

ESL Teachers' Knowledge of and Experience with Written Corrective Feedback

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH
BY

Peihong Cao

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Dr. Jean M. Stevenson, Advisor

April 2017

© Peihong Cao 2017

Acknowledgements

To be able to write the acknowledgements for this dissertation delights me since my advisor Dr. Jean W. Stevenson told me three years ago, “This is the only part that truly belongs to an author”. This acknowledgement section also offers me a special place to express my thanks to the people who have helped me to become who I am today, but to whom I have never gained a chance to thank them in person.

I am really grateful for all the people who facilitated my becoming a student at University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and the people (known or unknown, from my home country and America) who have been helping me in various ways constantly and willingly within these four years.

I would like to thank my home university for encouraging teachers to further their study either at home or abroad, and my colleagues from Northeast Normal University who have taken over my teaching load for four years while I was not in China. I am also grateful for their willingness to answer the questionnaire that helped me gain data to address my research questions. I would like to thank in particular the teachers who were willing to be interviewed and who allowed me to observe their writing classes as well as studying the feedback they provided on their students’ papers.

I could never thank the teachers and faculty from University of Minnesota Duluth enough since studying here has proven to be one of the most valuable experiences I have had in my life. It is at this place that I have acquired knowledge about how to teach and learn better, provide consultation for students at the writer’s workshop, teach ESL students more effectively through the Academic English Learning Program and conduct

research through being a research assistant. My knowledge concerning teaching and learning has improved through these four years of study.

But knowledge is not the only thing that I have gained at UMD, I have also attained other gifts—friends and mentors. While studying at UMD, I made friends with people from all kinds of places, who have enriched my life, widened my vision and left me with lasting memories. With them around me, I did not have the time to feel lonely or homesick since they are like family members to me.

At the same time, I also acquired a great number of mentors whose invisible qualities have inspired me and set a good example for me to become a better person and a better teacher too. The mentors to me not only include all the teachers from the Ed. D program but also the other teachers and faculty from Education Department at UMD as well as the teachers from the other colleges and service centers at UMD. These people offered me—the only international student in the Ed. D program—extra help, support, care, understanding and patience. They also influenced me without realizing it by their diligence, passion towards their careers, their devotion, love and deep concern for their students' growth as well as by their own experience of pursuing their doctorate degrees—the hardships they encountered and how they overcome them through their perseverance.

Besides thanking all the people who have helped me to become a student at UMD, all the friends I have made and teachers I have known at UMD, I would also like to give special thanks to all my committee members, whom I can never thank enough and words even fail to express my deep gratitude, since without them, I would never be able to achieve so much.

My sincere thanks go to my advisor Dr. Jean Stevenson who interacts with me constantly starting from my second year at UMD; who has been suggesting books and articles on writing to read; and who put reading materials to my mailbox from time to time when I was at UMD and sent me articles through email when I went back to China. All her diligence and assistance successfully changed my views towards writing—from being afraid to write to being able to write. I would also like to thank her for her immeasurable patience with me and her detailed instructions and careful revision suggestions for my dissertation. Jean reads my work almost as many times as I wrote it. I thank her for everything she has done for me and the number of the things is so large that I cannot write them one by one here. But I will never forget what she has done during these four years. Her diligence and her devotion to the students set me an example and will definitely be a lifelong wealth for me. I am greatly indebted to her kind help, understanding, support, encourage and motherly like love.

I am thankful for Dr. Lynn Brice, my committee chair for her compassionate guidance, understanding, support and professionalism. I would like to thank her for having shaped my awareness of research lens and enriched my understanding of the role of perspective in all inquiry.

I am grateful to Dr. Insoon Han who has served as my research mentor for two years. I would like to thank her for her patient and careful instruction through the weekly meeting with me. Her offering me opportunities to attend conferences together with her has broadened my views and aroused my interest towards doing research. I am not so afraid of doing research after two years' research internship with Insoon. During the

dissertation writing process, I am grateful for her careful reading and attention to every detail and help with all the formatting.

I would like to thank Dr. Chongwon Park for his willingness to be on my committee and for his inspiring advice and support on my writing as well as for his understanding and heartening inspiration.

I am also grateful to Dr. Joyce Strand for her constant guidance, help, and devotion. Without her, I would not be able to attend UMD and would not be who I am today. She has been offering continuous aid as well as constructive advice to me along my educational path and life road. She is like the timely rain who rescues me from difficult situations always in a timely manner and I will always treasure the deep love she gives me all these years.

The other group of people that I would like to express my gratitude to are people who are occupying special places in my heart since though we do not contact each other very often, they are there whenever I need help. They are my dear teacher and mentor Charles Peek from America, my graduate supervisor Jeroen van de Weijer from the Netherlands, my graduate supervisor Zeng Li from China and my dearest and most inspiring peer Heng Xu.

The last but not least group of people that I would like to thank are my family members—my husband, my son, my mother-in-law, parents, brother and sister. Without their support, understanding, trust, encouragement, endurance of longtime not seeing each other, I would not be able to study at UMD or finish writing this dissertation.

To all these people, once again, I offer my profound gratitude from the bottom of my heart.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my husband Chun who has been supportive, inspiring and encouraging all these years and to my son Fangming who has enriched my life so much.

Abstract

Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in writing classes is fundamental to interactions between teachers and students about students' writing and to help students further improve their writing. As one of the main feedback sources, teachers' cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) needs to be probed to properly understand teachers and their teaching (Borg, 2006). Currently, there is little research regarding teachers' cognition and their practice of offering WCF in Mainland China. The purpose of this study was to explore ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with and practice of WCF, and to investigate the connection among these aspects.

The participants were teachers of English from a major normal university. The phenomenological methodology was used to explore teachers' cognition and practice of WCF when teaching writing to undergraduate and graduate students. The study employed a triangulated approach that included a questionnaire administered to 55 teachers, interviews with two teachers and a study of the two teachers' feedback responses to 68 students' papers/journal entries, which were collected to further explore the interviewees' practice of WCF. Questionnaire data was statistically aggregated and tabulated. The interview data was analyzed using Hycner's 15 steps. The teachers' responses on students' papers were analyzed according to WCF types (direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic, focus of feedback, electronic CF, and reformulation) and error types (organizational errors, stylistic errors, and linguistic errors) and the results were tabulated.

Findings indicated that ESL teachers possessed different levels of knowledge concerning WCF and used a varying number of WCF types to target error types. Most

teachers were not well trained or provided with opportunities to be equipped with the necessary skills, to further improve their cognition and practice of providing feedback. Differences existed between teachers' perceptions of the employment of WCF and their actual practice of it. The findings are an indication that administrators should consider employing multiple strategies to better equip teachers of writing to teach and provide feedback more effectively and efficiently. The future of providing WCF on writing in Mainland China is dependent upon a workforce that excels in feedback cognition and practice.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Dedication.....	vi
Abstract.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Tables.....	xiv
Chapter One Introduction.....	1
Purpose Statement.....	2
Background of the Study.....	2
Statement of the Problem.....	8
Research Questions.....	9
Significance of the Study.....	9
Operational Definitions and Abbreviations of Key Terms.....	10
Assumptions.....	11
Delimitations.....	15
Limitations.....	16
Nature of the Study	16
Organization of the Remainder of the Study	17
Summary	18
Chapter Two Review of the Literature.....	19
Concepts and Terms.....	19
The different types of written corrective feedback.....	20

Theoretical Viewpoints on the Role of Written Corrective Feedback.....	21
Research on Written Corrective Feedback Conducted Abroad and in Hong Kong.24	
Studies on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback.....	24
Effectiveness of different types of written corrective feedback.....	26
Extent of written corrective feedback.....	29
Individual factors and contextual factors.....	30
Studies on students' reactions to, preferences and perception of WCF.....	31
Written corrective feedback from the perspective of teachers.....	33
<i>Studies of written corrective feedback on teachers' training</i>	33
<i>Written corrective feedback on teachers' challenges</i>	33
<i>Written corrective feedback on teachers' perception</i>	34
<i>Teachers' perspectives, philosophies and practices</i>	35
<i>Teachers' beliefs and practices</i>	36
<i>Teachers' perceptions of error and written grammar feedback</i>	39
<i>Teachers' self-assessment and actual performance</i>	40
<i>Teacher's stance as reflected in feedback on student writing</i>	40
Research on Written Corrective Feedback in China.....	41
Studies on the efficacy of written corrective feedback.....	42
Effectiveness of different types of written corrective feedback.....	43
<i>Comparison between two types of feedback</i>	44
<i>Comparison among three types of feedback and their combinations</i>	46
<i>Comparison between focused and unfocused</i>	48

<i>Comparison between reader-styled feedback and corrective feedback</i>	49
<i>Comparison between form-focused and content-focused feedback</i>	49
<i>Comparison between different feedback subjects</i>	50
Studies on the Factors That Influence the Feedback Efficacy.....	52
Studies on Written Corrective Feedback from the Perspective of Students.....	54
The Gap.....	57
Summary.....	59
Chapter Three Methodology	60
Rationale and Research Design.....	60
Research Paradigm.....	62
Qualitative.....	62
Phenomenology.....	62
Data Collection.....	63
Participants.....	63
Setting.....	64
Data collection technique I: Questionnaire.....	65
Data collection technique II: Interview.....	68
Data collection technique III: Studying of feedback responses.....	69
Verification of Data.....	70
Ethical Considerations.....	70
Summary.....	71
Chapter Four Results.....	72

Questionnaire Findings: Aggregation, Tabulation and Description.....	72
Participant demographic information.....	73
Results of close-ended questions.....	74
<i>Teacher knowledge of written corrective feedback.....</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>Teacher experience with receiving written corrective feedback.....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Teacher training and practice of written corrective feedback.....</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Aggregation of participants' knowledge of, experience with and use of CF....</i>	<i>87</i>
Results of open-ended questions.....	95
<i>Results of open-ended question one.....</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Results of open-ended question two.....</i>	<i>96</i>
Results of the Interview.....	98
Interview result of teacher one.....	99
Interview result of teacher two.....	102
Results of the Teachers' Responses to Students' Composition.....	105
Results of feedback provided by interviewee one.....	105
Results of feedback provided by interviewee two.....	112
Integration of Findings Gained From Different Data Collection Techniques.....	116
Integration of the results of the questionnaire and interviews.....	116
Integration of results of interview and examination of teachers' responses.....	118
Summary.....	119
Chapter Five Discussion and Conclusion.....	121
Overview of the Study.....	121

Summary and discussion of questionnaire findings.....	121
<i>Summary of closed-ended question results.....</i>	<i>121</i>
<i>Discussion of closed-ended question results.....</i>	<i>126</i>
<i>Summary of the two open-ended results.....</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>Discussion of the two open-ended results.....</i>	<i>131</i>
Summary of the interview findings.....	132
Discussion of the interview findings.....	134
Summary of findings of feedback responses	135
Discussion of the findings of feedback responses.....	137
Summary and discussion of findings of data collection technique II & III.....	138
Limitations of the Study and Means to Rectify.....	138
Implications of Results	140
Conclusion	141
REFERENCES.....	143
APPENDIX A: Written Corrective Feedback Questionnaire	165
APPENDIX B: University of Minnesota IRB Approval.....	170

List of Tables

Table 1. <i>Participant Demographic Information</i>	74
Table 2. <i>Types of WCF that Participants are Familiar With</i>	76
Table 3. <i>Sources of Getting the Terms</i>	76
Table 4. <i>Frequency Participants Read Articles</i>	77
Table 5. <i>Teachers' Opinions on Articles Read</i>	77
Table 6. <i>Feedback Amount Participants Received</i>	78
Table 7. <i>Error Types Addressed by Participants' Teachers and their Targeted Priority</i> ..	79
Table 8. <i>WCF Types Participants Received</i>	80
Table 9. <i>Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Receive</i>	82
Table 10. <i>Participants' Reactions to Feedback Received</i>	82
Table 11. <i>Participants' Attitudes toward Feedback Received</i>	82
Table 12. <i>Training Participants Received in Providing WCF</i>	84
Table 13. <i>Confidence Level with Providing WCF to Students</i>	85
Table 14. <i>Feedback Amount Participants Provided</i>	85
Table 15. <i>Participants Addressed Error Types and Their Targeting Priority</i>	86
Table 16. <i>The Effects of Feedback on the Error Types</i>	86
Table 17. <i>WCF Types Participants Selected</i>	88
Table 18. <i>Order of WCF types Participants Preferred to Provide</i>	88
Table 19. <i>Comparison among Knowledge of, Experience with and Practice of WCF</i>	91
Table 20. <i>Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Receive and Provide</i>	92
Table 21. <i>Feedback Amount Participants Received and Provided</i>	94

Table 22. <i>Types of Errors Addressed and Targeting Priority</i>	94
Table 23. <i>WCF Types, Key Reasons for Providing and Characteristic Response</i>	97
Table 24. <i>Opinions on Feedback Provided</i>	98
Table 25. <i>Interviewee One's Feedback Provided on Sophomores' Journals</i>	108
Table 26. <i>Feedback Provided by Interviewee Two on Postgraduates' Paper</i>	114

Chapter One

Introduction

Feedback in writing classes is fundamental to interactions between teachers and students about the students' writing and to help students further improve their writing. One of the greatest challenges that instructors of English writing (ESL teachers in particular) face is providing feedback (Ferris, 2007). Despite the documentation of the facilitative role of written corrective feedback (WCF) by Lyster and Saito (2010) and Mackey and Goo (2007), many teachers are not convinced that WCF is efficient (Guénette & Lyster, 2013). Though unconvinced of the efficiency of WCF, teachers still believe that they should correct students' grammatical errors (Guénette & Lyster, 2013).

Providing WCF on students' writing can be a very trying and frustrating process to teachers because it is the most time-consuming task (Ferris, 2007; Jiang & Zeng, 2011). Providing WCF can also be challenging to those teachers who believe they are not well trained (Tusi, 1996) or equipped with the relevant knowledge about techniques concerning providing WCF (e.g. Guénette & Lyster, 2013). Moreover, lack of universal agreement on the feedback effect, quantity, types or strategies among scholars in providing feedback also brings instructors of writing frustration and challenges.

Frustrating and challenging as it is, providing WCF is still a frequent practice in the writing classes, but the practice could vary from instructor to instructor due to their varied cognition (e.g., thoughts, beliefs and knowledge). More and more scholars realize the importance of getting to know the teachers' cognition to understand teachers and their practice (Borg, 2006). Scholars have incorporated this as a new and emerging study focus of WCF since teachers' cognition of providing feedback is not static and changes

with their accumulation of knowledge of and experience with it.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore written corrective feedback (WCF) from the perspective of teachers, to document and describe ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, and to investigate the connection between their knowledge of and experience with WCF and their use of it in the actual writing classes at a major university in Mainland China. This present phenomenological study adopted a triangulated data collection technique to gain data. First surveys were administered to ESL teachers at a normal university in the northeastern part of China to report their knowledge of, experience with, previous training in and present practice of providing feedback and the connection among these aspects. Second, two participants were interviewed to report as particular cases the actual state of these teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and perception of employment of WCF in ESL classrooms. The feedback responses provided by these two interviewees were further examined and then compared with data drawn from the interviews to determine the connection between one's cognition and practice of WCF. To study WCF from this perspective was to gain insight into these ESL teachers' cognition and practice, to increase understanding of the actual state of teachers' knowledge level of WCF, to inform curriculum and to encourage more studies to be carried out with ESL teachers at other places in Mainland China to address the gap in the literature.

Background of the Study

Corrective feedback (CF), which typically involves a teacher or some peers offering a student either formal or informal feedback on his/her performance on various

tasks, is a frequent practice in the field of both First Language Acquisition (FLA) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Starting from the 1980s, researchers (e.g., Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984) began to carry out experiments on WCF in the writing classes of language teaching. From then on, the experiments increased both in number and in coverage: from the general effectiveness of CF to the effects of different types of CF; from the effects of targeting different error types to the impact of individual differences; and from the potential influence of contextual factors (the educational background and the social relationship) on engagement with WCF to students' reactions to WCF.

On the other hand, the scholars in Mainland China were a step slower in studying WCF and they did not turn their attention to it until the 1990s (Fan, 2015). After entering the 21st century, studies on CF flourished in Mainland China and have been through three developmental stages: the beginning stage (2001-2003), the developmental stage (2005-2007) and the deepening stage (2009-2013) (Peng, 2014). Similar to their counterparts abroad, scholars in Mainland China have achieved a great deal in the studies of CF. The scholars not only combed the studies carried out abroad and at home (Guo & Qin, 2006; Su, 2015; Zhang & Wang 2015; Zhang, 2015) but also carried out empirical studies on the following five aspects of CF: the efficacy of CF; the effects of the different types of CF; the studies on the different feedback provision subjects (teachers *vs.* peers, foreign teachers *vs.* Chinese teachers); students' reactions to, preferences for and attitudes toward CF; the different factors that influenced students' writing, their responses to WCF, their revision strategies, and their discourse correction.

Despite the numbers of studies on CF and the growing wider interest in CF

carried out in Mainland China, the gap between the studies conducted abroad and the studies in China still exists. In recent years, a new research gap on WCF has arisen, that is, the study of WCF from the perspective of teachers.

In the field of composition in the west, a growing number of scholars turned their attention to study WCF from the perspectives of teachers in terms of their cognition, challenges and training. Scholars targeted teacher's cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) with the aim of properly understanding teachers and their teaching (Borg, 2006). The research field on ESL teachers in terms of CF has spawned a number of studies and the research foci encompassed wider themes starting from the 1990s.

Ferris (2014), Ferris et al. (2011), and Lee (2003) focused on teachers' perspectives, philosophies and practices through surveys and interviews with varying contexts. Ferris (2014) studied writing teachers from both universities and community colleges living in the same geographical region. He concluded that instructors differed in their guiding principles and the teachers' own written commentary demonstrated that discontinuity existed between the response principle teachers reported and their actual practices. Ferris et al. (2011) focused on college writing instructors in both mainstream and specialized second language writing contexts. He found that instructors of writing varied both in their feedback approach adjustments and in their overall attitude toward the effort of responding to second language writers. Lee (2003) surveyed and interviewed secondary English teachers in Hong Kong. The author discovered that most teachers marked errors in a comprehensive manner instead of marking errors selectively—an error correction mechanism put forward by the local English syllabus and error correction

literature. Moreover, teachers regard error feedback as a job that lacks long-term significance and they do not believe their time-consuming effort pays off with regards to student improvement.

Teachers' beliefs and practices were researched by scholars (Diab, 2005b; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, 1998, 2008, 2009; Min, 2013). Diab (2005b) targeted a university-level ESL instructor's feedback techniques and rationale. Though the instructor seemed to agree with the recommendation of providing feedback on content and of adopting alternative feedback methods rather than traditional ones, she recommended using surface-level error correction for the students' sake since she thought students needed it.

Junqueira and Kim (2013) compared a novice and an experienced ESL teacher's previous training, teaching experience, and CF beliefs and practices. The investigation showed that though the two teachers were similar in the amount of feedback provided and of learner uptake and repair, the experienced teacher excelled in teacher-learner interactions, in the number of feedback types and in the balance across linguistic targets. The results also revealed the "apprenticeship of observation," instead of teaching experience and training, seemed to have a greater influence on both teachers' belief systems.

Junqueira and Payant (2015) researched a pre-service L2 writing teacher's feedback beliefs and practices through multiple data collection. The participant believed she put more emphasis on global concerns; however, the results indicated that the amount of local WCF (83.9%) outnumbered that of the global WCF (16.1%). Min (2013) studied how an EFL writing teacher/researcher provided WF through a self-study of her own

beliefs and practices by examining her journal entries, learning log entries and written comments on students' writings. At the beginning of the semester, four principles (clarifying writers' intentions, identifying problems, explaining problems, and making specific suggestions) guided the feedback she provided. The teacher's guiding principles changed hierarchically toward the end of the semester when her corresponding priority was changed from fixing students' problems to understanding their intentions. The teacher's beliefs and practices showed congruity due to the fact that she articulated and demonstrated her beliefs publicly in class and she gained the procedural knowledge in providing feedback.

Lee (1998, 2008, 2009) carried out a series of studies on ESL teachers in Hong Kong secondary schools by focusing on their beliefs, practices, and guiding principles in terms of writing. Lee's studies, to some extent, enabled people to learn teachers' beliefs and practices in an EFL context since "much of L2 teacher feedback research is conducted with advanced students in process-oriented classrooms in the United States"(Lee, 2008, p. 68). The study conducted in 1998 found that a gap existed between teachers' beliefs and their practices: they regarded discourse coherence as essential to writing instruction, though in actual practice, they tended to emphasize more on grammar in their evaluation. Lee's study (2009) focused on teachers' beliefs and WCF practice and found ten salient mismatches between their beliefs and practice. The study conducted in 2008 by Lee dealt with the understanding of teachers' WCF practices and the reasons behind the discrepancies between their specific practices and the recommended principles. The results showed that the written feedback was mainly error-focused and occurred in single-draft classrooms, which did not conform to the recommended principles listed in

the local curriculum documents. The factors that influenced teachers' practices were multifold that included contextual factors (teachers' beliefs, values, understandings, and knowledge), cultural and institutional contexts (philosophies about feedback and attitude to exams), and socio-political issues pertaining to power and teacher autonomy.

Tsui (1996) focused on an ESL teacher's dissatisfaction with the way she had been taught writing as well as her ways of teaching writing. Even though the teacher thought that all errors needed to be corrected by students, the teacher did not provide many written comments to students' writing. After the teacher was introduced to the process approach to writing in an in-service teacher education program, she intended to implement it in her classroom despite the dilemmas she faced. She presented some suggestions (such as, providing a creative topic, a safe and supportive environment and generating ideas, organizing and revising) to deal with the frustrations caused by irrelevant composition topic, critical and unsympathetic environment and product-focused writing.

Guénette and Lyster (2013) addressed the challenges faced by writing teachers in terms of WCF. The authors found out that pre-service teachers overused direct corrections at the expense of more indirect CF strategies, which was similar to their in-service colleagues (e.g., Ferris, 2006; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). The authors also discovered that pre-service teachers faced many challenges caused by a lack of teachers' metalinguistic awareness of complex linguistic notions and by not having a full understanding of students' proficiency levels. Therefore, they called for special training of teacher candidates in the area of providing WCF.

In sum, the literature on CF from the perspective of teachers abroad was much

richer and with wider foci. The results enabled instructors of writing in China to gain some understanding of their counterparts' beliefs, guiding principles, challenges, and practices. The studies also show the importance of training since the study carried out by Tsui (1996) manifested the changes in the participants' practice after taking an in-service initial teacher education program. Moreover, Guénette and Lyster (2013) called for the special training of teacher candidates in the area of providing WCF. In Mainland China, little literature was on WCF studies from the perspective of ESL teachers. The existing studies were on the comparison of the practice of providing feedback between foreign teachers of English and that of ESL teachers from China (Liu, 2013; Zhao, 2010). However, research on ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF remains an almost untouched area, this current study serves to examine WCF from this perspective to address the gap.

Statement of the Problem

Little is known about ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of providing feedback in Mainland China. Evidence suggests that one needs to understand teachers' cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) to properly understand teachers and their teaching practice (Borg, 2006). A teacher's cognition is not static (see Tsui's study, 1996; Min, 2013) and is influenced by multifold factors such as knowledge gained through life-long study, experience acquired through years of teaching (Junqueira & Kim, 2013). Moreover, "apprenticeship of observation" (Junqueira & Kim, 2013) and in-service training (Tsui, 1996, Montgomery & Baker, 2007) also play a vital role in changing a person's cognition and practice of providing feedback. To improve one's practice, a teacher's cognition needs to be nurtured

constantly through studying consciously on his/her own or provided with opportunities to apprentice or to be trained. Before actions to be taken to improve teachers' practice of providing feedback, their cognition needs to be explored and documented first.

Research Questions

Due to the lack of literature on ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, the proposed research intentionally seeks to explore and document these teachers' cognition and practice. The following are the primary research questions:

1. What knowledge of and experience with written corrective feedback do ESL teachers have?
2. How do they employ and adapt written corrective feedback with ESL students in their classrooms ?
3. What is the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of written corrective feedback?

Significance of the Study

In the western academic field, an increasing amount of literature on WCF was from the perspective of teachers' cognition and practice. Answering the above-mentioned research questions helps in finding out ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with and practice of WCF in Mainland China. Results from this investigation may assist ESL educators who teach writing know the present state of their cognition of WCF, so they can take actions to better equip themselves and to prepare future ESL teachers to provide feedback. Further, the study's results may encourage Education administrators to provide documentation-specific training, resources, and support for ESL teachers who teach writing for the very first time.

Operational Definitions and Abbreviations of Key Terms

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is used for non-native English speakers learning English in a country where English is not commonly spoken.

English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) is often used for non-native English speakers learning English in a country where English is commonly spoken.

First Language Acquisition (FLA) studies infants' acquisition of their native language.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is used for non-native English speakers learning English in a country where English is not commonly spoken.

Corrective feedback (CF): typically involves a teacher or some peers offering a student either formal or informal feedback on his/her performance on various tasks and it is a frequent practice in the field of both First Language Acquisition (FLA) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

Direct corrective feedback (direct CF): refers to CF that supplies learners with the correct target language form when they make an error (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008, p.355).

Indirect corrective feedback (indirect CF): refers to various strategies (e.g., simply indicating errors) to encourage learners to self-correct their errors (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008, p.355).

Metalinguistic feedback: involves providing some kind of metalinguistic clue as to the nature of the error that has been committed and the correction needed. Metalinguistic feedback, then, appeals to learners' explicit knowledge by helping them to understand the nature of the error they have committed (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008,

p.356).

Focused feedback: selects specific errors to be corrected and ignores other errors (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008, p.356)

Unfocused feedback: corresponds to what might be considered normal practice in writing instruction (although not necessarily what L2 writing researchers advocate); teachers correct all (or at least a range of) the errors in learners' written work. This type of CF can be viewed as 'extensive' because it treats multiple errors (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008, p.356).

Electronic corrective feedback (Electronic CF): using electronic software programs to provide feedback

Reformulation: the student's text was rewritten by a native speaker who should "preserve as many of the writer's ideas as possible, while expressing them in his/her own words so as to make the piece sound native-like" (Cohen 1989: 4).

Stylistic errors: refers mainly to such errors as misspelling, wordiness, redundancy, formal or informal tone.

Linguistic errors: refers mainly to errors in grammar and mechanics

Assumptions

The following were the assumptions taken by the researcher while carrying out this study:

1. All participants understood the survey instrument and filled it out by following its directions.
2. All participants were honest and accurate in their answers to the survey questions.

3. The interviewed participants were providing truthful information during the interviews and the feedback provided by them on their students' writing was representative of the work they have been doing all the time.
4. To the researcher, teachers' cognition is not static but changes with increase of knowledge and experience since her own cognition of CF has changed with her increase in experience with and in knowledge of providing feedback. The researcher is an ESL teacher at a normal university in Mainland China who has both received feedback during her study and provided feedback at work, who has been gaining more experience during her continual studying for both her master's and doctoral degree. As a writing consultant at the writer's workshop and a teaching assistant to the Academic English Learning Program (AELP) and a doctoral student at University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), the researcher learned more things concerning providing feedback for students: 1) the different priority (the other consultants and the researcher) targeted when providing feedback 2) the usefulness of in-service training in gaining knowledge about providing feedback 3) the benefits of reading articles on WCF.

The first thing the researcher learned was the different priorities the other consultants and the researcher targeted while providing feedback for students. When the researcher provided students with feedback, she tended to focus on grammar and mechanics while the other consultants targeted the different aspects of the paper in accordance with the stage the students' writing. The reason for this difference was due to the different cognition of writing. Writing was generally a one-draft task in China while in America it was a process that consisted of prewriting (brainstorming, research and

outline), first draft, second draft and final draft. Since the researcher treated the paper as a one-draft product, she focused on linguistic errors that students made to call their attention to correct them by themselves and to avoid making them in the future. But writing is taught as a process in America, teachers could adopt different feedback strategies with the focus suitable for that stage of writing—from targeting organization and spiraling down to grammar and mechanics. The feedback providing technique at UMD is more interaction than direct correction, which is more heuristically oriented and helpful to students' long-term learning. It took the researcher some time to gain the knowledge and experience and to change her cognition of providing feedback, which in turn changes her practice of providing feedback.

Second, the researcher gained more knowledge concerning WCF through in-service training at writer's workshop at UMD. All the writing consultants were offered a one-hour training session every week with articles and materials concerning certain aspects of providing feedback for students. They were required to read the articles beforehand and the weekly conference was held in the library where consultants could discuss the articles, share their thoughts, talk about their experience and learn from each other. Through this weekly training-and-application pattern, consultants became better equipped and became more confident in interacting with students and in offering feedback. They could adapt their feedback techniques to best meet students' needs. This type of in-service training was new to the researcher and helped broaden her views concerning providing CF and strengthened her confidence in providing feedback for students.

Third, the articles read by the researcher during these years enabled her to have a

much thorough knowledge foundation of providing feedback. Through the systematic reading and reviewing of the articles, the researcher's knowledge of providing CF has been accumulating gradually.

