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EFL/ESL Teachers' and Students' Perceptions and Practices of Written Feedback in a Higher Education Context

Percepciones y prácticas de profesores y estudiantes de inglés en relación con la retroalimentación escrita en el contexto de la educación superior

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This systematic review focused on higher education teachers' and students' perceptions and practices of written feedback, as well as their relationships and differences in English as a foreign/second language and academic writing. This study aimed to identify empirical studies, describe their characteristics, summarize the findings, and make recommendations for future research. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses protocol was used. Electronic searches produced 2,398 references, of which 30 articles met the inclusion criteria. Studies primarily focused on students' perceptions, with few concentrating on students' and teachers' reported practices and the relationships between their perceptions and practices. This review suggests that future research should focus on multiple comparisons between teachers' and students' perceptions and practices of written feedback.

Keywords: academic writing, English as a second or foreign language, higher education, perceptions, practices, written feedback

Con esta revisión sistemática se sintetizaron las percepciones y prácticas de profesores y estudiantes de educación superior sobre la retroalimentación escrita para la escritura académica en inglés como lengua extranjera o segunda lengua. Se buscó identificar las características, hallazgos y recomendaciones para futuras investigaciones de los estudios empíricos seleccionados mediante el protocolo para la presentación de informes de revisiones sistemáticas y metaanálisis. La búsqueda electrónica arrojó 2398 referencias, de las cuales treinta artículos cumplieron con los criterios de inclusión. Los estudios se centran en las percepciones de los estudiantes, pero pocos discuten las prácticas informadas por estudiantes y profesores, así como las relaciones entre sus percepciones y prácticas. Los estudios futuros deberían focalizarse en comparaciones múltiples entre las percepciones y prácticas de profesores y estudiantes con respecto a la retroalimentación escrita.

Palabras clave: escritura académica, escritura en inglés como lengua extranjera o segunda lengua, educación superior, percepciones, prácticas, retroalimentación escrita

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Introduction

Previous empirical studies in higher education (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Sia & Cheung, 2017) overtly focused on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback (WCF) in fostering students' linguistic forms of writing. This perspective was supported by Ferris (1999, 2010), who claimed that WCF can help students struggling with writing accuracy. However, some researchers (Kepner, 1991; Polio et al., 1998) questioned the effectiveness of WCF; Truscott (1996, 2001, 2004) argued against grammar correction because WCF might only have a temporary impact and not encourage students to develop their self-editing writing strategies. Thus, university students were academically underprepared and dissatisfied with teacher feedback (Evans, 2013; Mulliner & Tucker, 2017) if they perceived that WCF did not help them become proficient writers. Therefore, other researchers (Haines, 2004; Hyland, 2013; Vattøy & Smith, 2019) investigated process-oriented written feedback that aims to guide students through various writing processes (e.g., pre-writing, drafting, revision, and editing) and support their development as writers (Keh, 1990).

Previous systematic reviews have explored the effectiveness of written feedback in the higher education context. Torres et al. (2020) conducted a systematic narrative review on the impact of teacher feedback on college students' self-perception in reflective writing. They found that content-situated, dialogic, and emphatic feedback can enhance students' writing and revision processes. Yu and Yang's (2021) review revealed affective, cognitive, and behavioral engagement in the revision process of writing as significant factors influencing ESL/EFL learners' responses to teacher written feedback in tertiary education. Panadero and Lipnevich (2022) reviewed feedback models and typologies developed through research with higher education students and non-university samples. They concluded with an integrative model of feedback elements—including message, implementation, student, context, and agents—and explained how their interactions may improve student performance and learning. Although these reviews revealed that recent research focuses more on student-centered process-oriented feedback than on teacher-centered product-oriented written feedback, this paradigm shift has not yet been examined in the EFL/ESL/academic writing context. Therefore, this systematic review aimed, on the one hand, to explore how teachers' or students' written feedback perceptions are formed and how these shape their practices and, on the other, to compare teachers' feedback perceptions and reported practices with those of students. This review did not focus on primary and secondary levels, as the contexts in which written feedback is provided and received may make different perceptions and/or practices viable or optimal, and the findings can be better compared when only the university context is included. Thus, four research questions were addressed:

1. What are teachers' perceptions and self-reported practices of written feedback?
2. What are students' perceptions and reported practices of written feedback?
3. What are the relationships between teachers' or students' perceptions and their reported practices of written feedback?
4. What are the differences between students' and teachers' perceptions and/or reported practices of written feedback?

Perceptions and Reported Practices

Perceptions are defined as individually distinct experiences, mental and personal constructions, assumptions, and propositions (McDonald, 2012; Richards & Schmitt, 2010). They are closely related

to beliefs, views, perspectives, and conceptions (Pajares, 1992). Regarding teachers, these refer to their knowledge, ideas, and thoughts (Cheng et al., 2021), indicating "the unobservable cognitive dimensions of teaching—what teachers know, believe, and think" (Borg, 2003, p. 81). Concerning the student perspective, perceptions refer to learners' conceptions, ideas, and opinions about English learning, teaching, and language itself (Pajares, 1992). Learners' beliefs are context-based, shaped by their prior experiences, and identified as either functional or dysfunctional (Benson & Lor, 1999).

