influenced their immediate revisions. Four case-study pairs' discussions of each type of feedback were audio-recorded, their texts were analysed, and all language-related episodes were counted and classified as either limited engagement or extensive engagement. Limited levels of engagement involved episodes in which pairs only read the feedback, acknowledged, or repeated it, while extensive engagement included feedback with explanations and comments. The results showed students engaged more with indirect feedback than direct feedback, and thus extensive engagement with indirect feedback resulted in higher levels of uptake. In another more recent study, Zheng and Yu (2018) researched low-proficiency students' affective, behavioural, and cognitive engagement with teacher's written corrective feedback. The analysis of Chinese students' oral reports, their revisions and second drafts, and interviews indicated that students' low English level limited their behavioural and cognitive engagement, and that there were variations among affective, behavioural, and cognitive dimensions.

Recent studies in higher education have reported different levels of affective, behavioural, and cognitive engagement with peer feedback. Fan and Xu (2020) claimed that while university EFL students behaviourally and cognitively engaged with feedback on grammatical forms, they had low cognitive and behavioural engagement with the content feedback. Their engagement was varied according to the type of feedback. In contrast, Saeli and Cheng (2021) showed that Iranian EFL upper-intermediate and advanced students' affective engagement with peer feedback was at most slight as they considered the teacher a more knowledgeable, reliable source to guide their use of grammar. However, the textual analysis of peer-reviewed drafts showed that students improved their quality of writing, especially in content and vocabulary. These variations in engagement with peer feedback on linguistic and language issues led to questions of how students engage with peer group correction together with teacher feedback in genre-based writing.

Empirical evidence from our recent study (Dang et al., 2022) has shown that learning tasks, peer collaboration, types of feedback, categories of gaps, first language, and language ability also determine students' levels of engagement. This paper further discusses how students engage in the correcting process from a sociocultural perspective, elaborating *expert-novice* roles and how student engagement influences their rewritten texts. In particular, the paper references the dimensions of teacher scaffolding strategies and peer collaboration.

The present study therefore extends the scope of feedback practices in two ways. First, it addresses individual students' language ability by sequencing tasks by levels of difficulty, in ways that may engage all learners in the sequence in authentic classroom contexts. Second, it incorporates forms of feedback in learning tasks, using group-work (peer collaboration) together with the teacher's intervention to facilitate students' engagement with feedback.

Method

As part of a larger study, the present study adopted an exploratory approach to explore students' engagement in the group-based learning sequence and how their engagement impacted on rewritten texts. The enquiry was embedded in an eight-week teaching intervention from early February to the end of April, 2016, with data collected in the form of audio recordings and groups' rewritten texts, in order to gain a deeper understanding of students' engagement with feedback.

Research site and participants

The study was conducted at a secondary school in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam after obtaining ethics approval from Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee and permission from the school and participants, including parents' and students' assent. The participants were 31 Year 10 students aged 16 (females $n = 14$; males $n = 17$) who had spent five years learning English as a compulsory subject. The participating students were conveniently chosen and purposefully divided into eight mixed-ability groups (Groups 1-8) based on their English scores in the first semester exam, which ranged between low (0-4.75), medium (5-6.75), good (7-8.75) to excellent (9-10). There were seven groups with four students and one group with three students.

In addition, two teachers of English were involved in the teaching of the writing and correcting practice intervention over a period of eight weeks. The eight writing sessions were conducted in the mornings and preceded eight correcting sessions in the afternoons. The first teacher, with 14 years of experience in teaching English, instructed the students to write four letters and four descriptions and instigated collaborative correcting practices (see Appendix A). The first author participated in all eight correcting sessions to observe and to audio record the engagement and performance of the eight student groups.

