

It's Robot Time: The Use of Automated Written Feedback in L2 Writing: A Reflection of Student Engagement

Ahmad Syafi'i¹, Oikurema Purwati², Ahmad Munir²

¹Universitas Negeri Surabaya, STKIP Al Hikmah Surabaya; ²Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Corresponding email: ahmad.21037@mhs.unesa.ac.id, syaf@hikmahuniversity.ac.id

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we discuss a critical reflection on the extent to which the use of automated written corrective feedback, in this case, Paper Rater, aligned with the actual classroom implementation, particularly viewed from students' perception and their writing performance. Students perceive that the feedbacks given during the revision process are useful, particularly in teacher feedback, peer, and the Paper Rater. All students generally understand all the comments/corrections they get from their lecturer, and peer. Some students ignore the whole task after reading the peer's feedback. Students are behaviourally engaged with the multiple feedbacks they receive during the revision process. They also believe that the changes they make in the second draft make my writing better. The feedback they received from their lecturer makes them feel willing to do the task again and will overcome their mistakes with practice. Students are happy with the corrective feedback they receive from teacher, peer and Paper Rater. It clarifies that the students are cognitively engaged with the multiple feedbacks they received. The students also claimed that teacher-student conference is very helpful to mediate their confusion.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing in second language (L2) context is commonly considered as challenging task. In this case, therefore, frequent and thorough feedback plays significant role for L2 writing instruction. Moreover, (Hyland & Hyland, 2006) ensured that feedback on L2 writing is widely acknowledged to provide significant learning benefits by providing writers with an understanding of who their audience is and what they value in a text. However, its effectiveness is largely depended on students' responses. (Handley, Price, & Millar, 2011). Meanwhile, L2 teachers may be expecting students to be deeply engaged with their feedback on L1 and L2 learners' written texts. This expectation, however, may be unrealistic (Han & Hyland, 2015).

Meanwhile, rapid technological advancements have influenced how corrective feedback is delivered, particularly in writing classes (Miranty, Widiati, Cahyono, Suzila, & Sharif, 2021). Currently, feedback is delivered automatically or so-called Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE). The two main components of AWCF are a scoring engine that generates

automated scores and a feedback engine that generates automated written feedback (Bai & Hu, 2017). It enables teachers to meet this challenge by providing instant computer-generated quantitative and qualitative feedback on a large number of submitted essays (Bai & Hu, 2017).

AWE is considered to be more advantageous because students can receive automatic scores and feedbacks. It is believed to be more objective and consistent rather than teacher feedbacks. Therefore, it would improve motivate students' motivation and awareness. Moreover, the score and feedbacks provided by AWE enable to engage students in autonomous writing reflection and revision. AWE, in other hand, reduces their writing anxiety (Miranty & Widiati, 2021). By using AWE, the teachers can provide more detailed and consistent feedbacks. The feedbacks resulted from AWE enable the teacher to intensively interact with the students. AWE provides form-focused feedback such as grammatical accuracy and mechanics, the teachers can devote their time and efforts to evaluating content and organization. It is in line with (Isnawati, Sulisty, Widiati, & Suryati, 2019) who revealed that it is advantageous to implement teacher-student conference in providing feedback during the writing process.

One of the AWEs utilized in this research is Paper Rater. It utilizes artificial intelligence (AI) to help students write better. Its features are plagiarism checker, grammar and spelling checker. In addition, Paper Rater provides feedbacks on vocabulary usage, sentence length and variability phrases to avoid, passive voice detection, readability statistics, and also analysis of sentence beginnings.

Extensive research has been conducted on the use of automated correction written feedback in writing instruction in a variety of contexts. Several researchers focused on the use of AWC to facilitate students writing performance, such as (Burstein, Mc Caffrey, Elliot, & Klebanov, 2020; Shang, 2019; Shermis, Garvan, & Diao, 2008; Wilson, Olinghouse, & Andrada, 2014) fostering self-regulated learning (Yu, 2015), promoting students learner self-efficacy (Wilson & Roscoe, 2020), the constraints students experience when using AWC (Khoshnevisan, 2020), and students uptake after receiving feedback (Guo, Feng, & Hua, 2021; Ranalli, 2018). However, very few of them specifically address the relationship between AWC and student engagement.

Student's engagement with teacher feedback is defined as his or her response to the WCF obtained from the teacher, and this engagement manifests itself in the perspectives of affection, behavior, and cognition. In this sense, student engagement with teacher feedback is a "meta-construct," and the three dimensions of affective, behavioral, and cognitive engagement are interconnected under the apex construct (Zheng & Yu, 2018). Affective engagement is defined as a student's attitude (Han, 2017; Han & Hyland, 2015), which is manifested in affect, judgment, and appreciation (Mahfoodh, 2017). Similarly, Ellis (2010) stated that student engagement can be examined from an affective perspective by focusing on how learners respond attitudinally to feedback received. Accordingly, we refer to students' feelings and emotions expressed upon receiving WCF in conjunction with changes in these feelings and emotions when revising text as the affect; personal judgements of admiration/criticism as well as moral judgements of praise/condemnation towards WCF as the judgement; and valuing the worth of teacher WCF as the appreciation. They are sub-constructs under the affective dimension of student engagement with teacher WCF.