Reported practices refer to the broader term, teacher practice, which is frequently investigated as perceived by students, observed by researchers, and/or self-reported by teachers (Muijs, 2006). Reported practices are based on these agents' estimates of the types, frequency, and techniques of different lesson activities (Richards & Schmidt, 2010), which need to be examined in triangulation with other perspectives (Lawrenz et al., 2003).

Perceptions and practices are closely related, as perceptions can influence teachers' judgments, decisions, and teaching practices (Borg, 2001; Burns, 1992). Thus, reported practices can have meaningful alignment with perceptions (Brown, 2009) when teachers' perceptions shape their actual instructional practices (Cheng et al., 2021). Discrepancies between these constructs can arise from personal and contextual factors related to teachers, students, and the working environment (Basturkmen, 2012). Therefore, it is essential to investigate how teachers' perceptions shape their written feedback practices (Min, 2013) and how teacher perceptions are related to those of students (Ma, 2018), despite the rarity of this comparison (Montgomery & Baker, 2007).

Method

This article reviews empirical studies on EFL/ESL/academic writing higher education teachers' and students' written feedback perceptions and practices and their relationships to address the research questions. The studies reviewed were published after 1996 because this was the beginning of the debate between Truscott (1996) and Ferris (1999) on WCF effectiveness. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol (Page et al., 2021) was used to identify empirical studies, describe their characteristics, summarize findings, and make recommendations for future research.

Articles were included if they focused on higher education students' and/or teachers' perceptions and reported practices on written feedback, were related to EFL/ESL/academic writing contexts, contained empirical results, and were published in English in peer-reviewed journals that were indexed in Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection. For the search, we used Scopus and the EBSCOhost platform. These sources were last searched on April 1, 2022.

Table 1 shows the terms divided into four categories and the filters used in the literature search. Each category and filter element were linked using the Boolean search code operators AND, and in each category, OR was applied. Truncations (*) were utilized to increase the number of records. In the cases of feedback types and writing context, only the main terms, "feedback" and "writing," were used, and the writing context related to the first language was excluded. The search was conducted by title, abstract, and keywords. The limits were set manually when searching the databases via the EBSCOhost platform.

Table 1. Terms and Limits Used in the Searching Phase

Category	Related terms or limits
Inclusion categories	
Feedback providers or receivers	teachers, supervisors, instructors, lecturers, professors, students, learners
Feedback types	written feedback, written corrective feedback, peer feedback, teacher feedback, direct feedback, indirect feedback, coded feedback
Constructs	perceptions, views, beliefs, perspectives, conceptions, self-reported practices, preferences
Writing context	EFL/ESL writing, academic writing
Filters	
Language	English
Publications	journal articles published after 1996
Exclusion terms	first language, L1 language

Three steps were used to screen studies for inclusion. First, the study characteristics were examined, and the record was excluded if it was non-empirical or if the feedback provider or receiver was not a higher education teacher or student. Second, the writing context was controlled, and the record was eliminated if the study focused on other disciplines (medicine, nursing, pharmacy, etc.) or a general writing context. Third, the construct was checked, and the record was excluded if it did not focus on one of the terms (Table 1) related to any written feedback type. Two reviewers independently screened and reviewed the titles and abstracts of the first 100 records; their ratings were compared, and disagreements were resolved for records considered for inclusion. Then, the reviewers independently screened 200 more records and calculated Cohen's Kappa (κ = .853), indicating high agreement between them. Thus, the first author reviewed the remaining records and discussed the problematic ones with the second author to determine if the abstracts were eligible for full article review.

To retrieve data from the selected articles, the study's reference, research design, data collection method, sample characteristics (sample size, research country), writing context, feedback type, and measured constructs were categorized. First, two reviewers independently assessed the reports for eligibility using this coding scheme. Their discussion on papers to include or exclude resolved disagreements. Second, the first author collected data from the included studies using these categories.

