Global Englishes Language Teaching: Implications for Feedback in EAL Writing

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ABSTRACT

This short article reviews key literature that problematizes the conventional WCF approach, which adheres to native-speaker norms and fails to reflect the diverse realities of English use in the globalized era. Drawing on Lee's (2023) proposal, the article discusses the principles and benefits of a feedback pedagogy informed by Global Englishes (GE), which values learners' linguistic resources, prioritizes communicative effectiveness, and promotes language awareness. In line with Rose and Galloway's (2019) GELT curriculum innovation cycle, the article highlights the need for further research to examine the feasibility, compatibility, and effectiveness of this approach in various contexts. It also emphasizes the importance of developing guidelines to support teachers in adopting GE principles and incorporating them into teacher training programs, with a specific focus on feedback in writing. The article concludes by underscoring the potential of the GELT framework for transforming feedback practices in L2

writing and fostering a more equitable and inclusive landscape of written feedback research and pedagogy.

Keywords: Global Englishes Language Teaching, WCF, feedback pedagogy, curriculum innovation

Introduction

The emergence of the Global Englishes (GE) paradigm has profoundly changed the landscape of English language teaching (ELT) over the past decade or so (Galloway, 2011; Rose & Galloway, 2019). There is now a substantial body of literature on the need to move away from native-speaker norms and innovate ELT pedagogy to better align with the diverse realities of English use in the globalized era (Rose et al., 2021). In writing, there have been calls for a translingual approach (Horner et al., 2011; Zhang, 2022) that challenges the monolingual ideology and embraces language varieties and flexibility in written communication. Despite these developments, the conventional feedback pedagogy in L2 writing, which is dominated by written corrective feedback (WCF), continues to emphasize error correction based on native-speaker norms (Lee, 2023). The main limitation of such a WCF approach is that it relies on a simplistic binary of "correct" or "incorrect" language use (Lee, 2023), failing to account for the socially contingent nature of correctness and appropriateness in writing (Horner et al, 2011). L2 writing scholars have problematized the WCF approach's adherence to native norms, arguing that it places unrealistic expectations on both teachers and learners; and inhibits learners' creativity and risk-taking in writing (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018; Lee, 2023).

However, to date, Lee (2023) is the only discussion in the literature on redesigning feedback pedagogy from the GE perspective in L2 writing. The main aim of this article is to take stock of such initiatives under the innovative cycle of Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT) (Rose & Galloway, 2019). Implications for future research and teacher education are discussed.

GELT: Bridging the Gap Between ELT and Language Reality

Conventional approaches to ELT have long prioritized native-speaker norms, often regarding non-standard usages as deficiencies. However, these approaches fall short in preparing learners for the linguistic diversity they inevitably encounter in global contexts, where the majority of English communication occurs between multilingual language users who are

non-native English speakers (NNES) (Crystal, 2012). To address this discrepancy, Galloway (2011) introduced the concept of GELT, which aims to reframe ELT by grounding it in the theoretical principles of GE research. This shift seeks to better align ELT with the evolving sociolinguistic landscape of English in the 21ˢᵗ century (Galloway & Rose, 2019).

The latest iteration of GELT (Galloway & Rose, 2019) highlights the distinctions between traditional ELT and GELT from various aspects, including the target interlocutor, language ownership, the treatment of culture, norms, teacher hiring practices, materials, needs, assessment criteria, learning goals, ideological foundations, and overall language orientation. These differences underscore the shifting paradigms in ELT towards a more inclusive, global, and multilingual approach that recognizes the diverse realities of English use in today's world.

That said, research on incorporating GELT into writing remains relatively limited despite the growing interest in a multilingual approach to writing (e.g., Horner et al., 2011). This scarcity can be attributed to the adherence to codified standards and traditional assessment practices, which restrict the space for embracing non-standard forms and varieties in the writing classroom (Tardy et al., 2021; Zhang, 2022). The same holds true for written feedback pedagogy and research, where the predominant focus is on error correction based on native-speaker norms (Lee, 2023). This suggests a need for a paradigm shift in written feedback to better reflect the realities of English use in the globalized world.

