Different Sequences of Feedback Types: Effectiveness, Attitudes, and Preferences

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to: 1) to compare the effects of different sequences of feedback types on the students' writing ability and their effect size; 2) to compare the effects of the levels of general English proficiency (high, moderate, and low) on the students' writing ability and their effect size; 3) to investigate the interaction effects between the different sequences of feedback types and levels of general English proficiency on the students' writing ability; and 4) to survey the students preferences for self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and the integration of Facebook and the peer feedback strategy. This study was of an experimental, 3x3 factorial design and was conducted with 108 engineering students with different levels of general English proficiency. The students were trained in how to do self-correction or how to provide effective peer feedback before doing the assigned tasks. Two-way ANOVA was employed for the data analysis for the first three research questions, and descriptive statistics

and content analysis were used for analyzing the data from the questionnaires, interviews, and reflective journals for the fourth research question. Pedagogical implications for EFL writing classes are discussed.

Keywords: self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, Facebook-integrated peer feedback, EFL writing instruction

Introduction

A command of good writing ability is one of the most required skills in the twenty-first century. However, students that learn English as a foreign language (EFL) often lack sufficient English writing ability. This is a significant barrier that may obstruct greater academic achievement, career success in the world of business, and pleasure in civic life (Hansen, 2005). Writing ability is not a naturally-born talent or merely acquired through exposure to English input without proper instruction and practice. In order to become a competent writer, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence are required (Canale & Swain, 1980).

At King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB), writing is one of the elective courses offered every semester, and there are approximately 120-150 students enrolled in this course. Unfortunately, the students' English problems, such as illogical organization of ideas, incorrect language use, incoherent sentences, inappropriate word choice, misspelling, and wrong punctuation are presented when they are assigned to write an English paragraph. Without doubt, these prominent problems may be due to the fact that most students had little or no experience in paragraph writing; the skill of writing was not the main focus of the two foundation English courses previously taken in their first year of study. Therefore, it is the major responsibility of writing instructors to search for effective teaching methods and strategies that enable students to improve their writing skills.

In Thailand, because of the paradigm shift in language instruction, from rote learning to a student-centered approach,

Educational Affairs has proclaimed the 2010 National Education Act, which aims at encouraging Thai students at all levels to acquire a thirst for knowledge and to become lifelong learners (Ministry of Education, 2008). Therefore, the ultimate goals of a writing course should be re-examined. The course objectives should not only increase the students' writing ability but also train them to become independent learners that are able to empower their own learning with less teacher dependence in a supportive learning environment. However, this result cannot be successfully achieved if there is a mismatch between learning objectives and learning assessment, which relies heavily on traditional testing methods. Therefore, alternative assessment, including self-assessment and peer assessment, has gained considerable attention from scholars and English language instructors. However, it is still controversial whether EFL students are able to evaluate their own work and provide useful comments to their classmates effectively since their English knowledge is limited. In addition, they are inclined to be affected by Thai culture in terms of such aspects as face preservation and group harmony, which have deep roots in the system of Thai education and which may influence the quality of feedback.

A number of studies have investigated the effects of different types of written responses on the students' writing performance, revisions, and attitudes (Berg, 1999; Chandler, 2003; Hewett, 2000; Tuzi, 2004; Warchauer, 1996), and the types of responses may vary, from feedback responders (self, teacher, or peers) to modes (oral or written) and media (traditional paper-pencil, e-mail, or Web 2.0 technology). In these studies, the student participants were assigned to a particular group in which they experienced only one type of feedback as a treatment for the experiments. In other words, the students were not able to experience different types of feedback, so they did not know which type of feedback they would prefer and that would help them to learn. In the present study, three types of feedback—self-correction, traditional paper-pencil peer feedback, and the integration of Facebook and peer feedback—are the main focus.

Self-correction is a strategy used when students read, analyze, correct, and evaluate their own writing by using guided questions or checklists (Wanchid, 2013). The focus of the revision could be on either form or meaning or both together. A number of previous studies have shown that the self-correction strategy can improve the students' linguistic competence (Erfanian, 2002), increase their writing performance and accuracy (Ganji, 2009), help increase their independence from the teacher, help them to better remember their writing mistakes, assist in the evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses in writing, and it saves time in large classes (Ancker, 2000; Yang, 2010).

However, the research conducted with EFL students has not been consistent with ESL writing instruction, as many students may find it difficult and demotivating to locate their own mistakes with their insufficient English knowledge. The different results of the previous research may be a result of several factors, such as the levels of English ability, the student's previous English learning background, and no self-revision strategy training.

Peer feedback is a writing activity in which writers work in groups collaboratively and provide information on each other's writing. The peer feedback activity can be different in terms of the focus of feedback, employing comments or corrections for example, and the forms of the feedback may be in a written, oral, or computer-mediated mode. The important theoretical framework of peer feedback is derived from Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development, where a less competent learner follows a more competent learner's example and gradually develops the ability to do certain tasks without help. This means that advanced peers can provide scaffolding through feedback and reduce the potential problems in peer evaluation (Wanchid, 2013).

