A Synthesis of Qualitative Findings about Feedback on EFL Writing Performance

Leyla Harputlu[1]
Eda Ceylan[2]

[1] Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey
[2] Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey / Contact: eceylan6@hotmail.com

Abstract
Feedback is widely regarded as essential for the improvement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing performance. However, previous research in the field has not offered conclusive data on regarding whom feedback should be provided by, what extent it should be provided or how it should be provided, etc. The role of different feedback types such as teacher feedback and peer feedback in EFL writing across different contexts has been another controversial issue. This study aims to provide better understanding into what teachers and students experience about feedback on EFL writing, including how different contexts affect feedback practices by undertaking a synthesis of the qualitative studies. Meta-ethnographic approach was used so as to synthesize the qualitative findings of the included studies. The synthesis revealed that two dimensions of feedback were highlighted: the contextual factors affecting feedback on EFL writing and the perceived effects of feedback practices on EFL students' writing performance. In the lights of the synthesis of qualitative findings of the included studies, several practical implications are presented in order to facilitate feedback practices in EFL writing.

Keywords
Feedback,
EFL writing,
synthesis,
qualitative findings,
meta-ethnography

Introduction

Feedback can be defined as "information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding" (Hattie & Timperley 2007, p.81). It plays a critical role in assisting students in their learning processes (Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016). As in every aspect of learning, feedback practices are essential in the improvement of EFL writing skills, as

well. The literature indicates that in order to engage students actively in writing process and improve their writing performances, teachers primarily employ two types of feedback, namely teacher feedback and peer feedback. In teacher feedback, teachers are the providers or the sources of the feedback. Providing feedback is a complex process, hence there are various issues which teachers need to decide while giving feedback: What they should focus on (e.g. grammar, content, organization or style), to what extent errors should be marked (e.g. focused or comprehensive) and what strategies should be used (e.g. direct or indirect), etc. (Lee, 2017, p.59). The previous research shows that teacher feedback mainly focuses on grammar or spelling with much less attention on content, organization, and style (Furneaux, Paran, & Fairfax, 2007). Moreover, teachers tend to mark every single error in student writing like "a marking machine" (Lee, 2017, p.59). Spotting every error negatively affects both teachers and students. While teachers feel exhausted and complain about how time consuming and difficult process it is, students feel less motivated and confident about EFL writing when they see that their papers are full of red ink. As Lee (2016) points out, it is "a no-win situation" (p.518). Peer feedback is another most common form of feedback, which is increasingly utilized by teachers instead of /in addition to teacher feedback, because of its potential to involve students actively in learning process. Previous research on peer feedback reports that there are many benefits of peer feedback; however, it is required to state that teachers have difficulties in applying peer feedback because of students' limited language proficiency and contextual constraints in school contexts such as time and class size (Lee, 2017).

While previous studies enable us to gain better insight into different types of feedback, they have not offered conclusive data regarding what should be the focus of feedback, what extent it should be provided or how it should be provided, what strategies should be used, etc. Inconclusive data on these issues can be related to the fact that feedback is a comprehensive field of study which includes a range of components such as teachers, students, administrators, colleagues. Accordingly, it is affected by many contextual factors including students and teachers' perceptions, beliefs, feedback experiences, students' language proficiency, motives, goals, and group work experiences and institutional requirements, L1 use, etc. These factors do not only shape the socio-cultural context in which feedback activities are situated but also, they are shaped by the context itself. That is to say, there is a complex and

interwoven relationship between contextual factors and feedback practices in EFL writing. Therefore, the findings of the studies which do not take into account the contextual factors shaping feedback practices fail to be implemented in EFL classrooms. In order to gain better insight of feedback in EFL writing, researchers need to consider feedback as a practice which is situated in a socio-cultural context. Additionally, they should provide thick description of the socio-cultural context, thus writing teachers in similar contexts can benefit from the findings of the studies and apply them in their own classrooms.

The purpose of this study is to provide better understanding into what teachers and students experience about EFL writing feedback practices in their socio-cultural contexts by undertaking a synthesis of the qualitative studies. More precisely, this study examines following research questions:

(1) How do contextual factors affect feedback practices on EFL writing performance?

(2) What are the perceived effects of feedback practices on EFL writing performance?