In this reflection, L2 writing instruction practice will be elaborated thoroughly, particularly in relation with the use of the Paper Rater as the automated written corrective feedback collaborated with teacher and peer feedback in L2 writing instruction. Student perception and engagement were taken as main data to measure the efficacy of the

combination of Paper Rater collaborated with teacher and peer feedback in L2 writing instruction.

METHOD

Context and Participants

The participants in this study were three students, one male and two females. They are all majoring in the same subject. After hearing the purpose of our research, the students agreed to share their written assignments with us and participate in the interview sessions. The students enrolled in a 16-week semester-long Basic Written English course. Throughout the semester, students were assigned five 300-word paragraphs: descriptive, recount, definition, process, and expository. The students received three types of feedback for each paragraph: peer, AWE, and teacher feedback. As AWE, Paper Rater was used. The lecturer demonstrated how AWE feedback works in the first lecture to familiarize students with the system. Similarly, he gave the students detailed instructions on how to provide effective peer feedback, as well as the types of questions that might encourage reviewers to reflect on and rework their texts. When students were not restricted by time constraints, they provided peer feedback outside of the classroom. Students received teacher feedback after revising based on AWE and peer feedback. Each essay accounted for 40% of the overall course grade.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study differs from many previous studies in that it investigates student revision operations and how and why they were carried out. As a result, the researcher will concentrate on the first of two types of text, descriptive and recount text. This was done to keep the participants from becoming overburdened. The Think Aloud Protocol (TAP) was used to examine student engagement with multiple feedbacks received during the revision process. To learn more about student engagement, an in-depth interview was conducted. All three students agreed to be interviewed. As a result, our data set included all of the written texts. The stages of combining AWE, teacher, and peer feedback is illustrated as follows:

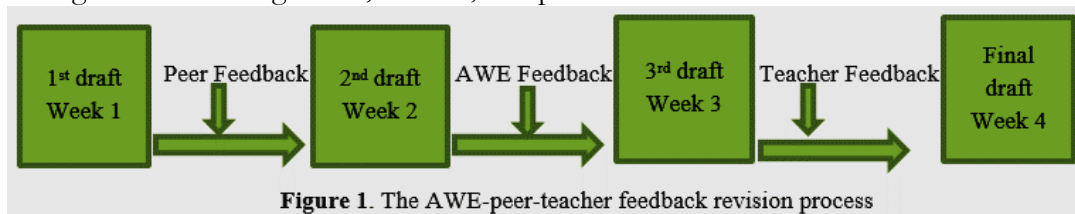


Figure 1. The AWE-peer-teacher feedback revision process

The above revision process can be elaborated in details as follows:

1. Students are instructed to begin writing the first draft in week one. The draft was then uploaded to Google Classroom.
2. The draft will be distributed to peers at random. The peers will then provide feedback. The second draft will then be submitted in Google Classroom.
3. The third draft, which was evaluated using Paper Rater, will be submitted to Google Classroom for final teacher feedback.
4. The teacher will hold a conference with the students to discuss the Paper Rater's feedback. The teacher will explain each area of feedback provided by the Paper Rater during this conference. The students will then revise their drafts in light of the teacher's explanation.

FINDING

STUDENT PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE USE MULTIPLE FEEDBACK

Three students were specifically chosen to be respondents in my reflection paper. They were instructed to complete a survey followed by an in-depth interview as reflective tools. In general, students believe that feedback provided during the revision process is useful, particularly teacher feedback, peer feedback, and Paper Rater feedback. After receiving feedback, they all look up the corrections. After reading the lecturer's feedback, none of them dismiss the entire task. After reading the peer feedback, some students disregard the entire task. After reading the automated written feedback, none of them ignore the entire task. Furthermore, all students understand all of the comments/corrections they receive from their lecturer and peers. However, students do not always understand all of the comments/corrections they receive from Paper Rater.

They also believe that the revisions they make in the second draft improve their writing. The feedback they received from their lecturer encourages them to complete the task again. It demonstrates that the students are behaving in response to the various feedbacks they receive during the revision process. Similarly, the students believe that with practice, they will be able to overcome their mistakes. Nonetheless, they would rather have additional corrections and explanations on their paper.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH MULTIPLE FEEDBACK

Behavioral Engagement

Time-on-task is an important indicator of behavioral engagement, which we were able to investigate using AWE data and retrospective interviews with students. 100% of students who submitted their work to the AWE system more than five times expressed a general willingness to engage with and revise based on AWE feedback. Students spent an average of 5 hours revising their drafts after receiving AWE feedback, according to the interviews. This is more than they stated they spent on peer and teacher feedback. The number of submissions and time spent revising indicate that the students were actively involved in their revisions.