Two methods were used to synthesize the studies: First, the research methodology, data collection, and participant characteristics were summarized. Riazi et al.'s (2018) research methodology codes (qualitative, quantitative, mixed, and eclectic) were used for the first purpose. The methodology designs were also assigned to the categories summarized by Hyland (2016), which contain auto-ethnography, experimentation, case studies, quasi-experiments, and others. Second, the included studies were thematically analyzed to identify and summarize common themes. The process by which the themes were generated and applied was guided by the four research questions. Thus, empirical studies on teachers' perceptions and self-reported written feedback practices were first synthesized, and these constructs were also examined from the students' perspectives. The studies were synthesized based on the educational context and feedback type. The thematic analysis then focused on studies investigating the relationships between perceptions and practices

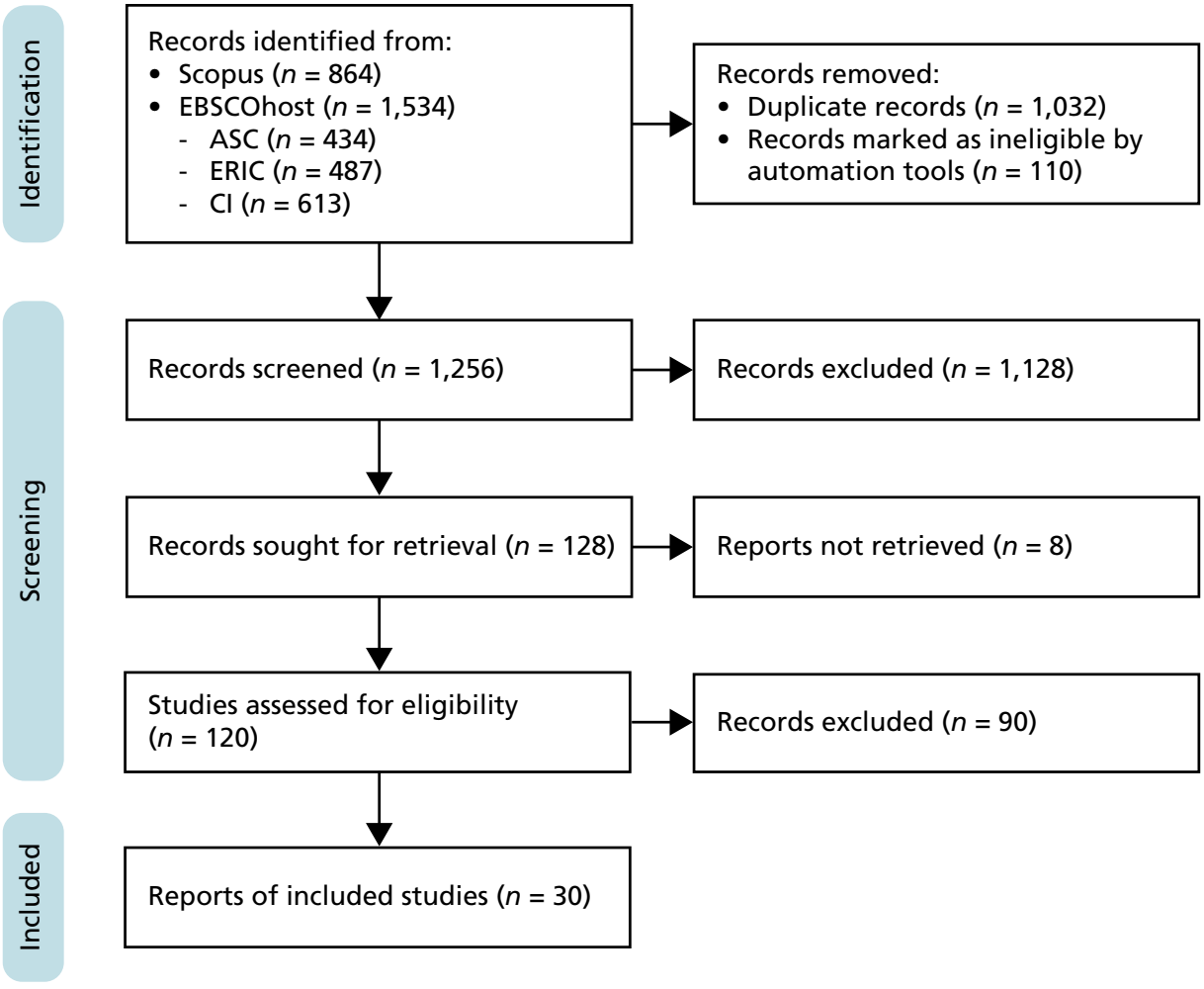
from the perspectives of either teachers or students. Finally, differences in perceptions and/or reported written feedback practices between teachers and students were summarized.

Results

Study Selection

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram. The search yielded 2,398 records. After removing duplicates and records marked ineligible by automation filters, the titles and abstracts of the remaining records were screened. We excluded 1,128 records because they were not empirical ($n = 86$) and not indexed in WoS ($n = 39$); did not involve higher education teachers or students ($n = 41$); focused on other disciplines ($n = 430$); did not pertain to an EFL/ESL/academic writing context ($n = 248$); no variables were connected to the construct (e.g., perceptions, reported practices, etc.; $n = 168$) or to any written feedback type ($n = 116$). After the screening, 128 possible articles remained, of which eight could not be retrieved.

