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RESPONSE TO WRITING

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Student Perceptions of Dynamic Written Corrective Feedback in Developmental Multilingual Writing Classes

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In this project, I investigated student perceptions of dynamic written corrective feedback (DWCF), a specific method of providing accuracy feedback, in developmental writing classes for multilingual students. Via a quasi-experimental design using treatment and control sections of a developmental writing program's three levels, I collected and contrasted survey data from a total of 145 students. I then interviewed three students (one international and two generation 1.5) representing a range of perceptions of DWCF. Participants generally appreciated and valued DWCF, especially as a complement to a grammar textbook, and students of classes that used DWCF reported higher scores on most survey items, such as quality of grammar feedback and general class instruction. I also present students' pedagogical suggestions for better integration of DWCF in writing classes.

Keywords: dynamic written corrective feedback, student perceptions, comprehensive grammar feedback, multilingual writing

Many second language (L2) writing instructors and researchers are interested in written corrective feedback (WCF), specifically what type(s) of WCF are most effective. WCF consists of any written comment and/or feedback a teacher provides with the aim of improving writing, although it frequently focuses primarily on grammatical accuracy, at least within the existing literature (Ferris, 2006, 2011). Despite some controversy (e.g., Truscott, 1996), many instructors assume that second or multilingual writers benefit from WCF by reducing or eliminating their grammatical or linguistic errors. While much of the recent research on WCF has supported the conclusion that it can be effective at promoting accuracy, further research into specific, effective approaches to WCF is necessary. One such WCF method with strong potential is dynamic written corrective feedback (DWCF, outlined originally in Evans, Hartshorn, McCollum, & Wolfersberger, 2010).

DWCF is a particular approach to delivering WCF targeting grammatical concepts to multilingual students. Students regularly write short paragraphs in class (perhaps during each class period/week), for about 10 minutes. The teacher codes the errors in the paragraphs using an established coding system and returns the paragraphs during the next class meeting. Students edit their paragraphs for an additional round of teacher coding. Depending on program requirements, this process can be repeated until a paragraph becomes error-free or reaches some standard of accuracy. Students also systematically tally and record all errors to identify their individual grammatical error patterns; this may thus help them develop increased autonomy via self-editing (Ferris, 2006; Kurzer, 2018; Lalande, 1982).

WCF and Cognitive/Second Language Acquisition Theories

Feedback aimed at the individual needs of students may be used to help students better internalize (Vygotsky, 1978) and produce accurate grammatical concepts in their writing. This feedback can be a tool to help teachers interact effectively with their students' zone of proximal development. While Vygotsky's theories were founded in psychology and deal with the first language acquisition of young children, multilingual learners may similarly benefit from increased levels of self-regulated

consciousness and experts' linguistic mediation (Vygotsky, 1978), as noted by second language researchers (Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Long & Robinson, 1998; Russell & Spada, 2006). WCF may thus be one effective manner of providing scaffolding, or assistance “that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts” (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976, p. 90).

In his input hypothesis (1985), Krashen suggested that comprehensible input—instruction on concepts that are marginally beyond a learner's current mastery, or $i+1$ —in the L2 may be used to promote meaningful learning. Targeted WCF may be one way of providing comprehensible input-appropriate feedback while pushing students to promote timely acquisition of grammatical concepts. In an extension of Krashen's hypothesis, Long (1996) explicitly promoted corrective feedback, as it may enable efficient L2 acquisition, “at least for vocabulary, morphology, and language-specific syntax” (Long, 1996, p. 414). WCF may be beneficial for students, at least when it is level appropriate. Ensuring this benefit can be difficult for instructors; the input hypothesis has been criticized for being imprecise and problematic to operationalize (Zafar, 2009). Effective programmatic guidelines may support instructors regarding what types of feedback may best match student needs.

Students also need to develop declarative knowledge—what they know—in order to acquire procedural knowledge: the ability to apply declarative knowledge to language production (DeKeyser, 2001, 2007). DeKeyser proposed that teachers include deliberate, frequent practice opportunities to help students achieve such procedural knowledge, which then may help students with automatization of the target language. He also noted that students might not easily transfer procedural knowledge to new environments, a common issue with textbook-based grammar instruction, as students may not practice producing authentic language in such a context. However, teacher-produced WCF may better help students to transfer procedural knowledge, enhancing grammar learning.

Perceptions of WCF

While most studies of WCF have investigated how effectively students produce more accurate texts, some researchers have also investigated

student perceptions of general WCF, although few studies thus far have looked at student perceptions of DWCF specifically. Via a survey of 100 students in a sheltered first-year composition class at a university, Leki (1991) found that nearly all students felt that they should eliminate as many errors as possible in their writing and that they valued feedback from their teachers on features such as vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and grammar, in addition to organization and content. These students also noted that their teachers frequently ignored errors in favor of commenting on ideas/content, which they felt did not meet all of their needs. Leki hypothesized that this desire for WCF attending language errors may stem from students' desire to get support on items that are relatively simple to address, as content or organization issues may take quite a bit of time and attention to resolve.

A more recent study investigated 10 generation 1.5 students regarding WCF in general (Ferris, Liu, Sinha, & Senna, 2013). The participants of this study wrote four timed-writing texts over a 16-week semester, and the researchers coded the errors and met with the students to ask about their processes as they responded to the WCF. Student participants typically lacked confidence in their abilities to self-edit or monitor their writing, particularly in timed-writing circumstances, but valued the feedback and support they received. One student noted that she preferred feedback that identified errors but did not provide a correction, while another student initially reported that he preferred receiving explicit correction but later said that such an approach allowed him to avoid the responsibility of learning the rules himself. The students of this study generally noted that they valued WCF as a guide that helped them better master grammatical content (Ferris et al., 2013).