All the articles concerning CF the researcher has read starting from 2005 when writing the master's thesis on CF provided in oral class and in writing class, and all the in-service training and experience with providing feedback at UMD changed her cognition of CF, which in turn changed her practice of providing it. The experience collectively suggest that a teacher's practice of providing CF is directly related with that his/her knowledge, experience, and training. Therefore, the researcher became increasingly interested in finding out the other ESL teachers' experience with, training in, knowledge of and practice of providing CF in Mainland China. For this reason, all the ESL teachers at a major normal University were chosen as participants. Ideally, a comprehensive understanding of these teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of providing CF are to be gained. In addition, the researcher hopes that this study can also enable teacher educators to gain valuable information and help them identify new avenues for the training and the professional development of future ESL teachers in Mainland China.

Though the last assumption of this present study was based on the researcher's own experience, the biases for the study can be bracketed or filtered out through the triangulated data collection techniques. ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF and their actual practice of it with ESL students in their classrooms will be gained through this phenomenological study.

A strength the researcher brings to this study is that she is an ESL teacher who has

worked with the other ESL teachers and has been teaching ESL students for 17 years. The researcher personally has been through the struggles, challenges that the scholars (Guénette & Lyster, 2013) discussed in their findings and she understands that a person's cognition grows like a process, which helps reduce prejudice and increase authenticity.

Moreover, as an ESL teacher at the normal university where the researcher was to conduct the research, she has the trust of the dean and was able to gain permission to conduct research at this university. Second, being a colleague of all the participants enabled the researcher not only to network with all of them, but also to gain their trust in gathering data. The researcher will create and adhere to all protocol, focusing on the aspects only as appropriate to this study.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to all ESL teachers currently working at a normal university in the northeastern part of China. All these teachers majored in English during their undergraduate study and all have a master's degree or above in English or other disciplines. All the English-major students in China are required to be trained in the basic skills that include listening, speaking, reading and writing during their undergraduate study period. Undergraduates majoring in English are required to take at least two years of writing in English; therefore, all those teachers should have experience with writing in English and with receiving feedback from their teachers of writing when they were at universities. These teachers are teaching English at one of the major normal universities, and they know how they were trained and how they provided feedback for their students. Their cognition and practice of WCF are going to influence their students—some would be ESL teachers at different schools all over China. The interviewees were teachers who

taught writing as a separate course during the fall of 2016. The reason for choosing them as interviewees was that they were more involved with writing and with providing students with feedback. It was more meaningful to find out their perception and practice of feedback since they were going to influence their students without their own realization. The feedback provided on students' writing assignments by these two interviewees would be collected to find out their actual practice of providing feedback. These participants were eligible for one-time filling out the questionnaire and semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews respectively.

Limitations

Although every effort was made to minimize the limitations' influence on the research outcomes, certain constraints were beyond the control of the study. The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. This study intended to include ESL teachers currently working at one normal university in the northeastern part of China but only those who were willing to participant returned the survey forms.
2. Each participant responded to the survey as truthfully and accurately as possible.
3. Interviewees responded to the interview questions honestly and thoroughly.
4. Interviewee One was in a rush to hand in the grades of her students at the end of the semester, so she did not have time to provide feedback on the final essays written by the students. Therefore, feedback provided by her on her students' journal entries was collected instead.

Nature of the Study

After obtaining approval from the University of Minnesota Institutional Review

Board (IRB) via exemption, the researcher carried out this phenomenological study. Data collected first through a survey questionnaire issued in September 2016. Fifty-five responses were obtained in terms of ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of WCF, together with participant demographic information. Data were also collected through interviews of two teachers on two days in September to explore in particular their cognition of WCF and their perceived employment and adaption of WCF in their classrooms. Moreover, data were collected through the students' writing assignments with feedback responses handed over to the researcher by the two interviewees in November 2016 and February 2017. Data were used to 1) determine descriptive statistics for all items and significant connections between survey items, 2) document ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF in particular cases, 3) document the actual practice of interviewees' practice of providing feedback, and 4) determine the connection between interviewees' perceived practice and actual practice.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

This study aimed to examine ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of WCF. The researcher has presented the research questions, definitions, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations in Chapter 1. In the coming chapters, the researcher will review pertinent literature related to the research question in Chapter 2, describe the research methods employed during the investigation in Chapter 3, detail the results of the study in Chapter 4 and present a discussion of the study's results, provide recommendations given the study's outcomes, and offer suggestions for future research in Chapter 5.

Summary

Though studies on WCF from the perspective of teachers have been a new research avenue abroad in the recent two decades, only a very few scholars (Liu, 2013; Zhao, 2010) in Mainland China have studied WCF from the perspective of teachers, and mainly focused on comparing different subjects for providing feedback (foreign teachers vs. Chinese teachers of English). It is vital for educators to enrich the research scope of WCF from the perspective of teachers by finding out the knowledge of the ESL teachers have concerning WCF and their own experience with receiving WCF while they were students, as well as how they deal with WCF in their actual writing classes. This study, therefore, is to find out what knowledge and experience ESL teachers have about WCF and how they employ and/or adapt it with ESL students in their classrooms as well as the connection between one's knowledge, experience and practice of WCF.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study was to explore WCF from the perspective of teachers, to document and describe ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, and to investigate the relationship between their knowledge of and experience with WCF and use of it in the actual writing classes at a major university in Mainland China. The following questions were targeted: "*What knowledge of and experience with corrective feedback do teachers have and how do they employ and adapt corrective feedback with ESL students in their classrooms? What is the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of written corrective feedback?*"

This chapter will outline and review the published research conducted on corrective feedback in China and abroad (i.e., western academic research) by addressing the definitions and concepts associated with corrective feedback and the various types of WCF. There will be additional discussion concerning the different types (oral and written feedback) as there is an obvious difference between the two types. The different theoretical viewpoints on the role of WCF will be examined. Moreover, all the studies on WCF that have been conducted in Mainland China will be analyzed and synthesized. It ends with the gap and summary of the chapter.

Concepts and Terms

Historically, scholars had to be careful in their usage of the terminology used for providing corrective feedback for students because there was no consensus on any one definition for commonly used terms such as *corrective feedback*, *negative evidence* or *negative feedback*. However, during the last two decades of the 20th century, scholars

provided a definition for corrective feedback that has been universally accepted (Chaudron, 1988; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Long, 1996; Schachter, 1991). In addition, they distinguished among the once-commonly used terms such as *corrective feedback*, *negative evidence or negative feedback*. Despite the fine distinction of these terms (Schachter, 1991), individuals still use the terms interchangeably, and the trend has been towards using corrective feedback more frequently (See Cao, 2006 for the detailed discussion of the terms). When scholars carry out their research in writing classes, they adopt the usage of written corrective feedback or written error correction more often. In this dissertation, the term written corrective feedback (WCF) will be used to refer to all the written feedback that teachers provide for students.

The different types of written corrective feedback. This section describes the different types of WCF, since there are some obvious differences between oral (see Cao 2006 for detailed division of the types) and WCF types. When teachers provide feedback in writing classes, they target several aspects of the composition—content, form, organizational, stylistic and linguistic errors. Among these aspects, teachers are inclined to target the linguistic errors and provide different types of feedback on this area.

In Ellis's (2009) article, there is a discussion of the comprehensive types of WCF. He presents a typology of the feedback options that teachers can adopt in correcting students' linguistic errors. According to Ellis, there are six types that teachers can use to provide corrective feedback (CF):

1. Direct CF-direct correct the errors made by the students
2. Indirect CF -indicating + locating the error; indication only
3. Metalinguistic CF -use of error code; brief grammatical descriptions

4. The focus of CF-unfocused CF, focused CF
5. Electronic CF-using electronic software programs to provide feedback
6. Reformulation-the student's text was rewritten by a native speaker who should "preserve as many of the writer's ideas as possible, while expressing them in his/her own words so as to make the piece sound native-like" (Cohen 1989: 4).

Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages; some scholars prefer one type of CF, while some prefer a combination of the different types. Though there is no CF recipe, it is still recommended that teachers get to know the available CF options and each option's rationale as well as the research findings. Then teachers can develop their own correction policy through focusing on some key issues, which in turn might facilitate their teaching and benefit the students' learning.

Theoretical Viewpoints on the Role of Written Corrective Feedback

Theories and practice go hand in hand—the former serves as the guideline to the latter, while the latter tests and verifies the former. However, the actual fact is that researchers have systematically studied CF without considering the theories behind CF. Even so, it would be wise to find out what the stances of the different existing theories are for the practice of WCF and the extent these theories can lend to the actual empirical studies and experiments of WCF. As far as the author of this dissertation knows, until now only three articles have provided a comparatively comprehensive view on the different theoretical stances on the role of corrective feedback.

In 2006, Cao made an attempt to compare and analyze in detail the theoretical stances on the role of oral CF and suggested the theories were abundant but of a mixed nature on oral CF. In the thesis, the author went to great length to cover the theories

available at that time and classified the theories into two categories, those that are not in favor of corrective feedback and those that are in favor of corrective feedback. The former group includes the theories such as “*Nativist Theory, the Input Hypothesis and the Monitor Theory*” (Cao, 2006, p. 9), while the latter contains theories such as “*the Reinforcement Theory, the Interlanguage Theory, the Output Hypothesis, the Noticing Hypothesis, the Testing Models Hypothesis and Long’s Interactionist Hypothesis*” (Cao, 2006, p.9).

Scholars continued to conduct research without delving into the question of the theoretical stances on the role of WCF. It was not until 2012 that Charlene Polio made an effort to investigate “the claim that written error correction is incompatible with theories of second language acquisition” (p.375). Polio discussed the written error correction from the perspective of the different approaches to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and what these approaches in turn have to say about written error correction. The theoretical approaches Polio examined include *Generative Theory, Processability Theory, Usage-Based Approach, Skill-based Theory, Sociocultural Approach* (including *Vygotsky’s ZPD and Leontiev’s Activity Theory*) as well as *Interactionist Perspective*. According to Polio’s discussion, feedback has no role in either *Generative Theory* or *Processability Theory*. On one hand, as the *Generative Theory* focuses on learners’ competence or their implicit knowledge while WCF focuses on their explicit knowledge, therefore, feedback could only serve as a trigger in this type of learning. On the other hand, *Processability Theory* maintains there are distinct developmental stages of SLA learners’ interlanguage due to the language processor’s constraints and nothing (no matter it is the frequency of a structure, the interaction, the output, or the formal instruction) can alter the development

course, let alone error correction, which at best might speed up the development with the condition that is used at the right level, which is hard to measure. Contrary to these two theories, feedback does have a role in the remaining four theories summarized by Polio—corrective feedback could draw the learner’s attention to the forms in the *Usage-Based Approach*; the feedback can help during practice in the *Skill-acquisition Theory*; the feedback can help learners scaffold if it is pitched to the learners’ level in the *Sociocultural Approach* and finally feedback is essential in the *Interactionist Theory* (See Polio 2012, for detailed discussion of the different theories).

John Bitchener (2012) dealt with the SLA theories that are either not in favor of or for corrective feedback. He mainly focused on Krashen’s *Monitor Model* (five hypotheses—Acquisition-learning Hypothesis, the Monitor Hypothesis, Natural Order Hypothesis, the Input Hypothesis, as well as the Affective Hypothesis), *Skill Acquisition*, *Interaction* as well as *Socio-Cultural Theories*, with the first theory not in favor of corrective feedback while the remaining three theories are in favor of corrective feedback (See Bitchener, 2012 for detailed discussion).

From the theoretical viewpoints expressed in the three articles (Bitchener, 2012; Cao, 2006; Polio, 2012), a complete summary of all the theories that did not consider corrective feedback have a role in SLA were *Nativist Theory/ Generative Theory* (since both adopt the theoretical foundation of *Universal Grammar*), the *Input Hypothesis*, the *Monitor Theory* and the *Processability Theory*. The theories that considered corrective feedback had a role in SLA were the *Reinforcement Theory*, the *Interlanguage Theory*, the *Output Hypothesis*, the *Noticing Hypothesis*, the *Testing Models Hypothesis*, *Interactionist Hypothesis*, *Usage-Based Approach*, *Skill-based Theory* as well as the

Sociocultural Approach. The reason for this division is that the theories focus on different aspects of learning and acquisition, with the first group on competence, implicit learning or the different developmental learning processes; the second group focuses on the explicit learning or a specific aspect or the outcome of learning.

From the aforementioned stances on the role of corrective feedback, we can find out how fruitful the SLA theories are, especially on the role of corrective feedback/WCF in the process of language acquisition either orally or in writing. The mixed appraisal of the role of corrective feedback among these different theories did not stifle scholars' enthusiasm; instead it stimulated researchers to conduct an enormous number of studies within a 30-year period of time to test the effects of WCF, the effects of the different types of WCF and the focus of CF. Just like there are diverse theoretical stances, there are different viewpoints on the role WCF. In the coming literature review section, these articles on the role of WCF and the effects of the different types of WCF are to be compared and analyzed.

Research on Written Corrective Feedback Conducted Abroad and in Hong Kong

In the coming section, research conducted abroad and in Hong Kong will be examined. The reason for including the studies conducted by Hong Kong scholars in this section is that they (just like the scholars abroad) are seemingly a step ahead in studying WCF when compared with the scholars in Mainland China.

Studies on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback. Just as researchers studying oral corrective feedback did, researchers studying WCF conducted their studies with the aim of finding out whether WCF was an effective teaching practice. The results of the findings were divergent. On the one hand, a series of studies were conducted as

early as the 1980s and 1990s, with the usage of direct error correction or the combination of direct error correction with indirect coded feedback (or indirect highlighting feedback). Contrary to the researchers' expectations related to the effectiveness of WCF, the results of these studies (Kepner, 1991; Polio, Fleck & Leder, 1998; Robb, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984; Sheppard, 1992) failed to provide evidence for the claim that the usage of WCF was able to improve the accuracy of a particular written text. This difference between the expectations and the actual experimental results prompted the researchers to reexamine these experiments and scholars such as Bitchener and Ferris (2012); Gu enette (2007) and Van Beuningen, de Jong, and Kuiken (2008) pointed out the possible issues existing in these studies that led to the unfavorable results of WCF. The issues are—either there is a problem in the design, the execution and the data analysis of the studies; or the different variables used in the studies. Even though from the results of these studies, it appears that researchers could not prove the effectiveness of WCF in improving the writing accuracy, these results are generally considered not valid at all in themselves due to the above-mentioned design issues.

On the other hand, many studies conducted by scholars in the 1990s and 2000s reported the effectiveness of WCF in improving the accuracy of the writing of ESL students. However, the results of these studies have encountered different kinds of questioning. The studies (Chandler, 2000; Ferris, 1995a, 1997, 2006; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts & McKee, 2000) reported positive effects of WCF were questioned because they lacked control groups. Therefore, it is impossible to draw the conclusion that the improvement in accuracy was the result of WCF only. The other studies (Ashwell, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997; Ferris & Roberts, 2001)

with control groups that reported favorable effects of WCF were also criticized because of the flawed design of their studies, that is, the students in the study were required to revise their writing rather than write new texts. Some scholars (Polio et al., 1998; Truscott & Hsu, 2008) considered that revising a text could not be counted as evidence of learning. Later, Chandler (2003) conducted a more rigorous study and found WCF was effective in improving students' accuracy. Truscott (2004) questioned Chandler's study results by claiming his control group also received CF. The only difference was that the experimental group was provided error correction with revision, while the control group received error correction without revision. Although there are some problems with the design of the aforementioned studies, whose results are questioned by scholars, the contribution made by the researchers cannot be denied. The studies can serve as a guide when future studies are designed to resolve the key issue of the effectiveness of WCF. From the results of these studies; it seems researchers could, to some extent, prove the effectiveness of WCF in improving the writing accuracy.

Effectiveness of different types of written corrective feedback. Just as there are so many studies on the effectiveness of WCF, there are numerous studies on the effectiveness of the different types of WCF and the results of which still diverge (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010b; Chandler, 2003; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982; Robb et al., 1986; Semke, 1984; Van Beuningen, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2008, 2012). First, scholars focused their attention on the dichotomy of direct versus indirect feedback. The studies conducted by Robb et al. (1986) and Semke (1984) did not find any advantage of either the option of direct CF or indirect CF. The studies of Lalande (1982) and that of Ferris and Helt (2000) claimed indirect feedback had a slight advantage over direct feedback,

but in the former study, the difference was not significant. However, Chandler's study (2003) found favorable evidence for the usage of direct feedback, especially for reducing long-term errors. Recently, three studies (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Van Beuningen, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2008, 2012) reported that both direct and indirect feedback had some positive short-term effects, but the direct error correction could produce more sustained effects than the indirect CF.

Second, scholars started to turn their attention to the investigation of the relative effectiveness of the different types of indirect feedback (coded vs. uncoded feedback). However, there were no significant differences between the two options in the studies conducted by Ferris and Roberts (2001), Ferris et al. (2000) and Robb et al. (1986).

Third, scholars combined the usage of direct feedback with metalinguistic feedback. The results were different between the two studies conducted by the same researchers (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2010), where they found the students who were given both metalinguistic feedback and direct error correction did not outperform those who only received direct error feedback. However, two other studies (Bitchener et al., 2005; Sheen, 2007) reported the combination of direct error correction with oral metalinguistic information was more effective than direct error correction alone.

Fourth, scholars used electronic devices to provide feedback. In 2006, Milton introduced a software program *Mark My Words* that contained an electronic store of about 100 recurrent errors both at the lexico-grammatical level and the style level, which occurred in Chinese students' writing. Though Milton (2006) did not carry out a study to test the effectiveness of this error correction software, he did offer some anecdotal evidence and reported that the students were successful in their revisions through using

the software.

Shiou-Wen and Jia-Jiunn (2008) conducted a study, in which online annotations were used to support error correction and corrective feedback. They created an interactive environment, first by developing an online system *Online Annotator for EFL Writing*, which embodies five parts: “Document Maker, Annotation Editor, Composer, Error Analyzer, and Viewer” (p.882); and then conducting an experiment to test the effectiveness of the system. The teachers marked the errors and students received CF and the system classified and displayed the error types. The experimental group received CF with the developed system and the control group received the paper-based error correction method. The experimental group performed much better than the control group on recognizing writing errors.

Fifth, scholars focused on the usage of reformulation in the study. Reformulation aims at providing a resource for learners to use to correct their errors, that is, the student’s text was rewritten by a native speaker who should “preserve as many of the writer’s ideas as possible, while expressing them in his/her own words so as to make the piece sound native-like” (Cohen 1989, p.4). Not many scholars used this methodology in their studies and the result is not in favor of this methodology either. For example, Sachs and Polio’s (2007) study, which compared reformulation with direct error correction, showed that the error correction group outperformed the reformulation group in their accuracy of revisions. However, Ellis (2009) thought that “reformulation is a technique that is not restricted to assisting students with their surface level linguistic errors; it is also designed to draw attention to higher order stylistic and organizational errors” (2009, p.104).

Therefore, in Ellis’s view, teachers should not dismiss the use of reformulation in their

writing class simply due to Sachs and Polio's study result. Sachs and Polio's claim brings us back to the heated debate among scholars—to what extent WCF can effectively target different types of error.

Extent of written corrective feedback. In writing, there are all kinds of errors—linguistic errors, stylistic errors as well as organizational errors. To what extent WCF can effectively target different types of errors remains the root of all the controversies surrounding WCF until now. The research on different error types continues to gain positive and negative results in terms of their success in working with students. So far, many studies (e.g. Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Bitchener et al., 2005; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sheen et al., 2009) that specifically targeted one or two linguistic error categories (different functional uses of the definite and indefinite articles) found significant gains in the immediate post-tests as well as the delayed post-tests for the experimental groups, which supported the effectiveness of WCF. There is only one exception, that is, Bitchener et al.'s (2005) study found that WCF was not effective in targeting prepositions. However, their study was effective in dealing with the use of the English articles and the simple past tense. Based on the results of these studies, some scholars made the claim that WCF was effective; however, we cannot ignore that all these studies examined one or two grammatical error types. If we move our focus to the other error types, we are going to see different study results. Take lexical errors as an example, studies by the following scholars (Bitchener et al, 2005; Ferris, 2006; Frantzen, 1995; Lalande, 1982) reported that WCF was not effective in improving learners' accuracy of the use of lexical items or prepositions.

The positive evidence of the use of WCF in targeting one or two linguistic error

types prompted researchers to turn their investigation to the comprehensive approach versus the focused group. But even on this aspect, the studies still present different results. The study by Ellis et al. (2008) is the only one that reported improved accuracy for both the focused group and the comprehensive group, but their conclusion that both focused and unfocused CF were equally effective was questioned by the other scholars such as Xu (2009), since the learners from the focused group were provided with more CF. Sheen et al.'s study (2009) compared focused CF with comprehensive feedback and found the former was more beneficial than the latter and the reason for this result, according to the authors, was that the comprehensive feedback was provided in an unsystematic manner. Some errors were corrected while others were not. However, three studies (Truscott & Hsu, 2008; Van Beuningen et al., 2008, 2012) compared advanced learners who received comprehensive CF with those who did not and found the comprehensive group did better than the focused group. But there is a difference between these studies, the one conducted by Truscott and Hsu (2008) found the improved accuracy of a text revision could not be transferred to the task of new text writing. Yet, Van Beuningen et al. (2008, 2012) found the improved accuracy occurred both in the revised version of a text and in the writing of a new text.

Individual factors and contextual factors. With the increase in the number of studies on the impact of individual differences on second language acquisition (SLA), scholars began to investigate what impact the individual differences have on learners' writing as well as their response to WCF, with the aim of finding out to what extent the affective factors (beliefs, goals, attitudes, etc.) mediate learners' engagement with CF. The studies (Hyland, 1998, 2003; Sheen, 2007; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010) found

individual factors could facilitate the engagement with CF. Although these studies concluded CF facilitated engagement with CF, they focused on individual case studies. Further research still needs to be conducted using quantitative longitudinal methodologies, so it can be determined to what extent the identified effect of individual factors on engagement with CF can be generalized in SLA.

In addition to the studies on individual factors, there were studies that focused on the potential influence of contextual factors on engagement with WCF, though these studies were not prominent in the literature. So far only two contexts have been studied—the educational background and the social relationship. Four scholars studied the influence of educational background on foreign and second language learners' engagement with CF (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Ferris, 1999; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996; Reid, 1998; Roberts, 1999) while two scholars (Given & Schallert, 2008) examined how social relationships (especially, the relationship between the teacher and the learners) may have an effect on learners' engagement with WCF. The result was the more trusting the teacher-learner relationship was, the more positively learners would respond to the CF provided by teachers.

Studies on students' reactions to, preferences for and perception of WCF.

The assessment of students' reactions, preferences and perceptions to the feedback they receive has spawned a number of studies with specific studying objectives (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Chandler, 2003, Diab, 2005a, Diab, 2005b; Enginarlar, 1993; Ferris, 1995b; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Hyland, 2013; Leki, 1991; Lee, 2008; McCurdy, 1992; Radecki & Swales; 1988; Saito, 1994; Schulz, 1996; 2001;). The studies (Diab, 2005a, Enginarlar, 1993; Ferris, 1995; Leki, 1991; Radecki & Swales; 1988; Saito, 1994;

Schulz, 1996; 2001) focusing on EFL university students' preferences for error correction found that EFL students revealed a great concern with surface-level error correction, such as accuracy and error-free writing. The study conducted by Icy Lee (2008) in two Hong Kong secondary classrooms found that students preferred to receive more written comments from teachers no matter what their proficiency level was.

As to students' responses to the types of CF, Chandler (2003) discovered students preferred direct correction due to the fact that it was fast and easy to produce accurate revisions. However, from the point of view of learning, the students felt they learned more from correcting the errors themselves after seeing the simple underlining of errors marked by the teachers. Lee (2008) found students were more interested in teachers' providing explicit error feedback, irrespective of the fact that students of higher proficiency were more interested in CF than those of lower proficiency. As to their opinions of the feedback they received, the students from the following studies (Chandler, 2003; Diab, 2005a; Diab, 2005b; Ferris, 1995) found that their teachers' feedback was useful in helping them improve their writing. On the other hand, the students from Lee's study (2008) did not understand all of the feedback provided by teachers, due in part to the illegibility of the feedback.

In 2013, Hyland studied students' perceptions of the hidden messages in their teacher's written feedback in Hong Kong. The paper not only identified the content of these messages as well as the influences on students' attitudes to their "field of study, to disciplinary writing, to learning and to teacher-student relationships" (p.180). The result of the study was that students took away various messages from teachers' responses, despite the fact that some information was not explicit or was irrelevant to their work at

hand. Students interpreted their teachers' beliefs through both the content of the feedback and means of response.

Written corrective feedback from the perspective of teachers. In addition to the studies on the previously mentioned themes, researchers also started to turn their focus onto teachers—teachers' training, challenges as well as their cognition were all studied by researchers.

Studies of written corrective feedback on teachers' training. Tsui (1996) focused on a ESL teacher's dissatisfaction with the way she had been taught writing as well as her ways of teaching writing. Even though the teacher thought that all errors needed to be corrected by students, the teacher did not provide many written comments on students' writing. The writing was more product-oriented with strict word limit and time limit. After the teacher was introduced to the process approach to writing in an in-service initial teacher education program, she intended to implement it in her classroom, despite the dilemmas she faced. She presented some suggestions (such as, providing a creative topic, a safe and supportive environment and generating ideas, organizing and revising) to deal with the frustrations caused by irrelevant composition topic, critical and unsympathetic environment and product-focused writing.

Written corrective feedback on teachers' challenges. There was also one study (e.g. Guénette & Lyster, 2013) that addressed the challenges faced by writing teachers in terms of WCF. The authors investigated the CF practices of 18 ESL teacher candidates and analyzed the types of CF the pre-service teachers adopted, the error types they tended to target, and the reasons of their choices. Through both the quantitative analysis of the CF type frequency distribution in terms of error types and the qualitative analysis of

journals and interview data, the authors found out that, pre-service teachers overused direct corrections at the expense of more indirect CF strategies, which was similar to their in-service colleagues (e.g., Ferris, 2006; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). The authors also discovered that pre-service teachers faced many challenges caused by a lack of teachers' metalinguistic awareness of complex linguistic notions and by not having a full understanding of the proficiency levels of the students. Therefore, they called for the special training of teacher candidates in the area of providing WCF.

Written corrective feedback on teachers' perception. A number of studies targeted teacher cognition, which refers to the unobservable dimension of teaching or the mental lives of teachers. In other words, teacher cognition refers to the teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs that influence this practice. Since the 1970s, research on teacher cognition in the field of general education has been a prolific one. The reason that so many scholars conduct research on this perspective is due to the claim that there is a need to understand teacher cognition in order to properly understand teachers and their teaching (Borg, 2006). Though research on second language teacher cognition has a shorter history (Borg, 2006) and used to have a narrow focus—mainly on second language grammar instruction (Baker & Murphy, 2011), the research field on second language teachers spawned more studies and wider foci starting from the 1990s. These research foci could be put into the following themes—teachers' perspectives, philosophy and practices (Ferris et al., 2011; Lee 2003; Ferris, 2014); teachers' beliefs and practice (Diab, 2005b; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, 1998, 2008, 2009; Min, 2013); teachers' perceptions of error and written grammar feedback (Hyland & Anan, 2006; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012) and teachers' self-

assessment and actual performance (Montgomery & Baker, 2007) as well as teacher stance as reflected in feedback on student writing (Furneaux, Paran & FairFax, 2007).

Teachers' perspectives, philosophies and practices. Ferris et al. (2011), Ferris (2014) and Lee (2003) focused their research on the perspectives, philosophies and practices of teachers of writing as informants through surveys and interviews. Their study participants are all teachers of writing; however, their teaching contexts vary. In 2011, Ferris focused on college writing instructors in both mainstream and specialized second language writing contexts. In 2014, Ferris turned his attention to study writing teachers from both universities and community colleges living in the same geographical region. On the other hand, Lee (2003) surveyed and interviewed secondary English teachers in Hong Kong, which widened the views of teachers' perspectives, practices and problems of error feedback in addition to that found in America.

In addition to the different research contexts, the researchers varied in their specific focus. Ferris (2011) targeted college writing instructors' training and experience as well as their philosophies and practices in terms of providing feedback on students' writing. He found that instructors of writing varied both in their feedback approach adjustments and in their overall attitude toward the effort of responding to second language writers. In 2014, Ferris expanded his study focus by including the principles that guide teachers of writing, the formation of the teachers' teaching philosophies, whether consistency exists between teachers' practices and their views of response and the way teachers provided feedback. The author found that instructors differed in their guiding principles and the teachers' own written commentary demonstrated that discontinuity existed between teachers' reported principles and their actual practices. Lee

(2003) investigated teachers' ways of correcting students' errors, their perception of error correction, and their concerns and problems encountered. The author discovered that most teachers marked errors in a comprehensive manner contrary to the recommendation of marking errors selectively, an error correction mechanism put forward by the local English syllabus and error correction literature. Teachers regard error feedback as a job that lacks long-term significance and they do not believe their time-consuming effort pays off with regards to student improvement.

Teachers' beliefs and practices. In recent years, teachers' beliefs and practices have also become scholars' research interest (e.g., Diab, 2005b; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, 1998, 2008, 2009; Min, 2013). Four studies (Diab, 2005b; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Min, 2013) investigated teachers' beliefs and practices by conducting case studies. Diab (2005b) targeted a university-level ESL instructor and investigated both the instructor's feedback techniques and her rationale. The result showed that despite the fact the instructor seemed to agree with the recommendation of providing feedback on content rather than on form and adopting alternative feedback methods rather than traditional ones, she recommended using surface-level error correction for the students' sake since she thought students needed it. Junqueira and Kim (2013) investigated that of a novice and an experienced ESL teacher's previous training, teaching experience, CF beliefs, and practices by adopting multiple data collection sources such as observations, stimulated recalls and interviews. The investigation showed that though the two teachers were similar in the amount of feedback provided and in the amount of learner uptake and repair, the experienced teacher excelled in teacher-learner interactions, in the number of feedback types and in the balance across

linguistic targets. The results also revealed the "apprenticeship of observation", instead of teaching experience and training, seemed to have a greater influence on both teachers' belief systems.