Figure 1. Summary of Literature Search and Review Process



Among the 120 full-text articles, 90 were omitted due to their focus on language institutes or centers that are not part of the universal higher education system (n = 11); higher education students' and/or teachers' reported reactions or perceived effects of feedback (n = 23); automated writing evaluation (n = 23); other languages or disciplines, not including EFL/ESL contexts (n = 12); higher education teachers' and/or students' reflections on the experience of feedback provision and/or reception (n = 10); issues of writing or feedback unrelated to written feedback perceptions or practices (n = 8); and learners' differences or contextual factors and their relation to written feedback perceptions and practices (n = 3). The screening process yielded a total of 30 studies.

Study Characteristics

Regarding research methodology, four studies had quantitative designs, five had qualitative designs, and one had mixed designs. Twenty articles were categorized as eclectic, combining qualitative and quantitative data analysis without explicitly mentioning that their study used mixed methods. Concerning methodology designs, no auto-ethnography, experimentation, or quasi-experiment study was found; there were three case studies. Twenty-seven studies were classified as other designs (e.g., ethnographies, text analysis), with mainly eclectic studies giving similar weight to qualitative and quantitative data analysis (n = 15). Teacher and student questionnaires, interviews, and written reports were often used to collect data (see Table 2). Less frequently applied methods were verbal reports, different feedback types, classroom observations, and analysis of teaching documents. In the studies conducted in the 2017–2022 period (n = 14), student surveys have been used to a lesser extent, emphasizing the examination of written reports.

Table 2. Frequency of Data Collection Methods

Method	Frequency
Student interviews (individual or group discussions)	9
Teacher interviews (individual or group discussions or focus group interviews)	7
Student questionnaires or surveys	22
Teacher questionnaires or surveys	6
Written reports (abstract writing, essays, compositions, writing samples, written assignments or tasks, journals)	12
Verbal reports (think-aloud protocols, stimulated records)	2
Feedback (teacher feedback, student feedback, peer feedback)	7
Classroom observation	1
Teaching documents (teaching materials, tests, teacher self-reports or reflections)	4

Most studies (n = 19) were carried out in Asia, primarily in China (n = 8), Japan (n = 4), and Korea (n = 2), with one study in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Seven studies were administered in America (USA = 5, Canada = 1, Costa Rica = 1). The other studies were conducted in Germany (n = 2), Ethiopia, and New Zealand.

Table 3 shows the key characteristics of the included studies. Regarding writing context, most studies (n = 19) were conducted in EFL, the rest in ESL (n = 5) or

academic writing (n = 6). The studies were grouped based on feedback type, covering product- (f = 30) and process-based written feedback (f = 14); oral feedback (f = 6); and three key sources of feedback, including teacher (f = 27), student (f = 12), and peer (f = 11). In these studies, product-based written feedback is received and provided on written texts to improve students' language accuracy. In contrast, process-based written feedback is used before, during, and after writing activities to develop students' self-regulation, self-editing writing skills, and writing performance, involving social and cognitive processes. Oral feedback is used as a supplement to written feedback through verbal discussions and responses to writing issues. As for perceptions, 11 studies explored them from the teachers' perspective, and 22 investigated students' perceptions. Within both groups, we identified two main topics: 16 studies analyzed teacher and/or student preferences, 10 studied its usefulness, and two focused on both aspects. Self-reported practices were examined in 10 studies from teachers' and/or students' perspectives. Six studies revealed the relationships between perceptions and practices, and in another six articles, the differences between the two target groups were also investigated.

Table 3. Characteristics of the Reviewed Studies

Study	Writing	Feedback						Perceptions		Practices		Rel.	Diff.
		Written		Source			Oral	T	S	T	S		
		Prod.	Proc.	T	S	Peer							
Ahmed (2021)	Acad.	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓
Alshahrani & Storch (2014)	EFL	✓		✓	✓			P	P	✓		✓	✓
Black & Nanni (2016)	EFL	✓		✓				P	P				✓
Bonilla López et al. (2017)	EFL	✓	✓	✓	✓				P				
Chen et al. (2016)	EFL	✓		✓	✓				P				
Cheng et al. (2021)	EFL	✓		✓				P		✓		✓	
Cho (2015)	EFL	✓	✓	✓				U					
Elwood & Bode (2014)	EFL	✓		✓					P				
Haupt & Bikowski (2014)	EFL	✓		✓					U	✓			
Hirose (2012)	EFL	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		U				
Kim (2019)	EFL	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		P				
Li & Barnard (2011)	Acad.	✓	✓	✓				U		✓		✓	
Liu & Wu (2019)	ESL	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	P	P				✓
Maas (2017a)	Acad.	✓		✓	✓				P, U				
Maas (2017b)	Acad.	✓	✓	✓	✓				U				
Mahmood (2021)	EFL	✓		✓					P				
Mao & Crosthwaite (2019)	ESL	✓		✓				P		✓		✓	
McMartin-Miller (2014)	ESL	✓		✓				U	P	✓	✓		✓
Park (2018)	EFL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			U				
Shang (2017)	EFL	✓	✓		✓	✓			U				
Sinha & Nassaji (2022)	ESL	✓		✓					P				