However, the effectiveness of using traditional peer feedback in the EFL writing class is still inconclusive because of several factors, such as the students' English proficiency and the impacts of culture. Most EFL students tend to avoid providing honest comments in order to preserve a harmonious relationship

among group members, and they are likely to be reticent in group discussions (Wanchid, 2013).

Facebook, a free social networking site, was applied in this study, as most students are familiar with it and it is the most popular site registered by users around the world (Dave, 2012). Facebook presents users with a platform for sharing information, expressing their feelings, giving opinions, and having discussions through private rooms, wall posts, or a particular group. Students can gain benefits through the integration of Facebook as an effective communication tool for student-student interactions and teacher-student interactions in the language classroom. Previous research has shown that using Facebook in the writing class not only increases the students' learning motivation but also enhances the interaction among students and the teacher in a virtual context where the target language learning is not limited as in the traditional classroom (Saengsawang, 2013; Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012; Yancey, 2009). It has also been asserted that the use of peer feedback via Facebook can possibly substitute for face-to-face communication. Although Facebook seems to yield positive results, negative results have also been found. For instance, negative comments from peers on Facebook can affect the students' self-esteem and may discourage them from learning and writing (Yanus & Salehi, 2012). Additionally, with the use of Facebook students have been found to spend more time in socialization than for educational purposes (Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, 2010; Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009).

Overall, each type of feedback has its own advantages and disadvantages and may affect the students' writing performance in different ways. Thus, different sequences of types of feedback in writing instruction can possibly have different effects on the students' writing ability, especially when being employed with mixed ability levels of students in the writing class. Interestingly enough, not many studies have focused on this aspect, and in order to fill this gap, this research was conducted in order to compare the effects of different sequences of types of feedback and different levels of general English ability on the students' writing

ability and the interaction effects of these two independent variables.

Literature Review

According to Lewis (2002), for teachers, feedback provides information about the students' learning progress and is a form of evaluation for their teaching. For learners, feedback is considered an ongoing process, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses as well as their learning progress. Providing feedback in the EFL writing class is believed to be a teacher's major responsibility, particularly in higher-context cultures, in which authority is primarily in the teachers' hands and students feel that it is inappropriate to question teachers (Baker, 2013). However, previous studies have pointed out that teacher feedback sometimes disheartens and destroys the students' self-esteem and self-confidence. As a result, self-correction and peer feedback strategies have been introduced in first (L1), second, (L2), and foreign language writing instruction (Hyland, 2003).

In this digital age, it cannot be denied that computer technology has vastly impacted English language instruction, in particular the instruction of writing. Hence, the trend to provide feedback has also moved from the traditional paper-pencil or face-to-face mode to the electronic mode. Many social networking sites such as Facebook, MSN Messenger, and weblogs have become popular and are utilized in the writing class. Table 1 shows some of the common features and differences among oral peer feedback, paper-pencil peer feedback, and electronic peer feedback.

Table 1: Common Features and Differences in Oral, Written, and Electronic Peer Feedback (Tuzi, 2004; Wanchid, 2008)

Criteria	Oral peer feedback	Paper-pencil peer feedback	Electronic peer feedback
Mode of communication	Oral	Written/ mostly one-way communication	Written/two-way communication
Pressure to respond	Pressure to immediately respond	Pressure to respond by next class	No pressure to immediately respond
Place and time	Place and time dependent	Place and time dependent	Place and time independent
Components of communicaiton	Nonverbal components	No nonverbal components	No nonverbal components
Personal distance	Face-to-face or less personal distance	Less personal distance	More personal distance
Level of cultural barriers	Greater cultural barriers	Greater cultural barriers	Fewer cultural barriers
Involvement with others	Greater sense of involvement	Less sense of involvement	Greater sense of involvement
Frequency of meaning negotiation	More negotiation of meaning	Less negotiation of meaning	More negotiation of meaning
Delivery effort	Less delivery effort depending on L1 or L2	Greater delivery effort	Less delivery effort
Other facilities	Not available	Not available	Cut & paste
Message permanence	Less sense of message permanence due to unpublished messages	Less sense of message permanence due to unpublished messages	Greater sense of message permanence due to visible online messages

As can be seen in Table 1, oral peer feedback typically occurs in real time in a classroom where writers and responders can read, mark errors, or give comments on a paper text. Both parties can use verbal and non-verbal language for communication and negotiation. The students may feel pressured due to the class time constraints and feel uncomfortable when giving truthful comments during the face-to-face communication. In paper-pencil peer feedback, responders read and write comments on their friend's paper during class or outside class time and then return the paper within the due date, so the delivery effort is strong and sometimes the paper is lost or accidentally damaged.

Interestingly enough, the characteristics of the paper-pencil peer feedback and electronic peer feedback are different in various aspects, and it could be said that the benefits of electronic peer feedback outweigh the paper-pencil peer feedback in several ways, such as it being place and time independent, causing less pressure in terms of providing feedback, requiring less delivery effort, the proud of message permanence, and encouraging higher interaction levels. However, in order to maximize the potential of the peer feedback activity, the combination of these three modes can be employed in the writing process cycle at different stages depending on the writing instructors' teaching and learning contexts.