Junqueira and Payant (2015) researched a pre-service L2 writing teacher's feedback beliefs and practices through multiple data collection (e.g. comments-on students' essays, a reflective journal, two interviews, and one member check). The teacher in the study believed that she put more emphasis on global concerns than on local issues when she provided feedback. However, the results indicated that the amount of local WCF (83.9%) outnumbered that of the global WCF (16.1%). The study also included other beliefs concerning providing feedback for students, that is, "feedback needs to be contextualized, is time-consuming, is a process that requires practice, and can lead to better writing" (p. 19). The problem with this study is the use of quantitative methods to compare global WCF with local WCF, since the number of the global WCF is definitely smaller than the local ones as the former focuses on general issues such as organization and content, while the latter deals more with surface-level and specific errors.

Min (2013) studied how an EFL writing teacher/researcher provided WF through a self-study of her own beliefs and practices by examining her journal entries, learning log entries and written comments on students' writings. At the beginning of the semester, four principles (clarifying writers' intentions, identifying problems, explaining problems, and making specific suggestions) guided the feedback she provided. Her guiding principles changed hierarchically toward the end of the semester when she shifted her corresponding priority from fixing students' problems to understanding their intentions.

The teacher's beliefs and practices showed congruity due to the fact that she articulated and demonstrated her beliefs publicly in class and she gained the procedural knowledge in providing feedback. Lee (1998, 2008, 2009) carried out a series of studies of ESL teachers in Hong Kong secondary schools, by focusing on their beliefs and practices as well as their practices and guiding principles in terms of writing. Lee's studies, to some extent, enabled people to get to know teachers' beliefs and practices in an EFL context since "much of L2 teacher feedback research is conducted with advanced students in process-oriented classrooms in the United States" (Lee, 2008, p. 68). The study conducted in 1998 found that a gap existed between teachers' beliefs and their practices—they regarded discourse coherence as essential to writing instruction, though in actual practice, they tended to emphasize more on grammar in their evaluation. Lee's 2009 study focused on the gap between teachers' beliefs and WCF practice. The study comprised of two sets of data—feedback analysis of 174 texts collected from 26 teachers and interview data of seven of them; survey data of 206 teachers and interview data of 19 of them. The former data targeted teachers' actual practice of written feedback, while the latter addressed teachers' beliefs and reported practice. The two follow-up interviews were used to probe the teachers' beliefs and practices. In spite of the demonstration of beliefs having an important impact on teachers' practice, the study done by Lee found ten salient mismatches between teachers' beliefs and WCF practice. The study conducted in 2008 by Lee dealt with the understanding of teachers' WF practices and the reasons behind the discrepancies between their specific practices and the recommended principles. Twenty-six Hong Kong secondary English teachers and 174 student texts were studied; six teachers were interviewed to find out what factors influenced their responding

practices. The results revealed that the written feedback was mainly error-focused and occurred in single-draft classrooms, which did not conform to the recommended principles listed in the local curriculum documents. The factors that influenced teachers' practices were multifold: contextual factors (teachers' beliefs, values, understandings, and knowledge), cultural and institutional contexts (philosophies about feedback and attitude to exams), and socio-political issues pertaining to power and teacher autonomy.

Teachers' perceptions of error and written grammar feedback. Two articles (Hyland & Anan, 2006; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012) dealt with teachers' perception of errors and WCF with different foci. Hyland and Anan (2006) investigated 48 teachers' identification of errors in the writing of one Japanese university student. These teachers (16 native English speaking EFL teachers, 16 Japanese speaking EFL teachers and 16 educated native English speaking non-teachers) identified and corrected the errors in the student's writing, pointed out the seriousness of the errors and stated reasons for their decisions. The results revealed that non-native EFL teachers, in general, were more severe in grading errors. They tended to treat stylistic variations as errors and they judged the seriousness of errors depending more on rule infringement than intelligibility. On the contrary, the native English-speaking teachers cared more about formality and academic appropriateness. According to the authors, the participants' experience resulted in these differences.

On the other hand, Jodaie and Farrokhi (2012) explored the perceptions of written grammar feedback given by 30 EFL teachers working at a private language institute. The study results showed that the EFL teachers were positive in their perception of WCF: preferred to provide students with direct feedback and tended to mark grammatical errors

in a comprehensive manner.

Teachers' self-assessment and actual performance. Montgomery and Baker (2007) conducted a study, focusing on teachers' self-assessment of teacher-written feedback to fill the gap and to counter the trendy focus on students' perceptions. They surveyed teachers and students of English in an ESL program on the amount of local feedback and global WCF teachers provided; on whether teachers' self-assessments and students' perceptions coordinated; and on whether teachers' self-assessments matched their actual performance. The results of the study demonstrated that teachers provided more local feedback than global feedback and that the coordination between teachers' self-assessments and student perceptions of was strong. However, the coordination between teachers' self-assessment and their actual performance was not that strong. The study also indicated that the training that the teachers have received impacted their perception more than their actual performance of written feedback.

Teacher's stance as reflected in feedback on student writing. Teacher's stance became the focus of Furneaux, Paran and FairFax (2007) when they examined the feedback practices of 110 EFL teachers who worked in secondary schools. These teachers who were from Cyprus, France, Korea, Spain, and Thailand were asked to provide feedback on the same student essay. The teachers' assumed stance and their feedback foci were analyzed. The study discovered that teachers usually adopted two roles in providing feedback to students' essays—a provider role and an initiator role. When adopting the provider role, the teachers focused primarily on grammatical issues in their feedback. They provided students with the correct forms and reacted as language teachers instead of as readers of communication. When adopting the initiator role, the

teachers indicated the errors with a broader feedback focus (such as lexis, style and discourse) and expected the learners to work on them by themselves.

Research on Written Corrective Feedback in China

Compared with the studies on WCF conducted abroad and in Hong Kong, the scholars in Mainland China started to focus their studies on this aspect a bit later. It was not until the 1990s that scholars in China turned their attention to feedback (Fan, 2015). After entering the 21st century, the studies on second language WCF have been through three developmental stages: the beginning stage (2001-2003), the developmental stage (2005-2007) and the deepening stage (2009-2013) (Peng, 2014).

In recent years, an increasing number of scholars have conducted studies on feedback and have made discoveries. Their research interests covered a wider range and could be put into the following categories:

1. Literature reviews of the studies abroad (Guo & Qin, 2006; Su, 2015; Zhang & Wang, 2015; Zhang, 2015) and of studies at home (Fan, 2015; Guo, 2009; Peng, 2014) as well as of studies abroad and at home (Ma, 2014)
2. Literature reviews on the studies of teacher feedback and peer feedback (Qin & Guo, 2010)
3. The empirical studies of the efficacy of written corrective feedback (Bei, 2009; Chen, 2011; Chen & Li, 2009; Jiang & Zeng, 2011; Li, 2013; Wang, 2006; Wu, 2010; Yang, 2013; Zhang & Guo, 2007; Zhou, 2012) to those of the effect of different types of feedback (Chen & Li, 2009; Chen, Peng, Guo, Zhang & Liu, 2013; Hu, 2011; Ji, 2011; Jiang & Chen, 2013; Jiang & Chen, 2014; Wang, 2006; Yin, 2008; Zhang & Deng, 2009; Zhu & Wang, 2005)

4. Studies of the different subjects in providing feedback (e.g., Cai, 2011; Meng, 2009; Qi, 2004; Xu & Liu, 2010; Yang, Yang & Zhang, 2013; Yang, 2006; Yu, 2013)
5. Studies on students' reactions, preferences and attitudes toward corrective feedback (Li, 2001; Li, 2011; Qiu, 1997; Rong, 2009; Shi, 2014; Song, 2011 ; Wang, 2008; Wang & Ding, 2011; Zhang, 2014)
6. There were also studies that targeted the different factors that influenced students' writing, their response to WCF, their revision strategies, and their discourse correction (Ge, 2011; Su, 2011a, 2014b; Yan, 2011; Yan, Wu, Li & Yang, 2009; Yan, 2010)

Studies on the efficacy of written corrective feedback. Much like their counterparts abroad, Chinese researchers studying CF focused their work on determining whether WCF was an effective teaching strategy. The results of their findings were divergent too. On one hand, some studies indicated that WCF was facilitative in improving students' writing (Chen & Li, 2009; Li, 2013; Wang, 2006; Wu, 2010; Yang, 2013; Zhang, 2008; Zhang & Deng, 2009; Zhou, 2012). The studies (Zhang, 2008; Zhang & Deng, 2009) showed that experimental groups made significant improvement in their writing in general. The results of the study (Chen & Li, 2009) indicated that feedback groups significantly outperformed the control group in terms of linguistic accuracy in the subsequent writings. Teacher written feedback (be it detailed or general) can notably improve the overall quality of learners' writing as a whole and improve the writing content. Li (2013) found both corrective feedback and non-corrective feedback were useful in improving students' language accuracy and the latter was more effective in

arousing students' attention to their writing content, organization and improve their overall writing. Wang (2006) and Yang (2013) drew the conclusion that the experimental group that received WCF made obvious improvement in self-correction competency, writing accuracy and the overall writing. Wu (2010) concluded teacher feedback only had significant effect on the correction of verbs and had some influence on the structure errors, but it had the reverse effect on nouns, articles and prepositions. The students made more errors after receiving the feedback. Zhou (2012) found WCF made significant improvement on highly competent students' writing content and accuracy (such as sentence structure, verb tense and form, article, noun suffix, vocabulary). WCF also made significant improvement on less competent students' writing accuracy (such as verb tense and form, article, noun suffix) but it did not have significant effect on their sentence structure and vocabulary.

On the other hand, a series of studies reported that WCF was not that effective (Bei, 2009; Jiang & Zeng, 2011; Wang, 2006). Wang (2006) found students from both groups had no significant difference in their writing fluency and Bei (2009) found similar results in her study. According to Bei (2009) teachers' feedback did not have significant impact on students' writing level and writing fluency. Jiang and Zeng (2011) studied WCF from the perspective of costs and benefits. They reported that although teachers' feedback was helpful to some extent, the teachers devoted too much time to it. There was no marked correlation between students' learning and the investment teachers made in giving feedback.

Effectiveness of different types of written corrective feedback. In recent years, a growing number of studies have proved that WCF, to some extent, could reduce

students' grammatical errors, improve accuracy and writing level. But, as to the issue which type of feedback is more effective or the combination of what types are more effective remains to be the research focus. Researches so far could be classified into the following groups:

1. The comparison between two types of feedback (direct feedback *vs.* indirect feedback, direct *vs.* metalinguistic; metalinguistic *vs.* indirect)
2. The comparison among three types of feedback (direct feedback, indirect feedback, & metalinguistic feedback) as well as comparison of their combinations
3. The comparison between focused and unfocused (selective *vs.* comprehensive).
4. The comparison between reader-styled feedback and corrective feedback
5. The comparison between form-focused feedback and content-focused feedback

Comparison between two types of feedback (direct feedback vs. indirect feedback, direct vs. metalinguistic; metalinguistic vs. indirect). First, the studies on the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback have come to almost the same conclusion. Direct feedback is more effective in improving students' linguistic accuracy (Chen & Li 2009); their grammatical accuracy (Zhang & Deng, 2009) and students' writing accuracy (Zhao, 2013). Indirect feedback is more beneficial to students' overall writing quality (Zhang & Deng, 2009; Zhao, 2013). Metalinguistic feedback was more effective with noun phrases (Jiang & Chen, 2013) and the implicit knowledge of English articles (Jiang & Chen, 2014).

Chen and Li (2009) pointed out that the group that received direct feedback improved more in linguistic accuracy in subsequent writings than those who received indirect feedback in terms of language accuracy. Zhang and Deng (2009) compared the

effect of providing direct feedback, indirect feedback as well as no feedback but encouraging words. The result showed that the experimental groups did better than the control group in terms of grammar, while the indirect feedback group performed better than the direct group.

Zhao (2013) investigated the effect of direct feedback and indirect feedback on the writing of non-English major sophomores. The result revealed that the experimental groups improved in terms of their writing accuracy, complexity and general quality than the control group, but none of the groups made improvement in their writing fluency. The group that received direct feedback had more long-term effect in writing accuracy than the group that got indirect feedback. However, in terms of overall writing quality, the students that received indirect feedback made more obvious improvement than the students that got direct feedback. There was not any significant difference between the two types of feedback on the writing complexity.

Jiang and Chen (2013, 2014) conducted two studies and reported the favorable usage of metalinguistic feedback as regards to noun phrases (2013) and the implicit knowledge of English articles (2014). Jiang and Chen (2013) investigated the effect of metalinguistic feedback and indirect feedback on students' noun phrases and found metalinguistic feedback provided more understandable feedback input that prompted the acquisition of noun phrases while indirect feedback had no such effect. In 2014, Jiang and Chen investigated the influence of WCF (metalinguistic feedback and direct feedback) on the development of explicit and implicit knowledge of English articles. They adopted the research design of "pretest-intervention-posttest-delayed posttest" and found both means had equal effect on the development of the explicit knowledge of

English articles. However, metalinguistic feedback was more effective than direct feedback in terms of the implicit knowledge of English articles.

Yao (2012) compared the effect of two types of providing feedback (error indication with explanation *vs.* error indication only) on students' self-correction ability and students' writing accuracy. The empirical study showed that the experimental group made significant improvement in both self-correction ability and writing accuracy.

Comparison among three types of feedback (direct feedback, indirect feedback and metalinguistic feedback,) as well as comparison of their combinations. Another research interest that attracted scholars was the comparison among three types of feedback. The results of the research indicated that each type (direct feedback, indirect feedback, and metalinguistic feedback) had its own function and it was hard to draw the conclusion which type was best. Duan (2011) found that metalinguistic feedback was more effective, and the study result of Han's (2010) favored direct feedback. However, two studies (Song, 2013; Zhu & Wang, 2005) found favorable evidence for the application of indirect feedback. The other three studies (Hu, 2011; Ji, 2011; Wang, 2006) found favorable evidence for the combination of either two types of feedback. Hu (2011) reported that direct feedback combined with a teacher-student conference was most effective in improving students' accuracy using articles and subject-verb agreement. Ji (2011) found that the combination of *underline with symbol indication (U+S)* and *(indirect +metalinguistic)* was more effective to the less competent students while Wang (2006) found the usage of correction and underline combination (direct + indirect) effective.

Duan (2011) investigated the effect of three types of feedback (direct feedback,

indirect feedback and metalinguistic feedback) on students' writing. The study indicated that all three types could improve students' writing scores and all three forms could significantly lessen the formal errors and meaning-preserving errors. But, only the group that received metalinguistic feedback made significant improvement in diminishing the microstructure errors.

Han (2010) conducted an empirical study in finding out which type of feedback (1. direct feedback 2. error indication and description feedback 3. description feedback, 4. error indication) was more effective on students' writing accuracy and complexity. Five kinds of errors (verb, noun, article, word choice, sentence structure) were targeted. Direct feedback was most effective when she analyzed all five kinds of errors as a whole. When she analyzed the error kinds separately, the study found that direct feedback was more effective in targeting verb errors, noun errors and article errors, while error indication and description feedback were more effective in dealing with word choice and sentence structure. All groups made improvement in their writing complexity, but there were no data showing which type was more effective. Most students preferred direct feedback.

Hu (2011) compared the effect of direct feedback and indirect feedback as well as direct feedback with teacher-student conference on the accuracy of article and subject-verb agreement. The study reported on the effectiveness of teacher feedback and the most effective feedback type in improving the accuracy of article and subject-verb agreement was direct feedback with a teacher-student conference. However, the effect of these three types of feedback did not present in the posttest three weeks later.

Ji (2011) studied the effect of four types of written feedback: 1.no feedback (O); 2. underline at the specific spot without any explanation (U) 3. underline and symbol

indication (U+S) 4. underline, symbol indication and peer correction (U+S+P). The study result indicated that all groups that received feedback scored much higher on their last paper. The less competent students' score change range was higher than that of the more competent students. The former improved more when they received underline and symbol indication (U+S) while the latter achieved the most when they got underline (U) feedback.

Song (2013) targeted different types of feedback (direct, indirect, metalinguistic feedback) on students' self-efficacy. The study found that non-English major students' writing self-efficacy was generally low and WCF could prompt the increase of self-efficacy. The most effective feedback type in improving students' self-efficacy was indirect feedback, followed by metalinguistic feedback, and finally direct feedback.

Wang (2006) studied the effect of different types of feedback on students' writing fluency, accuracy and complexity. She chose three types feedback (direct correction, error indication symbol and underline) and investigated the effect of the combination of either two types (correction + symbol; correction + underline; and underline + symbol). The results revealed that the experimental groups made more improvement than the control group in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity. The group that received correction with underline improved more than the other two groups in the writing accuracy.

Zhu and Wang (2005) studied three forms of indirect feedback (underlining the whole sentence, precise annotation and grammatical indication) and found that the most effective was the grammatical indication.

Comparison between focused and unfocused (selective vs comprehensive).

This group incorporates fewer studies. Chen, Peng, Guo, Zhang and Liu (2013) targeted whether focused and unfocused feedback could improve the accurate usage of unreal conditional subjunctive mood. There were five groups in the study—direct focused, indirect focused, direct unfocused, indirect unfocused and control group. The result showed that all the experimental groups outperformed the control group in both immediate posttest and delayed posttest. But in the immediate posttest, there was no significant difference between focused feedback group and unfocused feedback group, direct focused group outperformed indirect focused group, and direct unfocused group performed better than indirect unfocused group. In the delayed posttest, the focused feedback group performed better than the unfocused feedback group, indirect focused group outperformed direct focused group, and indirect unfocused group performed better than direct unfocused group.

Comparison between reader-styled feedback and corrective feedback. Yin (2008) explored the influence of teacher written feedback on students' writing fluency, accuracy and complexity and focused on finding out which type (reader-styled feedback versus corrective feedback) was more effective. The study results showed that the experimental group made significant improvement in their writing when compared with the control group. Both types of feedback were effective in improving students' writing fluency, accuracy and complexity, but the reader-styled feedback was more obvious in improving students' overall writing level while CF had more positive impact on their writing accuracy.

Comparison between the form-focused feedback and content-focused feedback. Several studies chose to compare the effect of form-focused feedback, content-focused

feedback and the combination of form-focused and content-focused feedback on college students' writing (Hu, 2007; Sun, 2011) as well as students' perceptions of feedback (Liu, 2009) and their preferences of feedback type (Hu, 2007; Sun, 2011). Their research results were almost the same. Three studies found these feedback types were effective, and the combination of form-focused and content-focused feedback was the most effective. The combination of these two types of feedback could help students improve their writing in terms of grammar, vocabulary, paper organization, language accuracy and the whole discourse of the paper. To improve students' grammar, vocabulary, part of paper organization and language accuracy, the form-focused feedback was more effective than content focused feedback.

Comparison between different feedback subjects. The other research area that scholars focused on was the comparison between the different feedback subjects—teachers vs. peer and Chinese teachers vs. foreign teachers

Several studies (e.g., Cai, 2011; Meng, 2009; Qi, 2004; Xu & Liu, 2010; Yang, 2006; Yang, Yang & Zhang, 2013; Yu, 2013) focused on the feedback subjects of teachers and peers. These studies showed that students could make use of teacher feedback or peer feedback; however, their focus and efficacy varied. Studies (e.g., Lv, 2013; Meng, 2009; Yang, 2006; Zhou, 2013; Zhou, 2009) found that peer feedback was effective and could be used as a complementary feedback method to teacher feedback.

The other studies (Qi, 2014; Xu & Liu, 2010; Yang, 2006; Yang, 2013) explored the difference between teacher feedback and peer feedback. According to the studies, teacher feedback was more detailed, precise and effective (Qi, 2014), more on surface level such as grammar and form (Xu & Liu, 2010; Yang, 2006), and more comprehensive

and balanced, focusing more on the reasonableness of the organization and structure (Yang, 2013). On the other hand, peer feedback focused more on the structure of the paper, the overall comment and the content level (Xu & Liu, 2010; Yang, 2006) and it had more effect on content rather than vocabulary (Yang, 2013).

Cai (2011) studied and concluded that online peer feedback had its own advantage—it was good for students to strengthen their reader awareness, to master writing technique and to form a writing society. Ge (2011) investigated the efficacy of both teacher feedback and peer feedback through both experiment and survey and confirmed the facilitative effect of feedback in improving students' writing.

Due to the fact that both teacher feedback and peer feedback have their own advantages, and the combination of both could improve the quality of writing and improve students' writing level and arouse students' initiative, Yu (2013) put forward the strategy of combining these two forms of feedback. There is a need to maximize the zone of shared goals between the two, to encourage students to use selective feedback, to distribute the resources in a more reasonable manner and to complement the two to a fuller extent. The literature review on the studies of teacher feedback and peer feedback (e.g., Qin & Guo, 2010) would enable us to get a fuller view of it.

Some scholars (Liu, 2013; Zhao, 2010) also studied the feedback practice of a Chinese teacher of English versus that of a foreign teacher. The studies found that they had their own means of practice and the result varied too. In a case study, Zhao (2010) studied the WCF practice of a Chinese and a foreign teacher and students' feedback to teachers' feedback. The study reported the foreign teacher provided feedback on the basis of the paper itself and used more euphemisms. The Chinese teacher focused more on

form while the foreign teacher focused more on content. Both teachers adopted direct feedback and comprehensive feedback rather than indirect feedback and selected feedback.

Liu (2013) conducted a similar study on the feedback efficacy on non-English major students' writing provided by a Chinese and a foreign teacher. The study showed that the feedback provided by these two teachers varied in terms of grammar, content, organization, sentence structure, vocabulary and the idiomatic aspect of language, and the foreign teacher provided more feedback than the Chinese in these six aspects. The differences in the feedback provided between the two teachers were more obvious in the organization, vocabulary and idiomatic aspect of language. The students who received feedback from the foreign teacher made obvious improvement in their writing content, organization and sentence structure, while the improvement on vocabulary and idiomatic expression was not obvious and their average grammatical mean score was much lower than their counterparts.

Studies on the factors that influence the feedback efficacy. In recent years, scholars in China also started to investigate the factors that have an influence on learners' writing, on their response to WCF, their revision strategies, and their discourse correction. Yan (2010) studied the students' individual differences in revision strategies and their relationship with working memories. The process of students' responses to written feedback was examined through two types of "noticing"—learner noticing and noticing aroused by the teacher (Yan, 2011). Scholars (Yan, Wu, Li & Yang, 2009) investigated students' discourse correction in terms of their different levels of self-esteem, teachers' feedback explicitness and face-threatening levels. Ge (2011) widened the results of Yan

et.al (2009) by pointing out that the other factors (such as differences in brainstorming activities, logical thinking, motivation, attitude and emotion) that may influence the effect of teachers' written feedback in addition to different forms of assessment and the degrees of language explicitness and face threatening.

Yan (2010) examined the students' individual differences in revision strategies and their relationship with working memories through investigating 220 sophomores majoring in English. Yan found more competent writers adopted an integrated revision strategy while the less competent ones employed a local revision strategy and made fewer correct revisions at both surface and meaning levels. Students with a longer working memory performed much better in their revision than their counterparts who have shorter working memory.

Yan (2011) targeted the process of students' responses to written feedback by examining two types of "noticing"—learner noticing and noticing aroused by the teacher. The study found that the degree of explicitness of the written feedback and the degree of students' "noticing" are closely connected, though this noticing is only effective on the surface-level aspects of language errors such as structure and idea. He suggests that students need to improve the awareness of revising meaning and the logic aspects of the paper.

Yan, Wu, Li and Yang (2009) examined students' discourse correction with regards to their different levels of self-esteem, teachers' feedback explicitness and face-threatening levels. They found that teachers' feedback explicitness and face-threatening levels did not significantly influence students' correction at the surface level—linguistic level, but significantly influenced students' deeper level correction—meaning correction.

To the students with low self-esteem, they made more successful correction when they were provided with less explicit, high face-threatening feedback than provided with feedback less clear, low face-threatening feedback. However, to the students with high self-esteem, they made more successful correction when provided with high explicit, low face-threatening feedback than provided with less explicit, high face-threatening feedback.

The study carried out by Ge (2011) has some implications for the teaching of the writing process, since Ge widened the results of Yan et.al (2009) by pointing out that the other factors (such as differences in brainstorming activities, logical thinking, motivation, attitude and emotion) that may influence the effect of teachers' written feedback in addition to different forms of assessment and the degrees of language explicitness and face threatening. Since it is very tiresome for teachers to either provide written assessment on paper or online or during a face-to-face conference, Ge pointed out that in English writing, teachers need to put priority to their assessment and method and its efficacy. She suggested that teachers adopted various forms of assessment and feedback, but did not mention those specific forms.

Studies on written corrective feedback from the perspective of students. The focus on students' reactions, preferences and perceptions of feedback provided by teachers has also resulted in a number of studies in China.

The studies (Li, 2001; Qiu, 1997; Song, 2011) targeted students' reaction towards feedback and found that most learners paid attention to teachers' WCF with the aim of improving their language accuracy and fluency, and they carefully read the feedback they received. However, Song's study also found that 32 % of the participants did not pay

much attention to feedback due to their lack of interest in writing and their lack of motivation to improve the accuracy of their English language.

Students in general manifested different preferences to teachers' feedback (Li, 2011; Rong, 2009; Shi, 2014; Song, 2013; Wang & Ding, 2011; Wang, 2008; Zhang, 2014) due to their differences in language proficiency, study aim and so on. In terms of CF type, Li (2011) found that students preferred direct CF and coded indirect CF, the result echoed that of those studies (Rennie, 2000; Ferris et al. 2000; Chandler, 2003; Lee, 2004). Liu (2009) also discovered that students liked direct feedback the most and they hoped that teachers could provide them with more writing techniques and strategies. Hu (2007) and Sun (2011) found that students were in favor of the combination of the form-focused and the content-focused types of feedback. As to the non-corrective feedback, students put more priority on comments on content and overall suggestions for improving their competence in writing English.

The studies (Liu, 2009; Shi, 2014; Song, 2013; Wang, 2013; Wang, 2008; Zhang, 2014) found that students held positive views toward corrective feedback, though students' preferences varied due to their writing proficiency. Generally the less competent students preferred direct feedback (Shi, 2014; Wang, 2013) and form-focused feedback (Hui, 2007). Students with low proficiency focused more on grammar and vocabulary feedback, expected more positive feedback, and needed to use the other sources to correct their errors (such as the dictionary, reference books, teachers and students) (Wang 2008). On the other hand, the more competent students were in favor of heuristic feedback (Shi, 2014; Wang, 2013) and of content-focused feedback (Hui, 2007). They preferred feedback on structure and content, expected more negative feedback, and

were more independent, correcting the errors by their own means (Wang, 2008).

A number of studies found that a gap existed between teachers' providing feedback and students' preferences and the individual differences (such as gender, character and English proficiency), to a certain extent, influenced students' preferences towards teachers' providing feedback.

Zhang (2014) targeted English-major students and found that they expected more content feedback from teachers. However, Rong (2009) discovered that non-English major students generally were not interested in either writing in English or receiving feedback on it and they lacked confidence.

Zhao's study (2010) found students needed teachers to provide feedback on the linguistic form, content and structure of the paper. They generally preferred the feedback that was based on the paper, was comprehensive, direct and contained strategies for making corrections. Different from Zhao's findings, Song (2013) found students liked their teachers to provide detailed and suggestive writing feedback and hoped teachers could provide feedback on the organization, subject matter, vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar.

Wang and Ding (2011) studied students' preferences and needs for teacher feedback on writing through both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The study found students had high expectations for teacher written feedback—they expected that teachers not only graded their papers but also pointed out the errors and wrote comments. They hoped that teachers corrected all the grammatical mistakes. When the teachers made the corrections, they needed to mark the errors and point out the error types. These expectations were challenging to teachers who had more than 200 students a

semester.

Zhu and Wang (2005) conducted an in-depth experiment targeting the relationship among feedback types, perception explicitness and feedback efficacy. Defining and measuring feedback explicitness was completely based on student learners' subjective perception towards the different feedback types (underline, specific markings and metalinguistic clues). The study found that there was a close relationship between the feedback type and students' perception of explicitness, but with the caution that feedback explicitness did not equal the level of students' perception, since these two were related and at the same time independent of each other. Perception explicitness did significantly influence students' error recognition and error correction, but the feedback type and feedback amount did not significantly influence students' error recognition and error correction. It should be pointed out that it is a complicated recognition process for learners to deal with CF, which is an interaction between the internal language mechanism and external language information.

The Gap

Despite the numbers of studies on CF and the growing wider interest in CF, the gap between the studies conducted abroad and those in Mainland China should not be neglected. In recent years, a new research gap on CF between scholars abroad and scholars in Mainland China has risen; that is, the study of CF from the perspective of teachers.