Conventional WCF Practices: Limitations and Challenges

WCF, also known as grammar feedback or error correction (Lee, 2024), refers to the practice of providing markings, symbols, or comments on written texts to correct linguistic errors primarily at the local level (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, and spelling). As an essential aspect of L2 writing (Crosthwaite et al., 2022; Mao & Lee, 2020), WCF serves the dual purposes of developing L2 writing skills and facilitating L2 acquisition and is considered a powerful form of interaction between the learner and a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher or peer (Crosthwaite et al., 2022).

Given the dynamic and multifaceted nature of WCF, it has been a vibrant and ongoing research topic in the field of L2 writing (Ferris, 2012; Lee, 2023). In the early years, many studies sought to provide evidence supporting the use of WCF in response to Truscott's (1996) case against error correction. Consequently, the primary focus was on the effectiveness of WCF strategies, such as direct vs indirect feedback, in improving grammatical accuracy (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 1999). Over time, the scope expanded beyond just the WCF itself to consider various contextual and individual

difference factors, as evidenced by a notable rise in studies on teacher WCF practices and stakeholders' beliefs and attitudes (e.g., Lee, 2009; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019). Researchers also increasingly investigated learners' and teachers' engagement with and responses to WCF (e.g., Han & Hyland, 2015; Mao & Lee, 2022; Zheng & Yu, 2018), as well as their emotional experiences (e.g., Mahfoodh, 2017; Yu et al., 2021). This shift reflects a growing recognition of the social and interpersonal aspects of feedback processes. Technology has also changed the landscape of WCF, as seen in the mounting research on computer-mediated WCF (e.g., Ene & Upton, 2018) and automated writing evaluation (e.g., Stevenson & Phakiti, 2014). Recent years have also witnessed an upsurge in WCF research on feedback literacy (e.g., Lee, 2021; Lee et al., 2023).

It is noteworthy that previous WCF studies are built upon the assumption that native-speaker norms serve as the benchmark for providing feedback on L2 writing (Lee, 2023). The reliance on native-speaker standards may, however, fail to fully account for the socially contingent nature of correctness and appropriateness in writing, overlook the nuances of language use in different contexts (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018; Heng Hartse & Kubota, 2014), and bring detrimental effects to both teachers and students, warranting critical reevaluation.

To begin with, by adhering to a monolingual ideology and native-speaker norms, the conventional WCF approach places an unrealistic expectation and undue pressure on teachers as they are held to an elusive ideal of native-like correctness (Casanave, 2012; Lee, 2023). In reality, however, EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers may struggle to provide feedback that conforms to native-speaker standards. In a study by Lee (2004), 58 Hong Kong secondary teachers were asked to correct a student essay, and analysis of the teacher error corrections showed that only slightly more than half of them were correct. In addition, rigid adherence to native-speaker norms can lead to an overemphasis on accuracy, with teachers feeling pressured to focus excessively on error-free writing measured against native-speaker norms (Lee, 2008). Consequently, teachers are likely to develop a simplistic view of writing that reduces the complexities of writing to just enforcing grammatical accuracy norms, failing to acknowledge that meaning-making should be prioritized over strict adherence to form when teaching writing (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018). Moreover, the conventional WCF approach may hinder teachers from aligning their feedback with the broad sociolinguistic realities of English language use in global contexts, where most communication takes place within non-native speaker norms (Rose et al., 2021).

Similarly, the conventional WCF approach may hinder students' development as multilingual writers. By disregarding the value of learners'

multilingual and cultural resources, conventional WCF practices can be demotivating for students and inhibit risk-taking and creativity in writing (Lee, 2023). Additionally, an excessive focus on correctness reinforces the monolingual ideology and compels students to strive for an unattainable goal of native-like accuracy (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018). According to a survey study by Lee et al. (2018), the cumulative effect of receiving error-focused feedback over the years can take a significant toll on students' writing motivation. Also, students may develop a narrow view of writing that prioritizes grammatical accuracy over effective communication, potentially undermining their confidence as multilingual writers (Canagarajah, 2006).

