

Teacher feedback and feedback practice: The views of teachers and students

Leong Ping Alvin
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Lee Hwee Hoon
Singapore Institute of Technology, Singapore



Teacher Feedback

- **Teacher feedback seeks to narrow the gap between current understanding/performance and the set goals of the assignment.**
- **Focus on past research**
 - **Form of feedback**
 - **Type of feedback**
 - **Effectiveness of feedback**

Teacher Feedback

“Overall, the findings show that faculty teachers’ feedback is shaped by a desire to see students write in disciplinary approved ways, yet only infrequently supports students towards this goal.” (Hyland, 2013, p. 240)

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“Content analysis of feedback samples and student responses uncovered four main themes of feedback considered unhelpful to improve learning: comments which were too general or vague, lacked guidance, focused on the negative, or were unrelated to assessment criteria.” (Weaver, 2006, p. 379)

Teacher Feedback

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this

Ten mismatches between teachers' beliefs and written feedback practice

Icy Lee

ELT Journal, Volume 63, Issue 1, 1 January 2009, Pages 13–22, <https://doi-org.ezlibproxy1.ntu.edu.sg/10.1093/elt/ccn010>

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Feedback as Dialogue

- **Teacher-student engagement**
 - To improve student response to feedback (Orsmond et al. 2013)
 - To work towards sustainable feedback (Mutch et al., 2018)
- **Research gap**
 - Little focus on how both teachers and students in the same educational setting view the current state of feedback practice.

Research Objective

- **What is the extent of match between teacher and student perspectives about teacher feedback and feedback practice?**

Methodology

- **Public university in Singapore**
 - **Language Centre**
- **Focus-group discussions**
- **Participants**
 - **Nine teachers from the Centre**
 - **Taught for at least 8 years at the university level**
 - **Eight undergraduates (*arts, social sciences*)**
 - **Recently completed one research-writing course offered by the Centre**

Methodology

- **Materials**
 - **Three samples of written feedback on student essays**
 - **Student essays were a critique of the introduction section of a research article**

Methodology

Feedback on critique

Thanks heaps for the effort! My feedback is as follows:

- (1) There may be some misreading of the article objection, you wrote:

This makes their research goal of wanting to writers who had instruction in scientific writing. To begin with, there was no proof suggesting metacognitive training.

You are correct to say that the authors did not state that 'metacognition is rarely taught in college statement covering science classrooms — not in the world — such a statement does require evidence.

However, in the context of their own study, own university (University of Georgia):

We had the opportunity to do this at our large biology writing seminar offered separately but not as part of the biology course.

The authors would therefore be in a position to state that students received any metacognitive training (as lecturers would know whether their own students used metacognitive strategies). The authors are then claiming that students lacked such training. Their study is flawed.

- (2) There also appears to be a misreading of the article.

Furthermore, the authors did not adopt a stance of support or opposition of the hypotheses proposed. The mechanisms explained under the second and third hypotheses.

Note that the authors *do* make a stand in the following:

We hypothesized that writing in the argument from writing. More specifically, the need to establish a link required for these assignments would serve as a mechanism for students to reflect more on their understanding of relationships among them.

Insofar as writing involves metacognitive strategies, we agree with Klein's mechanisms. The purpose of the study was to find out whether these mechanisms are *fully* borne out by the data eventually found out that the mechanisms were not.

The research article entitled 'Learning from Writing in College Biology' by Norris A. Armstrong, Carolyn S. Wallace, and Shu-Mei Chang, S-M, is extra. Science Education, volume 38, pages 483 to 499, and was published in 2008. It seeks to investigate the effectiveness of using written argument in college biology classes, as well as to examine the types of writing that students use. This article is ineffective in expressing the authors' rhetorical structure and style. However, the establishment of the background.

The authors wrote with poor rhetorical structure and style. *Was there not an objective statement?* They did not state the main focus of the study. As seen from the secondary focus — the types of metacognition employed — they used numerous in-text citations, which provided credibility, readability and coherence. Furthermore, they failed to show arguments and evidence. The authors merely quoted the authors' own work. *The explanation lacks clarity.* They did not establish the link. A research subjects under 'Research Questions'. This was done in the following section of 'Materials and Methods'.

app/ link
On the contrary, the authors attempted to maintain good academic standards. The questions were briefly addressed in the introduction, allowing for the purposes of the study. The authors have also established the link.