Affective Engagement

Affective engagement was assessed using students' emotional and attitudinal responses in interviews. Most students expressed positive attitudes toward the incorporation of AWE feedback in the interviews, citing 'convenient,' 'timely,' 'effective,' and 'helpful' as the main attributes. AWE systems give students immediate feedback, providing real-time feedback on their work and making formative assistance especially effective, reducing delay and encouraging students to participate in the learning process. The researcher discovered that 91% of students had positive attitudes toward incorporating AWE into their revising processes, implying that they were more engaged with the feedback they received. Concerning peer feedback, the majority of students agreed that it should be included in the revision process, citing terms like. Regarding peer feedback, the majority of students agreed that it should be included in the revision process, with the majority citing terms such as supportive 'understanding,' and 'less critical,' among others.

In one student's case, incorporating peer review increased both affective and cognitive engagement with revision. She felt more empathy in her peer group, which reduced her anxiety. Peer review had the potential to reduce anxiety and increase motivation, thereby facilitating affective engagement.

Cognitive Engagement

The researcher investigated cognitive engagement by examining the interviews, the students' textual revision operations, and their reflective reports from the think aloud protocol, all of which were required as part of the revision process.

The introduction of AWE and peer feedback into the classroom has introduced something new: exposing students to a variety of writing experiences and encouraging them to see writing as a process of revision rather than a one-time task. More importantly, it appears that the interaction between students and the three types of feedback promotes active student participation in writing and revision.

Overall, the majority of students praised the integrated approach for improving their revision experience by involving them in the revision process. Students were able to divide their revision process into stages in which they focused on different aspects of their writing by combining AWE and peer feedback with teacher feedback. AWE and peer feedback enabled the teacher to make better use of the time she spent on her own feedback, focusing on the content and expression of ideas. The three types of feedback, when combined, increased students' behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement in the writing process.

DISCUSSION

Student engagement with feedback is a complex process that involves three dynamically interconnected dimensions. Students must not only devote time and effort to their writing and revision after receiving feedback, but they must also regulate their emotional and attitudinal responses to feedback. (Harland & Wald, 2021); (Mulder, Baik, Naylor, & Pearce, 2014); (Nicol, Thomson, & Breslin, 2014). In addition, the ability to evaluate written texts, identify problems, and revise can be extremely difficult. studies consistently show that many students are dissatisfied with the feedback they receive. They frequently find it difficult to interpret and act on (Mulliner & Tucker, 2017), and they express dissatisfaction with its lack of detail and timeliness (Boud & Molloy, 2013).

A teacher's integrated approach to AWE and peer feedback made revision less daunting and more manageable for her students. It is in line with (Ranalli, 2018); (Warschauer & Grimes, 2008) who stated that AWE free up teachers' time so that they can concentrate on higher-order concerns (e.g., content, organization) and other parts of writing teaching rather than lower-order concerns (e.g., grammar, mechanics). As a result, the teachers will have greater opportunity to allocate their attention to grammar and content in different drafts, and encouraged them to share their work with each other as well as collaborate on their work.

The integrated approach encouraged students to focus on local and global issues at various stages of their writing and helped them understand that revision is an essential part of the writing process. It improved students' learning experiences by providing a variety of learning modes (both human and machine) and a diverse readership (peer and teacher). By incorporating peer and teacher feedback, the integrated approach responds to those who question the legitimacy of computer-generated diagnostics. It has a positive synergistic effect on student involvement and motivation. Overall, the incorporation of three types of feedback appears to provide the following advantages:

1. Encourage students to spend time writing and revising in order to improve their behavioral engagement.
2. Reduces the demotivating wait for timely feedback and provides peer support for writing development, promoting affective engagement.
3. Require students to analyze, evaluate, monitor, and regulate their writing and revisions using cognitive strategies.

Nevertheless, the integrated approach is not a cure-all for some students' low engagement. Individual factors such as motivation and language proficiency can also color the picture.

Not all students will be sufficiently motivated to participate in what appears to be a ruse to get them to work harder on the same piece of writing. As a result, promoting student engagement with feedback requires teachers to develop skills and awareness, as well as create inclusive and cooperative learning environments. The fact that the teacher was able to incorporate various types of feedback in her class without requiring major changes to the classroom layout indicates that her approach is worth exploring in other classrooms.

CONCLUSION

The incorporation of various types of feedback deserves the attention of both researchers and practitioners in higher education. The researcher accomplished this by tracking changes in student drafts, a method common in L2 writing research but less common in college and university course assessment. The difficulties in extrapolating to other classrooms and populations should be viewed as instructive.

A case study has limited generalizability because it reflects the thoughts and practices of individuals in a specific context, but it raises important issues that large-scale surveys may miss. The researcher hopes that this will inspire others to investigate how different types of feedback can promote greater engagement among their own students.

Students can engage in writing and revision when inclusive pedagogies and supportive learning environments are used. Teachers may be able to provide students with a more varied writing experience that accommodates different learning styles and needs by incorporating multiple types of feedback. Through increased behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement, this could facilitate active redrafting and improved writing.

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