Methodology

Research Design

A synthesis of qualitative research attempts to integrate "themes and insights gained from individual qualitative research into a higher order synthesis that promotes broad understandings of the entire body of research, while still respecting the integrity of the individual reports" (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007, p.395). In this study, the qualitative findings of individual studies were synthesized using meta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988), which is one of the approaches providing an overall pathway for systematically synthesizing qualitative research. Meta-ethnography was chosen since it allows "conceptual translation between different types of qualitative evidence research" (Flemming, McCaughan, Angus, & Graham, 2014, p. 1211). Noblit and Hare (1998) identified seven phases for meta-ethnographic approach: (1) getting started, (2) deciding what is relevant to the initial interest, (3) reading the studies, (4) determining how the studies are related, (5) translating the studies into one another, (6) synthesizing translations, (7) expressing the synthesis (p. 26-29).

The search query was conducted for published studies from 2012–June 2017 and in multiple electronic databases including Dokuz Eylül University Library, the

Academic Social Sciences Index, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), ULAKBIM Turkish National Databases. In order to identify potential qualitative studies for this study, the variations of the following key terms were used in the search query: 'qualitative', 'feedback', 'EFL writing', 'error'. The studies were selected for inclusion in the light of the following criteria: (1) Focus on feedback on EFL writing, (2) studies conducted using qualitative methods and data collection tools, (3) studies published in a refereed journal (national and international), (4) studies published in 2012 and later. These limitations reduced the number of studies to 16.

Quality appraisal

The full texts of the remaining 16 articles were reviewed and rated for quality by one reviewer and checked by a second using a checklist developed for qualitative studies (Hawker, Payne, Kerr, Hardey, & Powell, 2002). Later, the reviewers discussed on all the studies and negotiated on their quality scores. No articles were excluded as a result of quality appraisal. The quality scores for 16 articles ranged from 29–33 (Table 1).

Table 1. Table of Included Studies

Studies (n = 16)	Participants	Study Methods	Quality Score
Allen and Katayama (2016)	6 university students	Interview Observation	30
Best *et al.* (2014)	20 university students	Focus group	30
Buckingham and Aktug-Ekinci (2017)	32 university students	Interview Think-aloud Observation	29
Han and Hyland (2015)	4 university students	Interview Stimulated recall	31
Hyland (2013)	20 university teachers	Interview	29
Junqueira and Payant (2015)	1 writing teacher	Case study	32
Lee (2015)	9 secondary school students	Interview	33
Lee (2016)	2 writing teachers	Interview Observation	33
Lee *et al* (2015)	2 writing teachers	Interview	32
Lee *et al.* (2016)	9 writing teachers	Focus group Interview	29
Mahfoodh (2016)	8 university students 2 writing teachers	Interview Think-aloud	29

Yu and Hu (2017)	2 university students	Case study	31
Yu and Lee (2014a)	2 university students	Case study	31
Yu and Lee (2014b)	22 university students	Stimulated recall	30
Yu and Lee (2016a)	4 university students	Interview Stimulated recall	32
Yu and Lee (2016b)	12 university students	Case study	32

Data Extraction

Relevant qualitative data (participants, methodology used, methods of data collection, analysis, and results) were extracted from each study by one reviewer and checked by a second.

Synthesis

The qualitative data extracted from each study was synthesized through meta-ethnographic approach. First, the 16 articles were thoroughly read. Line-by-line coding of each article was done. The codes were compared, contrasted and grouped by two researchers into broad categories (translations) of similarity through reciprocal translation analysis. This process produced 12 translations about feedback on EFL writing (Table 2). Taking into account the translations, the researchers examined and compared them to identify lines of argument (Table 2).

Table 2. Translations and Lines of Argument

Translations	Lines of argument
Beliefs Feedback experiences Institutional requirements Students' language proficiency Students' needs, motives and goals Students' group work experiences Group dynamics Preparedness L1 use	Contextual factors affecting feedback practices
Raising awareness Emotional response Insufficient and unclear feedback	Perceived effects of feedback practices

Findings

The synthesis of the included studies revealed that two dimensions of feedback on EFL writing were highlighted: (1) Contextual factors affecting feedback practices and

(2) perceived effects of feedback practices. These dimensions are presented in detail below.