Sample B

Sample C

This paper critiques "Learning from Writing in College Biology". It was written by Norris A. Armstrong, Carolyn S. Wallace, and Shu-Mei Chang, and published in the Research in Science Education Journal, Volume 38 in 2008. It mentions that writing coupled with information evaluation for effective learning. In the article, they hypothesize the significance of argumentation writing in science students' academic learning. The introduction was organized in a fluent approach to the topic and was well supported with valid comparisons, but however, showed weakness in one of its arguments. *Needs to be phrased in a better manner.*

In the opening section of the introduction, the author began their approach to the topic by stating that writing would involve various thought processes, and stated that it benefits knowledge gaining through written assignments. They then proposed argumentation as a method which generates thought processes, and may not need training when it comes to using it as a learning strategy. They likened this to the thinking skills applied by science students when conducting research, and drew relevance to earlier statement by describing the nature of assignments science students do. Based on these, they conducted their investigation, hypothesising that argumentative writing would benefit science students in content learning without having prior knowledge on applying this skill. Hence, it is seen that the authors coupled substantial research on the topic to draw a connection between argumentation in scientific learning to support the value of their hypothesis. *Warrant*

The authors pointed out that argumentative writing "can help students learn even without such training". This was probably a weakness in the investigation, as it was earlier mentioned that "knowledge-transforming" could become "knowledge-telling" while reflecting very little on understanding and generating little knowledge", and that proper training is required to "use these strategies effectively". The lack of training resulted in "little impact" of written work and was reflected as a possible cause. *This argument is not valid as the authors were presenting different parts of the topic.*

In conclusion, the authors demonstrated good reasoning to justify their approach towards the purpose of argumentative writing and its significance to science students and research analytical skills. However, a weak argument in part of their hypothesis might have led to insignificant results in their investigation. *// x*

While the first argument is fine, the second one is not convincing. Also there are some errors related to language and expression. The conclusion is not very clear.

Methodology

- **Focus-group discussion questions**
 - Purpose
 - Expectations of feedback
 - Focus (content, structure, and language)
- **Content analysis performed using NVivo10 (version 10).**
 - Collectively analyzed and coded by the research team
- **Recurring themes across both sets of data**
 - Purpose of feedback
 - Clarity of feedback
 - Specific areas of feedback (e.g., language, rhetorical structure)

Results | Purpose

- Beliefs
- Grade justification

Results | Purpose

- Beliefs
- Grade justification

“My teaching philosophy is, I think, you know, students need to be independent, especially since they are in university. I like students who are resourceful. They go and find out things for themselves; they don’t expect me to tell them everything. So even when I give them feedback, *I don’t tell them everything in detail*, because I like them to reflect, and I like them to actually come back to ask me—you know, what do you mean by this, how do you think I can improve?” (*Teresa*)

Results | Purpose

- Beliefs
- Grade justification

“Sometimes when you read the feedback, you’re like, *hey* this makes sense—I shouldn’t have made that error, but hey, I made that error [...] And hopefully I won’t make the same error again. And there are other kinds of feedback, where you just didn’t know that those kinds of error existed. You’re like, *huh*, interesting. So in that case, I would probably talk to the tutor, and try to understand it better, ...” (Samuel)

Results | Purpose

- Beliefs
- **Grade justification**

“So the feedback can sound very harsh or it can sound very good, but once you see the grade, then you can contextualize that and say, okay, you know, my grade’s an A–, but the feedback is harsh, so she’s putting in the sense that okay, you could have gotten an A, but you failed to do this.” *(Steven)*

Results | Purpose

- Beliefs
- Grade justification

“I have changed the way I give feedback, because you know, the students, they are so concerned about the grades. So I have learned from my colleagues, and from my own experience, to write more and more comments [...] to justify the grade that we give them.” (Tammy)

“For example, for a B– grade, I’ll definitely put more comments. And definitely, I’ll underline more language errors ...” (Titus)

Results | Clarity

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"I don't do this, but I would like to do it... and I wish I could do it" (Tom)

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"It's very time-consuming." (Tammy)

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Results | Clarity

used numerous in-text citations, which
readability and coherence. Furthermore

les mentioned. This article is

unconvincing as the authors failed to establish a link between metacognition and writing-to-learn, despite the quotation of ample evidences. Henceforth, this study is not significant in finding the relationship between writing and learning.

“I really don’t like it when they just circle something and put a question mark on top [...] Okay, it’s wrong, but why is it wrong?” (Sophia)

Results | Areas

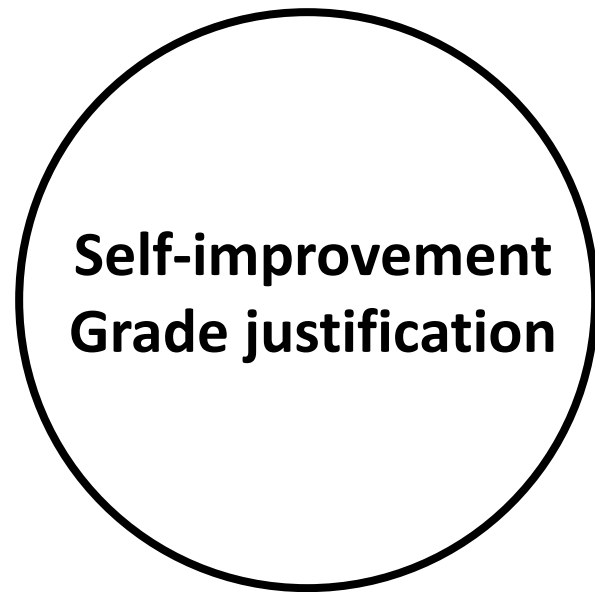
- **Teacher feedback tended to focus on the nature of the course.**
- **Diverse needs of students**
 - **Proficient students needed only broad statements (*Steven*)**
 - **Others needed specific guidance**
 - **Grammar (*Seth, Samuel*)**
 - **Argumentation (*Sheldon*)**
 - **Development of ideas (*Susan, Sharon*)**
 - **Exemplars of good writing (*Samuel*)**