In the field of composition in western universities, a growing number of scholars turned their attention to study CF from the perspectives of teachers due to the claim that teacher cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) needs to be

understood to properly understand teachers and their teaching (Borg, 2006). The research field on ESL teachers in terms of CF has spawned more studies and the research foci encompassed more and more themes starting from the 1990s. These research foci could be put into the following themes:

1. Teachers' perspectives, philosophy and practices (Ferris et al., 2011; Ferris, 2014; Lee 2003);
2. Teachers' beliefs and practices (Diab, 2005b; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, 1998, 2008, 2009; Min, 2013);
3. Teachers' perceptions of error and written grammar feedback (Hyland & Anan, 2006; Jodaie & Farrokhi, 2012)
4. Teachers' self-assessment and actual performance (Montgomery & Baker, 2007)
5. Teacher stance as reflected in feedback on student writing (Furieux, Paran & FairFax, 2007)

As far as the literature abroad and at home indicates, only a very few scholars in Mainland China have so far targeted CF from the perspective of ESL teachers and their studies were mainly on the comparison of foreign teachers and teachers of English from Mainland China (Liu, 2013; Zhao, 2010). Little is known about ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of providing feedback. In order to enrich the research theme on ESL teachers in Mainland China, the current study is going to examine their experience, knowledge and practice and the relationship among them. The present research is to explore the questions:

1. *What knowledge of and experience with corrective feedback do teachers have?*
2. *How do they employ and adapt corrective feedback with ESL students in their classrooms?*
3. *What is the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of written corrective feedback?*

As a result of this research, an authentic view of WCF will be developed, with no interventions, from the actual practice of teachers in writing classes at a normal university in northeastern China.

Summary

In this chapter, the literature on WCF both abroad (including Hong Kong) and in China has been synthesized and analyzed. The literature that supported this present research on the topic of WCF from the perspective of teachers in China has also been examined. In the coming chapter, the research paradigm for this study will be addressed; the data collection methods and their procedure will be presented. The data analysis and the verification of data as well as the ethics concerning this research will also be included.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Little is known about ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of providing feedback. This phenomenological study aimed to examine WCF from the perspective of teachers that will address this gap. This study adopted a triangulated data collection techniques: it surveyed, interviewed and examined feedback responses provided by ESL teachers to learn about their cognition and practice of providing feedback as well as the connection between cognition and practice.

This chapter focuses on the methods used in this study. The rationale and description of the research design and a description of the paradigms are presented. Next, a data collection protocol, which includes a survey instrument, two interviews, and examination of students' writing assignments with feedback responses provided by their teachers, is presented. Verification of data and ethical considerations are included and followed by a summary of the chapter.

Rationale and Research Design

The following three questions were to be explored during this study:

1. *What knowledge of and experience with corrective feedback do teachers have?*
2. *How do they employ and adapt corrective feedback with ESL students in their classrooms?*
3. *What is the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of written corrective feedback?*

To obtain information on ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, a phenomenological study was performed using triangulated data drawn from a survey, two

semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews and examination of feedback responses provided by the two interviewees on their students' writing assignments. The interviews and study of feedback responses on students' work were used in this study rather than questionnaires alone because Bartels (2005) and Dornyei (2003) argued that questionnaires should be used together with other data drawn from other sources to ensure a greater degree of credibility. In addition, triangulated sources of data were collected to improve the validity of the data (Creswell, 2014).

The questionnaire was first administered to document ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF regarding English writing at a normal university in China. Next, two teachers were interviewed to find out their knowledge of, experience with WCF as well as their perception of how they employ and adapt WCF with ESL students in their classrooms. The interviewed teachers are currently teaching writing as a separate course to two different groups of students—undergraduates majoring in English and non-English major graduates. The former group of students will become teachers of English in the future at different levels of schools or at colleges or universities. The latter group won't be teachers of English but will need to exhibit their knowledge/abilities either when they would like to further their study or in the exams to achieve professional ranks (e.g. lecturers need to take part in the English tests if they want to become associate professors). After that, data on the two interviewees' actual practice of the WCF were collected through examining feedback responses on the students' writing assignments in the fall semester of 2016. A holistic view of ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, their perception of employing and adapting of it as well as their actual use of it with ESL students in their classrooms was able to be gained through this

phenomenological study.

Research Paradigm

Qualitative. According to Mackey and Gass (2005), qualitative research was used to describe in-depth, descriptive data collection, which is non-statistical in nature. Blumer (1999) stated that the qualitative approach offered the researchers the freedom to adapt their inquiry line with the gathering of more information and with a better understanding of the situation. The processes of collecting data, coding data, and analyzing data are blended throughout the study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

A triangulated data collection methods were used to increase the validity of the data and to embrace all key concepts and themes to represent the ESL writing teachers' cognition and practice of WCF adequately. Retaining a high degree of objectivity (Mackay & Gass, 2005) was one of the biggest struggles that the researcher encountered since she has been a teacher in this foreign language department for 17 years and she is a colleague of all the participants. To maintain a high degree of objectivity, validity and reliability of the data, the specific parameters required by each data collection approach was followed by the researcher as outlined.

Phenomenology. As one of the primary research traditions employed in qualitative research, especially in professional fields such as education (Tesch, 1988; van Manen, 1990), the phenomenological approach “*describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon*” (Creswell, 2013, p.76). A phenomenological study was an appropriate research paradigm for this dissertation for the following reasons. First, this study incorporated a major concept or phenomenon, that is, WCF. Second, the basic purpose of a phenomenological study is to reduce individual

experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (van Manen, 1990, p.177). This study's intention fits the paradigm's purpose of reducing ESL teachers' lived experience with receiving WCF and providing WCF to a description of the universal essence. Third, a phenomenological approach was appropriate for this project because this study used the data collection techniques such as interviews and written responses put forward by scholars such as Polkinghorne (1989) and van Manen (1990). Fourth, the broad, general questions asked during the interviews were in alignment with Moustakas's advice (1994) on questions asked while conducting a phenomenological study to develop textual and structural descriptions of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Data Collection

Participants. The participants in this research are currently teachers of English at the School of Foreign Languages of a normal university in the northeast part of China where the researcher works. All the teachers majored in English during their undergraduate study and all have a master's degree or above in English or other disciplines. All the English-major students in China are required to be trained in the basic skills that include listening, speaking, reading and writing during their undergraduate study period. Undergraduates majoring in English are required to take at least two years of writing in English; therefore, all those teachers should have rich experience with writing in English and with receiving feedback from their teachers of writing while they were at universities. Moreover, starting from 1991, all the English majors have to pass two important exams during their undergraduate studies—TEM-4 (Test for English Majors-Band 4 that takes place in the sophomore year) and TEM-8 (Test for English

Majors-Band 8 that takes place in the senior year). Writing is an essential part in these two tests, so the teachers themselves have either been taught writing or have taught writing themselves. These teachers should at least have some experience with feedback – the indispensable part of writing. The impact of these experiences of feedback will help them form their own opinions and preferences for receiving and providing feedback. At present, these teachers are all ESL teachers at the normal university, and their philosophy and pedagogical approach to the teaching of writing will surely influence their students—some of whom are the future teachers of English. All ESL teachers who are currently teaching English at the normal university were invited to take part in the research, and only those who were willing were included. The participants were assured that their status at the university would not be affected in anyway by the fact that either they took part in the study or they did not. Permission to collect and use the data was gained before the questionnaires were distributed to the participants.

Setting. The normal university in the northeastern part of China is one of the one hundred universities of the 21st century in China and it is also a teacher training university. The university houses a school of foreign languages where there are five departments, three of which are English-related departments—Department of English, Department of International Commerce and Department of College English. There are currently about 125 teachers of English in all these three departments who teach a student body of about 5000 students a year. The teachers (43) who work at the Department of English are teaching teacher candidates who will teach English in the future. Teachers (37) who work at the Department of International Commerce are teaching undergraduates who major in English commerce. The teachers (55) of the Department of College English

are teaching all the non-English undergraduates and postgraduates. Therefore, due to their enormous influence, it is vital to find out about these teachers' cognition, experience, knowledge and practice of offering corrective feedback.

Data collection technique I: Questionnaire. The first data collection technique used in this research was a questionnaire. According to Brown (2001), questionnaires are written instruments with a series of questions or statements to which participants need to respond by either writing answers out or choosing from among a group of possible answers (cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005). Questionnaires are a useful and reasonable means to collect data from a population that is too large to observe (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2004). Within the social sciences, questionnaires are popular due to their ability to assess the participants' beliefs, attitudes and opinions (Mackey & Gass, 2005) and their ease of construction, width of information gathering as well as versatility across topics (Dornyei, 2008).

Questionnaires were chosen as the first data collection method because they can focus on teachers' attitudes, content knowledge and pedagogy (Bartels, 1995), which were the main focal points of the first part of the research—ESL teachers' knowledge of, training in and experience with WCF. The other reason for choosing questionnaires with open questions as the data collection means was that they generate more novel or insightful data than the other statistical data collection methods do.

Though questionnaires are appropriate for collecting data for this research, open-ended questionnaires also pose a couple of issues. The first issue is the difficulty in creating open-ended questionnaires that gather what the researcher intends to gather. To address this difficulty, the questionnaire content was carefully constructed, reviewed and

experimented on through a pilot study.

The content of the questionnaire was developed by the researcher through adopting the typology of feedback options (direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic feedback, focus of feedback, electronic feedback and reformulation) discussed by Ellis in 2009 and the error types (organizational, stylistic, linguistic) studied by previous researchers. Using the number of WCF types and error types to determine ESL teachers' previous experience with, knowledge of and use of WCF was applicable because it took the researcher many years to accumulate knowledge concerning providing WCF. The larger the number of WCF types participants received, knew and used indicated the richer experience they had, the more knowledge they possessed and the more comprehensive they were in providing feedback. The order of WCF types and error types in terms of frequency was applicable in gaining information concerning ESL teachers' preference of WCF types and error types since the more frequent they appear, the more participants used them.

The questionnaire consists of two big categories (25 items)—participant demographic information (six items) and detailed questions (17 close-ended items and two open-ended items) on those teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF. The first category included information such as gender, department, master's major, years of teaching and general information on teaching writing (such as whether the participants have taught writing as a separate course and for how many years). The second category of the questionnaire can be further classified into three sub-categories—the participants' knowledge of WCF (four questions), the participants' previous experience of receiving WCF in their university writing classes (six questions) and the participants' training and

teaching experience of providing WCF on students' writing (seven close-ended questions and two open-ended questions).

Questions on WCF types running through the three subcategories of the questionnaire were used to find out the connection among one's knowledge of, experience with and use of WCF. Questions on error types running through the two subcategories of the questionnaire were used to explore the connection between the numbers and priority addressed by the participants' teachers and the participants. The questions on the questionnaires could further be used to determine whether changes took place in the feedback provided by ESL teachers over these years.

To address the issue of content validity and construct validity, three experts on composition from the Writing Studies Center at UMD were invited to review the questionnaire items twice. Survey items were further revised and clarified and administration time was improved through a pilot study carried out at UMD in 2015. This pilot study was used to assess potential connection between survey items, as well as to assess internal consistency of survey items.

Due to the fact that the vast time and energy demanded of the participants may result in data that exhibit participant errors (Dornyei, 2003); scholars criticized open-ended questionnaires for their being unspecific and not as effective at producing usable data. To address this problem, the researcher tried to include just two open-ended questions to avoid fatigue. Moreover, open-ended questionnaires pose the risk of producing data that are too wide and varied to be adequately organized and/or analyzed. This problem could be solved through categorizing the data into different meaning groups.

Permission was obtained to use the questionnaire. The raw data for the closed-

ended questions were collected in person and then transferred to an EXCEL spreadsheet for analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the data obtained from the close-ended questions on the questionnaire. The open-ended question on ESL teachers' reasons for providing certain feedback types to sorted through feedback types provided, reasons and characteristic responses. The other open-ended question on teachers' attitudes toward the feedback provided was sorted through positive, negative or neutral views.

Data collection technique II: Interview. The second data collection method adopted in this study was interview. Semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews of two teachers on a voluntary basis were done to document their general perceptions of training in, experience with, employment of and adaption to providing WCF. One teacher who teaches writing to English major sophomores and one who teaches writing to non-English major postgraduates were the participants. The researcher wanted to find out whether differences concerning perception of feedback existed between teachers when their students were different. The English major undergraduates were going to be teachers of English at different levels of schools all over China, while the non-English major postgraduates would be teachers of other subjects other than English. Teachers' teaching methodology at this normal university will surely have an impact on those teacher candidates; therefore, it is important to find out about their knowledge of and experience with WCF.

The reasons for choosing the interview as the data collection means are as follows. First, it helps to elicit views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2014). Then, it allows the researcher to control over the line of questioning to get the fresh, new and

primary information as needed (Creswell, 2014). Third, the interview could increase the knowledge of both the interviewer and the interviewee during their interchange of views and ideas (Rashid & Bappi, 2013). Finally, the interview was favored in this study due to its flexibility, because it could be framed differently based on the situation.

The data for the interviews were recorded on a digital device and transcribed, and then coded and analyzed according to Hycner's (1985) 15 steps. This permitted the analysis to be systematic and verifiable (Krueger, 2009).

Data collection technique III: Studying of feedback responses. To find out the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of WCF, another data collection technique was adopted in addition to the interview and survey. This technique was the study of feedback provided by the two interviewees on their students' writing assignments. Students' permission was gained and their writing assignments with feedback responses provided by their teachers were collected, sorted and presented. Two groups of students' assignments were chosen—one group of English major undergraduates and one group of non-English major postgraduates. The reasons for choosing these two groups were as follows. First, these two groups both have writing as a separate course, with the only difference—the former needs to pass TEM 4 while the latter does not need to. The researcher wanted to find out whether these two teachers provide different groups of students with feedback differently. Second, the researcher wanted to see whether there was any difference between what teachers believed and what they actually did in the classroom. The students were informed of the purpose of the study—finding out the actual practice of WCF by teachers and were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. There were no

consequences related to students' grades if they decided not to participate. The confidentiality and anonymity of all the students' documents were also addressed through storing the files in a secure place and giving students identity numbers. One writing sample from each group (about 70 students) was collected, sorted and analyzed through the usage of excel spread sheet and by the categorization of feedback types and error types documented by Ellis in 2009.

Verification of Data

To ensure data verification, a triangulated approach was adopted to collect data. This approach incorporated three different data collection techniques (a questionnaire, two interviews and study of interviewees' feedback responses on students' writing assignments). The combination of each two data collection techniques was also employed to answer each of the three research questions. To avoid bias, the researcher strictly adhered to the systematic procedures of all data collection means.

Ethical Considerations

The utmost ethical consideration of this research was to uphold the ethical standards of proper qualitative research. Before carrying out the research, proper permission from the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board was applied for on September 3, 2016 and received approval of the exempt on September 8, 2016. Notification of IRB approval of the exempt study is available in Appendix B. Moreover, the researcher gained permission from her advisor and members of her doctoral committee at the University of Minnesota Duluth and from the administration of School of Foreign Languages at a normal university, China in September 2016 respectively.

There are three ethical issues to be considered in this research concerning the

participants and the data collection. First, participation in the study was voluntary. To ensure that teachers took part in the questionnaire part voluntarily, the research study was explained to the teachers during one of the school conferences in September 2016 and those who were willing to participate were handed out the questionnaires and data were collected after their completing the survey. Then the two teachers who were to be interviewed were first informed about the study and were invited to take part in on a voluntary basis. The interview time was about half an hour on two separate days in late September. As to the study of the students' writing assignments, the students were informed about the study and their permission was obtained before collecting their compositions and handed over to the researcher to be photocopied in November 2016, and in late February 2017. The second and third ethical issues are confidentiality and anonymity. Although teachers' demographic information was obtained through the questionnaires and interviews and the students' true identities were gained from their compositions, their true identities were hidden by giving them identity numbers. The data with their true identities were placed at a separate location from the data with identity numbers. All the data were placed in a secure location where only the researcher had access. In this manner, the confidentiality of the research was guaranteed.

Summary

In this chapter, the method for this research study was outlined. It was a phenomenological research that incorporated a survey design, two interviews and examination of students' assignments with feedback provided by the two interviewees. In the chapter that follows, the research findings will be addressed.

Chapter Four

Results

This chapter will first describe the results gathered from the questionnaire—participant demographic information, followed by closed-questions on the questionnaire whose results will be organized by research questions and presented in terms of key terms over three subcategories of section two of the questionnaire. The results gathered from the two open questions on the questionnaire are also to be presented. Second, it will present the results of the semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews. Third, it will present the data gathered from the formal responses on students' compositions. Finally, it will conclude with the integration of findings and summary.

Questionnaire Findings: Aggregation, Tabulation and Description

The first data collection method, the questionnaire, was adopted to explore the knowledge of and experience with corrective feedback ESL teachers have and the connection between one's knowledge of, experience with WCF and the practice of it. It was distributed to all ESL teachers during one of the faculty meetings in September 2016 held at the conference room of School of Foreign Languages. Of 120 ESL teachers to whom survey form was distributed, a total of 55 (45.8%) individuals consented to participate and answered the questionnaire at one setting. The questionnaire consists of two big categories (25 items)—participant demographic information (six items) and detailed questions (17 close-ended items, two open-ended questions) on those teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF. The first category included participants' demographic information such as gender, department, master's major, years of teaching and general information on teaching writing (such as whether the participants have taught

writing as a separate course and for how many years). The second category of the questionnaire can be further classified into three sub-categories—the participants' knowledge of WCF (four questions), the participants' previous experience of receiving WCF in their university writing classes (six questions) and the participants' training and teaching experience of providing WCF on students' writing (seven closed-ended and two open-ended questions). The results of the questionnaire are presented in the following section.

Participant demographic information. The first category of the questionnaire was about participant demographic information, and Table 1 displays this information. Altogether 19 (35%) participants were male teachers while 36 (65%) participants were female teachers. Those teachers were from the three departments of School of Foreign Languages at a normal university in Mainland China—12 (22%) were from Department of English and from Department of Business English respectively, and 31 (56%) from Department of College English. All those participants have gained their master's degree with different majors: six (11%) majoring in English pedagogy, 31 (56%) in linguistics, 15 (27%) in British and American Literature, one (2%) in Business English and two (4%) in other fields—one in computer and one in economics. Most participants were rich in their teaching experience: 13 (24%) participants have been teaching for more than 21 years; nine (16%) have been teaching for 16-20 years; 18 (32%) have been teaching for 11-15 years; seven (13%) have been teaching for 6-10 years and only two (4%) have been teaching for less than five years. Only 20 (36%) participants have taught writing as a separate course while 35 (64%) participants have not. Among those 20 participants who have taught writing as a separate course, 9 (45%) have been teaching for 1-2 years, five

Table 1

Demographic Information on the Participants

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Male	19	35
Female	36	65
Department		
Department of English	12	22
Department of Business English	12	22
Department of College English	31	56
Major of Master's Degree		
English pedagogy	6	11
Linguistics	31	56
British and American Literature	15	27
Business English	1	2
Other(1 in computer, 1 in economics)	2	4
Years of Teaching		
Less than 5 years	2	4
6-10 years	7	13
11-15 years	18	33
16-20 years	9	16
21 years and above	13	24
Unknown	6	11
Taught Writing as a Separate Course		
Yes	20	36
No	35	64
Years of Teaching Writing as a Separate Course		
1-2 years	9	45
3-4 years	5	25
5-6 years	4	20
9-10 years	2	10

(25%) for 3-4 years; four (20%) for 5-6 years and two (10%) for 9-10 years.

Results of close-ended questions. The second category of the questionnaire incorporated three sub-categories—the participants' knowledge of WCF (four questions), the participants' previous experience of receiving WCF in their university writing classes (six questions) and the participants' training and teaching experience of providing WCF to students' writing (seven close-ended questions).

Teacher knowledge of written corrective feedback. The first sub-category of the questionnaire was about the ESL teachers' knowledge of WCF. Altogether, there were four questions—the WCF types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4. focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) that teachers are familiar with, the source of their knowledge of these terms, the frequency they read articles concerning WCF in academic journals and their opinions on these articles.

The first question concerned the types of WCF that teachers are familiar with. As shown in Table 2 (left side), of 55 teachers, only a small number (n=3, 5%) of teachers are familiar with all the six types of WCF, while a larger number (n=17; 31%) of teachers are familiar with only one type of WCF. The number of teachers who are familiar with five types of WCF (n=8; 15%), four types (n=9; 16%), three types (n=8; 15%) and two types (n=10; 18%) are about the same. ESL teachers' knowledge level of corrective feedback types was not very high, with 20 participants (36%) who were familiar with four-to-six types of corrective feedback while 35 participants (64%) were familiar with one-to-three types. The feedback type (see Table 2, right side) that the participants are most familiar with are direct feedback (n=42, 76%) and indirect feedback (n=33, 60%), followed by metalinguistic feedback (n=29, 53%), electronic (n=21, 38%), reformulation (n=20, 36%), and focus of feedback (n=12, 22%).

In terms of the five sources (1 textbooks, 2 academic articles, 3 writing workshops, 4 other colleague, and 5 previous training) where teachers gained knowledge of the aforementioned WCF terms, Table 3 (left side) shows that only two teachers (4%) learned them from four sources, while seven (13%) from three sources, thirteen (24%) from two sources and thirty-two (59%) from one source. The resources used by

Table 2

Types of WCF that Participants are Familiar With

	Number of Types						Rank of Type	n	(%)
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six			
1=8	12=1	123=3	1234=1	12346=3	123456=3		1st. Direct	42	(76)
2=3	13=1	125=1	1235=4	12356=4			2nd. Indirect	33	(60)
3=2	14=1	126=1	1236=3	23456=1			3rd. Metalinguistic	29	(53)
4=2	15=2	156=1	1256=1				4th. Electronic	21	(38)
5=1	16=2	235=2					5th. Reformulation	20	(36)
6=1	23=1						6th. Focus	12	(22)
	25=1								
	34=1								
n (%)	17(31)	10(18)	8(15)	9(16)	8(15)	3(5)			

Note. Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation.

participants to learn these terms were limited: 45 (83%) participants acquired these terms from one-to-two sources and only nine participants (17%) learned the terms from three-four-sources. Among these five sources (see Table 3, right side), academic articles were the most frequently used source (n=29, 54%), followed by textbooks (n=26, 48%), previous training (n=15, 28%), other colleagues (n=13, 24%) and the writing workshop was the least frequently used source (n=4, 7%).

The third question dealt with the frequency that teachers read articles concerning

Table 3

Sources of Getting the Terms

	Number of Sources				Rank of Source	n	(%)
	One	Two	Three	Four			
1=8	12=4	125=6	1245=1		1st. Academic articles	29	(54)
2=14	14=3	123=1	1235=1		2nd. Textbooks	26	(48)
4=7	15=2				3rd. Previous training	15	(28)
5=3	25=2				4th. Other colleagues	13	(24)
	34=2				5th. Writing workshops	4	(7)
n (%)	32 (59)	13 (24)	7 (13)	2 (4)			

Note. Type of Source: 1 Textbooks, 2 Academic articles, 3 Writing workshops, 4 Other colleagues, and 5 Previous training. N=54; one participant did not answer this question.

WCF in academic journals and the fourth question dealt with teachers' opinions on the articles published in academic journals concerning WCF. The results were as follows: for question three (as shown in Table 4), only one teacher (2%) read the articles often, thirteen teachers (24%) sometimes read them, 33 teachers (60%) read them occasionally while eight teachers (14%) never read them at all. As for question four (see Table 5), only one participant (2%) thought that the articles were very useful; 32 (59%) perceived them useful while 21 (39%) regarded them not very useful and one participant did not answer this question.

The results of the four questions on teachers' knowledge reveal that ESL teachers' knowledge level of corrective feedback types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4. focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) was not very high, with 20 (36%) participants who were familiar with four-to-six types of WCF while 35 (64%) of the participants were familiar with one-to-three types. The resources used by participants to

Table 4

Frequency Participants Read Articles

Response	n	%
Often	1	2
Sometimes	13	24
Occasionally	33	60
Never	8	14
Total	55	100

Table 5

Teachers' Opinions on Articles Read

Response	n	%
Very useful	1	2
Useful	32	59
Not very useful	21	39
Total	54	100

learn these terms were limited too: only nine participants (17%) got to know the terms from three-to-four sources and 45 (83%) acquired these terms from one-to- two sources. Despite the favorable opinions of the participants (n=33, 61%) on the articles published in academic journals concerning WCF, most participants read these articles only occasionally (n=33, 60%) or not at all (n=8, 14%) and a very limited number of the participants read them often (n=1, 2%) or sometimes (n=13, 24%).

Teacher experience with receiving written corrective feedback. The second subcategory of the questionnaire targeted ESL teachers' previous learning experience with receiving WCF in university writing classes. Altogether, there were six questions—the amount of WCF that the teachers received in their university writing classes; the types of errors that the university teachers of English writing addressed; the order of priority in addressing the error types; the types of WCF those participants received; the order of WCF types that those participants preferred to receive, and the participants' reactions to the feedback received and their attitudes toward the feedback received.

As to the first question on the amount of feedback those participants' teachers provided, the results (see Table 6) were that five participants (10%) reported that their teachers provided a lot of feedback to their writing assignments, 24 (47 %) said that the teachers provided some feedback to the writing, 16(31%) noted that the teachers provided

Table 6

Feedback Amount Participants Received

Amount	n	%
A lot	5	10
Some	24	47
A little	16	31
None	6	12
Total	51	100

a little feedback, while six (12%) remarked that the teachers did not provide feedback at all.

The second question was designed to find out the types of errors (organizational errors, stylistic errors, linguistic errors) that the university teachers of English writing addressed and the order of priority in addressing the error types. The results (see Table 7 left side) reveal that 25 participants (48%) reported that their teachers targeted all three types of errors in the writing assignments, ten participants (19%) reported that their teachers dealt with two error types while 17 (33%) informed that their teachers only addressed one error type. Results of the targeting priority (the middle of Table 7) shows that twelve participants (23%) reported that their teachers emphasized organizational errors, 17 (33%) marked that the teachers prioritized stylistic errors while 23 (44%) preferred to put linguistic errors as their first concern of priority. The type error that the participants' teachers targeted the most often (see the right side of Table 7) was stylistic errors (n=43, 83%), followed by linguistic errors (n=40, 77%) and organizational errors (n=29, 56%).

Table 7

Error Types Addressed by Participants' Teachers and their Targeted Priority

Number of Types Addressed			Targeted Priority			Rank of Type	n	(%)
Three	Two	One	1	2	3			
123=5	12=1	1=2	1=2	2=9	3=6	1st. Stylistic	43	(83)
132=3	13=1	2=9	12=1	23=5	32=3	2nd. Linguistic	40	(77)
213=2	23=5	3=6	13=1	213=2	312=8	3rd. Organizational	29	(56)
231=1	32=3		123=5	231=1	321=6			
312=8			132=3					
321=6								
n (%)	25(48)	10(19)	17(33)	12 (23)	17(33)	23(44)		

Note . Type of error. 1 Organizational, 2 Stylistic, and 3 Linguistic.

Table 8

WCF Types Participants Received

Number of Types					Rank of Type	n	(%)
One	Two	Three	Four	Five			
1=3	12=5	123=5	1234=2	12346=3	1st. Direct	47	(92)
4=1	13=2	126=4	1235=1	12456=1	2nd. Indirect	36	(71)
	14=3	135=1	1236=8		3rd. Metalinguisti	25	(49)
	15=1	136=1	1246=3		4th. Reformulatio	24	(47)
	16=1	156=1	1256=1		5th. Focus	15	(29)
	23=1		1346=1		6th. Electronic	7	(14)
	24=1						
	25=1						
n (%)	4 (8)	15 (29)	12(24)	16(31)	4 (8)		

Note . Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation. N=51; four participants did not answer this question

The third question addressed the types of WCF(1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4. focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) the participants received from their university teachers of English writing. The results (Table 8, left side) indicate that the number of participants received five types of WCF equaled that of those who received one type of WCF (n=4, 8%), while the number of participants (n=16, 31%) received four types of WCF was about the same as that of the participants (n=15, 29%) who received two types of WCF. Twelve participants (24%) received three types of WCF and four participants did not answer this question. The number of WCF types those participants received was varied: only 20 participants (39%) received four-to-five types of feedback while 31 (61%) received one-to-three types of feedback. The type of feedback (see the right side of table 8) that the participants received the most was direct feedback (n= 47, 92%), followed by indirect feedback (n=36, 71%); metalinguistic (n=25, 49%); reformulation (n= 24, 47%); focus of feedback (n=15, 29%) and electronic (n= 7, 14%).

The fourth question of the second part dealt with the order of WCF types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4 focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) that those participants preferred to receive from their university teachers of English writing. The results (See Table 9) are varied, yet it is still possible to place them into certain categories and determine that the number of the participants (n=21,41%) who preferred to receive direct CF ranked the first place, while those who liked to receive indirect CF came in the second place (n=14, 27%), followed by reformulation (n=7, 14%), metalinguistic CF (n=4,8%), focus of CF(n=3, 6%) and electronic CF (n=2, 4%).

The fifth and the sixth question addressed the participants' reactions to and their attitudes toward the feedback received respectively. The results of these two questions are presented in Table 10 and Table 11. In response to question five, 22 participants (44%) took the feedback they received very seriously and used it/them to revise or to learn; 23 participants (46%) took the feedback seriously and looked at all the feedback that they received; and five participants (10%) did not take the feedback very seriously and simply glanced over it. Five participants did not answer the question.