The body of literature on student perceptions largely indicates that students recognize the value of WCF, including on matters of grammatical/linguistic accuracy (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Lee, 2005; Montgomery & Baker, 2007), although the opinions regarding amounts of WCF needed and effectiveness of WCF practices may vary between multilingual students and instructors (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Pawlak, 2013). Despite these potential differences in perceptions between the two populations, research thus far has largely been “overwhelmingly positive” regarding

student and teacher perceptions of WCF (Pawlak, 2013, p. 83). However, researchers have yet to thoroughly investigate specific approaches to WCF, an area that warrants more attention as we devise stronger pedagogical methods for second language writing contexts. We also lack evidence regarding how WCF can affect students' perceptions of language or writing classes.

DWCF and Established WCF Best Practices

The aim of DWCF is “to help L2 learners improve the accuracy of writing by ensuring that instruction, practice, and feedback are manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant” (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012, p. 30) for students and teachers. As such, DWCF generally matches best pedagogical practices, as seen in much of the WCF research.

WCF that is *focused* on individual error types has been shown to be more effectual than *unfocused* WCF highlighting all error types, at least in terms of promoting increased accuracy on the grammatical features addressed (Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2007). This finding may make a comprehensive coding system like DWCF seem inappropriate. That said, as course instructors or program guidelines may dictate the particular errors that are prioritized—which may not actually align with the error patterns of their individual students—such WCF may focus primarily on only a small number of error types; this narrow focus is an established concern regarding the empirical research published about WCF (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2009a, 2009b, and 2010; Ellis et al., 2008, exclusively addressed articles/determiners in their studies, although other studies, e.g., Ferris, 2006, were more comprehensive). Accordingly, a more comprehensive coding approach, as seen in DWCF, may be broad enough to identify all students' error types while still providing explicit codes that may help scaffold student learning (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012), similar to focused WCF.

Research also indicates that *indirect* WCF (simply marking the existence of an error) may promote long-term gains in accuracy in writing more effectively than *direct* WCF (marking an error and providing a correction) (Ferris, 2006; Hendrickson, 1980; Lalande, 1982). This indirect WCF requires the students to correct errors on their own, which may in

turn promote internalization of grammatical concepts (Lalande, 1982). When using DWCF, an instructor marks and codes linguistic/grammatical errors on student writing but requires individual editing for the marked errors. Students have the information from the code to guide their correction, which likely acts as a scaffold (Wood et al., 1976). Students in classes that use DWCF also record their errors for the duration of the class; doing so may help them recognize individual error patterns as well as gradual improvement over time. Thus, indirect feedback may help students make accurate L2 production automatic (DeKeyser, 2001), as it likely promotes stronger self-monitoring abilities when writing (Lalande, 1982).

Untreatable grammatical features—those with idiosyncratic rules—may be difficult to teach properly, while *treatable* features have more methodical rules that lend themselves better to explicit instruction (Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 2006; Xu, 2009). Unfortunately, some untreatable features remain vital for effective communication, such as “word order, sentence boundaries, phrase construction, word choice, or collocations”; errors in these categories may “obscure meaning” (Ferris, 2010, p. 193). Despite the untreatable nature of the rules governing these grammatical features, language learners can, via DWCF, gain meaningful editing experiences with authentic, self-produced texts that may promote increased accuracy on future writing assignments, even without formal grammatical instruction (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012).

Explicit WCF—for example, a syntax-based coding system—likely can trigger recollection in L2 learners with previous explicit grammar instruction better than *unlabeled* WCF can (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Ferris, 2006; Foin & Lange, 2007; Sheen, 2007). For these students with knowledge of grammatical terms and labels, DWCF may help to remind language learners of this previous instruction, which then may help reinforce grammar mastery. Multilingual students may appreciate such an explicit coding system for WCF, as noted elsewhere (e.g., Lee, 2005).

Empirical Studies on DWCF

Despite seemingly being grounded in sound pedagogical practices and language learning/cognitive theories, DWCF has yet to be extensively studied, particularly regarding student and teacher responses.

Most experimental studies with control and treatment groups conducted on DWCF have included fairly small sample sizes, ranging from 12 to 28 students (Evans et al., 2010; Evans, Hartshorn, & Strong-Krause, 2011; Hartshorn & Evans, 2012, 2015; Hartshorn et al., 2010). These studies explored DWCF primarily in an intensive English program (IEP) associated with a large, western university, although one (Evans et al., 2011) used optional grammar support classes for matriculated multilingual students at the university.

These studies noted statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups regarding increased accuracy in general (Evans et al., 2010; Evans et al., 2011; Hartshorn & Evans, 2015; Hartshorn et al., 2010) and concerning specific linguistic/grammatical features: sentence structures, numeric agreement, determiners, lexical accuracy, verb accuracy, semantic accuracy, and mechanical accuracy (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012). These studies also revealed medium to large effect sizes across both accuracy and linguistic feature variables. However, some of the studies featured data from groups that were fairly different in terms of home language backgrounds, and thus may have acquired the English language in different manners (Corder, 1981), making it difficult to compare the groups properly. Additionally, while Hartshorn and Evans (2015) followed students over two semesters—the best approximation of a longitudinal study conducted thus far—stronger longitudinal evidence of grammatical/linguistic improvement that can be ascribed to DWCF is much needed.