Aims and procedures of the correcting sequence

The sequence reported in this paper was designed to scaffold students' learning. The teacher used indirect feedback and/or questions as a form of assistance to prompt the groups' interactions and collaboration to identify and treat gaps and to rewrite the texts that individual students could not perform independently. The sequence was mediated through peer collaboration under the teacher's guidance and support, ranging from indirect and less indirect to direct forms, rather than through the unique channel of "expert-novice scaffolding" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 79). From this approach, writing development can be seen as moving from mutual engagement and shared practices, and from social channels to independent learning. Further, the process focused on interaction that is founded on the premise that learning "occurs *in* rather than *as a result of* interaction" (Ellis, 2009, p. 12). Groups of students in this study were therefore empowered to respond to issues in their written texts and positioned as active agents rather than passive feedback recipients (Lee, 2014).

The process was also designed to incorporate various levels of difficulty in ways that would foster students' responses to issues in their written texts. The eight groups were provided with the same feedback guide (Appendix B) and written outputs that had been chosen based on the preselected linguistic and language issues. Students were instructed to work collaboratively with peers in groups during the discovering, correcting, and rewriting phases (summarised in Appendix C). The three phases were conducted over eight weeks with eight different writing topics; each week two-hour correcting sessions were conducted. To prepare for the sessions, enlarged copies of the texts and markers were provided for each group to assist with the rewriting and correcting of the texts. This allowed the students to work together to rewrite the texts and display them for the whole class. It also assisted the students to amend their rewritten texts in response to peer feedback while presenting the rewritten texts. The correcting sessions were conducted in English and Vietnamese languages - for example, the teacher moved between English and Vietnamese when explaining difficult issues and students asked questions in English and/or Vietnamese.

Discovering gaps

The discovering task prompted students to attend, locate, and identify the three categories of language issues/errors (see Appendix A) in their writing of letters and descriptions. The eight student groups received either indirect feedback and/or less direct feedback to discover the errors, by working with their peers in collaborative groups. After identifying issues, the groups were encouraged to display their texts for the class to review. If there were unidentified errors, the teacher would prompt students to locate specific errors by asking questions; for example, "Is there an error related to tense in the second paragraph?"

Correcting practice

The correcting task aimed to create a correcting experience with peers in groups and the teacher's support. Students collaborated with peers in groups (intra-peers) to correct the identified gaps prior to receiving the teacher's indirect corrections. This arrangement aimed to encourage active participation in the learning tasks. After completing their corrections, groups either displayed their corrected texts and explained their corrections or shared their corrected papers with other groups for checking and receiving feedback. These tasks were designed to offer the students further opportunities to notice and renotice the gaps, learn from peers' corrections across groups (inter-peers), provide and respond to feedback, and to ask for further clarification.

Rewriting practice

The rewriting task emphasised reflective and conscious learning by rewriting and comparing practices. The eight groups practised rewriting the first draft after correction, which aimed to provide students with an opportunity to think about the correct use of language and to make improvements in the revised texts. They then compared their revised text with the original text to review their corrections and modifications. These two tasks helped raise students' awareness of language as they reflected on their knowledge of correction and of transferring such knowledge to another piece of writing.

Data analysis

An inductive approach was adopted to analyse data from audio recordings. The audio recordings of the eight correcting sessions were first transcribed verbatim. The 16 hours of recording required 128 hours of transcription. The researcher then read, reviewed, and categorised the transcripts according to themes in response to the research question. This paper reports extracts and groups' rewritten texts that demonstrate evidence of groups' processing of different types of errors and their levels of engagement, as well as improvements in the groups' written texts. Transcripts excerpts and the students' handwritten texts are included as an authentic and nuanced account of their participation in the learning or correction sequence, demonstrating their developing control over all aspects of English written expression.

Findings

The analysis of data from audio recordings and students' revisions indicated that although all eight groups participated in the process, they exhibited either extensive, scaffolded/partial, or limited levels of engagement across each phase of the learning sequence and varied levels of accuracy and control over the targeted features of writing. The teacher's assistance and the feedback guide (see Appendix B) were seen to direct students to engage in discovering errors. In some cases, however, they were unable to discover other errors or provide explanations for all errors discovered. The engagement of the eight groups in the correcting and rewriting process also varied, as these tasks involved higher cognitive processes.