Question six was designed to find out the participants' attitudes towards the feedback they received. The result was that 18 (36%) thought the feedback very useful, 31 (62%) thought it useful, and only one (2%) regarded the feedback as not very useful, and five participants did not answer the question.

The questions of this section manifested ESL teachers' previous experience with receiving WCF. As to the amount of WCF that the participants received in their university writing classes, the participants reported different results: 29 (57%) indicated that they received either a lot or some feedback while 22 (43%) reported that they

Table 9

Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Receive

	Type of WCF					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1=6	2=2	3=1	4=1	542316=1	634=1
	13=1	25=1	345=1	423156=1	561432=1	612435=1
	14=1	234=1	345621=1	463215=1		624135=1
	16=1	246=1	365421=1			632145=1
	123=1	2361=1				632154=1
	126=1	23415=1				632541=1
	156=1	213546=1				654321=1
	123456=2	214563=1				
	124365=1	235461=1				
	126435=1	241563=1				
	126453=1	246513=1				
	135462=1	254631=1				
	136245=2	263451=1				
	162345=1					
n (%)	21 (41)	14 (2)	4 (8)	3 (6)	2 (4)	7 (14)

Note . Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation. N=51; four participants did not answer this question.

Table 10

Participants' Reactions to Feedback Received

Response	n	%
I took feedback very seriously used it to revise or to learn	22	44
I took feedback seriously and looked at all the feedback that I got	23	46
I did not take feedback very seriously and simply glanced over it	5	10
Total	50	100

Table 11

Participants' Attitudes toward Feedback Received

Response	n	%
Very useful	18	36
Useful	31	62
Not very useful	1	2
Total	50	100

received either a little or no feedback at all. Twenty-five participants (48%) marked that their teachers of writing targeted all the three types of errors (organizational, stylistic and linguistic) and 27 (52%) said that their teacher targeted either one error type or two error types. The participants' university teachers of English writing prioritized linguistic errors (n=23, 44%), followed by stylistic errors (n=17, 33%) and organizational errors (n=12, 23%). The WCF types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4 focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) those participants received were varied too: 31 participants (61%) received one-to-three types of feedback while 20 (39%) received four-to-five types of feedback. The order of WCF types that those participants preferred to receive differed, with direct feedback ranked the first (n=21, 41%), followed by indirect feedback (n=14, 27%), reformulation (n=7, 14%), metalinguistic (n=4, 8%), focused feedback (n=3, 6%), and electronic CF (n=2, 4%). Despite the differences in type preference, the participants' reactions to the feedback received were favorable since 45 participants (90%) took the feedback seriously or very seriously and their attitudes toward the feedback received were favorable, 49 (98%) participants thought the feedback they received was useful or very useful.

Teacher training and practice of written corrective feedback. The third subcategory of the questionnaire addressed ESL teachers' previous training and teaching experience with providing WCF to students' writing. Altogether, there were seven close-ended questions and two open-ended questions.

The first question aimed to find out whether participants took any courses that were related to grammar and usage and asked participants to provide a couple of examples if they answered "Yes" to the question. Thirty-six participants reported that

they had taken courses that were related to grammar and usage while they were students. The courses focused on grammar (e.g., basic grammar course, grammar, practical grammar, theoretical grammar, transformative and generative grammar; grammatical structures); courses that combined grammar with another topic (e.g. grammar and reading grammar and writing) as well as some other courses such as writing, fundamental English, and stylistics.

The second question targeted the training the participants received in terms of providing WCF to students' writing. Among those participants, only three (6%) thought that they were well trained; 21 (40%) thought themselves trained; 20 (38%) did not think that they were very well trained and nine (16%) thought that they were not trained at all. Two participants did not answer this question (see Table 12).

The third question dealt with the confidence level of those participants in providing WCF. The result (see Table 13) indicates that 42 participants (79%) thought their level of confidence in providing WCF was medium, while three (6%) thought their confidence level was high and eight (15%) thought their level was low.

Table 12

Training Participants Received in Providing WCF

Response	n	%
I was well trained	3	6
I was trained	21	40
I was not very well trained	20	38
I was not trained at all	9	16
Total	53	100

Table 13

Confidence Level with Providing WCF to Students

Confidence level	n	%
High	3	6
Medium	42	79
Low	8	15
Total	53	100

The fourth question aimed to find out the amount of feedback those participants provided for their students in writing. The results (Table 14) show that 11 participants (21%) provided their students with a lot of feedback, 28 (53%) provided students with some feedback, 12 (23%) provided a little feedback and two (4%) did not provide feedback for students at all. Two participants did not answer this question.

The fifth question dealt with the types of errors (organizational errors, stylistic errors, and linguistic errors) that those participants addressed and the order of priority in their addressing these error types. The results (see Table 15, left side) revealed that ten participants (19%) addressed only one error type; five participants (9%) targeted two types of errors; and 38 participants (78%) dealt with three types of errors. The part concerning the addressing priority (see Table 15, middle) revealed that 22 participants (42%) put organizational errors in the first place; 19 participants (36%) prioritized linguistic errors and 12 participants (23%) stylistic errors. The rank of the error types

Table 14

Feedback Amount Participants Provided

Amount	n	%
A lot	11	21
Some	28	53
A little	12	23
None	2	4
Total	53	100

Table 15

Error Types Addressed by Participants and their Targeted Priority

	Number of Types Addressed			Targeted Priority			Rank of Type	n	(%)
	Three	Two	One	1	2	3			
	123=11	13=2	1=2	1=2	2=1	3=7	1st. Linguistic	50	(94)
	132=7	23=1	2=1	13=2	23=1	32=2	2nd. Stylistic	42	(79)
	213=6	32=2	3=7	123=11	213=6	312=7	3rd. Organizational	42	(79)
	231=4			132=7	231=4	321=3			
	312=7								
	321=3								
n (%)	38(72)	5(9)	10(19)	22(42)	12(23)	19(36)			

Note . Type of error. 1 Organizational, 2 Stylistic, and 3 Linguistic.

(see Table 15, right) that were targeted the most often was linguistic errors (n=50, 94%), while stylistic errors and organizational errors were treated with the same frequency (n=42, 79%).

The sixth question asked the participants to list the error types in terms of their effectiveness, that is, where they see students make the most improvement. The results (see Table 16) show 20 participants (40%) indicated that feedback targeting linguistic errors was the most effective, followed by feedback addressing organizational errors (n=18, 35%) and finally the feedback on stylistic errors (n=13, 25%).

The seventh question asked participants to select the types of WCF they provided students with and to rank them in the order of their preferences. The responses for this

Table 16

Effects of Feedback on the Error Types

	Error Type		
	1	2	3
	1=3	2=3	3=5
	123=6	23=2	312=7
	132=9	213=4	321=8
		231=4	
n (%)	18 (35)	13 (25)	20 (40)

Note . Type of error. 1 Organizational, 2 Stylistic, and 3 Linguistic.

were also varied as could be seen from Table 17 and Table 18 respectively. As to the types the participants provided (see Table 17, left side), fourteen participants (27%) adopted six types of WCF, followed by the participants who adopted three types of feedback (n=10, 19%) and those who adopted one type of feedback (n=9, 17%), the next was the participants who adopted four types of feedback (n=8, 15%), and then followed by the number of the participants who adopted two types of feedback (n=6, 12%) and those who adopted five types of feedback (n=5, 10%). The number of WCF types the participants provided for students was different: 27 participants (52%) provided four-to-six types of feedback while 25 (48%) provided one-to-three types of feedback. Among the feedback types that the participants adopted to use the most frequently (see Table 17, right side) was direct feedback (n= 46, 88%), followed by indirect feedback (n= 40, 77%), metalinguistic feedback (n= 30, 58%), reformulation (n= 28, 54%), electronic CF (n=27, 52%), and focus of feedback (n=25, 48%).

As to the order of the participants preferred to provide can be seen in Table 18. Twenty-six participants (50%) preferred to provide direct feedback for students and 16 (31%) preferred indirect feedback. As to the other four types of feedback, the number of the participants was rather small, with four (8%) selecting metalinguistic CF, three (6%) selecting electronic CF and two (4%) selecting reformulation and one (2%) selecting focus of CF.

The questions of the third subcategory draw out ESL teachers' previous training and their teaching experience with providing WCF on students' writing. Although as many as 36 participants reported having taken courses related to grammar and usage when they were students, twenty-nine participants (54%) thought that they were either

Table 17

WCF Types Participants Selected to Provide

	Number of Types						Rank of Type	n	(%)
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six			
1=5	12=3	123=2	1235=1	12346=1	123456=1	1st. Direct	46	(88)	
2=2	15=1	124=1	2146=1	12456=1	123645=1	2nd. Indirect	40	(77)	
4=1	25=1	126=1	2156=1	23145=1	125634=1	3rd. Metalinguistic	30	(58)	
5=1	34=1	136=1	2316=2	23415=1	126453=1	4th. Reformulation	28	(54)	
		156=1	2413=1	31265=1	132465=1	5th. Electronic	27	(52)	
		213=1	2516=1		135462=1	6th. Focus	25	(48)	
		531=1	3421=1		136245=2				
		621=1			213645=1				
		624=1			234165=1				
					236541=1				
					263145=1				
					365421=1				
					521436=1				
n (%)	9 (17)	6 (12)	10 (19)	8 (15)	5 (10)	14 (27)			

Note. Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation. N=52; three participants did not answer this question

Table 18

Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Provide

	Type of WCF					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1=5	2=2	34=1	4=1	5=1	621=1	
12=3	25=1	3421=1		531=1	654=1	
15=1	213=1	31265=1		521436=1		
123=2	2146=1	365421=1				
124=1	2156=1					
126=1	2316=2					
136=1	2413=1					
156=1	2516=1					
1235=1	23145=1					
12346=1	23415=1					
12456=1	213645=1					
123456=1	234165=1					
123645=1	236541=1					
125634=1	263145=1					
126453=1						
132465=1						
135462=1						
136245=2						
n (%)	26 (50)	16(31)	4 (8)	1 (2)	3(6)	2(4)

Note. Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation. N=52; three participants did not answer this question.

not well trained or not trained at all pertaining to providing feedback to students. Despite the claim that most participants (n=42, 79%) thought their confidence level with providing feedback for students was medium, 39 participants provided either a lot (n=11, 21%) or some (n=28, 53%) feedback for their students. Compared with their university teachers of writing, more participants (n=38, 72%) targeted all three error types (organizational, stylistic and linguistic) and fewer (n=15, 28%) targeted either one error type or two error types. Differing from their teachers who prioritized linguistic errors (n=23, 44%), the participants (n=22, 42%) prioritized organizational errors, followed by linguistic errors (n=19, 36%), and stylistic errors (n=12, 23%). They thought the feedback targeting linguistic errors was the most effective (n=20, 40%), while feedback dealing with stylistic errors ranked the second (n= 18, 35%) and feedback on organizational errors came last (n=13, 25%). The number of WCF types(1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4 focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) the participants provided for students was different: 25 (48%) provided one-to-three types of feedback while 27 participants (52%) provided four-to-six types of feedback. The order of WCF types that those participants preferred to provide differed too, with direct feedback ranking the first (n=26, 50%), followed by indirect feedback (n=16, 31%), metalinguistic feedback (n=4, 8%), electronic feedback (n=3, 6%), reformulation (n=2, 4%), and focus of feedback (n=1, 2%).

Aggregation of participants' knowledge of, experience with and use of corrective feedback. Sorting the questionnaire results in terms of the same key terms such as WCF types, WCF amount, and opinions on WCF revealed the connection between the participants' knowledge of, experience with WCF and their usage of it.

Aggregating the results gained from the three questions on WCF types (the types they were familiar with, the ones they received from their university teachers of writing, and the types they provided students with), one found that differences existed among these three data sets (See Table 19). The WCF types participants received were fewer than those types they were familiar, which in turn were fewer than the types they provided students with (see the left side of the data). No participants had ever received six types of feedback from their teachers while three participants were familiar with six types of feedback. However, 14 participants reported that they adopted all six types of WCF in providing students with feedback. As to the rank order of the different types of feedback among the three questions(see the right side of the table)—the types ESL teachers were familiar with, the ones they received and those they preferred to provide, there was minor differences. The rank order for first three feedback types that ESL teachers were most familiar with, received and provided was the same: direct feedback (n=42, 76%; n=47, 92%; n=46, 88%), indirect feedback (n=33, 60%; n=36, 71%; n=40, 77%) and metalinguistic feedback(n=29, 53%; n=25,49%; n=30, 58%). However, a minor difference existed among the rank order of the other three WCF types participants were familiar with, received and provided. For participants' knowledge, the order was electronic (n= 21, 38%), followed by reformulation (n=20, 36%) and focus (n=12, 22%). For WCF types received, the order was reformulation (n=24, 47%), focus (n=14, 27%) and electronic (n=7, 14%). For practice of WCF, the order was reformulation (n=28, 54%), electronic (n=27, 52%) and focus (n=25, 48%).

There was little difference in WCF order that the participants preferred to receive

Table 19

Comparison among Knowledge of, Experience in and Practice of WCF Types

	Number of Types						Rank of Type	n	(%)
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six			
<i>Knowledge of WCF types: N=55</i>									
	1=8	12=1	123=3	1234=1	12346=3	123456=3	1st. Direct	42	(76)
	2=3	13=1	125=1	1235=4	12356=4		2nd. Indirect	33	(60)
	3=2	14=1	126=1	1236=3	23456=1		3rd. Metalinguistic	29	(53)
	4=2	15=2	156=1	1256=1			4th. Electronic	21	(38)
	5=1	16=2	235=2				5th. Reformulation	20	(36)
	6=1	23=1					6th. Focus	12	(22)
		25=1							
		34=1							
n (%)	17(31)	10(18)	8(15)	9(16)	8(15)	3(5)			
<i>Experience: Receiving WCF types: N=51</i>									
	1=3	12=5	123=5	1234=2	12346=3		1st. Direct	47	(92)
	4=1	13=2	126=4	1235=1	12456=1		2nd. Indirect	36	(71)
		14=3	135=1	1236=8			3rd. Metalinguistic	25	(49)
		15=1	136=1	1246=3			4th. Reformulation	24	(47)
		16=1	156=1	1256=1			5th. Focus	15	(29)
		23=1		1346=1			6th. Electronic	7	(14)
		24=1							
		25=1							
n (%)	4(8)	15(29)	12(24)	16(31)	4(8)				
<i>Practice: Selected WCF types to provide students with: N=52</i>									
	1=5	12=3	123=2	1235=1	12346=1	123456=1	1st. Direct	46	(88)
	2=2	15=1	124=1	2146=1	12456=1	123645=1	2nd. Indirect	40	(77)
	4=1	25=1	126=1	2156=1	23145=1	125634=1	3rd. Metalinguistic	30	(58)
	5=1	34=1	136=1	2316=2	23415=1	126453=1	4th. Reformulation	28	(54)
			156=1	2413=1	31265=1	132465=1	5th. Electronic	27	(52)
			213=1	2516=1		135462=1	6th. Focus	25	(48)
			531=1	3421=1		136245=2			
			621=1			213645=1			
			624=1			234165=1			
						236541=1			
						263145=1			
						365421=1			
						521436=1			
n (%)	9(17)	6(12)	10(19)	8(15)	5(10)	14 (27)			

Note . Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation.

Table 20

Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Receive and Provide

	Type of WCF					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Receive: N=51</i>						
1=6	2=2	3=1	4=1	542316=1	634=1	
13=1	25=1	345=1	423156=1	561432=1	612435=1	
14=1	234=1	345621=1	463215=1		624135=1	
16=1	246=1	365421=1			632145=1	
123=1	2361=1				632154=1	
126=1	23415=1				632541=1	
156=1	213546=1				654321=1	
123456=2	214563=1					
124365=1	235461=1					
126435=1	241563=1					
126453=1	246513=1					
135462=1	254631=1					
136245=2	263451=1					
162345=1						
n (%)	21 (41)	14 (2)	4 (8)	3 (6)	2 (4)	7 (14)
<i>Order of WCF Types Participants Preferred to Provide: N=52</i>						
1=5	2=2	34=1	4=1	5=1	621=1	
12=3	25=1	3421=1		531=1	654=1	
15=1	213=1	31265=1		521436=1		
123=2	2146=1	365421=1				
124=1	2156=1					
126=1	2316=2					
136=1	2413=1					
156=1	2516=1					
1235=1	23145=					
12346=1	23415=1					
12456=1	213645=1					
123456=1	234165=1					
123645=1	236541=1					
125634=1	263145=1					
126453=1						
132465=1						
135462=1						
136245=2						
n (%)	26 (50)	16 (31)	4 (8)	1 (2)	3 (6)	2 (4)

Note . Type of WCF: 1 Direct, 2 Indirect, 3 Metalinguistic, 4 Focus of feedback, 5 Electronic, and 6 Reformulation.

and the order they preferred to provide (see Table 20). Three types of feedback increased in importance: direct feedback (21,41% vs. 26,50%), indirect feedback (14, 27% vs. 16, 31%) and electronic feedback (2, 4% vs. 3, 6%). Metalinguistic feedback remained the same in importance (4, 8% vs. 4, 8%) and two types (focus of feedback 3, 6% vs. 1, 2% and reformulation (7, 14% vs. 2, 4 %) decreased in importance. However, the two types of WCF that those participants preferred to receive and to provide most remained the same—direct and indirect feedback.

The feedback amount provided by the participants' teachers and that of the participants themselves indicates that the participants provided more feedback than their university teachers of writing (See Table 21). The category of "providing a lot feedback" and "providing some feedback" increased by 11% and 6% respectively while the category of "providing a little" and "providing no feedback" have both decreased by 8%. Differences also existed between the types of error addressed and the targeting priority of error types between the participants' teachers of writing and the participants themselves. Table 22 shows that more participants (n=38, 72%) targeted three error types than their teachers did (n=25, 48%) and fewer participants (n=5, 9%) targeted two types of errors than their teachers did (n=10,19%).

Changes also occurred in the targeting priority: more participants (n=22, 42%) prioritized organizational errors than their teachers did (n=12, 23%) in the past. This change was understandable, since in recent years there has been a change in the teaching of writing—the focus has changed from product-oriented to process-oriented writing and teachers gave more priority to the organization of students' writing. Despite the change in the targeting priority of error types, the participants still considered the most effective

Table 21

Feedback Amount Participants Received and Provided

Amount	Received		Provided	
	n	%	n	%
A lot	5	10	11	21
Some	24	47	28	53
A little	16	31	12	23
None	6	12	2	4
Total	51	100	53	100

Table 22

Types of Errors Addressed, Targeted Priority and Treatment Effect

	Number of Types Addressed			Targeted Priority			Rank of Type	n	(%)
	Three	Two	One	1	2	3			
<i>Addressed by Participants' Teachers: N=52</i>									
	123=5	12=1	1=2	1=2	2=9	3=6	1st. Stylistic	43	(83)
	132=3	13=1	2=9	12=1	23=5	32=3	2nd. Linguistic	40	(77)
	213=2	23=5	3=6	13=1	213=2	312=8	3rd. Organizational	29	(56)
	231=1	32=3		123=5	231=1	321=6			
	312=8			132=3					
	321=6								
n (%)	25(48)	10(19)	17(33)	12 (23)	17(33)	23(44)			
<i>Addressed by Participants Themselves: N=52</i>									
	123=11	13=2	1=2	1=2	2=1	3=7	1st. Linguistic	50	(94)
	132=7	23=1	2=1	13=2	23=1	32=2	2nd. Stylistic	42	(79)
	213=6	32=2	3=7	123=11	213=6	312=7	3rd. Organizational	42	(79)
	231=4			132=7	231=4	321=3			
	312=7								
	321=3								
n (%)	38(72)	5(9)	10(19)	22(42)	12(23)	19(36)			
<i>Effects of Feedback on the Error Types: N=51</i>									
	1	2	3						
	1=3	2=3	3=5						
	123=6	23=2	312=7						
	132=9	213=4	321=8						
		231=4							
n (%)	18 (35)	13 (25)	20 (40)						

Note . Type of error: 1 Organizational, 2 Stylistic, and 3 Linguistic.

error type to treat was the linguistic error (n=20,39%), followed by organizational errors (n=18, 35%) and then stylistic errors (n=13, 26%).

Results of open-ended questions. The results of the open-ended questions revealed participants' reasons for providing certain numbers of WCF types and their opinions on feedback provided. As participants answered these two questions out of willingness, the number of participants who answered did not necessarily equal to 55.

Results of open-ended question one. Question eight from the third part of the questionnaire was open-ended and asked the participants to explain the reason why they preferred to provide for the students with the types of WCF listed in question seven of the third part of the questionnaire. As can be seen in question seven, participants provided different numbers of WCF types for their students and the reasons for their providing these types of feedback were different too. Table 23 reveals the various types of feedback provided, reasons as well as the characteristic responses.

The participants who provided all six types of feedback to the students listed the types in different orders were for different reasons. To them, all types were feasible and effective in improving students' writing and they provided feedback in accordance with the mistakes students made and students' level as well as with course's objectives. They also used the feedback to motivate students to consider the mistakes by themselves and to learn autonomously.

The participants who provided five types of feedback for the students differed in the types they provided. One participant thought that WCF should be vivid and clear, and teachers should "take care of" students' feelings. The other participants thought the feedback provided was direct, effective, useful and welcomed. The third participant,

though reported providing five types of feedback, focused on the reason for providing indirect CF, claiming that indirect CF made students review and revise their writings independently.

The reason for those who provided four types of feedback was that the feedback was useful, convenient and effective and the feedback could be used to help students find their mistakes, improve their writing skill, motivate students in an encouraging manner; and elicit answers from students.

The reason for the participants who provided three types of feedback was that teachers know what to do and they focus on ideas rather than on form by providing unfocused feedback, electronic feedback as well as reformulation. Moreover, students can know their mistakes and know how to correct. Those who provided direct and indirect feedback types for the students because students react and receive these feedback types well and the two participants who offered unfocused feedback were due to the fact that they were familiar with it.

Results of open-ended question two. Question nine targeted participants' opinions about the feedback they provided their students with. It was another open-ended question and the opinions of these participants varied from each other (see Table 24). A group of participants thought that the feedback they provided was very useful, important and helpful, which deserved more attention and needed to be increased in amount. Another group was more moderate in their opinions as they claimed that the feedback was, to some extent, helpful. To these two groups, feedback was necessary and could foster students' correct habits of thinking and studying. It was significant for students to find some errors in writing and find relative methods to make writing native-like.

However, there was also a group of participants who held negative opinions towards the feedback they provided. They thought that the feedback was not so effective since the students' errors were almost crystallized during the stage of tertiary education and the feedback

Table 23

WCF Types, Key Reasons for Providing and Characteristic Response

WCF Types	Key Reasons	Characteristic Response
<i>Q8. Please explain why you prefer these types of WCF?</i>		
123456/ 123645/ 126453/ 132465 125634 234165	All types are feasible/effective; provide feedback in accordance with mistakes, students' level and course's objectives; to motivate students to consider the mistakes by themselves/to learn autonomously.	All means are feasible as long as they are effective in improving writing; some mistakes need to be dealt with as soon as possible, some mistakes can be reminded and then students can do the correcting themselves and make them more aware of such likeness of errors; levels of students, objectives of courses; most of my students are freshmen or sophomores who need direct guidance and focused and specific CF; to motivate students to learn autonomously/to consider the mistakes by themselves.
31265 23154/ 23145/	Vivid and clear; considering students' feelings; direct, effective, useful, welcomed; indirect CF makes students review and revise their writings independently;	In my opinion, WCF should be vivid and clear, and "take care of" students' feelings; Direct, effective, useful, welcomed; indirect CF makes students review and revise their writings independently;
156/ 654 621/	Teachers know what to do; focus on ideas rather than on form; students know their mistakes and how to correct;	You can know what to do to improve the students' writing skills; students can know where they made mistakes and how to correct them; not focus on but on ideas.
12 4b	Students react and receive these feedback well Familiar with it	Students seem to react and receive these types of feedback more effectively I'm familiar with it

Table 24

Opinions on Feedback Provided

Opinions	Key Reasons	Characteristic Response
<i>Q9. What are your opinions of the feedback you provide to your students</i>		
Positive	Very useful, important and helpful; foster students' thinking and studying habits;	It is of significance for students to find some errors in writing and find relative methods to make writing native; it is necessary and can foster students' correct habits of thinking and studying. It is what students need; very useful; it was useful and deserved enough attention.
Negative	Errors are crystallized; feedback was unsystematic and uninformed.	Students are crystallized; feedback tend to be unsystematic and uninformed;
Depends	Students' autonomy plays the key role	If the students take it seriously, they benefit a lot. But most of the students ignore it.

provided tended to be unsystematic and uninformed. There was a group of participants who answered this question from the perspective of students. To them, students' autonomy was more important than teachers' feedback since students' attitudes played a very important role in determining the effectiveness of the feedback. Careful students took the feedback seriously and they benefited a lot from the feedback the teachers provided while the students who took it less seriously or just ignored it could not gain benefits from it. Finally, there were also participants who gave advice about the types of feedback to provide. To them, content feedback was more important than grammar feedback because students tended to write with better fluency/accuracy but less critical thinking. Direct correcting and indicating plus locating the error and leaving some room for students to learn to avoid some mistakes actively were more effective in practice.

Results of the Interviews

The second data collection method adopted in this study was the interview. Semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews of two teachers on a voluntary basis were done to document their general perceptions about receiving feedback during their English writing classes when they were university students, their training experience and their practice of providing feedback for their students. One teacher who teaches writing to English majors and one to non-English major postgraduates were the participants. The researcher wanted to find out whether differences concerning providing feedback existed between teachers when their students were different. The English major undergraduates are going to be teachers of English at different levels of schools all over China, while the non-English major postgraduates would be teachers of subjects other than English. Teachers' teaching methodology at a normal university will surely have an impact on those teacher candidates; therefore, it is important to find out about their knowledge and experience.

Interview result of teacher one. The first teacher interviewed was the teacher who is currently teaching writing to English majors who are sophomores. The teacher has been teaching since 1996 and has rich teaching experience with teaching courses and pedagogy, but this was the first time she taught writing as a separate course. She admitted that she had a lot of struggles, troubles and challenges. Her previous learning experience with writing offered her little help in her teaching writing because it has been a very long time ago since she was a university student (1992-1996), she could not recall whether there was a writing course and the reason for her blurred memory was not simply due to the long span of time, but also due to the fact that she might not be interested in the writing course or the teaching method did not appeal to her. She could hardly recall

whether her teacher was Chinese or even a foreigner, even if there was the writing course. As a result, she has no memory of receiving feedback during her undergraduate study. During her graduate study period, she was required to write the weekly paper and her dissertation, and she received feedback from her teacher, but the feedback was global feedback, that is, only one or two comments on the idea of the paper rather than on the other aspects such as stylistic or linguistic aspects.

After she became a teacher herself, she was still not very confident with her writing competence because she was not very well trained in this. Because the major focus of her master's study was English pedagogy and she has been teaching English pedagogy since then, she never attended any seminars, conferences or workshops on writing. She tried to improve her writing through reading widely, especially articles from home and abroad. Beginning this semester, she has read articles on writing consciously—the reference books suggested by the foreign teacher who is teaching writing at the normal university, the articles on writing, even those articles listed in her postgraduates' references. She personally thought the idea of her paper was not a problem, but she did not receive any solid training concerning the organization, logic and diction of writing. She personally mastered the concept of how to teach writing since she has to teach her students (junior high school and senior high school English teachers) how to teach writing. The process approach to writing was highly regarded by those teachers who stressed the combination of reading and writing, who adopted either the “reading for writing” or the “reading and writing” approach. In the learning process, one needs to analyze the whole article from its paragraph meanings, vocabulary, grammar, structure and the link of different parts. Then the students are required to write after the teacher

teaches them how to write and the whole process involves—giving a topic, brainstorming, mapping, outlining, drafting and revising. Despite knowing all these concepts of writing, the teacher who is teaching writing as a separate course encountered a lot of challenges—from how to teach, how to organize the class and how to provide feedback for students’ writing assignment. She did not receive any training in this aspect at all and there was no one to shadow her teaching.

Due to these challenges, the teacher is now adopting the teamwork method to teach writing. There is a very experienced foreign teacher who has been teaching writing for many years in China and is now teaching two classes of sophomores. She took the initiative to listen and observe the foreigner’s writing class on Wednesdays and then taught her own class on Thursdays. Though she intended to “copy” exactly what the foreign expert did, she made changes in her own class. These changes included the following aspects:

1. The difference in checking the reading assignment at the beginning of the class (e.g., The foreign teacher only asked “What have you got through reading this chapter?”, the Chinese teacher would add a question “What are the things that you know, but you do not know them clearly; however, after reading this chapter, you know them clearly?”)
2. The difference in supervising small group discussions (the foreign teacher tended to give attention to one single group while the Chinese teacher tried to give attention to all the groups)
3. The difference in assigning writing journals (the foreigner simply asked students to write two to three personal journal entries and two to three academic journal entries,

while the Chinese teacher asked the students to write the same assignments with more specific instructions for example, the academic journals must consist of two parts—what is it about and how do you evaluate)

4. The difference in providing feedback for students (the foreigner collected the journals once a month and would pick out one journal and provide detailed feedback while the Chinese teacher intended to provide feedback on each journal)
5. The difference in their understanding of the connection between reading and writing (the foreign teacher simply asked the students to read enormously while the Chinese teacher thought that reading should serve as the basis for writing, that is, students read the articles, study them and write by imitating what they have read).