Scope of the Study

1. The independent variables in this study are the different sequences of feedback types and the different levels of general English proficiency, while the student's writing ability, attitudes, and preferences are the dependent variables.

2. This study focused only on three types of feedback: self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and the integration of Facebook and peer feedback. Although the teacher provided written feedback and small group conferencing for the students' writing assignments, the students' attitudes toward the teacher's feedback was not included in this study.

3. There were three writing tasks focused on in the writing course, with three different rhetorical types: narrating an event, describing things, and giving reasons and examples.

Research Objectives

1. To compare the effects of different sequences of feedback types on the students' writing ability and their effect size

2. To compare the effects of the levels of general English proficiency (high, moderate, and low) on the students' writing ability and their effect size

3. To investigate the interaction effects between different sequences of feedback types and levels of general English proficiency on the students' writing ability

4. To survey the students' preferences regarding different types of feedback: self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and Facebook-integrated peer feedback

Research Hypotheses

1. The mean scores on the writing achievement test of students receiving different sequences of feedback types are not significantly different at the 0.05 level.

2. The mean scores on the writing achievement test of students that have different levels of general English proficiency are significantly different at the 0.05 level.

3. There is no interaction effect of different sequences of feedback types and levels of general English proficiency on students' writing achievement at the 0.05 level.

Methodology

Research Sample

The population was comprised of 150 Thai second-year undergraduate engineering students enrolled in *Writing I* as an elective course at KMUTNB in the first semester of academic year 2014; however, the subjects of this study were 108 students. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sufficient sample size with a reliability of 95% and errors not exceeding 5%, out of 150

as the number of population should be about 110, but there were 108 subjects in this study. However, the sample size was considered sufficient enough to represent the population for experimental research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

The subjects were composed of fifty-one females and fifty-seven males. The students' age range was 19-21. All of them had passed *Foundation English I* and *Foundation English II*, and they had different levels of general English proficiency (high, moderate, and low). The stratified random sampling technique was used for subject selection and assignments. Based on the students' total raw scores for English I and II, they were classified into three levels of general English proficiency: a high-proficiency group (36 participants), a moderate-proficiency group (36 participants), and a low-proficiency group (36 participants). After that, twelve students from each group were randomly assigned to the three experimental groups.

Measurement Instruments and Data Collection

Four research instruments were used in this study: a writing achievement test, an attitude questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, and reflective journals. The writing achievement test was used to serve the first three research questions, and it was adapted from Wanchid's study (2013). There were three main parts: error identification, completion, and expository paragraph writing on the topic "What is the most important thing in your life?" Test quality was validated by 3 experts in the field of EFL writing instruction, and the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was 1. Classical Test Item Analysis and Grading (Sukamolson, 1995) was used to analyze the test items. The results of the item analysis showed that the difficulty index was 0.66 on average, the discrimination index was 0.54, and the reliability coefficient was 0.76. The students had 3 hours to complete the test.

The assessment criteria for the paragraph writing section were based on Pavlik and Segal's writing profile (2007), covering five majors writing components: content, organization, vocabulary,

language use, and mechanics, with each one having three rating levels of *poor, average, and excellent.* Analytic scoring was applied as the rubric of evaluation because of its outstanding usefulness, high validity, and washback (Hyland, 2003). The test was distributed at the beginning and end of the course.

A questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, and three reflective journals were used in the study to answer the fourth research question. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the students' responses regarding their attitudes toward different types of feedback, and it had three main parts. The first part contained the students' demographic data. The second part of the questionnaire was composed of twenty short statements eliciting the students' preferences for feedback types while the third part had two open-ended questions asking the students' attitudes toward the writing course and further improvement. The reliability of the questionnaire calculated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, SPSS version 11.5, was 0.96. Descriptive statistics were used for the data analysis. Semi-structured interviews were arranged at the end of the experiment while the students' reflective journals were applied in order to gain more in-depth information. The students had to write three writing journals in which they reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of, and their preference for, each type of feedback they experienced when they finished each writing task. The instruments were validated by 3 experts, and the Index of Item Objective Congruence of the qualitative instruments (IOC) was 1.

The Experimental Process

The experimental period was 15 weeks, corresponding with the *Writing I* course. The students in the three experimental groups were treated equally in order to prevent the occurrence of other extraneous variables. Only the treatment was different, as each experimental group experienced different sequences of the types of feedback. The following table describes the experimental process of the study.