Extensive engagement with correction and revision

The data demonstrated students' extensive levels of engagement as they interacted with each other to solve issues in their written texts. Students in Group 4 collaborated with peers to work out an appropriate topic sentence while providing and responding to feedback. These aspects are described as both social and cognitive features of collaborative learning (Fisher, 2005). Excerpt 1 shows evidence of students' (S) engagement through collaboration with peers *within* the group as well as the teacher's (T) mediation as students worked on the text 'Your favourite school'.

Excerpt 1

- 1 S1: We need a topic sentence in paragraph two.
- 2 S2: I don't think so.
- 3 S3: Why not?
- 4 S2: We already have it.
- 5 S1: Which one?
- 6 S2: The school we enjoy the most is Marie Curie high school.
- 7 S4: No, it's in paragraph one.
- 8 S1: Yes, it's in the introduction. We need one in paragraph two.
- 9 S4: Let's read main ideas of paragraph two to find the topic.
- 10 S1: ... I found many activities in this paragraph.
- 11 S3: Yes, activities and location ... but I don't know to make a topic sentence.

- 12 S4: Ah, my favourite school has organised many interesting activities.
 13 S3: How about location? We should add location.
 14 S1: I don't think we can add activities and location.
 15 S3: Why not?
 16 S4: We cannot organise location, very difficult to add location in the topic, just delete it.
 17 S3: Can we change the verb organise? I don't know which verb ... Teacher, please help us! So difficult...
 18 T: What?
 19 S3: Which verb can we use to add location in this topic sentence?
 20 T: If you can't use the verb organise for activities and location, use activities and location as a subject, for example, your school's activities and location ...
 21 S3: Marie Curie school activities and location attract me...
 22 S1: Marie Curie school's activities and location attract many students.
 23 S4: Good!

Students acted as both *novice* and *expert* in the Excerpt 1 conversation as they directed each other to find an appropriate topic sentence. We can see that of the four students in Group 4, three engaged with adding a missing topic sentence and sought to fully understand their corrections. For example, S1, S3 and S4 in lines 7–13 actively engaged in searching for an appropriate verb to add to the topic sentence, but they had difficulties in choosing a verb for the topic sentence, as in lines 14–17. The teacher then provided the students with some clues (line 20). It is evident that collaboration resulted in a level of understanding that enabled the students (*except S2*) to complete the topic sentence, as in lines 21–23. This is an indication of students' active engagement in amending a language issue on writing description.

Similarly, Excerpt 2, an extract from the correcting session in response to the prompt 'Past memorable activities', is evidence of an extensive level of engagement *across* groups that was promoted by *novice-expert* scaffolding. Peers across groups and the teacher responded to Group 5's presentation of their correction by providing indirect feedback and cues to direct Group 5's attention to the incorrect use of 'because'.

Excerpt 2 (Dang et al., 2022)

- 1 S1: Why don't you combine the sentences in paragraph 2 "And the water was splashed all my teacher body. His body was all wet".
 2 S2: How?
 3 S1: Use "because".
 4 S2: Okay, let's try ... his body was all wet because the water was splashed.
 5 S3: Is it correct?
 6 S2: Not sure, but ...
 7 S3: It should be "my teacher[s] body was all wet because the water was splashed".
 8 S4: It's ok now.
 9 T: Good! You know to use because to combine the two sentences, but there are still errors, double check it.

- 10 S5: Can we change the verb active?
11 T: Read your sentence.
12 S5: My teacher[’s] body was all wet because the guys splashed the water.
13 T: Is it correct class? My teacher body was all wet because the guys splashed the water.
14 S6: My teacher’s body was all wet because the guys splashed the water.
15 T: That’s fine, but this sentence is better “my teacher was wet because the guys splashed the water on his body”.
16 S5: That’s why we need you, teacher.