The challenges and limitations discussed above raise important questions for further reflection and research in this field, such as the following: How do we critically examine assumptions about target norms in WCF research and practice? How can we develop feedback approaches that value learner diversity and communicative effectiveness over strict adherence to native-speaker norms? The GE paradigm offers vital insights into addressing these crucial issues for advancing a more inclusive and equitable landscape of written feedback research and pedagogy.

GELT-Inspired Feedback Pedagogy: Principles, Benefits and Challenges

Informed by GE, Lee (2023) problematized the conventional WCF approach and proposed to drop "corrective" from the term in favor of a broader notion of "feedback on language use". Instead of merely pointing out the inadequacy of the underlying WCF assumption, Lee (2023) also outlined several key principles for a feedback pedagogy through the lens of GE. First, a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy acknowledges learner agency and creativity in language use. It considers L1 proficiency as an asset rather than a liability. Teachers may prioritize intelligibility and recognize students' novel use of their multilingual resources to make meaning, even if it does not conform to "standard" English. By deemphasizing correctness as per native standards, this approach can divert attention to other important issues in writing, such as content, organization, and rhetorical effectiveness. When teachers and students are obsessed with the native-speaker norms, they may neglect these crucial dimensions of writing, resulting in a lop-sided approach that fails to develop students' overall writing competence. Second, a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy goes beyond surface-level accuracy and promotes learners' language awareness, aiming to develop students' rhetorical sensitivity in relation to genres, purposes, and audiences. Third, a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy recognizes the fluidity and flexibility of English as a global language, rather than viewing it through a simplistic binary of either correct or incorrect.

What is considered acceptable evolves across different communities that use English. For instance, Martinez (2018) conducted a corpus-based study revealing that non-native scholars use lexical items in ways that deviate from the native norms, such as using "besides" as a sentence-initial discourse marker, "works" meaning "studies", and "in this context" as a synonym for "thus". While initially considered non-standard, these usages are gaining acceptance in international scholarly publications over time. Additionally, a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy challenges native-speaker linguistic norms as the ultimate target for EAL learners. This written feedback approach aligns with GE principles that acknowledge the plurality and inclusivity of English use in the globalized context.

Lee's (2023) proposed GE-inspired feedback pedagogy enhances the current GELT framework (Rose & Galloway, 2019) by bringing forth a more nuanced understanding of written feedback practices within GELT, forming an integral part of the GELT writing curriculum innovation. This pedagogy offers manifold benefits to both teachers and students. To begin with, by clarifying that writing is not synonymous with accuracy, this approach frees teachers from an excessive focus on error-free writing as measured against an elusive native-speaker norm. As a result, teachers move beyond correctness to prioritize intelligibility and meaning-making, exercising professional judgement in feedback on language use. Second, it enables teachers to align their feedback practices with the broad sociolinguistic reality of English language use (Rose et al., 2021), allowing them to respond to EAL students' creative language use that may not conform to standard English but reflects students' agency in making meaning by drawing on their linguistic repertoire. Third, this approach releases students from the unrealistic expectation of achieving native-like correctness in writing, which can encourage them to take risks and express their creativity in writing. Consequently, it can help EAL learners build their confidence as multilingual writers by recognizing their culture, identity and multilingual abilities.

This pedagogical innovation, however, is not without challenges and resistance. Concerns have been raised about the potential erosion of established standards and the risk of confusion caused by recurring non-standard usages in grammar, word choice, word forms, and style in the pursuit of inclusivity (Stapleton, 2019). While the researchers proposing a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy may find its benefits obvious, frontline teachers, who serve as gatekeepers, might hold different perspectives based on their existing beliefs and experiences. Furthermore, factors such as language ideology, the availability of materials, and institutional constraints may hinder the adoption of this approach. More importantly, when high-stakes examinations place a great deal of emphasis on written accuracy defined in terms of native norms, teachers, especially those working in examination-

driven contexts, may find GE-inspired feedback pedagogy impractical and unfeasible. As suggested by Lee (2023), awareness of the influence of GE on feedback pedagogy does not necessarily mean that teachers should turn a blind eye to errors and completely ignore the realities of writing assessment. It is a matter of striking a balance between maintaining accuracy and embracing the diversity of GE in pedagogical practices.