In a further investigation of DWCF in an IEP—with an n of 27 but no control group comparison—Evans et al. (2010) aimed to explore the impact of DWCF as a means of supporting traditionally-delivered grammar instruction. Results of this study included statistically significant improvements within student writing done across 13 weeks in a grammar class, although it is not possible to completely ascribe that improvement to DWCF as an intervention given the lack of a control group.

In a different research-university context, a much larger study explored the impact of DWCF on matriculated multilingual students across the three levels of a developmental writing program designed to prepare these

students for mainstream first-year composition classes (Kurzer, 2018). In this study, the researcher categorized student errors as being global, local (per Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993), or mechanical and found statistically significant differences between the treatment group ($n = 214$) and the control group ($n = 111$) on all error categories. The students of the treatment group were better able to self-edit their errors than their peers were, suggesting that DWCF might indeed help prepare students for autonomous writing/future self-editing opportunities (Ferris, 2006; Lalande, 1982). DWCF had been adapted to the local context and was found to be beneficial, further suggesting that it can be appropriate for students in different programs, institutions, and language levels (as no ceiling level of the impact of DWCF has yet been recognized in the literature).

Finally, in a third context—this time a large, suburban community college (CC)—Kurzer (in print) conducted an action research study investigating student responses to DWCF as a complement to traditional grammar instruction in a lower-intermediate ESL writing class. This study was the first to ask students about their perceptions of DWCF, and thus, despite its small sample size ($n = 25$) and the combined role of teacher/researcher that makes action research approaches methodologically suspect, the study warrants some attention. This study was also the first on DWCF in community college settings.

Overall, students in this study reported that the DWCF treatment was more effective than the grammar textbook used in the class and seemed more level appropriate (supporting the idea that DWCF may be effective at helping teachers target students' individual errors). However, perhaps due to the small sample size, the differences between response averages contrasting DWCF with the grammar textbook only approached statistical significance. Students also reported that DWCF helped them improve their writing speed, particularly helpful in that context as the course curriculum was primarily on writing timed essays. Nine of the 25 students indicated that they preferred the textbook over DWCF, eight reported they preferred both DWCF and the grammar text, and eight said they preferred DWCF to the text, suggesting that DWCF was well received by this population (Kurzer, in print). Table 1 lists the previous studies conducted on DWCF.

Table 1
Previous DWCF Studies, Organized Chronologically

Study	Control	Large ($N > 30$)	Context	Longitudinal
Hartshorn et al., 2010	Yes	No	IEP	No
Evans et al., 2010	No	No	IEP	No
Hartshorn & Evans, 2012	Yes	No	IEP	No
Hartshorn & Evans, 2015	Yes	No	IEP	Yes
Evans et al., 2011	Yes	No	University	No
Kurzer, 2018	Yes	Yes	University	No
Kurzer, in print	No	No	CC	No

Taken collectively, the studies that have investigated DWCF present it as an appealing and meaningful classroom intervention that may effectively support improved grammar pedagogy in language/writing classes. Thus far, DWCF has been implemented in an IEP and two developmental/ESL writing programs, with administrators, teachers, and students anecdotally responding positively. However, despite these positive reactions, more robust studies specifically researching stakeholder perceptions are necessary to help us gain a more accurate portrait of the possible impact of DWCF on multilingual students. In particular, student and teacher reactions to DWCF warrant attention.

Study Focus and Research Questions

The study presented here is a portion of a larger study investigating DWCF across the three levels of a large, developmental writing program.¹ Specifically, this study begins to fill the gap regarding how student and teacher perceptions of DWCF, with data collected through student surveys and interviews with focal students. The following research questions guided this study:

¹ For the first publication stemming from this research, see my 2018 study briefly explained earlier. Because the current manuscript uses data collected in conjunction with the *TESOL Quarterly* study, the publications share similarities regarding organization and literature review content.

1. In what ways does the inclusion of DWCF in multilingual developmental writing classes affect students' perceptions of their writing abilities and writing courses?
2. How do students of these classes perceive DWCF? If helpful, in what ways? If not helpful, why not? What would they suggest regarding how to improve DWCF in their developmental writing classes?

Methodology

Institutional/Programmatic Context

The university associated with the program used in this study is a large research institution in Northern California with a traditionally diverse student body population consisting of large proportions of first-generation university students and generation 1.5/immigrant students, but with rapidly increasing numbers of international students studying in the United States on F-1 visas. These multilingual, international, and generation 1.5 students made up the developmental writing program, which consisted of three levels—beginning, intermediate, and advanced—prior to entry-level/first-year writing courses.

I used standing sections of classes within the developmental program across an academic year (this institution operates under the quarter system): the beginning level during one quarter, then intermediate, and advanced the final quarter. Certain sections of the courses were designated treatment, while others were designated control, for a quasi-experimental study design. Teachers utilized DWCF in the treatment sections to support grammar education, while teachers in control sections used only a traditional approach to grammar, via a grammar book and lectures on necessary grammatical features. The program administrators provided guidelines regarding which grammatical features should be emphasized at each level, and teachers in both treatment and control sections focused grammatical instruction primarily on those features. WCF in the control sections was delivered on only grammar textbook exercises and out-of-class essay assignments.

During a training session with the treatment-section teachers, I introduced the DWCF treatment process and the specific coding system, which was adapted from the original (Evans et al., 2010). Ultimately, I elected to simplify the original 20 codes to 16 grouped by error type: global (errors that may impede intended meaning), local (errors that may be irritating but do not usually impede meaning, per Bates et al., 1993), and mechanical (errors in spelling and punctuation); these categorizations of student errors have not yet been explored extensively in the larger literature body related to WCF. Appendix A contains the DWCF codes used for this study. Students also tracked their errors across the terms using an error log (Appendix B).