Table 2: The Experimental Process

Phases	Activities	Weeks (1-15)
I	• In the first week, the students took the pretest. • The students in each experimental group were divided into 6 subgroups for the peer feedback activities. Each group had 6 students: 2 high-, 2 moderate-, and 2 low-ability students. They worked together until the end of the course. • The objectives of the writing course, the course content, and the course evaluation were explained to and discussed with the students. The use of self-correction and peer feedback activities was introduced to the students. The objectives, contents, and scoring rubric for the writing tasks were also discussed.	1-3
II	• Throughout the course, the students had to write three writing assignments: narrative, descriptive, and giving reason and example paragraphs (3 weeks for each assignment). The students in the three experimental groups had to experience all three types of feedback with different sequences. The students in each experimental group were trained in how to do self-correction or how to provide effective peer feedback using paper and pencil or Facebook before doing the task. After each assignment was submitted, the students had to complete the writing journal, reflecting their viewpoints of the type of feedback they experienced.	4-14
III	• The students took the posttest. • The students completed the questionnaire. • Additionally, 30 students (10 high-proficiency students, 10 moderate-proficiency students, and 10 low-proficiency students) were randomly assigned to the interview session.	15

The three groups were taught by the researcher as a teacher, used the same teaching and learning materials, and wrote on the same paragraph writing topics assigned by the teacher. The time allotment for completing each writing assignment task was three weeks. Only the treatment—the different sequences of types of feedback—was different, as shown in Table 3. The different writing tasks were arranged in accordance with the course outline and the course book used in the writing course, namely, *Road to Successful Writing* (Wanchid, 2015). It was assumed that the efforts of the students writing these three different text types were more or less the same because each writing assignment had equal scores, and the students' performance on the feedback activities was taken into account in the course assessment and evaluation.

Table 3: The Sequence of Feedback of the Experimental Groups

Writing Assignment Task	Experimental Group 1	Experimental Group 2	Experimental Group 3
1. Narrative Writing (during weeks 4-6) Topic: The Most Memorable Event in My Life	Self-correction	Paper-pencil peer feedback	The integration of Facebook and peer feedback
2. Descriptive Writing (during weeks 8-10) Topic: My Bedroom	Paper-pencil peer feedback	The integration of Facebook and peer feedback	Self-correction
3. Giving Reasons and Examples (during weeks 12-14) Topic: My Idol	The integration of Facebook and peer feedback	Self-correction	Paper-pencil peer feedback

Procedures of self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and electronic peer feedback

As there were three experimental groups experiencing different sequences and types of feedback, as shown in Table 3,

the students underwent the same procedures for each type of feedback.

In regard to self-correction, before the students were assigned to do self-correction on their first draft, they were trained in how to correct their work by analyzing their own writing using guidelines: focusing on content, organization, and grammatical errors. Then the students were divided into small groups for conferencing with the teacher in order to ensure that they understood how to do the self-correction. Then they had one week to do the self-correction task and wrote a second draft based on their own revision, and then submitted the second draft to the teacher in the subsequent week in the classroom. After the students received the teacher feedback, they had to write the final draft and submit their work to the teacher.

It should be noted that before the students did the paper-pencil peer feedback or electronic peer feedback, they were trained in how to provide useful comments on their friends' paper in order to ensure the quality of their comments. In order to be certain that the students could distinguish between the helpful and not-so-helpful comments from their peers, group consultations were arranged out of class time at the beginning of the experiment, at least 2 times for each subgroup or 30 minutes per time.

For the paper-pencil peer feedback, the students had to write an essay and then submit it to the teacher within the due date. The essays were copied and assigned to the students that were in the same subgroup. Each student was assigned to provide feedback on five papers from their group members by using the guidelines, focusing on both global and surface-level aspects of writing. They had one week to do the task before returning the papers to their friends. After the students received the papers from their peers, they had a face-to-face discussion regarding the comments during class time for 30 minutes. After that, they had a weekend to revise their first draft outside the classroom before submitting the second draft to the teacher with the attachment of the peer feedback within the due date. Next, the teacher provided feedback on the students' second drafts. After that they revised

and then submitted the final product to the teacher before the due date.

Regarding the integration of Facebook and the peer feedback strategy, all of the students had a Facebook profile and were familiar with the "note" function on Facebook. The students were shown how to post their work, give comments to their group members based on the guidelines, and send multiple drafts, all of which was done using the Facebook note. Also, they could receive comments from other classmates or other friends that were on their friends' list. They had one week to do the task and they had to post their feedback to their friends before the next class. After the students received the feedback from their classmates, they had a weekend to revise their first draft outside the classroom before submitting the second draft. Next, the teacher provided feedback on the students' second drafts using the same peer feedback guidelines. After that, they had to revise and then submit the final product to the teacher before the due date.

Data Analysis

1. For the first three research objective, the writing scores of the students from the three experimental groups were analyzed using two-way ANOVA.

2. In regard to the fourth research objective, the data obtained from the close-ended part of the questionnaire were analyzed by employing descriptive analysis, including mean, S.D., and percentage. Additionally, regarding the data from the open-ended part of the questionnaire, reflective journals and semi-structured interview were analyzed using content analysis and then quantified in terms of percentage in salient categories.