Study	Writing	Feedback						Perceptions		Practices		Rel.	Diff.
		Written		Source			Oral	T	S	T	S		
		Prod.	Proc.	T	S	Peer							
Tian & Li (2018)	EFL	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		P				
Wakabayashi (2013)	EFL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			U				
Wang (2014)	EFL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		U				
Wei & Cao (2020)	EFL	✓		✓				P		✓		✓	
Wei et al. (2022)	Acad.	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓		
Yenus (2020)	EFL	✓		✓					P				
Yu et al. (2021)	Acad.	✓		✓				P					
Zhu & Carless (2018)	EFL	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		U				

Note. Acad. = Academic, Prod. = Product-based written feedback, Proc. = Process-based written feedback; T = Teacher; S = Student; U = Usefulness; P = Preferences; Rel. = Relationships; Dif. = Differences

The studies were divided into two categories to identify trends in the development of the themes and how they were applied. Compared to earlier studies (n = 16), teachers' written feedback preferences have been more frequently investigated in studies of the last five years (n = 14), while the usefulness of written feedback from the student perspective has been less emphasized. In addition to examining teachers' and students' written feedback practices, current investigations have focused more on peer and oral feedback and have also determined the differences in perceptions and reported practices between teachers and students. Next, we present the results of the thematic analysis. The sub-headings indicate the themes that were used in the data analysis.

Teachers' Perceptions and Self-Reported Practices of Written Feedback

Teachers' Perceptions of Written Feedback Preferences

Five studies focused on Chinese EFL/ESL or academic writing university instructors' written feedback preferences; thus, their findings can be compared due to the similar context. Owing to instructors' training and students' mixed abilities, teachers preferred to focus on a combination of various feedback strategies—including high-, low-, and no-demand (Wei & Cao, 2020), focused, indirect, and oral (Liu & Wu, 2019)—that was provided on global issues (Cheng et al., 2021; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019) in a comprehensive way (Cheng et al., 2021). Yu et al. (2021) found relationships between feedback preferences and teachers' emotions. Positive emotions occurred when written feedback was viewed as a means to communicate with students, and negative emotions were more prevalent among instructors who preferred to provide comprehensive WCF but perceived no returns from this practice.

In other university contexts, teachers' written feedback preferences varied mostly regarding WCF scope and types. Whereas selective WCF on grammar and vocabulary was preferred among Saudi EFL instructors (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014), global feedback by ESL writing teachers in the USA was favorable due to their conscious or unconscious awareness of its value (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). Thai university instructors favored indirect WCF to develop students' metacognitive writing skills (Black & Nanni, 2016).

Teachers' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Written Feedback

Cho (2015) revealed that Korean EFL teachers found focusing on the student writer rather than the written text useful because teachers perceived that providing feedback to motivate students was influential in developing independent writers who were confident in their writing. In another study, Li and Barnard (2011) found that although New Zealand academic writing tutors perceived feedback to improve students' writing skills as useful, their intention was rather to explain the grades they provided. In McMartin-Miller's (2014) study, all U.S. ESL instructors were aware of the usefulness of selective and comprehensive error correction practices. However, they perceived their use as challenging and dependent on their instructional context, beliefs about learning, and demands as graduate instructors.

Teachers' Self-Reported Practices of Written Feedback

Concerning the focus and scope of feedback in Chinese EFL writing instruction, most teachers reported that they provided feedback on local issues related to grammar, syntax, and vocabulary (Cheng et al., 2021; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019). Comprehensive feedback on all error types over selective feedback was often the common practice of teachers in China (Cheng et al., 2021) and Saudi Arabia (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014). Saudi EFL instructors used coded WCF on mechanics to assist students with low proficiency and to adhere to the university's feedback provision guidelines (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014). In line with the frequent practice of providing local feedback among teachers in China (Cheng et al., 2021; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019), ESL instructors in the USA also utilized local feedback because they thought that it helped students ameliorate their writing (Montgomery & Baker, 2007), and their feedback amounts also differed due to the need to adapt to the effective learning opportunities, instructional environment, and teaching demands (McMartin-Miller, 2014). Concerning the focus of academic writing instructors in the American context, written feedback sought to improve writing in terms of organization, thesis statement, purpose, coherence, and content rather than language accuracy (Ahmed, 2021).