Contextual factors affecting feedback practices

The review of the included studies indicated that giving and receiving feedback in EFL writing are complex and multifaceted processes including students, teachers, colleagues, and school administrators, hence a wide range of contextual factors influence feedback practices (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Best, Jones-Katz, Smolarek, Stolzenburg, & Williamson, 2014; Buckingham & Aktug-Ekinci, 2017; Han & Hyland, 2015; Hyland, 2013; Lee, 2015, 2016; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Mahfoodh, 2016; Min, 2013; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b). The detailed examination of the contextual factors affecting the feedback on EFL writing revealed that both teachers and students engage in feedback processes with their packages which contain their experiences, beliefs, perceptions, feelings, knowledge, motives, goals, etc. These packages do not only influence the socio-cultural context but also, they are shaped by this context. In other words, they are situated in a socio-cultural context which they affect and are affected by. This situation complicates the application of ideal feedback practices which are usually recommended by the researchers without taking into account the context. Accordingly, there is a gap between the ideal feedback activities and the actual feedback practices experienced by teachers and students in their own contexts (Best et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a). That is to say, teachers have difficulty in applying the feedback practices favored by the researchers in the field. To exemplify, the studies showed that even if most of teachers believe that feedback is provided to help students find solutions on their own and become active participants in the learning process, they usually apply traditional feedback strategies like comprehensive corrective feedback and direct teacher feedback, which do not lead students to reflect on and self-correct their errors (Han & Hyland, 2015; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016):

> *I am not happy that I was not able to incorporate all my beliefs in my teaching. This is disappointing. I just want to do it right, but it's so hard (Junqueira & Payant, 2015, p.31).*

This mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their feedback practices is related to a range of contextual factors such as the students' beliefs, motives, and goals, course

requirements, and institutional requirements (Han & Hyland, 2015; Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016). The analysis indicated that students' beliefs are one of the main reasons which lead to the tension between teachers' beliefs and their feedback practices. They are shaped by some other contextual factors like students' language proficiency, self-confidence about English, feedback experiences, and group work experiences. For instance, students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency in English mostly believed that providing feedback is their teachers' responsibility since they are more knowledgeable than students (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Lee, 2015; Yu & Lee, 2014a):

> *You know, it's quite difficult for students to provide really meaningful and useful comments and suggestions. Most of the feedback focuses on grammar. Always grammar … Peer feedback is unlike teacher feedback. There is a big gap in English level between me and my teachers. But students even with a higher level of English proficiency cannot provide impressive suggestions, I think (Yu & Lee, 2014a, p.13).*

The analysis also revealed that the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency are usually passive listeners during the interactions since they believe that the activities are inefficient or since they feel inhibited and uncomfortable during the feedback sessions; however, high-proficiency students are dominant in group peer feedback interactions (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Lee, 2015; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Yu & Lee, 2014a). Naturally, the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency preferred traditional feedback strategies to innovative feedback practices such peer feedback, coded teacher feedback, etc., which enable students to construct knowledge through social interaction (Liu, 2001) or self-reflection on their own writings. Despite their tendency towards teacher feedback and their dissatisfaction about peer feedback practices, they interestingly accepted almost all the comments and suggestions from their peers. The high rate of acceptance can be related to their lack of self-confidence about English. (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2014a):

> *Mariko: Oh, I accepted all the comments…. I responded and corrected all of them.*
> *Researcher: Why do you think you accepted all of the comments?*
> *Mariko: Uh, let me see. Because I don't have confidence* (*Allen & Katayama, 2016, p.103).*

The analysis further revealed that despite their tendency towards teacher feedback, positive relationships can change their beliefs about peer feedback. That is to say, if there is a positive relationship among students in a peer feedback group, they can

engage in and contribute to peer feedback since they feel less inhibited about providing comments and asking for suggestions (Yu & Lee, 2016b):

> *We are friends. . . Even if they don't provide the correct expressions, it is quite okay. We mainly focus on the writing (Yu & Lee, 2016b, p. 490).*