Generally speaking, the method the two teachers used to teach writing was lecturing and group discussion. There were almost no one-on-one conferences even though the Chinese teacher had office hours each week and no students used that time to ask questions. All the questions were discussed and solutions sought during the writing classes. The writing tasks the students were given included personal writing, keeping an academic response journal, and two essays.

Interview result of teacher two. The other teacher interviewed is the teacher who is currently teaching non-English major postgraduates. This teacher is also an experienced teacher who has been teaching for 27 years and has been teaching writing as a separate course for five years. When he was a university student, he took writing courses for two years, which were taught by a foreigner. The first year, the teaching of writing focused mainly on grammar, including a few lectures on paragraphs, and the second year, it focused mainly on rhetoric. The main type of writing was practical

writing(e.g., letters, resume). The foreign teacher provided feedback in two forms—in the class, the teacher provided metalinguistic feedback and used the blackboard to correct the mistakes made by students; after class, the teacher provided WCF on students' assignments, mainly on linguistic errors. The interviewee thought that this form of feedback provided by the foreign teacher was useful to improve the grammatical accuracy of the paper rather than the content of the paper.

When the interviewee started to teach writing five years ago, he was offered no training at all. He had to learn how to teach writing all by himself. By the time he started to teach, there was already a teacher who had been teaching writing to postgraduates for five years and that teacher introduced the writing course briefly to the interviewee. Then the two teachers discussed about the course and agreed on the teaching content, teaching pace as well as evaluation of students. At present, the textbook they adopted was *Postgraduate English Writing* and the teaching focused on the discourse (paragraphs, the structure of the paper and the coherence of the paper) and practical writing. The evaluation is mainly handled through two to three assignments completed each semester. The feedback the teacher provided was mainly on the organization of the paper and the structure of the paragraphs. The teacher did not focus his attention on linguistic errors in the students' assignments. According to him, this was the postgraduate level of writing and the emphasis should be on the organization and structure, and the linguistic aspect should be the focus of the lower level of studying. There were no one-on-one conferences between the interviewee and the students, but the students could contact the teacher by telephone, *wechat* software (that is similar to *facebook*) and email. The students mainly used *wechat* to seek individual consultation from the teacher about the elements that they

did not have confidence in. The writing was mainly a one-draft assignment rather than a process, and the teacher selected students' papers as case study materials, and they discussed the papers in class together, usually the typical papers would be selected—the best papers and the ones with the most problems. They focused their discussion on the reasons why certain papers were well written and on identifying problems in certain papers. The students could choose to revise their paper and send them to the teacher, but that won't be taken into account when the paper is graded.

The interviewee also encountered challenges due to teaching writing as a separate course. The challenges were not on how to teach or how to provide feedback, but on the large number of students, on students' lack of competence and low motivation. At present, the interviewee is teaching four classes, and each class consists of 40 students. Altogether he has to teach 160 students and each student needs to hand in two-to-three assignments during the semester and one final test paper. Correcting the papers is a challenge to the interviewee since it is time-consuming and energy consuming. The other challenge that the interviewee encounters is the lack of competence of the students. Because of the overwhelming number of postgraduates entering the first semester of studies at the normal university, an exempt exam is held at the beginning of the first semester. Those students who have passed CET (College English Test) Band Six could take part in the exam and they would be exempted from studying English if they pass the exempt exam. Therefore, the students who have to take English courses are generally lacking in competence, which makes teaching filled with challenges since the teacher has to use bilingual approaches when he teaches. He has to teach lessons in English first and then repeat them in Chinese, which makes teaching tiring, burdensome and unrewarding. He

could not teach more advanced material because the students would not be able to understand. The third challenge that the interviewee encounters is the low motivation of the students. From the students' perspective, they are required to take the English course, a course they do not like, simply to earn the credit. Most of the students do not read textbook, nor do they do any revision of their writing. They only attend the class and try to meet the basic requirements of the course, pass it and earn the credit. This type of low motivation makes it hard for the interviewee to assign any supplementary work, which limits the students from learning more about writing.

Results of Teachers' Responses to Students' Composition

The third data collection technique was examination of feedback responses provided by the two interviewees on their students' writing assignment. Data gained from this technique could be used to compare with data gained from the interview to determine the connection between one's knowledge of, experience with and use of WCF.

Results of feedback provided by interviewee one. Both interviewees assigned students writing tasks during the semester. Due to the time and energy limitation of the researcher, she only chose one (or two classes) of students from each interviewee and asked students' permission to collect one of their essays/journal entries with feedback provided by their teachers. After collecting the students' paper, the feedback data were recorded onto the excel spreadsheet and then were classified and tabulated.

Forty sophomore's journal entries with WCF provided by the first interviewee were collected. The journal assignment was a one-paragraph task on traveling. Students needed to write a topic sentence, with supporting evidence or information and then a conclusion. Through recording, sorting and tabulating, insight into how the interviewee

provided students with WCF was gained and Table 25 shows the detailed information of the results. Altogether this interviewee provided 120 responses to the 40 English major sophomores' journal entries. Out of the feedback provided, focused feedback accounted for 45 (37.5%); and unfocused feedback 75 (62.5%). The error types targeted included organizational errors (OE, n=59, 50 %), stylistic errors (SE, n= 30, 25%) and linguistic errors (LE, n=29, 24 %). Besides these error types, the interviewee also targeted the students' attitude to write this journal entry (n=2, 2%).

Focused feedback could be further classified into direct feedback (n=9; 7.5%), indirect feedback (n=27; 22.5%) and reformulation (n=9; 7.5%). In providing direct feedback (n=9; 7.5%), the interviewee directly corrected three words, a plural form of a word and one collocation (4%); directly commented on the usage of the word "then", pointing out the inappropriate usage of it (n=1,0.8%) and directly instructed the student to avoid the combination of print form and manuscript form (n=1,0.8%) as well as direct instructions to tell students to rewrite the concluding sentence (n=2, 1.6%). Then the teacher provided indirect feedback through question marks and questions. The question marks were put after the words spelled wrongly by the students (n=3, 2.5%), or after the word written by the student and the alternative form was provided by the teacher (n=5, 4%), or it was put on the wrong usage of the plural or singular form of the words (n=1, 0.8%) or on the personal pronouns that students failed to unify (n=3, 2.5%). The teacher also used question marks to indicate the improper usage of the collocation (n=1, 0.8%) or certain expressions (n=3, 2.5%). Moreover, the teacher asked the students questions to allow students to consider how they could improve the conciseness of the sentences (n=3, 2.5%), how to insert a sentence to improve its cohesion (n=1, 0.8%) and how to improve

their writing by providing more reasons/ examples or specific evidences (n=8, 7%). The teacher also adopted reformulation to help students improve their expressions of certain ideas (n=9, 7.5%).

Unfocused feedback (n=75; 62.5%) could be classified into the following three categories: calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=29; 24.2%); providing general comments(n=44, 36.7%): on students' effort (n=2, 1.6%) and on the different aspects of the journal writing (n=42; 35.1%); and asking/pointing out the questions concerning the paper (n=2; 1.6%). The teacher invited the students to pay attention to the structure of their paper (n=1, 0.8%), the sentences (n=8,7%), the words (n=6, 5%), and the grammatical errors (n=5, 4%) as well as the mechanics of the paper (n=9, 8%). As to the structure, the teacher requested the students to balance the three key aspects of the journal. As to the sentences, they could be further put into the topic sentence (n=1, 0.8%), the supporting sentences (n=2, 1.7%) as well as the concluding sentences (n=5, 4.2%). The teacher reminded one student that a well-developed paragraph needed enough specific examples/evidence to support the topic sentence and told two students that there was room for them to improve their supporting sentences. As to the concluding sentences, there were two aspects that students needed to know: three students could improve their concluding sentences and two students should understand that the concluding sentence could reemphasize the main idea but should not restate the main idea word by word. Word was a major aspect that the interviewee hoped that her students gave heed to, especially the word choice (n=2, 1.7%), the words encircled or underlined by the interviewee (n=2, 1.7%) and the plural and singular form of the word (n=2). Grammatical errors (e.g., adjective possessive pronoun, comma splice) were

another aspect that students needed to pay attention to (n=5, 4%). The interviewee also called students to pay attention to sentence structure (n=2, 1.7%), to the layout of the paragraph (n=1, 0.8%), to improve their handwriting (n=4, 3.3%) and to know the difference existed between writing in print form and in manuscript form (n=2, 1.7%).

The teacher also made general comments on students' efforts (n=2) and different aspects of students' journals (n=42, 35.1%). The teacher praised two students for their investing effort into writing this journal entry. The teacher commented on the journal paragraph that was either well-developed (n=4, 3.3%) or not well developed (n=1, 0.8%). The teacher also commented on the sentences of the journal (n=33, 27.5%), especially the topic sentence (n=7, 5.8%), the supporting sentences (n=22, 18%), the concluding sentence (n=1, 0.8%) and the overlapping of the sentences (n=3, 2.4%). As to the topic sentences, the teacher marked them as good (n=3, 2.5%), vague (n=2, 1.7%), not well structured (n=1, 0.8%) and one student did not write the topic sentence. And the majority of the interviewee's comment on the sentences was on the supporting sentences (n=22, 18.3%), which were classified into two categories—those that provided strong examples/evidence to support the topic sentence (n=7, 5.8%) and those that failed to support the topic sentence very well (n=15, 12.5%). The revised version (n=4, 3.3%) of students' journal entry also gained the interviewee's favorable comment in terms of the paragraph development and cohesion. But there were two questions concerning two students' journal entries, one student failed to understand the thesis of the journal, the other one did not write the journal on the assigned paragraph on "traveling".

Table 25

Interviewee One's Feedback Provided on Sophomores' Journals

Total (120)	Focused feedback (45) (37.5%)	Direct feedback (9) (7.5%)	Direct correction (5) (4%)	Words		3	LE (5) (4%)		
				Plural form		1			
				Collocation		1			
			Direct comment (1) (0.8%)	"Then" isn't an appropriate word	1	SE (2) (1.6%)			
			Direct instruction (3) (2.5%)	Avoid the combination of manuscript form and printing form	1				
		Indirect feedback (27) (22.5%)			Questions (27) (23%)	Rewrite the concluding sentence		2	LE(15) (13%)
						On spelling (word + question mark)		3	
						On correct word form (providing two choices, A or B)		5	
						On the plural/singular form of the word		1	
						On personal pronoun agreement		3	
	On collocation						1		
	On certain expressions						3	SE (5) 4%	
	On the conciseness of the sentences						2		
	On inserting sentence between two sentences						1	OE (9) (7.5%)	
	On the content of the passage					8			
	Reformulation (9) (7.5%)	e.g., "the world is so big, but we are tiny" can be replaced by "we are small in the world".	9	SE (9) (7.5%)					
Unfocused	Calling	Structure (1)	Balance of the three	1	OE (9)				

Feedback (75) (62.5%)	students' attention to the different aspects of the paper (29) (24.2%)	(0.8%)	aspects			(8%)
		Sentences (8) (7%)	Topic sentence (1)	Need specific examples to support	1	
			Supporting sentence (2)	Room to improve	2	
			Concluding sentence (5)	Room to improve	3	
				Function & what to avoid	2	
		Word (6) (5%)	Pay attention to word choice		2	SE(2) (1.6%)
			Pay attention to words encircled/underlined		2	LE(9) (7.5%)
			Pay attention to the use of singular and plural		2	
		Grammatical errors (5) (4%)	Adjective possessive pronoun		2	
			Comma splice		3	
		Mechanics (9) (8%)	Sentence structure		2	SE(9)(8%)
			Pay attention to the layout of the paragraph		1	
			Handwriting: room to improve		4	
			Pay attention to difference between print form and manuscript form		2	
		General Comments	On student' effort (2)	I can see your effort you devote to writing this		2

		(44) (36.7%)	(1.6%)	paragraph			
			On the paragraph (5) (4%)	Well-developed	Without explanation	2	OE(35) (29%)
					With explanation	2	
				Not well-developed		1	
			On the sentences (33) (28%)	Topic sentence (7)	Good	3	
					Vague	2	
					Not well structured	1	
					No topic sentence	1	
				Supporting sentences (22)	Good	7	
					Bad	15	
				Concluding sentence (1)	Good	1	
				Sentence overlapping (3)		3	SE(3) (2.5%)
			On the revision (4) 3.3%	Improved the paragraph development and cohesion		4	OE(5) (4%)
			Question on the paper (2) (1.6%)	You don't understand the thesis clearly		1	
Where is the paragraph on "Traveling"		1					

Note. LE=linguistic errors, SE=stylistic errors, OE=organizational errors

Results of feedback provided by interviewee two. Twenty-eight postgraduates' papers with WCF provided by the second interviewee were collected. The result of the interviewee's usage of WCF was gained after recording, sorting and tabulating the data

collected. Table 26 shows that this interviewee provided 216 responses to the 28 postgraduates' papers. Out of the feedback provided, focused feedback accounted for 185 (85%); and unfocused feedback 31 (15%). The error types targeted included organizational errors (OE, n=18, 8%), stylistic errors (SE, n=75, 35%) and linguistic errors (LE, n=123, 57%).

Focused feedback could be further classified into direct feedback (n=103; 48%), indirect feedback (n=44; 20%) and metalinguistic feedback (n=38,18%). In providing direct feedback, the interviewee mainly adopted the following three means—direct insertion (n=13; 5%); direct deletion (n=16; 7%) and direct correction (n=74; 35%). As to direct insertion, the teacher inserted seven words (three infinitive words, three articles and one relative pronoun “that”) and six space insertion marks between sentences. In terms of direct deletion, 16 places were deleted, including 13 words, two punctuation marks and one space between words. Among these three kinds of direct feedback, direct correction accounted for the biggest number (n=74, 35%), which further involved 30 words, 35 tenses, three instances of subject and verb agreement and six punctuation marks. The other two types of feedback that the interviewee adopted were indirect feedback (n=44, 20%) which incorporates the usage of question mark (n=44, 20%) and metalinguistic feedback(n=38,18%) such as error code (n=31,14%) and Chinese characters (n=7,4%). The teacher used question marks to provide indirect feedback mainly because of the following four reasons: the expression was unclear (21); third person singular was used incorrectly (3); the tense was not correct (14) and something was wrong with the usage of punctuation (6). The teacher also adopted indirect feedback to point out the seven tense problems by using error code (T) and 24 signs to indicate that

students should start a new paragraph. In addition, Chinese characters (7) were used to deal with the errors in word morphemes (2), in verb tenses (4) and in sentence connection (1).

Unfocused feedback (n=31; 15%) could be classified into the following three categories: calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=15; 7%), general comments on the paper itself (n=13; 6%), and questions on the paper (n=3; 2%). The teacher mainly asked students to pay attention to the details of their papers (3), the grammar (4, such as verb tense, and the past participle of verbs), organization of the paper (paying attention to the paragraphs, n=2) as well as the mechanics of the paper (n=6, e.g., justifying alignment on both sides n=3; and space between sentences, n=3). The teacher also made general comments (n=13, 6%) to the papers that were nicely written (10); well written with true emotions (2); as well as the paper whose organization was good, whose observation was careful and whose selection of the topic was appropriate (1). However, the interviewee also questioned students on their papers (n=3), with two questions concerning the strategies being used in writing the journal (It seem that the paper is not a narration) and a question on the writing of paper with the topic on Traveling.

Table 26

Feedback Provided by Interviewee Two on Postgraduates' Papers

T O T A L (216)	Focused feedback (185) (85%)	Direct feedback (103) (48%)	Direct insertion (13) 5%	Words (7)	Infinitive	3	LE (7) 3%
					Article	3	
					Relative pronoun	1	
				Space between	6	SE (19)9%	

			sentences (6)			
		Direct deletion (16) 7%	Words	13		
			Punctuation	2	LE (2)1%	
			Space between words	1	SE(1)0.4%	
		Direct correction (74) 35%	Word	30	LE (74) 35%	
			Tense	35		
			Subject and verb agreement	3		
			Punctuation	6		
	Indirect feedback (44) (20%)	Question mark (?) (44) (20%)	Unclear meaning	21	SE(21) 10%	
				Third person singular	3	LE(30) 14%
				Tense	14	
				Punctuation	6	
	Metalinguistic Feedback (38) 18%	Error code (31) 14%	Tense (T)	7		
				Indicating starting a new paragraph	24	SE(24) 11%
		Chinese characters (7) 4%	Morpheme (形态)	2	LE (6) 2.7%	
			Tense (时态)	4		
				Sentence connection (句内联结)	1	SE (4) 2%
Unfocused Feedback (31)	Calling students' attention to the	Detail (3)	Pay attention to the details of the paper	3		

	(15%)	different aspects of the paper (15) (7%)	Grammar (4)	Pay attention to Tense	3	LE (4) 2%	
				Pay attention to the Past participle of verbs	1		
			Organization(2)	Pay attention to the Paragraphs of the paper	2	OE(2)0.9%	
			Mechanics(6)	Alignment: justified on both sides	3	SE(6)3%	
				Pay attention to the space between sentences	3		
			General comments on the paper (13) (6%)	Nicely written		10	OE (16) 8%
				Nicely written with true emotions		2	
				Well organized, observed and chosen		1	
			Question on the paper (3) (2%)	It seems that the paper is not a narration		2	
				Where is the story?		1	

Note. LE=linguistic errors, SE=stylistic errors, OE=organizational errors

Integration of Findings Gained From Different Data Collection Techniques

The integration of results gained from different data collection techniques manifests a more holistic view on ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with and use of WCF in the Mainland China. Aggregating the results gained from both the questionnaire and interviews enables one to acquire not only participants' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of WCF in general but also the particular information concerning these aspects. On the other hand, integrating the results of the

interviews and the results of the examination of the feedback responses provided by the interviewees give one opportunity to perceive the connection between one's perception of and actual employment and adaption of WCF.

Integration of the results of the questionnaire and interviews. The results of the first subcategory of the questionnaire show that ESL teachers' knowledge level of the six corrective feedback types was not very high, with 35 (64%) participants who were familiar with one-to-three types while 20 (36%) four-to-six types. The types that the participants are most familiar with are direct feedback (n=42, 76%) and indirect feedback (n=33, 60%), followed by metalinguistic feedback (n=29, 53%), electronic (n=21, 38%), reformulation (n=20, 36%), and focus of feedback (n=12, 22%). On the other hand, the results of the interviewees show that Interviewee One did not possess much knowledge on providing feedback for it was the first time for her to teach writing while Interviewee Two has accumulated knowledge on this aspect through studying by himself.

The resources (1 textbooks, 2 academic articles, 3 writing workshops, 4 other colleagues, and 5 previous training) for participants' getting these terms were limited: 45 (83%) participants from one-to-two sources and only nine (17%) from three-to-four sources. Academic articles were the most frequently used source (n=29, 54%), followed by textbooks (n=26, 48%), previous training (n=15, 28%), other colleagues (n=13, 24%) and writing workshop (n=4, 7%). The two interviewees gained the knowledge concerning writing and providing feedback through mainly academic articles and textbooks as well.

Despite the favorable opinions of the participants (n=33, 61%) on the articles published in academic journals concerning WCF, most read them only occasionally (n=33, 60%) or not at all (n=8, 15%) and a very limited number of the participants read

them often (n=1, 2%) or sometimes (n=13, 24%). Interviewee One began to consciously and regularly read materials (reference books and articles) on writing after teaching writing as a separate course while for Interviewee Two, no related information was obtained.

The result of the second subcategory of the questionnaire manifested ESL teachers' previous experience with receiving WCF. As to the amount of WCF that the participants received in their university writing classes, 29 (57%) indicated that they received either a lot or some while 22 (43%) reported receiving either a little or no feedback at all. Interviewee One could not recall whether there was writing course during her undergraduate study but reported that she did receive little feedback from her teacher during her master's study. On the other hand, Interviewee Two did receive feedback from his teacher of writing at university, but the amount of which was not obtained by this study.

Twenty-five participants (48%) marked that their teachers of writing targeted all the three types of errors (organizational, stylistic and linguistic) and 27 (52%) said that their teacher targeted either one error type or two error types. The participants' university teachers of English writing prioritized linguistic errors (n=23, 44%), followed by stylistic errors (n=17, 33%) and organizational errors (n=12, 23%). The WCF types the participants received were as follows: 31 (61%) participants received one-to-three types of feedback while 20 (39%) received four-to-five types. On the other hand, as to the above three questions, Interviewee One only remembered received one or two general comments on the weekly paper while Interviewee Two gained two forms of feedback from his university teacher of writing—oral feedback during the class time and WCF on

the papers written (mainly targeted linguistic errors).

Finally, the third subcategory revealed ESL teachers' previous training and their teaching experience with providing WCF. Though 36 participants reported having taken courses related to grammar and usage before, 29 (55%) thought they were either not well trained or not trained at all pertaining to providing feedback. This was also true to the two interviewees who reported not well trained and no particular training was provided when assigned them to teach writing.

Despite the claim that most participants (n=42) thought their confidence level with providing feedback to students was medium, as many as 39 participants provided either a lot (n=11, 21%) or some (n=28, 53%) feedback for their students. This is also true to Interviewee One who had trouble in providing feedback but provided a total of 120 feedback responses on her 40 students' journal entries (one student one entry). However, Interviewee Two was confident in providing feedback and he provided 216 on 28 students' paper.

Integration of results of interview and examination of teachers' responses.

When interviewed, Interviewee One intended to provide feedback on all the journal responses written by the students and would focus feedback on the organization and structure of the journals. But a study of the feedback provided by her turned out to be different. She did not have the time to provide feedback on all the journal entries, instead she chose one to provide students with feedback. Interviewee One provided 120 feedbacks to her 40 English major sophomores' journal entries. Focused feedback accounted for 45 (37.5%), which incorporated direct feedback (n=9; 7.5%), indirect feedback (n=27; 22.5%) and reformulation (n=9; 7.5%). Unfocused feedback 75 (62.5%)

contained calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=29; 24.2%), providing general comments on students' effort (n=2, 1.6%) and on the different aspects of the journal writing (n=42; 35.1%); and asking/pointing out the questions concerning the paper (n=2; 1.6%). The error types targeted included organizational errors (OE, n=59, 50 %), stylistic errors (SE, n= 30, 25%) and linguistic errors (LE, n=29, 24 %). Besides these error types, the interviewee also targeted the students' attitude to write this journal entry (n=2, 2%).

Interviewee Two, during interview, reported to provide two forms of feedback—oral feedback as well as WCF. He preferred to focus the feedback on the paper's organization and the structure of paragraphs rather than on linguistic errors since he thought that the postgraduate level of writing should focus on the organization and structure, and the lower level of study needed to focus on the linguistic errors. However, the study of the feedback provided by him proved to be different. Interviewee Two provided 216 feedbacks to the 28 postgraduates' papers, out of which, focused feedback accounted for 85% (n=185) and unfocused feedback 15% (n=31). Focused feedback could be further classified into direct feedback (n=103; 48%), indirect feedback (n=44; 20 %) and metalinguistic feedback (n=38, 18%). Unfocused feedback (n=31; 15%) could also be put into three categories: calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=15; 7%), general comments on the paper itself (n=13; 6%), and questions on the paper (n=3; 2%). The error types incorporated organizational errors (n=18, 8%), stylistic errors (n=75, 35%) as well as linguistic errors (n=123, 57 %).

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the three data collection techniques—the

questionnaire, the interview as well as studying of feedback responses provided by the two interviewees for the students on their writing. Through the results gained from the survey, we mastered the participants' knowledge of providing feedback, their experience with receiving feedback, their training in as well as their confidence level with providing feedback. In addition, the amount of feedback, the WCF types, and the types of errors targeted by the participants and their teachers at university were also gained. The interview results allowed us to find out these two interviewees' experience with receiving feedback, the training they received concerning providing feedback, the challenges, troubles and struggles they encountered while teaching writing, and the techniques they reported to adopt while providing feedback. The third technique of collecting data indicated the feedback types the two interviewees mainly used as well as the error types they targeted.

The results from the three data collection techniques supplemented one another and provided data that one cannot find if only one technique was adopted. Data collecting technique two supplemented data collecting technique one in that the latter also found out the challenges, troubles and struggles the two interviewees encountered while teaching writing and providing feedback for their students. Comparing the results of data collection technique two and those of data collecting technique three, one found that discrepancy existed between the interviewees' perception and practice of providing feedback.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusion

Overview of the Study

One needs to understand teachers' cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) to properly understand teachers and their teaching practice (Borg, 2006). A teacher's cognition is not static (see Tsui's study, 1996; Min, 2013) and is influenced by multifold factors such as knowledge gained through life-long study, experience acquired through years of teaching (Junqueira & Kim, 2013). Moreover, "apprenticeship of observation" (Junqueira & Kim, 2013) and in-service training (Tsui, 1996, Montgomery & Baker, 2007) also play a vital role in changing a person's cognition and practice of providing feedback. To improve one's practice, a teacher's cognition needs to be nurtured constantly through studying consciously by herself/himself or being provided with opportunities to apprentice or to be trained. However, little is known about ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of providing feedback in Mainland China. A phenomenological study was undertaken to gain information on the abovementioned aspects of teachers' cognition and practice of providing feedback. The purpose of this study was to explore WCF from the perspective of teachers, to document and describe ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF, and to investigate the connection between their knowledge of and experience with WCF and use of it in the actual writing classes at a major university in Mainland China.

Three questions were targeted in this research:

1. *What knowledge of and experience with corrective feedback do teachers have?*
2. *How do they employ and adapt corrective feedback with ESL students in their*

classrooms?

3. *What is the connection between a teacher's knowledge of and experience with and the use of WCF?*

Three data collection techniques (the questionnaire with both close-ended questions and open-ended questions, the interviews, and studies of the feedback responses provided by the two interviewees on their students' writing) were adopted. The first data collection method, the questionnaire, was adopted to examine the knowledge of, experience with, and practice of corrective feedback and the connection between them. It was distributed to all ESL teachers during one of the faculty meetings held at the conference of School of Foreign Languages in September 2016. Of 120 ESL teachers to whom survey form was distributed, a total of 55 (45.8%) individuals consented to participate and answered the questionnaire at one time. The survey instrument consisted of two sections for a total of 25 items: six demographic items; 17 close-ended items related to ESL teachers' knowledge of WCF, previous experience of receiving WCF, and training and teaching experience of providing WCF; and two open-ended items on ESL teachers' reasons for adopting certain numbers of WCF types and opinions on feedback provided. The second data collection was two semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews of two ESL teachers who taught writing as a separate course during the fall semester of 2016. The data results not only provided more information on participants' knowledge of and experience with WCF, but also revealed how they perceived their employment and adaption of WCF with ESL students in their classrooms. The third data collection technique collected students' writing assignments with feedback responses provided by the two interviewees. Permission gained from both the teachers and their

students and data were collected in November 2016 and late February 2017 respectively. The data collected through techniques two and three also provided necessary data for finding out the connection between one's knowledge of and experience with and use of WCF. The results gained through these three data collection means supplemented one another and presented a more holistic view on ESL teachers' cognition and practice of WCF, more meaningful data that one technique alone cannot obtain.

This chapter presents first the outcomes obtained from each data collection technique and followed by the discussion of these results. Next, the limitations and the implications of this present research are discussed. Finally, it is the conclusion of the chapter.

Discussion of Findings

Summary and discussion of questionnaire findings. The following section includes summary of closed-ended question results, the discussion of the results, and summary of open-ended questions and its discussion.

Summary of closed-ended question results. The three subcategories of the questionnaire provide information on the participants' knowledge of WCF, their previous experience of receiving WCF in their university writing classes and their training and teaching experience of providing WCF on students' writing as well as how they were interrelated.

The results of the first subcategory of questionnaire show that ESL teachers' knowledge level of corrective feedback types(1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4 focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) was not very high, with 35 (64%) of the participants were familiar with one-to-three types while 20 (36%) participants who

were familiar with four-to-six types of corrective feedback. The resources used by the participants to learn these terms were limited: 45 (83%) participants acquired knowledge of these terms from one-to-two sources and only nine participants (17%) acquired knowledge of the terms from three to four sources. Despite the favorable opinions of the participants (n=33, 61%) on the articles published in academic journals concerning WCF, most participants read these articles only occasionally (n=33, 60%) or not at all (n=8, 14%) and a very limited number of the participants read them often (n=1, 2%) or sometimes (n=13, 24%).

The result of the second sub-category of the questionnaire indicated the ESL teachers' previous experience with receiving WCF. As to the amount of WCF that the participants received in their university writing classes, the participants reported different results: 22 (43%) reported that they received either a little or no feedback at all while 29 (57%) indicated that they received either a lot or some feedback. Twenty-seven participants (52%) said that their teachers of writing targeted either one error type or two error types and 25 (48%) indicated that their teachers targeted all the three types of errors (organizational, stylistic and linguistic). The participants' university teachers of English writing prioritized linguistic errors (n=23, 44%), followed by stylistic errors (n=17, 33%) and organizational errors (n=12, 23%). The WCF types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4. focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) those participants received were varied too: 31 (61%) received one to three types of feedback and 20 participants (39%) received four to five types of feedback. The order of WCF types that those participants preferred to receive differed, with direct feedback ranked first (n=21, 41%), followed by indirect feedback (n=14, 27%), reformulation (n=7, 14%),

metalinguistic (n=4, 8%), focused feedback (n=3, 6%), and electronic CF (n=2, 4%).