Three studies investigated teachers' practices regarding different written feedback types. Haupt and Bikowski (2014) found that involved U.S. EFL teachers reported providing form-based written feedback on grammatical aspects during the multi-draft writing process. Most teachers used indirect-coded written feedback and direct feedback, while indirect-coded written feedback with comments was never used. In accordance with students' mixed language abilities, Wei and Cao (2020) identified that EFL teachers from Thailand, China, and Vietnam employed high-demand feedback (e.g., students' response to feedback required) because of their preservice and in-service professional training experiences and contextual factors associated with local cultural influence and limited resources; low-demand (e.g., correcting all errors) and no-demand feedback were utilized due to these teachers' prior teaching and language learning experiences. The influential role of experiences was also verified in Li and Barnard's (2011) study: Giving feedback as a grade—and explaining the reason behind it—rather than giving feedback for improvement was attributed to the untrained and inexperienced part-time academic writing tutors' reflection on their own experiences as students when receiving feedback on their written assignments from instructors.

Students' Perceptions and Reported Practices of Written Feedback

Students' Perceptions of Written Feedback Preferences

Seven studies were conducted in the Asian EFL university writing context to investigate students' preferences concerning WCF, their relationships with writing

improvement, and preferred peer feedback activities in the revision process. Regarding WCF types, direct feedback was preferable to indirect feedback because it was useful for eliminating Kurdish learners' writing errors (Mahmood, 2021), improving Saudi students' writing performance in grammar (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014), and enhancing Thai students' writing accuracy (Black & Nanni, 2016). Direct feedback was preferred by Japanese female students over males, and students preferred detailed and handwritten feedback because they could address content and mechanical errors in this way (Elwood & Bode, 2014). However, face-to-face peer review was perceived as preferable to anonymous negative feedback because reviewers could ask for clarifications when dealing with problematic issues in essays (Kim, 2019). Similarly, in peer feedback interactions, Chinese students preferred providing oral feedback and formulating written comments in supportive ways, as well as observing peer feedback interactions between other classmates to identify their strengths and deficiencies and improve their own writing (Tian & Li, 2018). As an indicator of their active role in the revision writing process without relying heavily on instructors, Chinese students preferred indirect WCF that indicated their organizational and grammatical errors and extended comments on both content and grammar (Chen et al., 2016).

American ESL students' preferences regarding peer and teacher written feedback were investigated in three studies. Peer feedback, as indicated by students with higher proficiency levels, was considered important because it demonstrated their proficiency level and ability to evaluate themselves and others (Liu & Wu, 2019). However, students also viewed teacher feedback as preferable because it covered all of their writing errors, and they preferred feedback on global issues (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). Regarding their perception of error treatment, they also favored comprehensive error correction over their instructors' approach of providing selective feedback (McMartin-Miller, 2014).

In other contexts, written feedback was investigated based on students' perceived preferences related to thesis writing, comprehensive feedback, direct and indirect WCF, and learner-driven feedback (LDF). For their thesis writing, EFL graduate Ethiopian students favored content feedback over genre and linguistic feedback provided by their supervisors because the former helped them develop critical research skills, such as gaps in the literature and theoretical understanding and coverage (Yenus, 2020). Compared to low-proficiency students, high-proficiency Costa Rican students preferred metalinguistic feedback with codes due to positive attitudes toward WCF and its usefulness, as well as past foreign language learning, teaching, and testing experiences (Bonilla López et al., 2017). Although direct and indirect WCF positively affected students' accuracy, there was no significant relationship between learners' perceptions and the effectiveness of these feedback types (Sinha & Nassaji, 2022). German students preferred LDF over traditional forms of feedback because it fostered interactive discussions, self-regulation learning, and solving their own language problems, primarily in rewriting their drafts (Maas, 2017b).

Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Written Feedback

Six studies in the Asian EFL writing context aimed to investigate students' perceptions regarding the usefulness of different peer feedback activities in the revision process. Regarding dialogic peer feedback, Zhu and Carless (2018) found it beneficial because Chinese written feedback providers could interact with receivers and teachers to improve their evaluative strategies, whereas receivers could engage with and respond to the written comments they received as a result of their negotiations with the providers. However, Wang (2014) also revealed that the perceived usefulness of peer feedback decreased over time and was affected by students' knowledge of essay topics, limited English proficiency, attitudes toward peer feedback practice,

concerns with interpersonal relationships, as well as time constraints.

When comparing the beneficial effects of reviewing a peer's or one's text, Wakabayashi (2013) found that peer feedback from the writer's perspective was more beneficial than that obtained from the reviewer's perspective because it helped Japanese students revise their drafts and improve their writing. Understanding their dual responsibilities as a writer and a reviewer increased their awareness of the value of peer feedback. Enhancing students' activity through written-plus-spoken forms of peer feedback was also considered useful for motivating Japanese students to write and speak in English and, therefore, develop their writing skills (Hirose, 2012). Korean students also appreciated peer feedback because they had an active role as feedback providers and receivers in the revision process and could identify their weaknesses and strengths (Park, 2018). In other studies, however, the usefulness of peer feedback was not revealed. Taiwanese students had more positive feelings towards synchronous corrective feedback than asynchronous peer feedback because it helped them immediately correct their syntactic complexity-related errors (Shang, 2017). Similarly, the preference of Korean students for peer feedback over teacher feedback was not emphasized, even though both were helpful and beneficial (Park, 2018).