Additionally, the analysis indicated that feedback experiences and group work experiences affect students' beliefs about feedback, thus they shape group dynamics, which can appear as a source of content or discontent in peer feedback practices (Best et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu &Lee, 2014a). If students have negative peer feedback or group work experiences, they believe that it is a waste of time. On the other hand, if students have positive experiences about it, they value it and engage more actively in feedback practices (Best et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a):

> *I once worked with a good friend who was good at both Chinese and English writing and gave me many useful comments on different aspects of writing ... I often asked him about my English writing ... For other pair and group work, we students may produce some useful comments only when we were very serious and careful (Yu & Lee, 2014a, p.8).*

Alongside the students' beliefs, the review showed that teachers' feedback choices can be affected by students' motives and goals (Best et al., 2014; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016; Yu & Hu, 2017; Han & Hyland, 2015; Yu & Lee, 2014a). While students whose motive is to learn from their peers and gain mutual progress are likely to engage actively in peer feedback practices, the students whose goal is to finish a task assigned by their teachers tend to be passive listeners during peer feedback practices (Yu & Lee, 2014a). Naturally, this situation affects teacher feedback practices. The analysis further showed that the students who see a high grade as their goals are likely to give strong emotional responses- positive or negative according to the feedback- which influence their acceptance of the feedback provided by their teachers. Therefore, even if the teachers believe that they need to guide their students for self-correction or self-reflection on their errors, the teachers may feel obligated to use feedback as a form of justification for the grades awarded (Best et al., 2014; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016) as illustrated in the following excerpt: *"... to me, when you give a grade, you'll have to give feedback that indicates why the student got that grade" (Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016, p.6).*

Thus, providing feedback becomes more product-based process and less about learning. It does not help learners to develop strategies to improve their EFL writing.

Apart from the contextual factors mentioned above, institutional requirements were reported to bring about the tension between teachers' beliefs and their feedback practices. To give an example, school policies which promote traditional feedback strategies prevent teachers from applying innovative feedback practices (Lee, 2016; Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015): *"According to the school's policy, we have to let students know every error in compositions" (Lee, 2016, p. 522).* Further, teachers felt insecure about undertaking innovative feedback practices since they were not supported by their colleagues. They experienced a sense of discomfort and fear being excluded by their colleagues because of their nonconformity to the traditional feedback practices (Lee, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015):

> *We concern a lot about our students' performance. If everyone has the same practice, it won't seem like you are alienated. The students would also think that it is the whole-school policy. It's not Teacher A's practice, so I think at the end we can help the development of the school (Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015, p.15).*

Finally, even if language teachers mostly argue that the use of first language (L1) needs to be discouraged in foreign language classrooms since it hinders foreign language development, the studies reported that L1 is a resource which facilitates group peer feedback activities (Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b):

> *I usually use Chinese to point out the problems or write comments in my classmates' essays because this can save my time and the author's time. Using Chinese can help us finish the task more quickly and efficiently (Yu & Lee, 2014b, p.34).*

The analysis also showed that L1 can be considered as an important contextual factor from which EFL learners can benefit since it can make group feedback activities more comfortable and less frustrating (Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b): *"I usually use Chinese since I am afraid of making mistakes in using English" (Yu & Lee, 2014b, p.34).* The use of L1 is affected by several contextual factors including students' beliefs, language proficiency, self-confidence, teacher requirements (Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b):

> *I think it is necessary to use Chinese. Although we students should try to use English in peer reviewing as English is the language that we are learning and we need to practice it, it is still necessary to use our native language because our English proficiency varies a lot and it is impossible even for those students with high English proficiency to use English only in our communication (Yu & Lee, 2014b, p.33).*

Perceived effects of feedback practices

Even though the important role that feedback plays in EFL writing is mostly accepted in the literature, it is essential to gain better understanding into how teachers and students perceive and experience feedback practices. The analysis revealed that their perceptions and experiences about them can change according to types of feedback. To give an example, while the teachers in the included studies mostly described peer feedback as a useful and constructive process, they identified comprehensive corrective feedback as a time-consuming and difficult process (Hyland, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015):

> *My feedback took way too long…I think I commented on every line. I do not have the time it takes to help them with every problem they have in their writing. The task of grading and giving feedback is daunting and mentally exhausting (Junqueira & Payant, 2015, p.28).*