Results of the Study

1. According to the first research objective, which was to investigate the effects of different sequences of types of feedback on the students' writing ability, the results from the two-way ANOVA in Table 4 showed that the different sequences of feedback

types had a significant effect on the students' writing ability (F= 3.77, *p<.05*).

Table 4: Tests of Between-Subject Effects

Dependent Variable: Writing Achievement Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Partial Eta Squared
Different sequence of feedback types	963.842	2	481.921	3.77*	0.071
Levels of general English proficiency	7306.065	2	3653.033	28.55*	0.366
Different sequence of feedback types * Levels of general English proficiency	761.733	4	190.433	1.49	0.057
Error	12669.16	99	127.971		
Total	297620.902	108			
Corrected Total	21700.801	107			

* p< .05

Therefore, the first research hypothesis was rejected. This also means that the writing achievement scores of the students in the three experimental groups in the posttest significantly increased from the pretest. Moreover, the mean scores of the students in Experimental Group 3 (mean = 54.77) were higher than those of Experimental Group 2 (mean = 48.60), and Experimental Group 1 (mean = 48.27).

Since differences in the students' writing achievement according to the different sequences of feedback types were found, Scheffe's test, a post-hoc comparison test for equal variance assume, was performed. Table 5 shows that the students only in Experimental Group 3 performed differently from those in

Experimental Group 1, Scheffe's (the mean score of Experimental Group 1 – the mean score of the Experimental Group 3) = -6.4981 $p < .05$. In contrast, mean differences were not found between the pairs of other groups: 1) Experimental Group 1 and Experimental Group 2, and 2) Experiment Group 2 and Experimental Group 3.

Table 5: Results of the Post-hoc Multiple Comparison Test for the Three Experimental Groups

Comparisons		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Experimental Group 1	Experimental Group 2	-.3350	2.66	.991
	Experimental Group 3	-6.4981*	2.66	.043
Experimental Group 2	Experimental Group 1	-.3350	2.66	.991
	Experimental Group 3	-6.1631	2.66	.059
Experimental Group 3	Experimental Group 1	6.4981*	2.66	.043
	Experimental Group 2	6.1631	2.66	.059

The Partial Eta squared effect size was 0.071, which means that the different sequences of feedback types by themselves accounted for 7.1% of the total variability of the dependent variable or English writing achievement. According to Becker (2000), this magnitude is small. The correlation of 0.071 was small, as per Cohen's d scale of magnitudes of a correlation (Cohen, 1988).

2. According to the second research objective, which was to investigate the effects of the levels of general English proficiency on the students' writing achievement, the results from the two-way ANOVA showed that the levels of general English proficiency had a significant effect on the students' writing achievement ($F= 28.55$, $p<.05$). Therefore, the second research hypothesis was accepted. The results of the Scheffe's test are presented in Table 6.

It was found that the subjects at different general English proficiency levels performed differently.

Table 6: Results of the Post-hoc Multiple Comparison Test for the Three Levels of English Proficiency

Comparisons		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
High proficiency	Moderate proficiency	11.69*	2.67	.000
	Low proficiency	20.05*	2.67	.000
Moderate proficiency	High proficiency	-11.69*	2.67	.000
	Low proficiency	8.36*	2.67	.006
Low proficiency	High proficiency	-20.05*	2.67	.000
	Moderate proficiency	-8.36*	2.67	.006

The mean score on the writing test revealed that the high-proficiency group outperformed the moderate-proficiency group, and the moderate group outperformed the low-proficiency group. The Partial Eta squared effect size was 0.366, which meant that the levels of general English proficiency accounted for 36.6% of the total variability of the dependent variable or English writing ability. According to Becker (2000), this magnitude is moderate. The correlation of 0.37 was medium according to Cohen's d scale of magnitudes of a correlation (Cohen, 1988).

3. Based on the results from the two-way ANOVA, it was shown that there was no interaction effect of the types of feedback or levels of general English proficiency on the students' writing achievement (F= 1.49, *p>.05*). Therefore, the third research hypothesis was accepted.

4. According to the last research objective, which was to survey the students' preferences for self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, or Facebook peer feedback, the results from the questionnaire are illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7: Students' Preferences Regarding the Type of Feedback They Experienced

	Self-correction %	Paper-pencil peer feedback %	Facebook peer feedback %
1. I like this type of feedback the most.	4.4	32.2	63.3
2. I like this type of feedback the least.	78.9	6.7	14.4
3. This type of feedback is a fun way to learn.	5.6	7.8	86.7
4. This type of feedback is the most convenient.	10	25.6	64.4
5. This type of feedback is the most appropriate for the writing class.	4.4	55.6	40
6. This type of feedback is the most efficient method of revision.	3.3	41.1	55.6
7. This type of feedback is the easiest way to give comments.	7.8	7.8	84.4
8. This type of feedback is embarrassing.	6.7	4.4	88.9
9. This type of feedback is the most interesting.	4.4	17.8	77.8
10. This type of feedback is the most useful for a writer.	11.1	41.1	47.8
11. This type of feedback is the most useful for a reader.	3.3	15.6	81.1
12. This type of feedback is the least comfortable.	63.3	21.1	15.6
13. This type of feedback is the most stressful.	48.9	13.3	37.8
14. This type of feedback is the best was for me to provide feedback with confidence.	34.4	41.1	24.4
15. This type of feedback helps me improve the content of my writing.	6.7	32.2	61.1