The conversation in Excerpt 2 indicates an extensive level of engagement among groups to act on the use of “because” to combine the two sentences. Clearly, S1 in line 1 responded to inter-peer suggestion by asking the question as a form of indirect feedback to call for the revision by peers. S2 in line 4 attempted to use “because” to combine the two sentences in response to peer’s prompt, but the sentence remained incorrect. Lines 5, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 14 exhibited students’ engagement with feedback through their collaboration to search for a correct use of “because” to combine the two sentences. The teacher then provided both encouragement and indirect feedback (lines 9 and 11) to encourage students to think and report their correction. She also asked a question (line 13) to further motivate other groups to check their correction and finally provided a correct answer after students’ several unsuccessful attempts. The progression from the levels of indirect and less direct to direct feedback seemed to have been useful to help students restructure the sentence. The teacher’s mediation was, indeed, successful in prompting students’ actions in modifying the sentence by changing the verb to the active form. This suggests that feedback from the teacher and peers is useful for promoting student engagement as students negotiated and collaborated with peers to act on the use of “because”.

In another example, individuals of Group 1 were seen to work collaboratively *within* their group to rewrite the text “The Fox and the Grapes”. Figure 1 shows evidence of Group 1’s improved rewritten text that resulted from their extensive engagement with the rewriting practice. The rewritten text addressed all the three types of language issues and was a consequence of working effectively and collaboratively with peers in their group.

Figure 1 illustrates that students were able to revise their text. Group 1’s revisions and their corrections of conjunctions and tenses made the text more comprehensible. This suggests that extensive engagement with feedback resulted in comprehensive revisions, building students’ confidence and skill in writing.

The picture shows the story "The Fox and The Grapes".
 One day, there was a fox taking a nap in the jungle and dreamed of having a bunch of grapes for his dessert. While he was wandering, he saw a purple bunch of grapes that he thought of. Although the fox tried to get the fruit by his forefeet, he couldn't get it. He thought the bunch of grape was too high. Then, he went backward and jumped to take the delicious grapes, but he failed again. He felt exhausted and dizzy because he used all his energy to take the grapes twice. Although the grapes were juicy and the fox would love to have it, he went away and tried to convince himself by saying "the grapes were probably sour anyway."
 We learn that try to give up things that never belong to us.

Rewritten text - Group 1

Figure 1: Rewritten text: Collaboration and achievement

Scaffolded/partial engagement with discovering and rewriting tasks

The Excerpt 3 conversation between the teacher and students is an example of *expert-novices* scaffolding. Upon Group 4's presentation of the gaps discovered, the teacher used questions as a scaffolding strategy to foster students' engagement in discovering remaining language issues that Group 4 could not identify in their group. Consider the following excerpt from Group 4 during the correcting session of "An invitation letter".

Excerpt 3

-
- | | | |
|----|----|--|
| 1 | T: | Is the purpose statement of the letter clear? |
| 2 | S: | Uhum ... yes ... no. |
| 3 | T: | Why did the author write the letter? |
| 4 | S: | To invite a friend to his birthday party, to join her birthday party, to celebrate his birthday... |
| 5 | T: | Good! Underline the purpose of the letter if it is not clear. |
| 6 | T: | What are the activities and kinds of food in paragraph 2? |
| 7 | S: | Singing, dancing, blind man[?]s] buff, chicken, hamburger, and coke |
| 8 | T: | Good! What does paragraph 2 describe? |
| 9 | S: | Activity and food. |
| 10 | T: | Is there a topic sentence with these key words in paragraph 2? |
| 11 | S: | Uhum ... no. |
| 12 | T: | Take notes and add a topic sentence when correcting. |
-

The Excerpt 3 conversation shows students' engagement with discovering language issues. The teacher used questions in lines 1, 3, 6, 8 and 10 to direct students to detect the unclear meaning of the purpose of the letter and a missing topic sentence in the second paragraph. As a form of indirect feedback, these questions, in fact, triggered students'

attention to the gaps that resulted in their responses in lines 4, 7 and 9. In this case, students' engagement in identifying gaps were directed by the teacher's guiding questions.

As an example of *partial* engagement, Group 7 was unable to provide explanations for the errors identified. While Group 7 could identify a missing verb and the incorrect use of the simple present tense and conjunction ("but"), they could not explain *why* the underlined sentence was incorrect. The Excerpt 4 conversation between students of Groups 3 and 7 shows that explaining the gaps detected was beyond some students' levels of ability.