In contrast to the previous studies that focused on peer feedback, three examined the usefulness of other written feedback types. When investigating American university EFL learners' perceptions of both direct and indirect form-focused written feedback, Haupt and Bikowski (2014) identified that code-, comment-, and explanation-based feedback were perceived as more useful in text revision than the other feedback types. Maas (2017b) found that most of the German academic writing students perceived LDF delivery formats to be more helpful in improving their aspects of general language accuracy in English than traditional forms of feedback because they could ask for specific information on how they wanted to receive feedback and on what aspects. In another study, Maas (2017a) also revealed that students had positive attitudes toward interactive dialogues and self-regulation learning opportunities provided by the LDF modes (e.g., in-text changes and comments) because they could ask for specific feedback supporting them in revising their drafts.

Students' Perceived Written Feedback Practices

Three studies examined either students' perceived instructor practices on error correction in ESL or their reported peer feedback practices in academic writing. In McMartin-Miller's (2014) study, the participants reported that their instructors used varied WCF approaches by focusing on selective or comprehensive feedback. Regarding peer review practices in the academic writing context, Ahmed (2021) compared two groups of native and non-native students at a U.S. university and found that both groups prioritized language accuracy over macroaspects of writing, indicating they paid more attention to the final product than to the writing process. In Wei et al.'s (2022) study, both self-reflection and peer feedback practices varied between students with low and high self-efficacy. Low self-efficacy students focused on similar aspects of writing when providing peer feedback. In contrast, high self-efficacy students provided self-reflected feedback on and assessed peers' micro and macroaspects of writing.

The Relationship Between Teachers' or Students' Perceptions and Their Reported Practices

The reviewed studies do not examine the relationship between students' perceptions and reported practices; however, six studies investigated how teachers' perceptions related to their reported written feedback practices. These were categorized based on feedback scope, focus, strategies, and purpose.

Studies in the Chinese and Saudi contexts have resulted in contradictory findings regarding the scope

of feedback. Chinese university EFL teachers' beliefs toward a comprehensive approach to feedback (marking students' writing thoroughly) aligned with their practices because they provided feedback on both global and local writing issues (Cheng et al., 2021). However, Saudi EFL instructors' preferences toward selective WCF on grammar and vocabulary did not align with their practices of comprehensive WCF on mechanics (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014).

Comparable findings regarding the misalignment between teachers' perceptions of feedback focus and their practices were identified in Chinese and American EFL writing contexts. Most instructors involved in the studies of Cheng et al. (2021) and Montgomery and Baker (2007) claimed their focus was on global issues related to problems in content, organization, paragraphing, cohesion, and coherence. However, they rather provided written feedback on local issues such as vocabulary and grammar.

In the Chinese EFL writing context, teachers' perceptions regarding feedback strategies often did not match their practices. The instructors involved in Cheng et al.'s (2021) study used both direct and indirect feedback strategies, which were not reflected in their perceptions. This inconsistency was explained by contextual factors, including heavy workload, institutional policy, and time constraints. Misalignments were also identified in three feedback relationships (direct or indirect, global or local, and margin-based or non-margin-based feedback) because teachers stated in their interviews that they provided direct feedback based on global issues in the margin; however, based on their feedback on students' writing, they provided indirect feedback based on local issues without commenting in the margin (Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019). Wei and Cao (2020) also found that teachers perceived indirect feedback strategies as more beneficial; however, they reported their use of direct feedback.

In New Zealand, Li and Barnard's (2011) study revealed a discrepancy between academic tutors' perceptions of feedback purpose and their actual practices, as they believed that providing feedback was intended to help students improve their writing skills, whereas their actual intention in practice was to provide grades along with justifications. This disparity was attributed to the tutors' lack of experience with feedback provision standards, their reflection on their own feedback-receiving experiences as students, and their lack of systematic training as markers and assessors.

Differences Between Students' and Teachers' Perceptions and/or Reported Practices of Written Feedback

Three studies delved into the differences between students' and teachers' written feedback perceptions. Liu and Wu (2019) found that American teachers' views contradicted ESL students' preferences regarding peer review, scope, and feedback type because most teachers opposed peer review, hesitated to correct every error, and favored indirect WCF. The preferences of Thai university instructors and students for indirect feedback were inconsistent, as teachers favored it while students rated direct feedback typologies as their favorites (Black & Nanni, 2016). This misalignment justified teachers' willingness to develop metacognitive writing skills rather than the students' desired language accuracy. In contrast to these studies, Liu and Wu (2019) found alignment between teachers' and students' perspectives on the usefulness of feedback regarding feedback in a balanced tone, oral feedback, and feedback on both rhetorical issues and language use. Similarly, Montgomery and Baker (2007) identified a match because both teachers and students preferred primarily mechanics-related feedback.