	Self-correction %	Paper-pencil peer feedback %	Facebook peer feedback %
17. This type of feedback helps me improve the organization of my writing.	8.9	40	51.1
18. This type of feedback helps me improve my vocabulary.	13.3	18.9	67.8
19. This type of feedback helps me improve mechanics and spelling.	7.8	23.3	68.9
20. This type of feedback is the most honest way to give comments.	38.9	41.1	20

The findings from the writing journal were consistent with the questionnaire, as the students seemed to prefer Facebook peer feedback to the other two strategies. The percentage of the fourteen positive items of the questionnaire gained the highest positive response (from 47.8% to 86.7%) feedback, reflecting the student participants' preferences for Facebook peer feedback, as they felt that it was a fun way to learn (item 3), the easiest way to give comments (item 7), and the most useful for the reader (item 11). In contrast, the highest percentage of the participants' response or 88.9% went to item 8, as most of the students still felt embarrassed when their writing assignments were shown in public on Facebook.

For the paper-pencil peer feedback, three statements (items 5, 14, and 20) gained the highest response percentage from the student participants—this type of feedback is the most appropriate for use in the writing class (55.6%), gives me the most confidence in providing feedback (41.1%), and is the most honest way to give comments (41.1%). However, it is noteworthy that the self-correction group had the lowest response percentage in many aspects compared to the other two groups, except for item 2 (I like this type of feedback the least), item 12 (This type of feedback is

the least comfortable), and item 13 (This type of feedback is the most stressful), which are all negative statements. Further, the results of the students' journal writing assignments and the interview revealed that most of the students thought that the self-correction strategy was helpful as it encouraged them to be aware of the elements of good paragraph writing. However, it was sometimes difficult for them, especially for the low-English-ability students, to make corrections themselves without the teacher or peer intervention due to their limited language knowledge. For this reason they felt less confident and demotivated when they revised their own writing.

Discussion

The Effectiveness of the Different Sequences of Types of Feedback Employing Mixed Levels of English Proficiency Students

The results revealed that Experimental Group 3 undertaking the sequence of Facebook-integrated peer feedback, self-correction, and paper-pencil peer feedback respectively had the highest mean score on the posttest. In contrast, the students in Experimental Group 1 undertaking the sequence of self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and Facebook-integrated peer feedback received the lowest mean score. In other words, this result can be attributed to the different sequences of feedback strategies. To explain from affective and social perspectives, the utility of Facebook-integrated peer feedback was able to better trigger the students' learning motivation and enhance their positive attitudes toward English writing when it was arranged as the first sequence.

Based on the results from the interview with the students in Experimental Group 3, integrating Facebook and peer feedback seemed to be the most interesting means for them to provide feedback, as they normally use Facebook in their everyday life for social purposes. All of them agreed that they felt excited and had fun using Facebook for posting their writing assignments and commenting on their friends' work in public, where other friends

that did not study in the writing class could also see their writing. Additionally, they were eager to receive comments from their friends, and this motivated them to do their best in writing and providing high-quality feedback, as they were aware that their comments were also shown to the public. Furthermore, the functions of Facebook, which allow synchronous and asynchronous communications among users without time or place restrictions, can promote higher student-student interactions compared to paper-pencil peer feedback, so the relationships among friends in the group and the sense of trust among them were gradually developed. When they experienced the self-correction feedback as the second sequence in their second writing assignment, the input of their English knowledge increased, as they had gained a number of comments from other friends in the previous activity, the Facebook-integrated peer feedback activity, and they were more confident in terms of revising their own work. This time, it seemed that they gained more critical skills and improved their self-revision strategies. As a result, when they did the paper-pencil peer feedback as the third sequence, they could provide more specific comments and this conformed to the questionnaire results and reflective journals, showing that the paper-pencil peer feedback was the most appropriate strategy for use in the writing class.

Further, the group conferencing set up in the class time after paper-pencil peer feedback was more meaningful and provided more effective communication, as the degree of cultural barriers was decreased as the students had developed an integrity relationship as they were helping each other to improve their writing through many in-class activities. They were able to clarify their comments to their friends' and negotiate meaning. This comfortable environment for group conferencing would never have occurred if the oral group discussion had been set up for the first sequence, when they did not know each other well and their language input was insufficient. The interview results supported the findings, as the low- and moderate-English-proficiency groups were more confident in their writing ability and they could provide

more specific feedback on their friends' writing with less difficulty. The findings also conform to previous studies (Kurt & Atay, 2007; Rollingson, 2005), which revealed that using peer feedback decreased the writing anxiety of the students while in turn it increased their confidence and stimulated discussion and collaboration among peers.