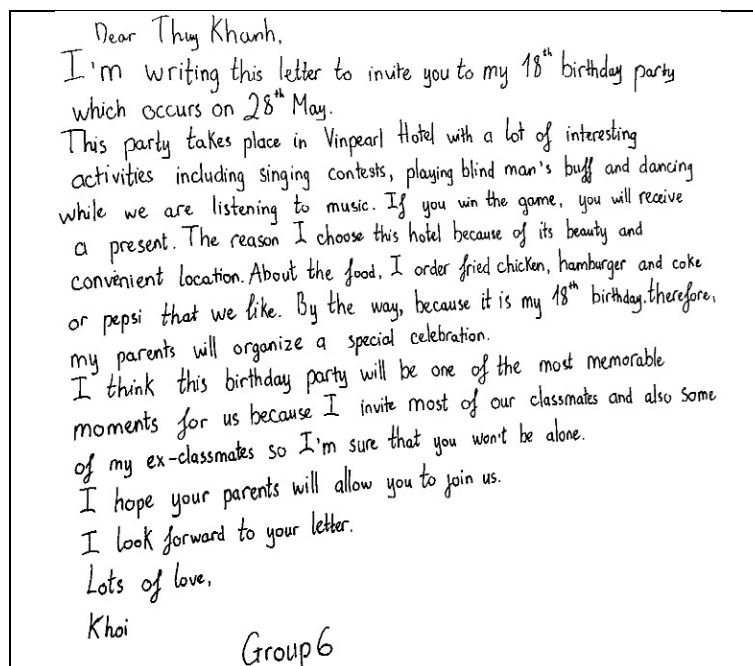
Excerpt 4

Group 3: Can you explain why you underline[d] the sentence "*although we all wet, but we always smile happily.*"?

Group 7: Uhum ..., just see it's wrong, [we] don't know to explain.

It can be seen from Excerpt 4 that engagement of Group 7 did not entail a level of understanding. When Group 3 responded to Group 7's presentation by asking peers to explain the underlined error, the latter group failed to provide an explanation to respond to the inter-peer feedback.

In the following example, Group 6's partial engagement with the rewriting practice resulted in relatively few corrections. Figure 2 shows an example of this group's rewritten letter of invitation that partially addressed the three types of errors described in the feedback guide.



Dear Thuy Khanh,

I'm writing this letter to invite you to my 18th birthday party which occurs on 28th May.

This party takes place in Vinpearl Hotel with a lot of interesting activities including singing contests, playing blind man's buff and dancing while we are listening to music. If you win the game, you will receive a present. The reason I choose this hotel because of its beauty and convenient location. About the food, I order fried chicken, hamburger and coke or pepsi that we like. By the way, because it is my 18th birthday, therefore, my parents will organize a special celebration.

I think this birthday party will be one of the most memorable moments for us because I invite most of our classmates and also some of my ex-classmates so I'm sure that you won't be alone.

I hope your parents will allow you to join us.

I look forward to your letter.

Lots of love,

Khai

Group 6

Figure 2: Partially improved rewritten text

Group 6's rewritten text, as shown in Figure 2, is evidence of partially responding to the feedback sequence. It shows a clear statement of purpose, the correct use of the simple present tense and the use of conjunctions to link ideas in the text. In the second paragraph, however, there remains a missing topic sentence, inconsistent use of tense and omission of verb in the clause "because I invite".

Limited engagement with rewriting texts

The following excerpt shows varied levels of engagement between Group 2 and Group 8, and their engagement taking place when students used both English and Vietnamese. While Group 2's engagement with the sharing practice was limited as they only responded to Group 8's questions and did not acknowledge the peer suggestions, Group 8 was willing to explain and share their rewritten text "The most popular celebrations" with peers.