I also provided teachers of treatment sections a list of topic prompts designed to solicit the target grammatical features, to help ensure uniformity of DWCF approach for the purposes of this study, although I did not dictate the order in which teachers should incorporate them in their classes. These prompts also followed the established guidelines for grammatical features emphasized at each of the three levels. As another way to promote uniformity, I required teachers to integrate specific numbers of DWCF rounds in their classes: 14 at the beginning level, 10 at the intermediate level, and 5 at the advanced level; this requirement was an additional adaptation of the original DWCF approach, which required new paragraphs or revisions each day of the class (Evans et al., 2010).

Participants and Data Collection/Analysis Procedures

The student perceptions portion of this study consisted of surveys and semistructured interviews with focal students from the classes. Student participants took attitudinal surveys (Appendix C) asking about their experiences in their developmental writing classes generally and then specifically about grammar, to avoid leading students. Both the treatment and control groups took the same survey, but the treatment group answered additional questions specifically about the DWCF treatment. Ultimately, of the 214 treatment student participants, 91 (43%) took the survey; of the 111 control student participants, 54 (49%) took it. Table 2 contains the breakdown of student participants across levels.

Approximately 80% of the student participants were international, and the remaining 20% were late- or early-arrival (Ferris, 2009) generation 1.5 students, matching the general demographics of the program. The international student population was largely Chinese, with smaller groups of students from Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Japan, and Mexico, and the generation 1.5 student population consisted of primarily Chinese and Spanish speakers.

Table 2
Study Participants

	Beginning		Intermediate		Advanced	
	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Sections	4	2	4	2	4	3
Teachers	3	2	4	2	3	2
Students	84	32	66	31	64	48
Survey responses	37	14	34	15	20	25

Via survey responses, I identified survey respondents who reacted to the treatment in different manners; students who reported having had a positive experience, a fairly neutral experience, and a negative experience with DWCF were asked to participate in follow-up interviews. In this manner, I robed more deeply into the experiences of students at the extremes; this ability to probe is a strength of qualitative data (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Patton, 1990). I contacted and conducted interviews with students who, on the survey, reported attitudes toward the DWCF that were varied: DWCF was highly helpful, somewhat helpful, or not very helpful. In this manner I was able to elicit information about the extremes, rather than just the average trends. These interviews were semistructured (Merriam, 2009), affording a structure for comparison across participants but flexibility to ask additional probes (Berg, 2001; see Appendix D for the general interview protocol). To help determine if students actually volunteered the opinion that DWCF was helpful, I chose to start interviews under the guise of evaluating the developmental writing curriculum in general. In this manner, I could see what students valued most about the

classes, which then would be telling if DWCF came up organically, without me priming them.

After transcription, I coded specific themes that emerged, following grounded theory (Strauss, 1987); the themes included general aspects of the writing classes students liked and disliked, along with comments on DWCF. (See Table 4 in the Results section for the complete list of codes and tallies for each.) Utterances were coded if a theme appeared anywhere in the utterance, and as such some were coded to multiple themes. Utterances were defined as one segment of conversation centered on one idea and, accordingly, often consisted of segments from both myself as the interviewer (mainly to frame the conversation topic via questions) and the interview participant. I did not employ a second researcher to verify my codes; however, to increase rater reliability, I coded all the interview utterances again after 2 months, similar to the procedure employed by Lancaster (2011), with a Pearson's r of .94, indicating strong reliability.

Three students were interviewed for this study. One was an international student who had not spent much time in English-speaking countries prior to starting at this institution the previous fall. The other two were late-arrival generation 1.5 students (having moved to the United States at the start of secondary school). All three participants were female and from separate treatment sections of the writing classes. Pseudonyms for all participants were used. This section provides a brief overview of the student participants' backgrounds.

Shreya. Shreya was an international student originally from India who had not spent any significant amount of time in English-speaking countries prior to starting at this university. Hindi was her native language. She claimed to be quite proficient at English, and while she didn't enjoy writing in either English or Hindi, she felt competent at academic writing in English. She quickly progressed through the beginning and intermediate developmental classes and at the time of the interview was in the advanced class. Shreya was an international relations major and reported the most negative experience with DWCF in her survey response.

Khong. Khong's family moved to Northern California at the start of her high school career to study in a high school geared toward linguistically preparing immigrant students for university study in the United States. Her grandfather, a veteran of the Vietnam War, had connections

that allowed him to move to the United States, and Khong's family was able to immigrate using those connections. Khong reported that she did little writing in either English or Vietnamese prior to her university-level writing classes, having just answered "questions from the [text]book." As of the time of this interview, Khong had not declared a major but was considering clinical nutrition and reported a neutral experience with DWCF in her survey response.

Pei. Pei also moved to Northern California with her family to study at a high school for immigrant students. In high school, she took ESL classes, but they did "not prepare [her] for college at all," since they did not progress beyond writing summaries and literature responses and those were at a very rudimentary level. Initially, she didn't like writing in either English or Mandarin, but she said that she was starting to like academic English writing more. She did not believe that she was a strong writer in Mandarin but thought she was getting better at English writing. This belief was reinforced by the fact that she was placed in the beginning class, then took the intermediate class, then skipped advanced and moved directly to the entry-level writing class. While this last class was difficult for her and she was concerned about the in-class timed writing expected for the final, she believed that she was doing fine so far. Pei had yet to declare a major, and she reported a positive experience with DWCF in her survey response.