Implications

The reconceptualization of a feedback pedagogy within the framework of GELT in L2 writing classrooms has several implications for future research and teacher education programs.

To the best of our knowledge, Lee (2023) is the only paper so far that has approached written feedback from the GE perspective. Given the importance of feedback in promoting students' language awareness, feedback informed by GE is still an uncharted research territory worth further exploration. Rose & Galloway (2019) proposed a complex curriculum innovation cycle that involves several key stages (Fig. 1). The cycle begins with an initial stage where a decision is made to proceed with GELT innovation. It is followed by the implementation stage, which involves attempting to integrate GELT into the curriculum. The next stage is institutionalization, where an attempt is made to align the GELT curriculum and achieve sustainability. In accordance with Rose and Galloway's (2019) pedagogical innovation cycle, following Lee's (2023) initial proposal of a GE-inspired feedback pedagogy, further research needs to be conducted to examine the feasibility and compatibility of this innovative approach with various contextual factors before attempting to implement it in practice. This is a crucial phase in the innovative process, as it helps identify potential barriers and informs necessary adaptations to maximize the likelihood of successful institutionalization (Rose & Galloway, 2019).

Figure. 1

Stages of GELT Curriculum Innovation (adapted from Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 82)
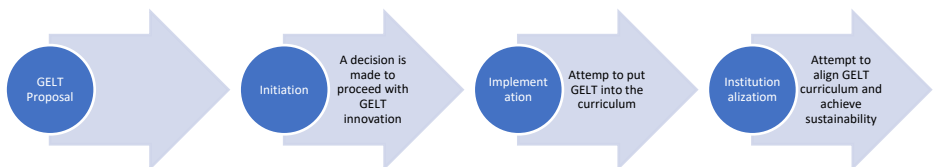
Research on stakeholders' (e.g., pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, language policymakers, institutional administrators, students, etc.) attitudes towards this pedagogical innovation can also facilitate communication and understanding between scholars proposing the changes and frontline teachers responsible for implementing them in mainstream language classrooms (Montakantiwong, 2023). Furthermore, evidence-based studies are needed to examine the effectiveness of this pedagogy on students' writing development, linguistic awareness, and attitudes towards language varieties to address both policymakers' and frontline teachers' concerns.

Meanwhile, researchers can develop guidelines to assist frontline teachers in navigating the paradigm shift, and these guidelines can be incorporated into teacher training programs to help pre-service and in-service teachers raise their awareness of GE and its implications for feedback practices.

Conclusion

This article focuses on the implications of the GELT framework for redesigning feedback pedagogy in L2 writing. It has been discussed that the current written corrective feedback (WCF) approach, which emphasizes error correction based on native-speaker norms, fails to align with the sociolinguistic realities of English use in the globalized era. This article has highlighted the value of Lee's (2023) proposal of a feedback pedagogy informed by GE, which is more inclusive and context-sensitive, acknowledges learners' diverse linguistic resources, and prioritizes communicative effectiveness over strict adherence to native-speaker norms. Importantly, this article has discussed the implications of this reconceptualized pedagogy for future research and teacher education, emphasizing the need for more studies to examine the feasibility, compatibility, and effectiveness of this approach in various contexts.

As Galloway (2017) noted, GELT does not seek to completely supersede established ELT practices, but rather to critically re-evaluate them in light of GE research. Likewise, it is crucial to note that the primary objective of this article is to contribute to the ongoing conversation about innovating feedback practices in L2 writing and to stimulate further research and discussion on this topic. The intention is not to negate previous approaches altogether or to present a definitive one-size-fits-all solution. Rather, the aim is to encourage a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of L2 writing from a GE perspective, recognizing the diverse contexts and needs of learners in an increasingly globalized world. It is hoped that this article illustrates the potential of the GELT framework for

transforming feedback practices in L2 writing and advancing a more equitable and inclusive landscape of written feedback research and pedagogy.

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