However, especially the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency preferred teacher feedback and gave negative emotional response to peer feedback practices. To describe their experiences about peer feedback, they primarily used such words as frustrating, unfair, uncomfortable, waste of time, embarrassed, confusing, nervous, and discouraging, etc. (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Best et al., 2014; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015): *"I was not confident at all, and I know this is bad for my partner, and bad for me" (Allen & Katayama, 2016, p. 103).*

Hence, they preferred more conventional feedback strategies. Contrary to the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency, the students who have positive peer feedback and group work experiences reported that they found peer feedback useful and interesting. Peer feedback evoked positive emotional responses in them (Lee, 2015; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a, 2016b):

> *I once worked with a good friend who was good at both Chinese and English writing and gave me many useful comments on different aspects of writing (Yu & Lee, 2014, p.8).*
> *Peer feedback made the writing process more relaxing and more delightful. We had fun. It was more entertaining…It was interesting to read my classmates' essays and then try to assume the teacher's role…It was boring and very mechanical to do writing and editing alone (Lee, 2015, p. 6).*

The analysis also indicated that while some students reported that peer feedback activities raise their linguistic and audience awareness (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Lee, 2015; Yu & Lee, 2016b), some complained about insufficient and unclear peer comments and suggestions (Allen & Katayama, 2016; Lee, 2015):

> *Ma has given me detailed comments. He identified many problems about the content and text structure in my essay. I cannot notice these problems myself (Yu & Lee, 2016b, p.488).*
> *Here one of them (peers) wrote: 'it was acceptable to edit the sentence'. Does that mean I should edit it or I could leave it? (Lee, 2015, p.5).*

Apart from peer feedback, the studies focused on coded written corrective feedback (WCF) practices (Buckingham & Aktug-Ekinci, 2017; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015). The analysis showed that both teachers and students found them useful and interesting (Buckingham & Aktug-Ekinci, 2017; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015):

> *For example, 'art' so they can think about "Did I use the wrong article, why should I use 'the' instead of 'a'?" They can reflect in this way (Teacher interview) (Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015, p.8).*

However, they both have some concerns about coded feedback. While some teachers thought that explaining codes are time-consuming, some students reported that they did not understand the meanings of codes (Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Mahfoodh, 2016):

> *Many students just do not bother about what the codes mean. I have to remind them every time for the meaning of the code 't' means tense, so I kind of go back to my original practice (Teacher interview) (Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015, p.12).*
> *No. The codes I don't like because I did not understand (Mahfoodh, 2016, p. 9).*

Another feedback type to which the researchers paid attention was focused WCF (Lee, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015). Teachers usually believed that it was more manageable and desirable than comprehensive WCF. Finally, the analysis showed that comprehensive WCF evoke negative emotions. The students mostly felt frustrated, guilty, disappointed, and overwhelmed when they saw their writing papers full of comments, corrections, circles, and marks (Han & Hyland, 2015; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Mahfoodh, 2016): *"These errors should not have been made" (Han & Hyland, 2015, p.38).* and *"I felt as if my heart was chilled; I was so sad." (Han & Hyland, 2015, p.37).*

Discussion & Conclusion

Examining qualitative findings about feedback on EFL writing performance, this synthesis study found that giving and receiving feedback is a complex and difficult process which is shaped by various contextual factors such as beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, motives, goals, needs, language proficiency levels, feedback experiences,

group work experiences, L1 use, etc. These factors make feedback process complicated; hence, the mismatches arise between the ideal feedback activities recommended in the literature and the actual feedback practices implemented in writing classrooms. That is to say, even if writing teachers want to apply ideal feedback activities in their classrooms, they experience some difficulties in using them in their contexts. This gap between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practice was consistent with the findings of previous studies (Basturkmen, 2012; Lee, 2008; Phipps & Borg, 2009).

The package which students bring into writing classrooms with themselves is one of the main reasons of the gap between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practice. This package consists of their beliefs, perceptions, language proficiency levels, motives, goals, feedback experiences and their native languages. The package, as a whole, influences feedback practices. In other words, while examining one factor in the package, we need to take into account others, as well. They have interwoven relationships with each other. To exemplify, students' beliefs affecting feedback process are shaped by some other contextual factors like students' language proficiency, self-confidence about English, feedback experiences, and group work experiences. While the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency in English mostly believe that providing feedback is their teachers' responsibility since they are more knowledgeable than students (Lee, 2015; Allen & Katayama, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2014), high proficiency level students usually find peer feedback useful and interesting (Allen & Katayama; Lee, 2017). Similarly, the students who have positive peer feedback or group work experiences believe that peer feedback is important for mutual learning; however, the students who have negative experiences believe that it is waste of time and unfair (Best et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a).