Results and Discussion

In this section, I present the results and discussion of the study, organized by research question.

RQ1: Impact of DWCF on Student Perceptions of Writing Abilities/Courses

Students from treatment and control groups were asked to take surveys investigating student perceptions of the helpfulness and quality of various aspects of their writing classes and efficacy regarding various aspects of their writing skills. Using *t* tests, I compared the responses of the two groups and found a statistically significant difference regarding answers to some questions (Table 3).

Table 3
Two-Tailed t-Test Student Survey Results

Question	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> ratio	<i>p</i> -value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
General instruction	Control	54	5.78	1.16	2.73	.0076 ^a	0.528
	Treatment	91	6.29	.72			
Grammar instruction	Control	54	5.83	1.48	1.48	.14	0.24
	Treatment	91	6.12	.83			
Teacher feedback	Control	54	6.11	.98	1.5	.13	0.29
	Treatment	91	6.38	.89			
Grammar feedback	Control	54	5.85	1.04	2.06	.042 ^a	0.45
	Treatment	91	6.29	.89			
Overall course	Control	54	5.83	1.22	1.43	.15	0.28
	Treatment	91	6.15	1.07			
Teacher lecture	Control	54	2.57	1.19	-.52	.6	0.098
	Treatment	91	2.46	1.04			
Teacher feedback	Control	54	1.56	.92	-.43	.67	0.089
	Treatment	91	1.48	.87			
Peer feedback	Control	54	3.72	1.31	2.27	.026 ^a	0.44
	Treatment	91	4.25	1.08			
Course readings	Control	54	3.54	1.14	.36	.72	0.07
	Treatment	91	3.62	1.07			
Grammar instruction	Control	54	3.19	1.17	1.84	.07	0.49
	Treatment	91	3.61	1.17			
Organization ability	Control	54	1.35	.52	-.25	.8	0.06
	Treatment	91	1.32	.51			
Grammar ability	Control	54	1.35	.48	-.24	.8	0.06
	Treatment	91	1.32	.55			

^aStatistically significant difference between control and treatment means.

Statistically, the treatment group responded more favorably regarding the following items: quality of general class instruction, quality of grammar feedback, and helpfulness of peer feedback. Responses to several other items approached statistically significant differences (with moderate

to large effect sizes, as noted by the Cohen's d values): quality of general grammar instruction, quality of general teacher feedback, helpfulness of teacher lectures, helpfulness of teacher feedback, helpfulness of grammar instruction, increased ability to write well-organized essays, and increased ability to write accurately.

Most relevant to the purposes of this study, the statistically significant difference regarding the quality of grammar feedback may suggest that students exposed to DWCF in their classrooms respond well to the treatment, matching trends seen in other studies on WCF (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Ferris et al., 2013; Lee, 2005; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). The differences in the groups' responses regarding the quality and helpfulness of general grammar instruction, while only approaching statistical significance, may support this conclusion as well.

The statistically significant differences regarding the quality of general classroom instruction and helpfulness of peer feedback are more difficult to explain; the students who received guiding WCF via the DWCF coding system may have believed that since they receive needed grammar support, their classes in general were stronger. It also is possible that during peer review, students were more capable of recognizing grammatical issues in peers' papers and could provide helpful feedback, perhaps due to the increased self-editing capabilities afforded by DWCF as seen in Kurzer (2018). Alternatively, given that the DWCF process addresses grammar, students may not have recognized the need to focus on grammar in each other's papers as much as they might have otherwise. Further investigation into the possible impact of DWCF on teacher/peer review approaches may shed some valuable insights.

In whole, the students in treatment sections using DWCF reported more positive perceptions of their writing classes, especially regarding the role of feedback. This suggests that DWCF may be a valuable addition to developmental writing classes for these multilingual students.

RQ2: Student Perceptions of and Integration Suggestions for DWCF

In this section, I discuss student perceptions of and suggestions for integrating DWCF. First, I present findings from the survey responses, and then I discuss findings from the interviews.

Survey results. In addition to the comparison questions used for RQ1, I asked treatment participants to answer some additional survey questions designed to elicit perceptions of DWCF. First—to avoid leading students—I asked an open-ended question about what they appreciated most regarding grammar instruction/support in their classes (Figure 1).

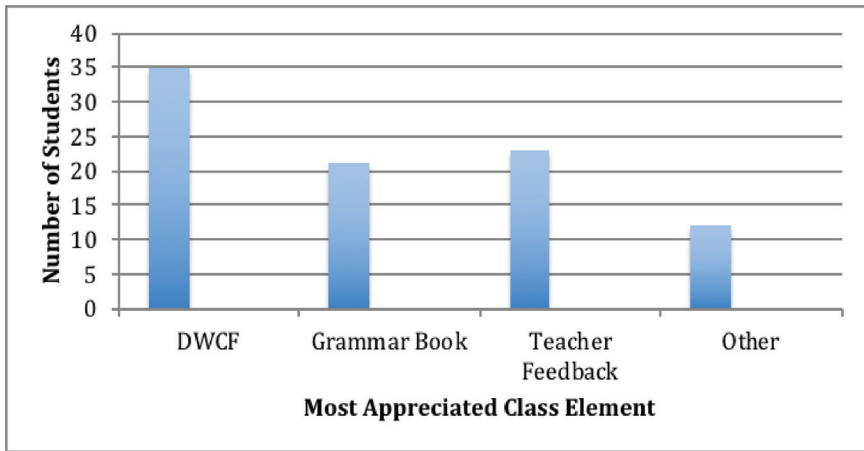


Figure 1. Student open-ended responses of what helped the most with grammar.