Excerpt 5

- 1 G8: Our group use[d] because to explain why we like Tet in the first paragraph.
- 2 G2: Great ...
- 3 G8: We added a topic sentence "adults and children participate in different activities on Tet" in the second paragraph.
- 4 G2: Why?
- 5 G8: [Be]cause this paragraph describe[s] activities parents and children do. Các bạn viết lại như thế nào? [How did you rewrite your paragraph?]
- 6 G2: Look! bọn mình viết lại câu thứ hai trong đoạn một và nối hai câu cuối của đoạn ba vào đoạn hai [We rewrote the second sentence in paragraph one and combined the last two sentences of paragraph three with the second paragraph.]
- 7 G8: You can use "because" to combine some sentences in paragraph two.
- 8 G2: I think it's okay.

The above conversation shows evidence of Group 2's limited engagement with the rewriting practice. Group 2's responses to Group 8's question in line 6 indicates some minor revisions, while their response in line 8 is an indication of not responding to peer feedback.

Figure 3 on the following page indicates Group 2's rewritten text with some minimal improvements.

Group 2's rewritten text in Figure 3 is an example of minimal improvement to the text as a consequence of limited engagement in the feedback sequence. The topic sentence in the second paragraph is missing and the students failed to use conjunctions such as "because", "although" and/or "but" as described in the feedback guide and also suggested by inter-peers feedback (Group 8; Excerpt 5). Their limited engagement with rewriting the texts also suggests that the rewriting task was either too challenging or students lacked motivation or the support necessary to improve on the texts.

In my country, there are many popular events like Tet or lunar new year, Teacher's Day, Women's Day. Tet is one of the most popular celebrations and it is our favourite celebration.

Tet is generally celebrated on late January or early February. Tet makes family get together and everyone can relax. On this occasion, adults and children are busy and excited with many different activities. For example, before Tet, we buy and prepare special food, clean and decorate the house with colorful flowers. During Tet children send their best wishes to family members and receive lucky money from parents and grandparents. Family members have more opportunities to get together by various kinds of games and enjoying traditional food. I like Tet very much. Tet make my family get together. I can relax at home and get lucky money from other. Tet is an important holiday in Viet nam.

Group 2

Figure 3: Limited improvement

Discussion

Based on the findings, the factors that are thought to have promoted students' levels of engagement with each phase of the sequence and their improvement in rewritten texts are discussed below.

The improvement in students' written texts can be interpreted from a pedagogical perspective. The findings suggest the usefulness of engaging students in discovering, correcting, and rewriting tasks that involve multiple levels of learning to develop knowledge of appropriate linguistic and language forms. This is seen through how students worked collaboratively with peers within and across groups to act on the incorrect forms of language (Excepts 1 and 2) that enabled them to gain an awareness of gaps and the corrections needed to rewrite the texts. The rewriting tasks further prompted students to reflect on and use the language features corrected to rewrite the texts as a form of output, which Polio (2012) considered to have an impact on learning. The improved rewritten texts (Figures 1 and 2) support the potential of rewriting a corrected essay (Polio, 2012) and highlight the importance of engaging students with levels of learning tasks in which various forms of feedback are integrated. Although students in the present study were scaffolded to engage in discovering and correcting linguistic and language issues (Excepts 1, 2 and 3), their limited engagement with the rewriting task resulted in minimal improvement to the text (Figure 3). This suggests that the learning sequence is most effective when students engage in *all* three tasks. The limited improve in the rewritten text (Figure 3) is somewhat in line with extant research that claims that teacher feedback resulted in little writing improvement (Polio et al., 1998; Truscott, 1996, 2007). The learning sequence, then, is an example of a scaffolded learning

design that emphasises aspects of learning-by-doing via group work, varying from discovery, correction, to revision, which increases students' understanding of learning features in their written texts.