Conclusion

- **Feedback should help students to be reflective and independent learners.**
 - **Risk of feedback being grade-centric**
- **Students did not always receive feedback that was sufficiently informative or met their varied needs.**

Clarity of feedback & areas of feedback

Purpose of feedback



Course
requirements

Diverse
concerns/needs

Legend

— — — . Teachers

..... Students

Proposals

- Focus on the *process*, not the product.
 - Draft-final mode of assessment
- Responsive feedback
 - Interactive cover sheet for students to indicate the areas their teachers' feedback should focus on (Bloxham & Campbell, 2010)

Proposals

I think the strengths of my essay are:

.....

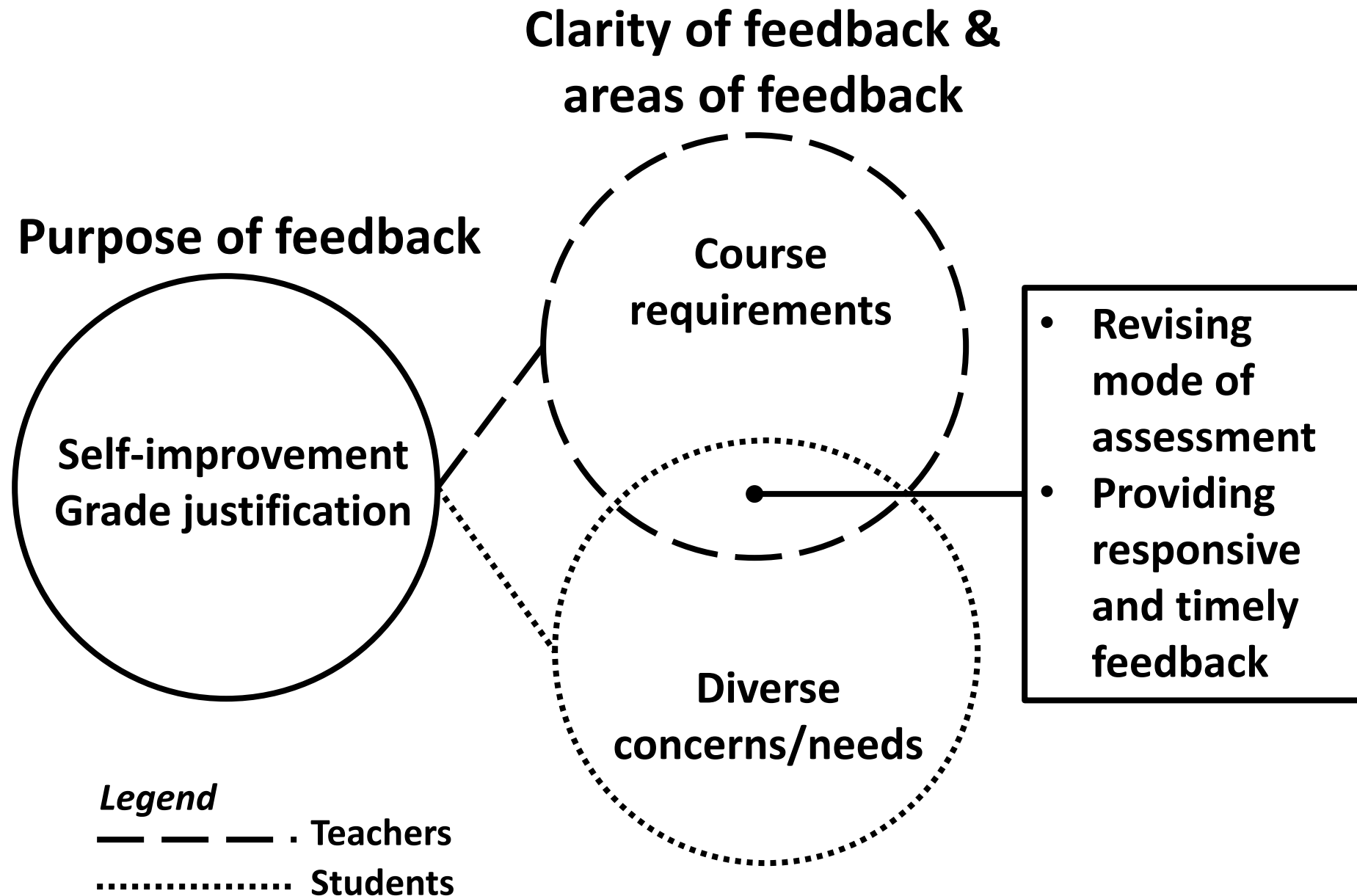
I think the weak points of my essay are:

.....

What I would like your feedback on / your help with is:

- ☐ Argumentation
- ☐ Arrangement of ideas
- ☐ Grammar

Etc.



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