Thirty-five (38%) of the 91 students who answered this question indicated that DWCF was the most helpful. The next most common element identified was teacher feedback (25%), followed by the grammar book (23%); a few other responses noted aspects such as teacher lectures and personal study were the most helpful. There may be some connection between teacher feedback and DWCF, as the teachers delivered feedback on students' DWCF paragraphs, but that was not possible to confirm given the open-ended nature of their responses to this item. These results largely match the conclusions drawn elsewhere that some multilingual students appreciate DWCF as a complement to a more traditional, textbook-based approach to grammar instruction (Kurzer, in print). Further investigation distinguishing between DWCF specifically and teacher feedback in general could better differentiate student perceptions of the two.

I then asked the students about their perceptions of DWCF specifically. As seen in Figure 2, 89% of the students reported some level of agreement that the DWCF process helped them improve their grammatical accuracy.

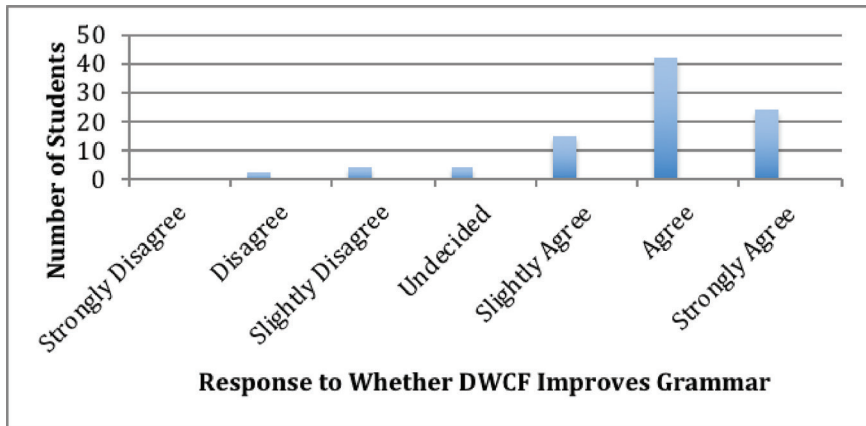


Figure 2. Student responses regarding whether DWCF improves grammar.

Both the open-ended and Likert scale items largely resulted in responses from students indicating that they appreciated DWCF.

The final item in the survey asked students to share suggestions regarding integrating DWCF better into the classroom. While most students (64%) left this item blank, those who did comment were largely supportive of DWCF as it had been implemented. Twenty (22%) explicitly commented that the current approach was fine. Five (5%) expressed interest in having more frequent rounds of DWCF, while eight (9%) desired less frequent rounds of DWCF. Two students (2%) recommended using writing topics more closely related to course work.

Interview results. The three student interviews revealed interesting pedagogical implications regarding grammar instruction and DWCF. As mentioned earlier, interview utterances were defined as one segment of conversation focused on one idea. Table 4 contains the list of codes identified in the interviews, along with a descriptive tally.

Table 4
Interview Codes and Tally

Code	Tally
General negative experiences in the courses	7
General positive experiences in the courses	6
Liked most about the courses	5
DWCF logistics	4 ^a
Issues with DWCF	3 ^b
Suggestions for DWCF	7
Benefits of DWCF	5

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all three participants included at least one utterance for each code. ^aFrom two participants, one international and one generation 1.5. ^bFrom the international student.

As seen in Table 4, despite variation in survey responses, all three interview participants ultimately reported benefits to using DWCF in the classroom. Specifically, all three explicitly reported that DWCF was a valuable use of classroom time and that it contributed to their mastery of grammatical concepts, leading to more accurate writing and other benefits, even the participant who initially did not value DWCF and the participant with a neutral attitude toward DWCF. They also all reported an understanding of the DWCF treatment that matched the instruction I gave to the teachers in the study—possible reassurance that the DWCF treatment was implemented in a consistent manner.

Of the three students, Shreya initially reported that DWCF was not as helpful as other grammatical features in the class (e.g., lectures and book work) but ultimately included DWCF as one of the things that she liked most about her writing classes. Khong was the sole participant who did not include DWCF as one of the things she liked best about her writing classes (preferring instead writing in general, accompanied by lectures and book work for grammar instruction). When I asked Pei what she liked about her writing classes, she emphatically responded with the DWCF, saying that she liked it for the following reason:

Because we get to practice. And if the teacher can tell us what this piece of timed writing focus [*sic*] on, then it will be better for us to practice time of grammar [*sic*], so we can show, “Oh, this is what I think it is, but is it really, uh, correct?”

All three students commented on the benefit of DWCF in helping their writing improve grammatically; they referenced features such as verb tenses and word forms (Pei) and spelling and punctuation (Shreya).

In addition to improvements in grammatical accuracy, the students noted different benefits of using DWCF in their classes. Despite Shreya’s survey response indicating that she thought DWCF was not as helpful as other course features, she said the following:

You’ve actively thought about something for 10 minutes, and put it into words. So you can always look back at it and see where you went wrong and how you should think when you only have 10 minutes [for] planning. You can learn from it. And also it’s just like six timed writings or whatever with two paragraphs each, so it’s not a lot of time anyway.

Shreya noticed the benefit of thinking through a concept and focusing on it while writing in a timed scenario. She reiterated this theme, noting that because students “don’t have all the time in the world to write [since they] have other things to do,” they need to practice writing quickly. This may support the conclusion that DWCF may not only result in stronger grammatical accuracy, but also increased fluency.