The Vygotskian concept of the "more knowledgeable other" may elucidate levels of both full and scaffolded engagement. As a mediator, it is evident that the teacher facilitated students' learning by assisting them to engage in performing learning tasks that are appropriate to them as individuals (Williams & Burden, 1997). Another example is that advanced students supported less capable peers by providing and responding to feedback and explaining and sharing their corrections and revisions with them. As such, all students could benefit from the supportive and collaborative learning environment, where they are empowered to provide and respond to the teacher and peer feedback. While advanced students might gain knowledge through tutoring and sharing with peers, in return, less capable students can learn from their peers when working within and across groups (Excerpts 1, 2, 4 and 5). This interpretation highlights the potential of mixed-ability group work, including interdependence, accountability, interaction, and socialisation, as discussed by Jacobs (2006). It also explains why students could accomplish the learning tasks that they are unable to do individually and on their own, for example, improving their rewritten texts (Figures 1 and 2), although levels of improvement varied.

Students' language ability and the learning tasks are also possible explanations for their partial and limited engagement in some instances. Low English ability might account for the fact that Group 7 was unable to provide explanations to respond to Group 3's question (Excerpt 4) and Group 2's responses to Group 8's indirect feedback (Excerpt 5). This finding finds support from Zheng and Yu (2018) who claimed that low English level limited student engagement with feedback. Moreover, the rewriting task might challenge less advanced students (Figure 3) as this requires students' reflection on their metacognitive knowledge of appropriate use of language features. The explanation finds support from Ellis's (2010) framework for investigating corrective feedback, where students' language ability and the learning activities are identified as affecting the extent to which learners engage in corrective feedback.

Teacher and peer feedback provides a further explanation for students' corrections of linguistic forms and ideas, and corresponding improvements in the rewritten texts. The teacher's use of questions, indirect feedback, as well as direct feedback with cues as a form of scaffolding appeared to have fostered the individuals' shared responsibilities for discovering and treating the preselected gaps and reproducing the texts. The improved texts clarify the usefulness of asking questions to elicit students' responsive actions to specific gaps, peers' interactions, clarifications, and explanations. The findings corroborate empirical evidence showing that indirect feedback extended student engagement and resulted in higher levels of improvement (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010) and the positive impact of teacher feedback on writing accuracy (Yang et al., 2006), grammatical use (Ruegg, 2015), and revisions (Ruegg, 2017).

In addition, providing and responding to peer feedback throughout the process seems to have strengthened students' detecting and noticing skills, and awareness of correction of

errors in texts. This finding supports the idea that students should locate and work on their own errors (Erlam et al., 2013; Lee, 2009), understand the usefulness of peer feedback for revisions (Yu & Lee, 2015) and writing improvement (Saeli & Cheng, 2021). However, the findings also suggests that a *combined* mode of teacher and peer feedback is useful for L2 learning if it is sequenced in learning tasks. The study provides evidence of students' responses to teacher and peer feedback integrated into the scaffolded process to respond to the call for engaging students in corrective feedback practice (Ferris, 2011; Hyland, 2010; van Beuningen, 2010).

Conclusion

The findings of the present study contribute new scholarship to the area of L2 writing and feedback literature by engaging students in multiple encounters with feedback through the three processes of discovery, correction, and revision. As illustrated, students' active responses to the process resulted in their improved rewritten texts in an effort to promote L2 acquisition. The study has also extended previous feedback research by connecting students' engagement and learning outcomes. Responding to the teacher's questions, indirect feedback, and direct feedback assisted the students to move from shared knowledge to improved performance. Advanced peers were also involved in scaffolding the learning of less able peers as students worked in mixed-ability groups, resulting in the improved rewriting of texts. The findings of this study suggest teachers should mediate students' engagement by providing guiding questions and indirect and/or direct feedback to elicit students' corrections, with considerations of their language ability and learning tasks.

The scaffolded correcting design offers EFL writing classrooms an opportunity to maximise both cognitive and social learning through students' active engagement with feedback-correction and revision practices. The adaption of feedback integrated into the sequence has particular relevance for L2 teaching in Vietnam where transmissive teaching practices limit students' active negotiation of learning in writing classrooms. The evidence of levels of engagement in the correcting process adds evidence to the feedback literature holding that EFL learners could act as both *expert* and *novice* to respond to linguistic and language issues in their texts in a scaffolded learning environment.