Despite the differences in type preference, the participants' reactions to the feedback received were favorable since as many as 45 participants (90%) took the feedback seriously or very seriously. Their attitudes toward the feedback received were favorable too: 49 (98%) participants thought the feedback they received was useful or very useful.

Finally, the third subcategory revealed ESL teachers' previous training and their teaching experience with providing WCF on students' writing. Although as many as 36 participants reported having taken courses related to grammar and usage when they were students, 29 participants (55%) thought that they were either not well trained or not trained at all pertaining to providing feedback for students. Despite the report that most participants (n=42) thought their confidence level with providing feedback for students was medium, as many as 39 participants provided either a lot (n=11, 21%) or some (n=28, 53%) feedback for their students. Compared with their university teachers of writing, more participants (n=38, 72%) targeted all three error types (organizational, stylistic and linguistic) and fewer participants (n=15, 28%) targeted either one error type or two error types. Differing from their teachers (n=23, 44%) who prioritized linguistic errors, the participants (n=22, 42%) prioritized organizational errors, followed by linguistic errors (n=19, 36%) and stylistic errors (n=12, 23%). They thought the feedback targeting linguistic errors was the most effective (n=20, 40%), while feedback dealing with stylistic errors ranked the second (n= 18, 35%) and feedback on organizational errors came last (n=13, 25%). The number of WCF types (1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4 focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation) the participants provided for students was different: 25 (48%) provided one-to-three types of feedback while 27 participants (52%)

provided four-to-six types of feedback. The order of WCF types that those participants preferred to provide differed too, with direct feedback ranking the first (n=26, 50%), followed by indirect feedback (n=16, 31%), metalinguistic feedback (n=4, 7%), electronic feedback (n=3, 6%), reformulation (n=2, 4%), and focused feedback (n=1, 2%).

Sorting the questionnaire result in terms of the same key terms such as WCF types, WCF amount, and opinions on WCF across the three subcategories of the close-ended question enabled us to see the connection among one's knowledge of, experience with WCF and their use of it.

Putting the three questions related with WCF types together (the types they were familiar with, the ones they received from their university teachers of writing, and the types they provided students with) reveal that differences existed among these three data sets. The WCF types participants received were fewer than those types they are familiar with, which in turn were fewer than the types they provided students with. It was understandable that differences existed between the WCF types participants were familiar with and the types they received from their university teachers of writing because other factors such as training and participants' self-study of the field could attribute to the difference. However, the discrepancy between the knowledge of WCF types and the WCF types the participants selected to provide for their students was a bit hard to explain. The probable reason for this discrepancy may result in participants interpreted the question as their willingness to provide for their students rather than their actual practice of providing feedback. The most obvious discrepancy lay in the fact that though only three participants indicated that they were familiar with all these six types of WCF, 14 participants reported that they adopted all six types of WCF in providing students with

feedback.

As to the rank order of the different types of feedback among the three questions—the types ESL teachers were familiar with, the ones they received and those they preferred to provide, there was minor difference. The rank order for the three feedback types that ESL teachers were most familiar with, received and provided were the same: direct feedback (n=42, 76%; n=47, 92%; n=46, 88%), indirect feedback (n=33, 60%; n=36, 71%; n=40, 77%) and metalinguistic feedback (n=29, 53%; n=25, 49%; n=30, 58%). However, a minor difference existed among the rank order of the other three WCF types participants were familiar with, received and provided. For participants' knowledge, the order was electronic (n= 21, 38%), followed by reformulation (n=20, 36%) and focus (n=12, 22%). For WCF types received, the order was reformulation (n=24, 47%), focus (n=14, 27%) and electronic (n=7, 14%). For practice of WCF, the order was reformulation (n=28, 54%), electronic (n=27, 52%) and focus (n=25, 48%).

There was little difference in the order of WCF that the participants preferred to receive and the order they preferred to provide. Three types of feedback increased in importance: direct feedback (21, 41% vs. 26, 50%), indirect feedback (14, 27% vs. 16, 31%) and electronic feedback (2, 4% vs. 3, 6%). Two types decreased in importance: focus of feedback (3, 6% vs. 1, 2%) and reformulation (7, 14% vs. 2, 4%) and one type remained the same: metalinguistic (4, 8% vs. 4, 8%). However, the two types of WCF that those participants preferred to receive and to provide most remained the same—direct feedback and indirect feedback.

The feedback amount provided by the participants' teachers and that of the participants themselves indicates that the participants provided more feedback than their

university teachers of writing. The category of “providing a lot feedback” and “providing some feedback” increased by 11% and 6% respectively while the category of “providing a little” and “providing no feedback” have both decreased by 8%.

Differences also existed between the types of errors addressed and the targeted priority of error types between the participants’ teachers of writing and the participants themselves. More participants (n=38, 72%) targeted three error types than their teachers (n=25, 48%) did and fewer participants (n=5, 9%; n=10,19%) targeted two error types or one error type than their teachers did (n=10,19%; n=17,33%). Changes also occurred in the targeting priority: more participants (n=22,42%) prioritized organizational errors than their teachers (n=12, 23%) did in the past. This change was understandable, since in recent years there has been a change in the teaching of writing—the focus has changed from product-oriented to process-oriented writing and teachers gave more priority to the organization of students’ writing. Despite the change in the targeting priority of error types, the participants still considered the most effective error type to treat was the linguistic error (n=20, 39%), followed by organizational errors (n=18,35%) and then stylistic errors (n=13, 26%).

Discussion of closed-ended question results. The result of the questionnaire indicated that the participants’ knowledge level of the feedback types(1 direct, 2 indirect, 3 metalinguistic, 4. focus of feedback, 5 electronic, and 6 reformulation), to some extent, was related to their previous experience with receiving feedback. Their knowledge level was not very high because they did not have rich experience with WCF—their exposure to the feedback types during their university study was moderate, their training pertaining to provide feedback was not adequate and their personal devotion to this specific field

was not sufficient. This corresponds with the findings gained by the other scholars (e.g., Tsui, 1996; Guénette & Lyster, 2013). The participant in Tsui's study was not satisfied with the way she was trained. Guénette and Lyster (2013) called for special training for teacher candidates in the area of providing WCF due to the novice teachers' lack of metalinguistic awareness of complex linguistic notions and lack of a full understanding of the proficiency levels of the students. Particular to this study, the participants' lack of devotion to study how to provide feedback was probably due to the fact that a large number of teachers (n=34) do not teach or have not taught writing as a separate course.

The results of the questionnaire also revealed the connection between the training one received and one's confidence level. That is, the training the participants received had some effect on the confidence level of participants' providing feedback. Three participants thought they were very well trained and their confidence level in providing feedback was high. This finding was similar to the findings done by Junqueira and Kim (2013) who discovered that the experienced teacher excelled in teacher-learner interactions, in the number of feedback types and in the balance across linguistic targets compared to the novice teacher.

On the other hand, participants' confidence level did not have much impact on their providing feedback for their students. Though only three participants reported to have high confidence level in providing feedback, 11 participants reported they provided a lot of feedback for students and 14 participants adopted all the six types of WCF to address students' writing. Moreover, as many as 38 participants reported their feedback targeted all three types of error types. That means participants' medium level of confidence was not directly related to the feedback types they provided, feedback amount

they offered and the error types they targeted. One of the possible explanations for this discrepancy may be that participants took feedback provided for their students as feedback they would like to provide for their students.

The questionnaire results, in terms of feedback types most frequently adopted by the participants and their teachers, remained the same—direct feedback and indirect feedback. The probable explanation for this phenomenon is that these two types were easier to provide and participants were more familiar with these two types of feedback since these two types had been studied the most often in the academic field (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Chandler, 2003; Chen & Li, 2009; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982; Robb et al., 1986; Semke, 1984; Van Beuningan, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2008, 2012; Zhang & Deng, 2009; Zhao, 2013; Zhang & Deng, 2009; Zhao, 2013).

Summary of the two open-ended results. The two open-ended questions of the questionnaire target the participant's reasons for providing certain feedback types for their students and their attitude towards the feedback provided. The results of the first open-ended question show the various types of feedback provided, reasons and the characteristic responses. The participants who provided all six types of feedback for the students with varying orders were for their feasibility and effectiveness in improving students' writing. Feedback was provided in line with the mistakes students made and with students' level as well as with the course's objectives. Feedback was also used to motivate students to consider the mistakes by themselves and to learn autonomously.

The participants who provided five different types of feedback for their students indicate that WCF should be vivid and clear, and teachers should "take care of" students' feelings; WCF should be direct, effective, useful and welcomed, and WCF should

encourage students to review and revise their writings independently.

The reasons for participants provided four types of feedback are that feedback is useful, convenient and effective and can be used to help students find their mistakes, improve their writing skills, motivate them in an encouraging manner, and elicit answers from students.

Participants provided three types of feedback for knowing what to do and they focused on ideas rather than on form by providing unfocused feedback, electronic feedback and reformulation. Students can know their mistakes and know how to correct them. Those provided direct and indirect feedback types of feedback because students reacted positively and received these feedback types well. The two participants who offered unfocused feedback indicated that they were familiar with that form.

The other open-ended question reveals participants' attitude towards feedback provided. Their opinions differ from each other and there were two views—positive and negative. Those who thought favorably about feedback provided indicated that feedback was necessary and could foster students' correct habits of thinking and studying. Those who held negative opinions thought that the feedback was not so effective since the students' errors were almost crystallized during the stage of tertiary education and the feedback provided tended to be unsystematic and uninformed.

Discussion of the two open-ended results. Answers to these two open-ended questions reveal that ESL teachers not only adopted varying numbers of feedback types but also were for different reasons. ESL teachers' attitudes about the feedback provided for their students on their papers vary. This finding echoed the findings in the studies of many scholars in history who held different views toward the effect of CF. Those who

held positive views (just like the participants from the study done by Jodaie and Farrokhi in 2012) toward feedback echoed those scholars who found a favorable effect of CF in their studies (Chandler, 2000; Ferris, 1995, 1997, 2006; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts & McKee, 2000). However, those participants who thought negatively about CF were in agreement with the scholars who had found unfavorable results of feedback provided (Kepner, 1991; Polio, Fleck & Leder, 1998; Robb, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984; Sheppard, 1992).

Summary of the interview findings. The interviews of the two teachers who were teaching writing as a separate course during the Fall semester of 2016 indicated that they differed from each other in almost every aspect—their students, their experience in teaching writing, their perception of receiving feedback from their university English writing teachers, their training experience and their practice in providing feedback for their students as well as their struggles, troubles and challenges.

Interviewee One was teaching sophomores who were English majors while Interviewee Two was teaching non-English major postgraduates. It was the first time for Interviewee One to teach writing as a separate course while Interviewee Two has been teaching writing for five years. Interviewee One's previous learning experience with writing offered her little help because she could not remember ever taking a writing course at all, let alone her memory of receiving feedback from her teacher. The feedback she received during her postgraduate study was not very helpful either because the feedback was only one or two general comments on the idea of the weekly papers. Interviewee Two could recall receiving two forms of feedback from his university teacher of writing—oral feedback during the class time and WCF (mainly targeting linguistic

errors) on students' papers. These two forms of feedback were also the main feedback types that Interviewee Two himself adopted during his practice in providing feedback.

Neither Interviewee One nor Interviewee Two received any specific training in how to teach writing as a separate course. Nor did they attend seminars, conferences, or workshops on writing since Interviewee One used to teach English pedagogy instead of writing, and Interviewee Two has been teaching non-English postgraduates. These two interviewees adopted different means to deal with this issue of lack of training.

Interviewee One chose to listen and to observe the writing class of an experienced foreign teacher of writing. At the same time, she began to consciously read materials (reference books and articles) on writing. She adopted the process approach to writing by stressing the combination of reading and writing. Students' reading task was the textbook and the articles recommended by the teacher as well as students' writings that included personal writing, academic response journal entries, and two essays. She intended to provide feedback on all the journal responses written by the students and would focus her feedback on the organization and structure of the journals. Interviewee Two did not have a teacher of writing to shadow and he could only depend on himself when designing and planning how to teach writing. The textbook *Postgraduate English Writing* was used and the teaching focused on the discourse (paragraphs, the structure of the paper and the coherence of the paper) and practical writing (e.g., letters, resume). The writing tasks were two to three assignments completed each semester and the writing was mainly a one-draft assignment rather than writing as a process. The teacher provided two forms of feedback—oral feedback as well as WCF. The feedback he preferred to focus was on the paper's organization and the structure of paragraphs rather than on linguistic errors since

he thought that the postgraduate level of writing should focus on the organization and structure, and the lower level of study needed to focus on the linguistic errors.

Both teachers encountered struggles, troubles, and challenges when teaching writing (similar to the finding of Guénette & Lyster, 2013), but their challenges differed. Interviewee One had a lot of struggles over how to teach, how to organize the class, and how to provide feedback on students' writing assignments since this was the first time she was teaching writing. Interviewee Two encountered challenges due to the large number of students he taught each semester, the students' lack of competence, and their low motivation. Neither of the two interviewees had one-on-one conferences with students. Interviewee One held office hours but no students went to her office to seek advice. For Interviewee Two, there were no office hours offered, but students generally sought consultation through the software "*wechat*" instead of face-to-face consultations.

Discussion of the interview findings. The interview findings reveal that the teachers who taught writing to different student groups differed from each other in almost every way. However, out of all the differences, it was still possible to discover an internal connection between a participant's previous experience with receiving feedback and their practice of providing feedback. Interviewee One could not recall receiving feedback from her university writing class, so she struggled and had many challenges related to providing feedback for students. She tended to follow the way that the foreign teacher of writing adopted when providing feedback. On the other hand, Interviewee Two provided feedback in the same method his university writing teacher used—oral metalinguistic feedback during class and WCF on students' assignments. Though there was a minor difference in their focus—the participants' teacher focused on students' linguistic errors

while the participant reported to emphasize organizational errors and structural errors. The two provided almost the same types of feedback for their students, for Interviewee, the types were direct feedback, indirect feedback and reformulation; for Interviewee Two, the types were direct, indirect and metalinguistic feedback.

The other important thing learned from the interview data was the importance of “shadowing”. Interviewee One benefited greatly from listening and observing the writing class of the experienced foreign teacher. Based on her listening and observing, she not only gained insight into how to organize the class, how to check students’ reading of assignments, how to supervise group discussion, how to provide students with feedback, how to best combine writing with reading and how she could adapt these strategies to improve her teaching and achieve success. The above two findings echoed the results gained by Junqueira and Kim (2013): the “apprenticeship of observation”, instead of teaching experience and training, seemed to have a greater influence on both teachers’ belief systems.

The third finding from the interview data was that onsite training for teachers who started to teach a new subject was lacking. Teachers could only draw on their previous experience, their recollections of taking the class when they were students, or finding a teacher to shadow if there was an experienced teacher who was teaching the same subject. Otherwise, the teachers could only explore by themselves—through reading related articles or through several rounds of teaching the same subject. The institute did not invest much in providing related workshops to equip the teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach the subject.

Summary of findings of feedback responses. An examination of the feedback

responses on students' papers and journal entries provided by the two interviewees revealed the amount and feedback types they offered as well as the errors they targeted. Interviewee One provided 120 responses on her 40 English major sophomores' journal entries, out of which focused feedback accounted for 45 (37.5%) while unfocused feedback 75 (62.5%). Focused feedback could be further separated into direct feedback (n=9; 7.5%), indirect feedback (n=27; 22.5%) and reformulation (n=9; 7.5%). Unfocused feedback (n=75; 62.5%) could be classified into categories such as calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=29; 24.2%), providing general comments on students' effort (n=2, 1.6%) and on the different aspects of the journal writing (n=42; 35.1%); and asking/pointing out the questions concerning the paper (n=2; 1.6%). The error types targeted included organizational errors (OE, n=59, 50 %), stylistic errors (SE, n= 30, 25%) and linguistic errors (LE, n=29, 24 %). Besides these error types, the interviewee also targeted the students' attitude toward writing this journal entry (n=2, 2%).

Interviewee Two provided 216 responses on the 28 postgraduates' papers, out of which, focused feedback accounted for 85% (n=185) and unfocused feedback 15% (n=31). Focused feedback could be further classified into direct feedback (n=103; 48%), indirect feedback (n=44; 20 %) and metalinguistic feedback (n=38, 18%). Unfocused feedback (n=31; 15%) could also be separated into three categories: calling students' attention to different aspects of the paper (n=15; 7%), general comments on the paper itself (n=13; 6%), and questions on the paper (n=3; 2%). The error types incorporated organizational errors (n=18, 8%), stylistic errors (n=75, 35%) as well as linguistic errors (n=123, 57 %).

Discussion of the findings of feedback responses. Studying the feedback responses on students' paper provided by both interviewees reveals that the two participants provided a large amount of feedback targeting different types of errors. This finding was similar to the finding obtained by the study done by Jodaie and Farrokhi (2012), in which the EFL teachers marked grammatical errors in a comprehensive manner. A closer examination of the findings reveals that there was no consistency among the feedback types adopted to target the error types. For example, the most commonly occurring error on the sophomores' journal entries was the proper usage of words; however, in targeting this error, Interviewee One adopted direct feedback, indirect feedback, and calling students' attention to it. As to the student papers of Interviewee Two's, the most commonly occurring linguistic error was the usage of past tense, and the participant also adopted direct feedback, indirect feedback and calling students to pay attention to tense.

A difference also existed between the two interviewees in terms of feedback amount, feedback types and targeting priority. Interviewee One provided fewer feedback responses for her students than Interviewee Two did, the former provided 120 responses on 40 students' journals while the latter provided 216 responses on 28 students' papers. A probable explanation for this difference is that Interviewee One provided feedback on students' journal entries instead of essays. The other reason is that Interviewee One focused more on organizational errors while Interviewee Two targeted linguistic errors most often. The other difference was the feedback types they adopted, in addition to direct and indirect feedback, Interviewee One used reformulation while Interviewee Two adopted metalinguistic feedback. The third difference was the targeted priority,

Interviewee One prioritized organizational errors (n=59, 50 %) while Interviewee Two linguistic errors (n=123, 57%).

Summary and discussion of finding integration of data collection technique

II & III. Integrating the data collected by technique two and technique three reveals that inconsistency existed between the participants' perception of providing students with feedback and the real practice of doing it. During the interview, Interviewee One reported that she intended to provide general feedback on each journal entry with different foci, but her real practice was to provide feedback on only one entry in detail due to the limitation of time and energy. She believed that the feedback type she adopted was mainly indirect feedback. However, a closer study of her feedback types indicated there was also direct feedback as well as reformulation. On the other hand, Interviewee Two reported he focused on the organizational errors since this was the postgraduate level of teaching writing. However, based on the feedback data collected from students' papers, it was noted that he devoted a great deal of his energy dealing with the other two error types—linguistic errors (62%) and stylistic errors (30%) as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that difference existed between the teacher's perception of providing feedback and the real practice of it. Scholars Junqueira and Payant (2015) and Lee (1998, 2009) documented similar findings in the gap between teachers' belief and practice.

Limitations of the Study and Means to Rectify

Despite the findings obtained in this study on the three questions related to ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with feedback, the limitations of the study still existed. First, the questionnaire sampling from only one university is too small, which limits an overall generalization of the participants' knowledge of and experience with

WCF. Future studies could expand the target population to include ESL teachers from different levels of teaching and different regions of China. Second, though the present study adopted a triangulated measure to examine the present status of the perception and practice of providing feedback, the design of the questionnaire could still be adjusted to improve its reliability and validity. For example, there was no unified measurement scale. For most questions, four measuring scales were adopted except for two questions (three measuring scales were used for the question on the participants' level of confidence in providing feedback, and five measuring scales were applied for the question on the frequency of reading academic journals). In the future study, an attempt could be made to unify the measuring scales.

The types of WCF adopted in this present study could be further improved by separating the choices listed under the terms metalinguistic CF and focus of CF. Instead of bracketing (3a. use of error code; 3b. brief grammatical descriptions) after the term metalinguistic CF, they could be listed separately such as:

3a. Metalinguistic CF—use of error code

3b. Metalinguistic CF-brief grammatical descriptions

In this way, the participants won't simply tick metalinguistic feedback without looking at the other two specific choices incorporated in it. It would ease the data analysis process. Third, due to the present design of the questionnaire, the data could only be presented as descriptive statistics. The data was entered and categorized through using key terms. It was hard to run correlation tests between a person's knowledge of WCF types and his/her previous reception of WCF types or the correlation test between his/her receiving of feedback types and his/her providing of WCF types through the SPSS

software.

Implications

Despite these limitations, the present study still contains research, practice, education, and training implications. This present study focuses on studying WCF from the perspective of teachers, which contributed a new literature to the present WCF literature that targeted teachers in Mainland China. Moreover, it is the first study that targets teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of WCF. However, the present study only chooses the ESL teachers from a university in the northeastern part of China as its participant sampling. There are still a lot of other groups of ESL teachers—such as primary school ESL teachers or secondary school ESL teachers—whose knowledge and practice of WCF need to be explored since English writing has increased its prominence in English. To master these teachers' experience with, knowledge of, training in and practice of WCF may help the administrators know the current practice of providing WCF and take actions to maintain or improve it. ESL teachers of the tertiary level from other areas of Mainland China could also serve as valuable study subjects to discover whether differences exist among teachers from different regions in terms of their perception and knowledge of WCF. They could be offered with the opportunity to communicate with and learn from each other.

The present study can offer valuable suggestions about the practice of providing WCF. Through this present study, insights were gained into two writing teachers' knowledge, perception and practice of providing feedback that enabled them to realize the differences existing between their perceptions and their practice as well as their lack of a unified means of providing feedback. With this knowledge in mind, the teachers can

further improve their approaches to providing feedback and improve its efficiency as well as efficacy through systematically experimenting with the types of feedback in targeting the specific error types. This improvement will not only save teachers' time and energy in providing feedback in the long run, but also benefit students in the more effective interaction through the means of WCF. This study can also shed light on other teachers who can examine their practice of providing feedback to see their own strength and weaknesses and then make changes to provide feedback more efficiently and effectively.

The present study offers valuable insights into the education of the teaching of writing as well as the training of writing teachers. As can be seen from the study results, most participants' confidence level in providing feedback was medium because they were not very well trained in this aspect and their previous experience with receiving feedback from their university writing teachers was minimal, which offered little help. If the university invests more in training the present teachers of writing who in turn influence their students—who are future teachers of English, then the future teachers will do a better job in providing their students with effective feedback to help those students with writing. If the ESL teachers of English were offered more onsite training opportunities, their overall ability would be heightened, which in turn will improve their confidence level and their teaching efficacy.

Conclusion

Teachers' cognition (e.g., teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs) needs to be probed to properly understand teachers and their teaching (Borg, 2006). Given the vital role of feedback as a means of interaction between a teacher and a student about the students' writing as well as its effect in providing room for all students to further improve

their writing, ESL teachers' cognition and practice of providing feedback should also be studied and documented. With necessary information concerning ESL teachers' knowledge of and experience with WCF in hand, ESL preparation institutions can take actions to improve teachers' competence in providing feedback for students.

This study explores and describes the current state of ESL teachers' knowledge of, experience with, training in and practice of WCF. Although findings suggest that ESL teachers possessed certain knowledge concerning WCF and provided different varying numbers of feedback types to target different error types, most teachers were not very well trained or had been provided with opportunities to be equipped with necessary skills or further improve their cognition and practice of providing feedback. Therefore, it is imperative that administrators explore multiple means and strategies that help equip the teachers of writing to teach and provide feedback in a more effective and efficient manner. This study also demonstrated that ESL teachers of writing need to shadow experienced teachers of writing and be offered constant onsite training opportunities (e.g., seminars, conferences) to improve a teacher's competence in a comprehensive manner. Teachers' challenges need to be taken into consideration and actions to be taken to help resolve these challenges. The future of providing WCF on writing is dependent upon a workforce that excels in feedback cognition and practice in Mainland China.

References

- Ashwell, T. (2000). Patterns of teacher response to student writing in a multi-draft composition classroom: Is content feedback followed by form feedback the best method? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9 (3), 227-257.
- Baker, A., & Murphy, J. (2011). Knowledge Base of Pronunciation Teaching: Staking out the Territory. *TESL Canada Journal*, 28(2), 29-50.
- Bartels, N. (2005). *Researching applied linguistics in language teacher education*. In N. Bartels (Ed.), *Applied linguistics in language teacher education* (pp. 1-26). New York: NY. Springer.
- Bitchener, J. (2008). Evidence in support of written CF. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17, 102–118.
- Bitchener, J. (2012). A reflection on ‘the language learning potential’ of written CF. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 21, 348–363
- Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. R. (2012). *Written CF in second language acquisition and writing*. New York: Routledge.
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2008). The value of written CF for migrant and international students. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 409–431.
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010a). The contribution of written CF to language development: A ten-month investigation. *Applied Linguistics*, 31, 193–214.
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010b). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written CF. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 19, 207–217.

- Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). The effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14*, 191–205.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition in language education: Research and Practice*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Brown, J. D. (2001). *Using surveys in language programs*. Cambridge University Press.
- Burns, N., & Grove, S.k. (1987). *The practice of research, conduct, critique, and utilization*. Philadelphia: Saunders.
- Cao, P. (2006). *Insights into corrective feedback*. MA thesis, Leiden University
- Chandler, J. (2000, March). *The efficacy of error correction for improvement in the accuracy of L2 student writing*. Paper presented at the AAAL conference.
- Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 12*, 267–96.
- Chaudron, C. (1988). *Second language classrooms: Research on teaching and learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, A. (1989). Reformulation: A technique for providing advanced feedback in writing. *Guidelines, 11*(2), 1–9.
- Cohen, A. D., & Cavalcanti, M. C. (1990). Feedback on compositions: Teacher and student verbal reports. *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom, 155-177*.
- Cormack, D.D. (1991). *The research process*. Black Scientific:Oxford.

- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Diab, R.L. (2005a). EFL university students' preferences for error correction and teacher feedback on writing. *TESL Reporter*, 38, 27–51.
- Diab, R. L. (2005b). Teachers' and students' beliefs about responding to ESL writing: A case study. *TESL Canada Journal*, 23(1), 28-43.
- Dornyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: construction, administration and processing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Ellis, R. (2009). A typology of written CF types. *ELT Journal*, 63(2), 97- 107.
- Ellis, R., Sheen, Y., Murakami, M., & Takashima, H. (2008). The effects of focused and unfocused written CF in an English as a foreign language context. *System*, 36, 353–371.
- Enginarlar, H. (1993). Student response to teacher feedback in EFL writing. *System*, 21(2), 193-204.
- Fathman, A., & Whalley, E. (1990). Teacher response to student writing: Focus on form versus content. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 178-190). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferris, D.R. (1995a). Can advanced ESL students be taught to correct their most serious and frequent errors? *CATESOL Journal*, 8, 41-62.
- Ferris, D. R. (1995b). Student reactions to teacher response in multiple - draft composition classrooms. *TESOL quarterly*, 29(1), 33-53.

- Ferris, D.R. (1997). The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31, 315-339.
- Ferris, D.R. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes. A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 1-10.
- Ferris, D.R. (2006). Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the short- and long-term effects of written error correction. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Perspectives on response*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferris, D. (2007). Preparing teachers to respond to student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(3), 165-193.
- Ferris, D. R. (2014). Responding to student writing: Teachers' philosophies and practices. *Assessing Writing*, 19, 6-23.
- Ferris, D., Brown, J., Liu, H. S., & Stine, M. E. A. (2011). Responding to L2 students in college writing classes: Teacher perspectives. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(2), 207-234.
- Ferris, D. R., & Helt, M. (2000, March). *Was Truscott right? New evidence on the effects of error correction in L2 writing classes*. Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference, March 11-14, 2000, Vancouver, B. C.
- Ferris, D.R., Chaney, S.J., Komura, K., Roberts, B.J., & McKee, S. (2000, March). *Perspectives, problems, and practices in treating written error*. Colloquium presented at International TESOL Convention, March 14-18, 2000, Vancouver, B.C.
- Ferris, D. R. and Roberts, B.(2001). 'Error feedback in L2 writing classes: How explicit does it need to be?'. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10, 161-84.

- Fitzpatrick, J. L., Sanders, J. R., & Worthen, B. R. (2004). *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines*.
- Frantzen, D. (1995). The effects of grammar supplementation on written accuracy in an intermediate Spanish content course. *Modern Language Journal*, 79(3), 329–344.
- Furneaux, C., Paran, A., & Fairfax, B. (2007). Teacher stance as reflected in feedback on student writing: An empirical study of secondary school teachers in five countries. *IRAL-International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 45(1), 69-94.
- Given, L & Schallert, D. (2008). Meeting in the margins: effects of the teacher-student relationship on revision processes of EFL college students taking a composition course. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17, 165-182.
- Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967). *Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*, New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Guénette, D. (2007). Is feedback pedagogically correct? Research design issues in studies of feedback on writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16, 40–53.
- Guénette, D., & Lyster, R. (2013). Written corrective feedback and its challenges for preservice ESL teachers. *Canadian modern language review*, 69(2), 129-153.
- Hedgcock, J., & Lefkowitz, N. (1996). Some input on input: Two analyses of student response to expert feedback in L2 writing. *Modern Language Journal*, 287-308.
- Hycner, R. H. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human studies*, 8(3), 279-303.
- Hyland, F. (1998). The impact of teacher written feedback on individual writers. *Journal of second language writing*, 7(3), 255-286.