Pei noted the timely nature of the feedback via DWCF:

It was not a waste of time at all because we get to get the feedback from the teacher right after. If we have a long time [between drafts], it won’t be as effective, because we already forgot what we [wrote].

This student clearly valued the prompt feedback afforded by DWCF and thought that it was indeed timely, as suggested by the original developers (Evans et al., 2010).

All three students felt that DWCF was a useful addition to the grammar instruction in class, and Shreya and Khong noted that DWCF also provided valuable practice after reviewing particular grammar points

in class. As such, DWCF may prove to be a helpful method of scaffolding the transition between directive grammar instruction and accuracy in produced student writing, a common concern because grammar instruction may frequently lack authenticity (Römer, 2004) or explicit connection to student-produced texts (Evans et al., 2010). It is difficult to say whether including a traditional lecture style or grammar textbook approach in grammar instruction is strictly necessary or just a preference of the students based on previous exposure. Regardless, the strong survey and interview responses on the topic suggest that both generation 1.5 students and international students in this study desired some formal grammar instruction in addition to the practice afforded by DWCF.

Despite the general approval, the student participants had suggestions that would make DWCF stronger pedagogically. Shreya suggested that the paragraph topics for DWCF should be “more about the essays that [the teacher] made [the students] do, so if [the paragraphs] had been along the lines of that topic, [the students] could start thinking about that and then talking about that, that would help.” From a pedagogical perspective, this change may be logical, provided that the topics of the larger essays lend themselves nicely to stand-alone paragraphs targeting specific grammatical features to allow for appropriate language production practice. Alternatively, perhaps these paragraphs could be integrated more seamlessly into the writing process (brainstorming topic ideas, developing body paragraphs, or writing reflections). However, while doing so may prime the students for the larger essays, the increased integration may end up raising the stakes of the DWCF approach, which could then reduce the focus on grammar development. Accordingly, further studies investigating the effectiveness of these alternative approaches to DWCF may prove beneficial.

The international student, Shreya, initially reported that she did not feel that the DWCF treatment was helpful. She commented that, while she would make mistakes in her writing, given more time, she would have been able to find those mistakes by herself (a theme reinforced by Khong). Shreya also noted that “the concept [the main idea of the paragraph] doesn’t have to be good in a timed writing, so it only has to be grammatically correct. So it was easy to get grammatically correct

sentences.” This comment suggests that she relied on straightforward sentence constructions. Shreya also noted that her teacher’s feedback was not always particularly helpful, as “she’d just mark off [for] spelling which was [common] when you’re writing fast.” Based on the fluency Shreya demonstrated during the interview, her English may have been advanced enough that she experienced a ceiling effect in the DWCF treatment. However, despite this overall negative perception, Shreya did feel that DWCF was ultimately helpful enough to warrant class time, and said “she’d [the teacher would] expect us to integrate a lot of the things used in the textbook in the timed writing. I think that was good.” This response indicates that the scaffolded practice was helpful. Pei did not have anything negative to say about DWCF.

The survey responses largely indicated that the multilingual students in the study valued DWCF, with many reporting that it was the most beneficial grammar method used in the classes. Interestingly, even the interview participants who initially reported neutral or negative experiences with DWCF in the survey ultimately largely reported positive themes in the interviews and provided solid pedagogical suggestions to improve the treatment. While most participants reported that they were satisfied with the manner in which DWCF was implemented, some thought that it could have been integrated into the courses in a more seamless manner, perhaps by helping students practice body paragraphs related to their longer, out-of-class essays.

Conclusions

The results of this study on student perceptions of DWCF indicate that international and generation 1.5 students typically appreciate the support provided by teachers using DWCF. Although adding further connections to existing essays or assignments may help validate DWCF for some students, this approach warrants further consideration and investigation to determine its effectiveness. Students who participated in classes that used DWCF generally had stronger responses to writing efficacy survey items, an area of research thus far largely lacking in the WCF literature.

This study provides some insights regarding how students perceive DWCF; student perceptions may be a valuable and often overlooked

pedagogical implication—that may better motivate students by providing them with some voice in their education as students likely benefit from feeling as though course activities and pedagogical approaches are valuable. This study also reinforces the concept that multilingual writers do indeed expect explicit grammar instruction and practice (Evans et al., 2010), which may effectively be accomplished using the DWCF approach. However, students also likely appreciate using a grammar textbook, as seen elsewhere (Kurzer, in print). These results suggest that instructors should consider providing some grammar instruction or at least consider explicitly discussing how DWCF alone is a stronger approach to grammar pedagogy than the alternative. Further research on student preferences regarding connections between WCF and grammar textbooks is needed.

Study Limitations

As with any study, this project has some experimental limitations, including limited generalizability to contexts different from that at my institution; a potential self-selection bias, as the participants volunteered for interviewing; and a potential researcher/teacher bias. I have taught writing classes using DWCF in the past and have anecdotal evidence that my students found DWCF to be valuable. Because I was aware of this bias, I tried to ensure that all my survey and interview questions were presented from a neutral perspective.

I also conducted this study operating under a set of assumptions. While the cultures of the informants and the researcher—myself—in these interviews were quite different (Gudmundsdottir, 1996), as I surveyed and interviewed multilingual students from across the world, I assumed that we shared, to some extent, a common culture of academia at this institution. Language issues also may have been an impediment, as it is possible that the student participants understood terms differently than I did. I tried to ensure that I asked clarifying questions in the interviews, when appropriate, to verify my understanding of the participants' responses, and I aimed for simple language when devising the interview and survey protocols.