With reference to future research, the outcomes suggest that L2 effective corrective feedback is dependent on the quality of the relationship and interactions between agents and activities. This invites teachers and researchers to revisit feedback-correction practices in both local and global contexts, and to continue to explore the social collaborative aspects of L2 learning. The limitations of this study also signal the need for further investigation. As a sample of one class in one city, the findings may obviously not be fully representative of other populations, with the generalisability and transferability of the understandings gained to other settings dependent on the degree they are similar to the people, times and settings in the research described (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). This indicates a need for further experiments for generalising the findings. The narrow range of linguistic structures investigated could also be expanded with a broader range of target forms considered in future research.

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Appendix A: Correcting topics and categories of issues (Dang, 2019a)

N	Correcting topics	Categories of issues
	<i>Phase 1:</i> Students learn to write in groups in their writing classes (morning sessions)	<i>Grammatical errors:</i>
	<i>Phase 2:</i> Correcting treatment (afternoon sessions)	
1	A paragraph to describe one of the most popular events/celebrations in Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the simple present and past tenses conjunctions: although and because
2	A letter to tell your friend about your past	<i>Non-grammatical issues:</i>
3	memorable activities	
4	A paragraph to describe your favourite school	
5	Picture description: the boy and the wallet	
6	Picture description: the fox and the grapes	
7	A letter of invitation	
8	A letter of acceptance	
	A letter of complaint	

Appendix B: Feedback guide

Dang (2019a) adapted from Yang et al. (2006)

Use the following suggestions to discover gaps and discuss some ways to correct the identified gaps in your pieces of writing in your group. You are encouraged to give more than one solution to treat errors.

Non-grammatical issues

- Does the writer introduce the topic of the letter or description? Yes/No
 - If no, suggest the ideas to introduce the topic of the letter or description.
 - If yes, circle it and check a ✓ after the sentence.
- Is there a topic sentence in each paragraph? Yes/no
 - Point out the paragraph without a topic sentence. Paragraph
 - Suggest a topic sentence for the paragraph.
- Are ideas relevant to the topic sentence? If you think the ideas are not appropriate, please suggest ideas that are more relevant.

Grammatical errors

- Is the use of tense correct?
 - If yes, check a ✓ after the correct tense.
 - If no, provide corrections.
- Does the writer use appropriate conjunctions (i.e., because and although) to link ideas?
 - If yes, check a ✓ after the correct conjunction.
 - If no, provide corrections.

Appendix C: Phases of intervention (Dang, 2021)

Phase of sequence	Student engagement with feedback and correction
<i>Discovering gaps</i> (Group work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> locate/identify 3 categories of gaps on feedback sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in peers' texts working with peer group receive indirect/direct feedback and cues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> from the teacher peers in groups after all gaps identified: display text for class review, and, prompted by teacher or peers among groups to find remaining errors
<i>Correcting practice</i> (Group work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with peer group to correct errors identified in phase 1 <i>during this work</i> get indirect/direct feedback from teacher <i>then</i> display + explain corrected text to class <i>or</i> share corrected text with other groups to check corrections respond to teacher and peer feedback
<i>Rewriting practice</i> (Group work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rewrite draft including corrections compare rewritten texts with original to review corrections

Dr Trang Thi Doan Dang is a lecturer at Ho Chi Minh City Open University. She has worked as a sessional teaching associate in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia where she obtained her PhD in TESOL. Her research interests are in the fields of English language pedagogy, applied linguistics, and teacher professional development. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0029-944X>
Email: doantrangmc71@gmail.com

Dr Janet Scull is an associate professor in the School of Curriculum, Teaching and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education, Monash University. Her teaching and research focus on areas of language and literacy acquisition, literacy teaching and assessment and effective teaching practices in the early years of schooling and exploring relationships between language, literacy and learning. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1772-4190>
Email: janet.scull@monash.edu

Dr Raqib Chowdhury is a senior lecturer in the School of Curriculum, Teaching and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education, Monash University. He has published in the areas of TESOL and ELT, culture and pedagogy, English Teacher Education, international education, social justice and identity. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3136-6545>
Email: raqib.chowdhury@monash.edu

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