- Hyland, F. (2003). Focusing on form: student engagement with teacher feedback. *System*, 31(2), 217-230.
- Hyland, K. (2013). Student perceptions of hidden messages in teacher written feedback. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 39(3), 180-187.
- Hyland, K., & Anan, E. (2006). Teachers' perceptions of error: The effects of first language and experience. *System*, 34(4), 509-519.
- Jodaie, M., & Farrokhi, F. (2012). An Exploration of Private Language Institute Teachers' Perceptions of Written Grammar Feedback in EFL Classes. *English Language Teaching*, 5(2), 58.
- Junqueira, L., & Kim, Y. (2013). Exploring the relationship between training, beliefs, and teachers' corrective feedback practices: A case study of a novice and an experienced ESL teacher. *Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 69(2), 181-206.
- Junqueira, L., & Payant, C. (2015). "I just want to do it right, but it's so hard": A novice teacher's written feedback beliefs and practices. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 27, 19-36.
- Kepner, C.G. (1991). An experiment in the relationship of types of written feedback to the development of second-language writing skills. *Modern Language Journal*, 75, 305-313.
- Krueger, R.A. & Casey, M.A. (2009). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. (4th Ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Lalande, J. F. (1982). Reducing composition errors: An experiment. *Modern Language Journal*, 66, 140-149.

- Lee, I. (1998). Writing in the Hong Kong Secondary Classroom: Teachers' Beliefs and Practices. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 61-75.
- Lee, I. (2003). L2 writing teachers' perspectives, practices and problems regarding error feedback. *Assessing Writing*, 8(3), 216-237.
- Lee, I. (2008). Understanding teachers' written feedback practices in Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17(2), 69-85.
- Lee, I. (2009). Ten mismatches between teachers' beliefs and written feedback practice. *ELT journal*, 63(1), 13-22.
- Leki, I. (1991). The preferences of ESL students for error correction in college - level writing classes. *Foreign language annals*, 24(3), 203-218.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Long, M. (1996). The role of linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & B. K. Bahtia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413-468). New York: Academic Press.
- Lyster, R., & Saito, K. (2010). Oral feedback in classroom SLA: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 32(2), 265-302.
- Mackey, A., & Goo, J. (2007). Interaction research in SLA: A meta-analysis and research synthesis. In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition: A series of empirical studies* (pp. 407-452). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCurdy, P. (1992, March). *What students do with composition feedback*. Paper presented at the 27th Annual TESOL Convention, Vancouver, B.C.

- Milton, J. (2006). Resource-rich Web-based feedback: Helping learners become independent writers. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (eds.). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Min, H. T. (2013). A case study of an EFL writing teacher's belief and practice about written feedback. *System*, 41(3), 625-638.
- Montgomery, J. L., & Baker, W. (2007). Teacher written feedback: Student perceptions, teacher self assessment, and actual teacher performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(2), 82-99.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Polio, C. (2012). The relevance of second language acquisition theory to the written error correction debate. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 21(4), 375-389.
- Polio, C., & Fleck, C. (1998). "If I only had more time:" ESL learners' changes in linguistic accuracy on essay revisions. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7(1), 43-68.
- Polio, C., Fleck, C., & Leder, N. (1998). "If only I had more time:" ESL learners' changes in linguistic accuracy on essay revisions. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7(1), 43-68.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1989). Phenomenological research methods. In *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology* (pp. 41-60). Springer US.
- Radecki, P., & Swales, J. (1988). ESL student reaction to written comments on their written work. *System*, 16, 355-365.

- Rashid, M & Bappi, O.C. (2013). *Advantage and disadvantage of interview*. Retrieved from <https://thebusinesscommunication.com/advantage-and-disadvantage-of-interview/>
- Reid, J. (1998). “Eye” learners and “ear” learners: Identifying the language needs of international students and U.S. resident writers. In P. Byrd & J. M. Reid (Eds.), *Grammar in the composition classroom: Essays on teaching ESL for college-bound students* (pp.3–17). Boston: Heinle & Heinle
- Rennie, C. E. (2000). *Error Feedback in ESL writing classes: what do students really want?* Sacramento: California State University.
- Robb, T., Ross, S., & Shortreed, I. (1986). Salience of feedback on error and its effect on EFL writing quality. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(1), 83-96.
- Roberts, B. (1999). *Can error logs raise more than consciousness? The effects of error logs and grammar feedback on ESL students' final drafts*. Unpublished master's thesis, California State University, Sacramento.
- Sachs, R. & Polio. C. (2007). Learners' use of two types of written feedback on an L2 writing task. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 29, 67–100.
- Saito, H. (1994). Teachers' practices and students' preferences for feedback on second language writing: A case study of adult ESL learners. *TESL Canada Journal*, 11(2), 46-70.
- Schachter, J. (1991). Corrective feedback in historical perspective. *Second Language Research*, 7, 89-102.

- Schulz, R. A. (1996). Focus on form in the foreign language classroom: Students' and teachers' views on error correction and the role of grammar. *Foreign Language Annals*, 29(3), 343-364.
- Schulz, R. A. (2001). Cultural differences in student and teacher perceptions concerning the role of grammar instruction and corrective feedback: USA-Colombia. *Modern Language Journal*, 85(2), 244-258.
- Semke, H. D. (1984). Effects of the red pen. *Foreign Language Annals*, 17(3), 195-202.
- Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written CF and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 255–83.
- Sheen, Y., Wright, D., & Moldawa, A. (2009). Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. *System*, 37, 353 – 371.
- Sheppard, K. (1992). Two feedback types: Do they make a difference?. *RELC journal*, 23(1), 103-110.
- Shiou-Wen Yeh, Jia-Jiunn Lo. (2008). Using online annotations to support error correction and corrective feedback. *Computers & Education*, 52, 882-892
- Storch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2010). Learners' processing, uptake, and retention of corrective feedback on writing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 32(02), 303-334.
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools*. New York: Falmer.
- Tesch, R. (1988). *The contribution of a qualitative method: Phenomenological research*. Unpublished manuscript, Qualitative Research Management, Santa Barbara, CA.

- Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning, 46*, 327–69.
- Truscott, J. (2004). Evidence and conjecture on the effects of correction: A response to Chandler. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13* (4), 337-343.
- Truscott, J., & Hsu, A. Y. P. (2008). Error correction, revision, and learning. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*(4), 292-305.
- Tsui, A. B. (1996). Learning how to teach ESL writing. *Teacher learning in language teaching, 97*.
- van Beuningen, C., de Jong, N. H., & Kuiken, F. (2008). The effect of direct and indirect corrective feedback on L2 learners' written accuracy. *ITL International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 156*, 279–296.
- van Beuningen, C., de Jong, N. H., & Kuiken, F. (2012). Evidence on the effectiveness of comprehensive error correction in Dutch multilingual classroom. *Language Learning, 62*, 1–41.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experiences: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ontario, Canada: The University of Western Ontario.
- Xu, C. (2009). Overgeneralization from a narrow focus: A response to Ellis et al.(2008) and Bitchener (2008). *Journal of Second Language Writing, 18*(4), 270-275.
- Bei, X. (2009). The efficacy of writing tasks and influence of teacher feedback on the writing quality and fluency of students with different proficiency. *Modern Foreign Languages, 32*(4): 389-398.

- 贝晓越. (2009). 写作任务的练习效应和教师反馈对不同外语水平学生写作质量和流利度的影响 [J]. 现代外语, 32(4): 389-398.
- Cai, J. (2011). A Contrastive study of online peer feedback and online teacher feedback in teaching English writing to college students. *Foreign Language World*, 143(2), 65-72.
- 蔡基刚. (2011). 中国大学生英语写作在线同伴反馈和教师反馈对比研究 [J]. 外语界, 143(2), 65-72.
- Chen, X. & Li, H. (2009). The effects of teachers' written corrective feedback on English writing. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (5):351-358.
- 陈晓湘、李会娜. (2009). 教师书面修正性反馈对学生英语写作的影响[J]. 外语教学与研究, (5):351-358.
- Chen, X., Peng, L., Guo, X. Zhang, J. & Liu, X. (2013). The influence of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback on the acquisition of English subjunctive conditional. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (2):31-40.
- 陈晓湘、彭丽娜、郭兴荣、张姣、刘星. (2013). 聚焦和非聚焦书面反馈对英语非真实条件虚拟语气习得的影响[J]. 外语与外语教学, (2):31-40.
- Duan, Y. (2011). *The empirical study of the efficacy of teacher feedback on non-English major students' English writing*. Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications.
- 段亚楠. (2011). 教师书面纠正性反馈对非英语专业大学生英语写作的有效性研究. 北京邮电大学.
- Fan, R. (2015). A Review of studies of L2 written corrective feedback in China. *Crazy English (Teachers)*, 1(2):58-61.
- 樊永美. (2015). 国内二语写作书面纠正性反馈研究述评. 疯狂英语教师版. 1(2):58-61.

- Ge, L. (2011). On the effects of feedback from teacher assessment and peer assessment in English writing. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal*, (3).
- 葛丽芳. (2011). 英语写作中教师评语及同伴互评的反馈效果研究. [J]. 山东外语教学, (3).
- Guo, C. & Qin, X. (2006). A review of written corrective feedback on ESL students abroad—their research perspective and its inspiration toward college English writing correction. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*. (5):59-63
- 郭翠红、秦晓晴. (2006). 国外二语学习者书面反馈研究——研究的视角及对大学英语作文评改的启示[J]. 解放军外国语学院学报, (5):59-63.
- Guo, S. (2009). A review of China's second language writing research in the past 18 years (1991-2008). *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal* (5): 38- 41.
- 郭姗姗. (2009). 国内二语写作研究 18 年述评(1991- 2008). [J]. 山东外语教学, (5): 38- 41
- Han, C.(2010). *The influence of different kinds of teacher feedback on Chinese college students' writing accuracy and complexity*. Lanzhou University
- 韩翠英. (2010). 不同的教师书面反馈方式对中国大学生英语写作准确性和复杂性的影响. [D]. 兰州大学.
- Hu, M. (2011). *The impact of different types of teacher feedback on English writing*. Lanzhou University.
- 胡梦蓉. (2011). 不同的教师反馈方式对英语写作的影响. [D]. 兰州大学.
- Hu, Y. (2007). *The empirical study of teacher feedback on non-English major students' English writing*. Huazhong University of Science and Technology.
- 胡颖. (2007). 教师反馈对中国非英语专业学生英语写作作用的实证研究. [D]. 华中科技大学.

- Ji, L. (2011). *Study on the effectiveness of English writing feedback modes*. Shanghai International Studies University.
- 吉乐. (2011). 英语写作反馈模式的效能评估研究 [D]. 上海外国语大学.
- Jiang, L, & Chen, J. (2013). Written corrective feedback and second language acquisition—an empirical study on English noun phrases. *Contemporary Foreign Languages Studies*,(11).
- 姜琳、陈锦. (2013). 书面纠正性反馈与二语习得——针对英语类指名词短语用法的实证研究[J]. 当代外语研究, (11).
- Jiang, L, & Chen, J. (2014). The influence of written corrective feedback on the development of explicit and implicit knowledge of English articles. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*, (6):48-56.
- 姜琳、陈锦. (2014). 书面纠正性反馈对英语冠词显性、隐性知识发展的作用 [J]. 解放军外国语学院学报, (6) :48-56.
- Jiang, X & Zeng, L (2011). The efficacy of college English teacher written corrective feedback—an empirical study with a new perspective. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*,(4):56-61.
- 蒋霞、曾路. (2011). 大学英语教师书面反馈作业行为的效率——新视角下的实证研究[J]. 山东外语教学, (4) :56-61.
- Li, J. (2011). A case study of the characteristics of teacher written corrective feedback and students' reaction in Chinese students' English writing. *Foreign Language World*, (6):30-39.
- 李竞. (2011). 中国学生英语写作中教师书面反馈特征与学生反应的案例研究[J]. 外语界, (6) :30-39.

- Li, J. (2013). A case study of the effect of corrective feedback on the writing level of the University Students. *Foreign Language World*, (2):87-96.
- 李竞. (2013). 英语写作教学中教师书面反馈效果的案例研究. [J]. 外语界, (2):87-96.
- Liu, D.(2013). *Study of the effectiveness of Sino-Chinese teacher written corrective feedback in improving non-English students' writing*. Shanghai International Studies University.
- 刘丹. (2013). 中外教师书面反馈对提高非英语专业大学生英语写作的有效性研究. [D]上海外国语大学.
- Liu, P. (2009). *Teacher written corrective feedback on non-English major students' writing*. Northwest Normal University.
- 刘鹏. (2009). 教师的书面反馈对非英语专业大学生英语写作的影响. [D]. 西北师范大学
- Lv, M. (2013). *Influence of peer feedback on the writing of students with different proficiency*. [D]. Hubei University.
- 吕萌萌. (2013). 同伴反馈对不同水平大学生英语写作的影响. [D]. 湖北大学.
- Ma, R. (2014). A review of feedback in ESL writing at home and abroad. *Journal of Changchun Education Institute*, (5): 108-128.
- 马蓉. (2014). 国内外二语写作教学中的反馈研究 [J] . 长春教育学院学报, (5):108-128
- Meng X. (2009). Study of peer feedback in English writing. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*, (4):59-62.

- 孟晓. (2009). 同伴反馈在英语写作教学中的应用研究[J]. 山东外语教学, (4):59-62.
- Peng, Y (2014). A Review of studies of L2 written corrective feedback in the past ten years in China. *Jiangxi Normal University*, (2): 138.
- 彭玉娜. (2014). 国内近十年二语写作书面反馈研究之述评 [J] . 江西师范大学, (2): 138
- Qi, Y. (2004). The Role of Feedback in English Teaching of Writing -- Study on English Major Thesis. *Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice*, (1):47-53.
- 戚炎. (2004). 反馈在英语写作教学中的作用——英语专业议论文写作研究 [J]. 国外外语教学, (1):47-53.
- Qin, C. & Guo, Y. (2010). *A review of teacher feedback and peer feedback in English writing*. *Journal of Basic English Education*, 12(1):3-8.
- 覃成强, 郭映红. (2010). 英语写作教学中教师反馈与同辈反馈研究述评. [J]. 山东师范大学外国语学院学报(基础英语教育), 12(1): 3-8.
- Qiu, Z. (1997). *Corrective feedback in EFL teaching—learners' views and requirement*. *Foreign Language World*, (2):41-45
- 邱兆杰. (1997). EFL 教学中的纠错问题——学习者的看法和要求 [J]. 外语界, (2):41-45
- Rong, H. (2009). *Feedback on feedback: a survey research on teacher feedback in college English writing*. Shanghai International Studies University.
- 戎宏斌. (2009). 反馈之反馈:一项针对大学英语写作教学中的教师反馈的调查研究. [D]. 上海外国语大学.

- Shi, L (2014). *Study on the influence of different types of corrective feedback on students with different proficiency in college English and its strategy*. Xi'an International Studies University.
- 石乐. (2014). 大学英语课堂纠错方式对不同水平学生的影响及对策研究 [D]. 西安外国语大学.
- Song, T. (2011). Study of corrective feedback in EFL writing. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, (4):67-69.
- 宋铁花. (2011). EFL 写作教学中修正性反馈研究. [J]. 西安外国语大学学报, (4) :67-69.
- Song, X. (2013). *Teacher written corrective feedback on non-English major college students' self-efficacy*. Shenyang Normal University.
- 宋夏. (2013). 教师书面纠错反馈对非英语专业大学生写作自我效能感的影响. 沈阳师范大学.
- Su, J. (2014a). *The efficacy of recognition factors, noticing, and written corrective feedback*. *Journal of Xi'an Foreign Languages University*, (1):75-78.
- 苏建红. (2014a). 认知因素、注意与书面纠正性反馈效果. [J]. 西安外国语大学学报, (1) :75-78.
- Su, J. (2014b). The impact of learners' thinking differences on the efficacy of written corrective feedback), *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (4):45-50.
- 苏建红. (2014b). 学习者思维方式个体差异对书面纠正性反馈效果的影响. [J]. 外语与外语教学, (4) :45-50
- Su, J. (2015). *Review of the empirical studies of written corrective feedback abroad*. *Journal of Xi'an Foreign Languages University*, 23(3).

苏建红. (2015). 国外书面纠正性反馈实证研究述评. 西安外国语大学学报, 23

(3) .

Sun H. (2011). *An Empirical study of different types of teacher written corrective feedback on non-English major college students' writing*. [D]. Northeast Normal University

孙辉. (2011). 不同类型的教师书面反馈对非英语专业大学生英语写作影响的实证研究. [D]东北师范大学.

Xu, Y. & Liu, J. (2010). *Study of anonymous feedback on second language writing*. *Foreign Language Teaching*,(3):44-49.

许悦婷, 刘骏. (2010). 基于匿名反馈的二语写作反馈研究 [J]. 外语教学理论与实践, (3): 44-49.

Yin, P. (2008). *Influence of teacher written corrective feedback on English learners' writing in China*. Northwest Normal University.

殷培贤. (2008). 教师书面反馈对于中国英语学习者写作水平的影响. [D]. 西北师范大学.

Wang, J. (2013). *The impact of different types of teacher feedback on non-English major students' writing*. Hubei University.

王娟. (2013). 教师的不同反馈对非英语专业学生英语写作的影响. 湖北大学.

Wang, X. (2008). *Study of Chinese non-English majors' attitudes toward teacher feedback in EFL writing*. Shandong University.

王晓莹. (2008). 中国非英语专业大学生对英语写作中教师反馈的态度的研究. [D]. 山东大学.

- Wang, Y. & Ding, W. (2011). Students' views and requirements of teacher written corrective feedback in college English writing. *Journal of Sichuan College of Education*, 27 (1) : 77-80.
- 王燕, 丁文英. (2011). 大学英语写作中学生对教师书面反馈的看法和需求 [J]. 四川教育学院学报, 27 (1) : 77-80.
- Wang, Y. (2006). *An empirical study of teacher written corrective feedback on college English writing in China*. Shandong University.
- 王颖. (2006). 教师反馈对中国大学生英语作文作用的实证研究 [D]. 山东大学.
- Wang, W. (2006). *The Efficacy of Teachers Error Correction on College Students Foreign Language Writing*. Huazhong University of Science and Technology.
- 汪卫红. (2006). 非英语专业大学生英语作文语言错误教师纠错效度研究. [D]. 华中科技大学
- Wu, F. (2010). *An empirical study of the efficacy of teacher grammar feedback in college English writing*. Shanghai International Studies University.
- 吴菲. (2010). 英语写作教学中教师语法错误反馈有效性的实证研究. [D]. 上海外国语大学
- Yang, L; Yang, M & Zhang, Y. (2013). A contrastive study of the three types of feedback in English writing in China. *Foreign Language Education*, (3):63-67.
- 杨丽娟、杨曼君、张阳. (2013). 我国英语写作教学三种反馈方式的对比研究 [J]. 外语教学, (3) : 63-67.
- Yang, M. (2006) *A contrastive study of teacher feedback and peer feedback in English writing in China*. Modern Foreign Languages.
- 杨苗. (2006). 中国英语写作课教师反馈和同级反馈对比研究. [J]. 现代外语 (季刊), (3).

- YANG QIAN. (2013). *Study of the efficacy of teacher written corrective feedback on non-English major students*. Xi'an International Studies University.
- YANG QIAN. (2013). 非英语专业大学生英语作文教师书面反馈的有效性研究 [D]. 西安外国语大学.
- Yao, N.(2012).*An empirical study on the efficacy of different types of teacher written corrective feedback on non-English major college students' writing*. Shanxi Normal University.
- 姚娜娜. (2012). 不同教师反馈类型对非英语专业大学生英语写作效用的实证研究. [D]. 陕西师范大学
- Yan, T. (2010).The relationship between ESL writing strategy in terms of individual differences and working memory. *Foreign Language Education*, (6).
- 闫焱. (2010). 二语写作修改策略的个体差异及其工作记忆的关系 [J]. 外语教学, (6).
- Yan, R. (2011).The relationship between students' noticing and teacher aroused noticing as well as its influence on writing revision. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*, (3).
- 闫焱. (2011). 二语写作中学习者自发注意与教师反馈印发注意的关系及其对习作修改的影响 [J]. 解放军外国语学院学报, (3).
- Yan, R, Wu, J, Li, Xiao & Yang, S. (2009).Teacher written corrective feedback in ESL writing—explicitness degree, face-threatening and its impact on different students' self-esteem and their discourse revision. *Modern Foreign Languages*. (2).
- 闫焱, 吴建设, 栗小兰, 杨欣然. (2009). 二语写作教师反馈研究——明晰度、面子威胁程度及其对不同自尊水平学习者篇章修改的影响. [J]. 现代外语, (2).

- Yu, S. (2013). Teacher feedback and peer feedback: the difference and combination under the social-cultural perspective. *Modern Foreign Languages*, 36 (1): 70-76.
- 于书林. (2013). 教师反馈与同伴反馈: 社会文化活动理论视角下的差异与融合. [J]. 现代外语, 36 (1): 70-76.
- Zhang, K. & Wang, T.(2015).A Review of studies on corrective feedback in interaction. *Journal of Ocean University of China*.(2):116-121
- 张凯、王同顺. (2015). 国外二语/外语交互活动中纠错反馈十年研究. [J]. 中国海洋大学学报. (2):116-121
- Zhang, P.& Guo, H. (2007). The necessity and means of college English writing feedback. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*, (3):66-69.
- 张萍、郭红梅. (2007). 大学英语作文反馈的必要性及方式 [J]. 山东外语教学, (3):66-69.
- Zhang, X.(2015). A review of the efficacy of grammar correction feedback in ESL writing at home and abroad. *Journal of Lanzhou Institute of Education*.(7):119-120
- 张晓文. (2015). 国外二语写作教学中修改语法错误的有效性研究综述. [J]. 兰州教育学院学报. (7):119-120
- Zhang, R (2014). *Study of English major students' feedback on different types of teacher written corrective feedback*. Guangxi Normal University.
- 张蓉. (2014). 英语专业学生对不同方式教师书面反馈之反馈的研究[D]. 广西师范大学.
- Zhang, W. & Deng, Y.(2009). Study of the efficacy of teacher written corrective feedback on college students' writing in China. *Foreign Language and Literature*. (25):139-144.

- 张薇、邓跃平. (2009). 修正性反馈对中国大学生写作的有效性研究 [J]. 外国语文, (25) :139-144.
- Zhao, H. (2013). *Impact of different revision strategies on college students' writing*. Northwest Normal University.
- 赵海莉. (2013). 不同修正反馈策略对大学生英语写作的影响. 西北师范大学.
- Zhao, L (2010). *A case study: feedback on teacher feedback and peer feedback*. Shanghai Jiao Tong University.
- 赵路路. (2010). 教师书面反馈和学生反馈之反馈:个案研究. [D]. 上海交通大学
- Zhou, H (2012). *Impact of teacher written corrective feedback on college students' writing in China*. Hunan Normal University.
- 周红茹. (2012). 教师书面纠正性反馈对中国大学生英语写作的影响 [D]. 湖南师范大学.
- Zhou, H. (2013). An empirical study of peer feedback on college students' writing revision. *Journal of Changchun Education Institute*,29 (8):112-113.
- 周辉. (2013). 同伴反馈对大学生作文修改影响的实证研究. 长春教育学院学报, 29 (8) : 112-113
- Zhou, Q. (2009). *High quality peer feedback on non-English major college students' writing ability*. Jiangxi Normal University.
- 周婧. (2009). 优化的同伴反馈对非英语专业学生英语写作能力的影响 [D]. 江西师范大学.
- Zhu, Y. & Wang, Min (2005). Study of feedback in ESL writing: form, explicitness and its effect. *Modern Foreign Languages*,(2):170-180.
- 朱晔、王敏. (2005). 二语写作中的反馈研究:形式、明晰度及具体效果 [J]. 现代外语, (2) :170-180.

APPENDIX A**Written Corrective Feedback Questionnaire****Demographic Information:**

1. Gender: (1) Male (2) Female

2. Which department do you belong to _____?

- (1) Department of English
- (2) Department of Business English
- (3) Department of College English

3. What is your master's major?

- (1) English pedagogy
- (2) Translation
- (3) Linguistics
- (4) British and American Literature
- (5) Business English
- (6) Other, please specify _____

4. Years of teaching _____

5. Have you ever taught writing as a separate course?

- (1) Yes (2) No

6. If yes, for how many years have you taught writing as a separate course

Detailed Questions:**Part One Knowledge of written corrective feedback**

1. Tick all the types of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) that you are familiar with?

- (1) direct CF (correct the mistakes directly)

- (2) indirect CF (2a.indicating + locating the error; 2b. indication only);
- (3) metalinguistic CF (3a.use of error code; 3b. brief grammatical descriptions);
- (4) focus of CF (4a.unfocused CF/general CF ; 4b.focused CF/specific CF);
- (5) electronic CF (the teacher uses certain software to provide CF
- (6) reformulation (the teacher repeats what the learner has said but correctly, without drawing attention explicitly to the error itself)

2. Where did you get to know these terms?

- (1) From textbooks
- (2) From reading academic articles
- (3) From writing workshops
- (4) From the other colleagues
- (5) From previous training

3. How often do you read articles concerning WCF in academic journals?

- (1) very often (2) often (3) sometimes (4) occasionally (5) never

4. What do you think of the articles published in academic journals concerning WCF?

- (1) very useful (2) useful (3) not very useful (4) of no use

Part Two Previous learning experience of receiving WCF in your university writing classes?

1. How much corrective feedback did your university teachers of English writing provide? (Not including instructors of other disciplines)

- (1) a lot (2) some (3) a little (4) none

2. Tick the types of errors that your university teachers of English writing addressed and put them into the order of their priority if the order is different from what is listed _____

- (1) organizational errors
- (2) stylistic errors (misspelling, wordiness, redundancy, formal or informal tone)
- (3) linguistic errors (grammar and mechanics)

3. Tick all the types of WCF that YOU received in your university English writing

classes?

- (1) direct CF (correct the mistakes directly)
- (2) indirect CF (2a.indicating + locating the error; 2b. indication only);
- (3) metalinguistic CF (3a.use of error code; 3b. brief grammatical descriptions);
- (4) focus of CF (4a.unfocused CF/general CF ; 4b.focused CF/specific CF);
- (5) electronic CF (the teacher uses certain software to provide CF)
- (6) reformulation (the teacher repeats what the learner has said but correctly, without drawing attention explicitly to the error itself)

4. List the following feedback types in the order that you prefer to receive feedback from the teachers? My preferred order _____

- (1) direct CF (correct the mistakes directly)
- (2) indirect CF (2a.indicating + locating the error; 2b. indication only);
- (3) metalinguistic CF (3a.use of error code; 3b. brief grammatical descriptions);
- (4) focus of CF (4a.unfocused CF/general CF ; 4b.focused CF/specific CF);
- (5) electronic CF (the teacher uses certain software to provide CF)
- (6) reformulation (the teacher repeats what the learner has said but correctly, without drawing attention explicitly to the error itself)

5. What were your reactions to the feedback you received?

- (1) I took it very seriously and used it to revise or to learn
- (2) I took it seriously and looked at all the feedback that I got
- (3) I did not take it very seriously and I simply glanced over it
- (4) I ignored it completely

6. What were your attitudes towards the feedback you received? It was

- (1) very useful (2) useful (3) not very useful (4) of no use

Part Three Your training and your teaching experience of providing WCF to students' writing

1. Did you take courses related to grammar and usage?

- (1) Yes (2) No

If yes, please provide a couple of examples _____

2. What do you think of the training you received in terms of providing WCF to students on their writing?

- (1) I was well trained
- (2) I was trained
- (3) I was not very well trained
- (4) I was not trained at all

3. My level of confidence with providing WCF is _____

- (1) high (2) medium (3) low

4. How much corrective feedback did you provide your students in the writing class?

- (1) a lot (2) some (3) a little (4) none

5. Tick the types of errors you tend to address when you provide students with feedback? And list them in the order of your preference _____

- (1) organizational errors
- (2) stylistic errors (misspelling, wordiness, redundancy, formal or informal)
- (3) linguistic errors (grammar and mechanics)

6. List them in the order of effectiveness (that is, you see students make the most improvement) _____

- (1) organizational errors
- (2) stylistic errors (misspelling, wordiness, redundancy, formal or informal)
- (3) linguistic errors (grammar and mechanics)

7. Tick all the types of WCF you provide students with and put the ones you use in the order of your preference _____

- (1) direct CF (correct the mistakes directly)
- (2) indirect CF (2a.indicating + locating the error; 2b. indication only);
- (3) metalinguistic CF (3a.use of error code; 3b. brief grammatical descriptions);
- (4) focus of CF (4a.unfocused CF/general CF ; 4b.focused CF/specific CF);
- (5) electronic CF (the teacher uses certain software to provide CF)

(6) reformulation (the teacher repeats what the learner has said but correctly, without drawing attention explicitly to the error itself)

8. Please explain why you prefer these types of WCF:_____

9. What are your opinions of the feedback you provide to students?

APPENDIX B**University of Minnesota IRB Approval**

The IRB: Human Subjects Committee determined that the referenced study is exempt from review under federal guidelines 45 CFR Part 46.101(b) category #2
SURVEYS/INTERVIEWS; STANDARDIZED EDUCATIONAL TESTS;
OBSERVATION OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR.

Study Number: 1609E94121

Principal Investigator: Peihong Cao

Title(s):

ESL Teachers' Knowledge of and Experience with Written Corrective Feedback