Despite the limitations, this study provides valuable insights into the perspectives students have regarding DWCF, as well as the perceived ability of these students to practice self-editing strategies (Ferris, 2006). The results support DWCF's inclusion in developmental ESL writing classes as a valuable method of scaffolding grammar instruction for authentic, student-produced texts. The results of this study suggest that, though DWCF is far from a magical fix for all things grammatical, students respond well to DWCF when it is coupled with explicit grammar instruction and/or a grammar text. These results are particularly valuable in combination with the other empirical studies showing that DWCF leads to improvements in accuracy.

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Appendix A: DWCF Writing Correction Marks

	Code	Error Type	Example
Global Errors	VF	Verb Form	It was happened yesterday. Psychology expose you to behavior.
	VT	Verb Time	It happen yesterday.
	SS	Sentence Structure (incl. run-on and incomplete)	They brought the man who them him found. Because they thought it was good. Because friendship takes effort, so it is time-consuming.
	W O	Word Order	Especially, I miss home.
	WC	Word Choice	She says that raising a pet needs responsibility.
Local Errors	PP	Prepositions	I was responsible of everything.
	D	Determiner (articles)	The trip to United States was enjoyable.
	NF	Noun Form	All family member are supposed to get along. She limited the amount of candies I could eat.
	WF	Word Form	Money brings themselves more opportunities.

Other Errors (Mechanical)	SPG	Spelling	I never worried about my teech getting bad.	
	P	Punctuation	When I was visiting; one morning scared me.	
	C	Capital Letter	Students love to party. they also love to eat pizza.	
	^	Use with SS	Insert something	A good major helps you earn a lot money.
			Omit something	I chose this major is because it is interesting.
	?		Meaning is not clear	He borrowed some smoke.
	AWK		Awkward wording	Candy makes children feel a sweet taste.

Appendix B: Error Log

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Paragraph Score:												
Global Errors	VF											
	VT											
	SS											
												
	WC											
Local Errors	PP											
	D											
	NF											
	WF											
Other Errors (Mechanical)	SPG											
	P											
	C											
	^											
												
	?											
	AWK											

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Appendix C: Survey Protocol

Demographic information: gender, age, time spent in the United States, previous time spent in English-speaking countries, anticipated graduation date, major.

1. Please describe your developmental writing class in terms of the following characteristics (Likert scale):
 - Quality of general class instruction
 - Quality of grammar instruction
 - Quality of general teacher feedback
 - Quality of grammar feedback
 - Overall Helpfulness for you as an international student
2. Please rank the following activities in order from most to least helpful:
 - Teacher lecture
 - Teacher feedback
 - Peer feedback
 - Class readings
 - Grammar instruction
3. Do you feel better able to write well-organized, academic essays after taking this class? (Y/N) Why or why not? (Free response)
4. Do you feel better able to write clear, grammatically-correct sentences after taking this class? (Y/N) Why or why not? (Free response)
5. What was most helpful about your writing class? (Free response)
6. What helped you most with grammar in your writing class? (Free response)
7. I feel that the DWCF paragraphs helped me improve my grammatical accuracy. (For the treatment participants)
 - Strongly Agree, Agree, Slightly Agree, Undecided, Slightly Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
8. Why did you respond as you did to Question 8? (Free response)
9. What suggestions do you have (if any) regarding how to better integrate the DWCF paragraphs into your writing classes? (Free response)

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Dear _____ (student's name),

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. Before we begin, I would like to remind you of what my purpose is. I am interested in finding out how you feel about your ESL developmental writing class. I will be tape recording our conversation to capture all of your good ideas. When we finish, I will type up your comments and then destroy the recording. Your name will never be mentioned or included in what is written, and your teacher will not see your comments. If you wouldn't like to answer any questions, just let me know and we can skip to something else. You can quit the interview at any time.

Do you have any questions?

May I turn on the recorder now then? [Turn tape recorder on now]

Demographics/Introductions

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself (where you grew up, time in U.S.).
2. How long have you been at this university?
3. When do you anticipate graduating? What is your major?

Background questions:

1. Some people like to study English in their home countries, but others prefer to go to English-speaking countries. What made you decide to come to the United States to learn English?
2. How much experience have you had prior to your class writing in your native language in academic settings?
3. Do you enjoy writing in your native language?
4. How much experience have you had prior to your class writing in English in academic settings?
5. Do you enjoy writing in English?

Grand tour question: We are here to talk a little bit about your experience in your writing class. Tell me what your writing experience in your writing class has been like.

6. How have you felt as an international student in your writing class? (Probes to get stories, e.g., Why did you feel that way? What did the teacher do to make you feel that way?)
7. What did you find most useful about the writing class instruction?
8. Specifically, what did you think of the grammar instruction? Was it helpful? Why or why not?
9. Tell me about the timed-writing paragraphs. What did you think about that process? [Probing questions for clarification as appropriate; may include questions asking the student to recreate their process when doing the DWCF paragraphs, and asking what they thought of that process]
10. In what ways did the timed-writing paragraphs help you or not help you?
11. What did you think of your teacher's feedback on the timed-writing paragraphs? Was it helpful or not? Why was it helpful/not helpful do you think?
12. Ok, I think that's all I have for you. Do you have anything else you'd like to share with me about the writing class?

[Turn tape recorder off]

Do you have anything to say about what we discussed during this interview?
Thank you again for your help!

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