As the researcher was the writing instructor in the three groups, the group discussions during the peer feedback activity were observed. It was found that when employing the group discussion for the first or second sequence, off-task comments and interaction often occurred, and the limited English-proficiency students that were reticent during the discussion were dominated by the higher-proficiency students. On the other hand, the comments provided during the group discussion after the paper-pencil peer feedback for the third sequence were more specific, and a cooperative learning environment among the different levels of English proficiency students was created in a respectful manner when dealing with different points of view. That can explain why the group undertaking paper-pencil peer feedback as the first task did not gain the highest mean scores as expected since they should have made use of the peer comments and revised their own work more effectively than the other two groups. Unlike the group that used the self-correction for the first method, they seemed frustrated, as this was the first task that they had studied for a few weeks, so their English writing had not yet improved or they did not have sufficient input to revise their own work even though they were trained in how to do self-correction before the task.

However, it was found that the posttest scores of the three experimental groups were significantly higher than the pretest scores. Being exposed to the three types of feedback provided the students with the opportunity to try innovative ways to open new doors of valuable learning experience using an alternative assessment that suited the students that had different learning styles. The variety of learning activities may have motivated them to learn instead of sticking to only one type of feedback until the end of the course.

Concerning to the levels of general English proficiency, the results showed that the writing achievement scores of the high-, moderate-, and low-proficiency groups were significantly different. Previous studies have demonstrated that there is a strong positive relationship between writing ability and general English proficiency. Moreover, the different writing process behaviors of the three proficiency groups were another significant reason for the significantly-different writing scores of the three proficiency groups. As pointed out by previous studies, skilled writers spend more time at the pre-writing stage, use various writing and revising strategies, and have sufficient language resources that enable them to concentrate on meaning more than grammatical aspects (Chalk et al., 2005; Chen, 2003; Sasaki, 2000). High-proficiency learners tend to use learning strategies more effectively, so they are more successful in language learning (Swatevacharkul, 2006; Wei, Shang & Briody, 2012). Further, the motivation, effort, and levels of self-directed ability of high-proficiency students are normally higher than those of low-proficiency groups. An interesting finding was that all three groups of students had better scores compared to the pretest. It could be said that the designated activities helped them to learn as their writing ability improved.

Although the different sequences of the types of feedback and the differences in English proficiency had significant effects on the students' writing ability, a significant interaction effect on the types of feedback strategy was not found. It seems that the levels of general English proficiency had significant effects on the students' writing achievement in a natural pattern, as the low-proficiency group using each feedback type had the lowest scores, while the high-proficiency group using a different feedback type performed best. Due to this natural pattern, each line had no chance for intersection. As a result, the conclusion can be drawn that there was no particular feedback type that was preferred by any proficiency group.

With respect to the reviewed literature, the types of feedback shared common characteristics, as previously discussed.

Therefore, their unique features and functions provided a number of benefits that may vary when employed at different times in the writing class. In other words, arranging the right sequence of feedback strategies at the appropriate time for writing instruction can maximize the utility of each type of feedback. Therefore, teachers should be aware of the sequence of feedback types when implementing them in the writing class. To conclude, each strategy has its own advantages and disadvantages, both in terms of theoretical aspects and practice. Writing instructors should be aware of their teaching and learning contexts, the students' personality traits, and the students' preferred learning styles as well.

In conclusion, this research contributes to teaching pedagogy by encouraging writing instructors to employ different feedback types in their writing class with the appropriate sequences in order to open new learning experiences to their students, which may enhance their students' writing development.

Preferences for Types of Feedback

The results revealed that Facebook-integrated peer feedback was the type of response that the students preferred most because of the beneficial functions of the social networking site from various perspectives. With respect to the cognitive perspective, in terms of writing development, the majority of the students reported that the integration of Facebook and peer feedback helped them improve their writing in all focused writing aspects, such as content, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics.

In terms of the social perspective, it can be said that Facebook can serve the students' lifestyles, as it has become an important part of their everyday communication among friends. The usefulness of the functions and applications on Facebook not only provides a supportive environment for collaborative and cooperative learning, but also provides a platform to learn writing through social interactions. The interview results showed that the students felt excited and motivated when they posted their work

and waited for comments. Additionally, their interaction increased. Although the Thai language could have been used as a means for communication, the students tried to communicate in English for asynchronous and synchronous interactions. However, off-task comments were also found.

Based on the students' perceptions, the students seemed to have positive feelings toward the use of social networks. This agrees with many studies (Maneeratphairoj and Wanchid, 2015; Saengsawang, 2013; Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012; Wanchid, 2013; Yancey, 2009). However, in the EFL writing class, the negative aspects that devalued the benefits of the social network were the feeling of shyness when the students received comments from their peers or when the errors in their writing were revealed, as they considered that they lost their face in public. This social embarrassment is considered to be one of the important threats to one's social identity, which may cause learning anxiety (Tanveer, 2008) and may affect subsequent learning achievement and proficiency more than instrumental and integrative motivation (Paige et al., 2000 cited in Young, 2014).