Concerning the differences between students' and teachers' reported written feedback practices, Ahmed's (2021) quantitative study revealed a mismatch because writing instructors stressed the macroaspects of writing (e.g., organization, evidence, thesis statement, content,

and coherence) while students focused on the language accuracy of their peers (e.g., grammar, spelling, and punctuation). Alshahrani and Storch (2014) compared Saudi teachers' WCF perceptions and practices with students' perceived preferences and discovered both an alignment in providing comprehensive feedback and a misalignment in feedback type and focus. Most teachers provided indirect feedback on mechanics, whereas students preferred direct feedback on grammar. McMartin-Miller (2014) also identified misalignment in the feedback approach because students sometimes reported that their instructors marked some writing errors while instructors claimed they were marking all errors. This discrepancy was due to students' lack of understanding of instructors' error marking and their role in the error treatment process.

Discussion and Conclusions

The present systematic review of written feedback research in the higher education context of EFL/ESL/academic writing revealed that student perceptions were more investigated than those of teachers, indicating a shift toward a student-centered approach. This differs from the teacher-centered transmission-oriented approach, as it allows learners to respond to feedback information from diverse sources (teacher, self, and peers) and implement it to enhance their work (Carless & Boud, 2018). Fewer studies from both perspectives concentrated on reported written feedback practices, and some studies explored the relationship between teachers' perceptions and their reported practices (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014; Cheng et al., 2021; Wei & Cao, 2020), but none examined this from the student's perspective. There were also a few studies that made comparisons between teachers' and students' written feedback perceptions and practices. Empirical studies examining written feedback dualities—implicit/explicit, face-to-face/anonymous, written/spoken, teacher/peer, asynchronous/synchronous— (Hirose, 2012; Kim, 2019; Shang, 2017) and their relationships—between proficiency level and feedback, as well as between peer dialogic feedback and its benefits— (Liu & Wu, 2019; Zhu & Carless, 2018) frequently focused on students' perceptions at the expense of their practices. Owing to their call for encouraging other alternative feedback practices, these studies could be significant to the field.

This paper disclosed some limitations in the evidence reviewed in the involved studies. Most of them (Cho, 2015; Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Wei & Cao, 2020) examined teachers' perceptions and/or practices regarding one or two written feedback types, and fewer focused on how EFL/ESL/academic writing teachers perceive and utilize various written feedback forms (Liu & Wu, 2019; Tian & Li, 2018). Similarly, student-related studies (Elwood & Bode, 2014; Kim, 2019; Yenus, 2020) primarily focused on specific written feedback types. Another limitation was that studies (Cheng et al., 2021; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019) primarily involved experienced teachers.

The review process was limited to studies published in the WoS Core Collection journals and focused on the higher education context. The difficulty of comparing, synthesizing, and generalizing findings from different writing contexts in various education systems is also acknowledged as a limitation. However, this review identified gaps in feedback research, particularly in comparing teachers' and students' perspectives. Addressing these gaps could provide a better understanding of written feedback principles and classroom practices and their impact on the collaborative roles of students and teachers in EFL/ESL/academic writing. Comparing students' and teachers' perceptions based on their preferences "may be a first step toward reconciling the differing expectations between those giving feedback (i.e., teachers) and those receiving it (i.e., students)" (Black & Nanni, 2016, p. 109).

To address the revealed mismatches between teachers' and students' written feedback perceptions and practices, instructors need to understand the meaning and value of feedback, both intended and perceived by

the recipients (van der Kleij, 2019). They should also reflect on their perceptions, peer review their teaching practices, seek feedback from experienced colleagues (Farrell, 2011), adopt a selective and focused approach to providing feedback, and recognize emotional reactions. This helps instructors regulate their emotions and focus on effective feedback-giving techniques (Yu et al., 2021). In terms of professional development, instructors should continuously enhance their written feedback strategies and approaches to improve student writing by meeting the specific needs of each learner (Yu et al., 2021). This may ameliorate classroom practice and align instructors' written feedback beliefs and practices with their students' preferences and reported practices to enhance student engagement and motivation, leading to higher effectiveness in writing development.

The review suggests exploring how teachers self-regulate their emotions when providing feedback, studying the development of their perceptions with increasing experience, and examining the mediating role of teachers in supporting peer feedback and developing students' evaluative judgment. Future research should also investigate the factors influencing written feedback perceptions and practices and the impact of different written feedback types, such as learner-driven, asynchronous, synchronous corrective, face-to-face, and anonymous feedback. Understanding students' preferences for direct feedback and their reasons for relying heavily on the instructor's input could also be valuable research. Overall, the present review sheds light on the gaps and limitations in existing research on written feedback in EFL/ESL/academic writing contexts. The identified implications and recommendations may guide instructors and researchers in enhancing the effectiveness of feedback practices.

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