L1, which is a part of students' packages, also plays an important role in feedback practices. As in students' beliefs, the use of L1 is affected by several contextual factors including students' beliefs, language proficiency, self-confidence, teacher requirements (Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b). If students believe that L1 facilitate group work interactions, they tend to use their L1 in group peer feedback sessions. This finding is congruent with the findings of Storch and Aldosar (2010) investigating learners' use of first language in pair work. Additionally, low-

proficiency students are most likely to utilize their L1, thus they feel more comfortable and less anxious (Yu and Lee, 2016b). The included studies also showed that if teachers do not forbid the use of L1 or there is no explicit requirement about the use of language in peer feedback, students mostly tend to use their L1, since it facilitates their' interactions and avoid misunderstanding during group work activities (Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b).

Institutional requirements are regarded as another contextual factor bringing about the tension between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices (Lee, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015). Writing teachers have difficulty in applying innovative feedback practices since school policies promote traditional feedback strategies like comprehensive WCF. In other words, even if they know that spotting every error in students' writings is overwhelming for both students and themselves, they have to let students know every error in their writings according to the school policy. Moreover, they feel insecure about undertaking innovative feedback practices since they are not supported by their colleagues. They feel uncomfortable and fear being excluded by their colleagues because of their nonconformity to the traditional feedback practices (Lee, 2016; Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015).

Apart from indicating how contextual factors affect feedback practices, this synthesis study highlighted the perceived effects of feedback practices by teachers and students. The analysis revealed that their perceptions and experiences shift from one type of feedback to another. While teachers usually find peer feedback useful and constructive (Hyland, 2013; Junqueira & Payant, 2015), the students' perceptions and experiences about peer feedback change according to several contextual factors such as their language proficiency level, beliefs, motives, peer feedback experiences, etc. (Lee, 2015; Yu & Hu, 2017; Yu & Lee, 2014a, 2016b). For instance, the students with low self-confidence or low language proficiency usually give negative emotional response to peer feedback and prefer teacher feedback. However, students who have positive peer feedback and group work experiences find peer feedback useful and interesting, thus it evokes positive emotional responses in them. As for coded feedback, both teachers and students usually regard it as a useful and interesting practice, however they report some problems about it, as well (Lee, Mak, & Burns, 2015; Mahfoodh, 2016). While some teachers think that explaining codes are time-consuming, some students state that they do not understand the meanings of codes

Lastly, both teachers and students usually prefer focused WCF to comprehensive WCF since they think that it is more manageable than comprehensive WCF.

Even if this study is limited with the qualitative studies published between 2012-2017, the findings suggest that teachers should make an effort to identify contextual factors affecting feedback, and to bridge the gap between their ideal feedback activities and the actual feedback practices experienced by them in their own contexts. Teachers need to take into account students' beliefs, perceptions, motives, goals, needs, etc. while applying feedback activities. Teachers can benefit from classroom discussions on feedback, error correction, and EFL writing in order to be familiar with their students' packages. As for school administrators, they may regulate their school policies on feedback practices with writing teachers since they are more knowledgeable about innovative feedback practices. Finally, future meta- synthesis studies can examine all the qualitative studies conducted on feedback in EFL writing until now, thus they can provide better understanding into feedback practices on EFL students' writing performance.

Notes on the contributors

Leyla Harputlu (Ph.D.) is a professor at the Department of English Language Teaching of Buca Education Faculty at Dokuz Eylul University, İzmir, Turkey. Her research and teaching cover the areas of linguistics, foreign language skills, affective states in foreign language learning.

Eda Ceylan (M.A.) is a research assistant at the department of English Language Teaching in Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey. She is also a Ph.D. candidate at the same department. Her research interests relate to foreign language skills, teacher cognition, and affective states in foreign language learning.

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