The study's findings are consistent with previous research (Thongrin, 2002; Wanchid, 2008), which pointed out that some Thai cultural traits such as the notion of face, ego-orientation, maintaining group harmony, and *Kreng Jai* (the concern for other people's feelings) are significant barriers that downgrade the value of peer feedback. In order to lessen this cultural impact, an anonymous peer feedback environment is recommended in order to obtain honest feedback from the peer group, and the objectives of the peer feedback activity and the role of the feedback provider should be clear enough to students so that they can build a sense of trust in a cooperative learning environment. As suggested by Young (2012, p. 24), "certain cultural shifts will be necessary if Thailand is to reach its desired goal of nationwide proficiency in English." In order to achieve this mission, the responsibility is given to the teachers to make this expected goal a reality.

Another advantage of peer feedback via Facebook is the physical aspects and convenience of storing, retrieving, and

submitting work and revising papers easily compared to paper-pencil peer feedback, where time and place are the main constraints. For the face-to-face discussion, the students had only 30 minutes, as the teacher had to follow the teaching schedule. Some students lost their friends' papers, and sometimes they did not receive comments because the students in their group missed the class. However, among the three types of feedback, the paper-pencil peer feedback gained the highest percentage of agreement from the students, as it was considered the best way of doing the activity, as off-task comments were not found and the peer comments were more specific. However, it could be said that honest comments would not be found if paper-pencil peer feedback were assigned as the first or second sequence, where the sense of trust among friends was not yet established. Most of the students kept their comments neutral in order to keep the group harmonious. Additionally, it was considered a more effective way to provide feedback, as the culture has an impact on providing comments.

Self-correction seemed to be the strategy that the students preferred the least, except for the high-proficiency students. Unlike the high-proficiency students, the low and moderate students said that it was difficult for them to correct their own work because of their limited linguistic knowledge. They were not ready for self-directed learning, and their learning styles seemed to prefer group work instead of individual work. Further, previous research has shown that students seemed to have negative attitudes toward learning English, and their writing behaviors are different from skilled writers, as they spend less time on pre-writing tasks. A number of students reported that self-correction was the most stressful feedback strategy because they could not find the errors or mistakes by themselves. As a result, employing this as the first strategy among the three types may increase their anxiety and apprehensiveness. Therefore, teachers should consider both internal and external learner variables in order to maximize the students' learning outcomes or the sequence of activities before implementing them in the course.

Conclusion

The results revealed that the different sequences of types of feedback and the levels of general English proficiency had a significant effect on the students' writing ability with a small and a medium effect size respectively. Among the three experimental groups in this research, the students in the third experimental group undertaking the integration of Facebook and peer feedback strategy, self-correction, and then paper-pencil peer feedback gained the highest mean scores, while the students in the first experimental group experiencing self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and then Facebook-integrated peer feedback had the lowest mean scores. The possible reasons for the results may be cognitive, affective, social, and cultural. Further, the results showed that the students in the high-proficiency group outperformed the two other groups, and the scores of the students with moderate English proficiency were higher than those of the low-proficiency students. The characteristics of good and bad language learners and the different behaviors of skilled and less-skilled writers during the writing process can provide a vivid explanation. The interaction effect between these two independent variables—different sequences of types of feedback and levels of general English proficiency—was not found due to their natural pattern, with no chance for intersection. In terms of the students' preferences, they seemed to prefer Facebook-integrated peer feedback, as it provided them with a supportive and collaborative learning environment, although they felt embarrassed. The virtual environment overcomes these bad feelings as the benefits of Facebook overcome the negative aspects.

Pedagogical Implications

According to the results of the study, significant effects of the different sequences of types of feedback and levels of general English proficiency on the students' writing ability were found, and the students' attitudes toward self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, and Facebook peer feedback quite varied. It could be inferred that the best feedback method does not exist, as each

type of feedback has its own strengths and weaknesses, and the students themselves have their own personality and preferences. As a result, the belief that there is a single effective strategy that fits the variety of all students does not exist in language instruction. In fact, it would be useful for students to have a chance to be exposed to various kinds of feedback in the writing class since it would help them discover which method is suitable to their own learning. In order to achieve this goal, writing instructors have an important role to play in designing feedback activities and well-planned lessons, which definitely requires a great deal of effort, energy, and determination on the part of the teachers and the students' full cooperation.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. As teacher feedback may have an important role in EFL writing instruction, a comparable study of different types of feedback such as self-correction, paper-pencil peer feedback, electronic peer feedback, and teacher feedback would be interesting.
2. In order to gain more in-depth insights, the attitudes of the students with different levels of English proficiency should be statistically tested.
3. Other potential factors that might cause different results, such as gender, age, learning styles, learning strategies, technology apprehension, and computer literacy, should be taken into consideration.
4. As this study was conducted with engineering students, it would be interesting to study other non-English major students in order to see if different results are yielded.
5. Other types of feedback and teacher feedback would be interesting to compare in terms of students' preferences and effectiveness.

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Acknowledgements

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