Eastern Washington University
EWU Digital Commons

EWU Masters Thesis Collection | Student Research and Creative Works

2014

WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN THE L2 WRITING CLASSROOM

Daniel Ducken
Eastern Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: http://dc.ewu.edu/theses

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
Ducken, Daniel, "WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN THE L2 WRITING CLASSROOM" (2014). *EWU Masters Thesis Collection*. 221.
http://dc.ewu.edu/theses/221

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Research and Creative Works at EWU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in EWU Masters Thesis Collection by an authorized administrator of EWU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jotto@ewu.edu.

WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN THE L2 WRITING CLASSROOM

A Thesis

Presented to

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree

Master's in English: Teaching English as a Second Language

By

Daniel Roy Ducken

Spring, 2014

THESIS OF Daniel Roy Ducken APPROVED BY

_____

DATE_____

TRACEY MCHENRY, PH.D.

GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

_____

DATE_____

LAVONA REEVES, PH.D.

GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

MASTERS'S THESIS

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree at Eastern Washington University, I agree that the JFK Library shall make copies freely available for inspection. I further agree that copying of this project in whole or in part is allowable only for scholarly purposes. It is understood, however, that any copying or publication of this thesis for commercial purposes, or for financial gain, shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature _____

Date _____

Abstract

In 1996, a highly influential essay entitled "The Case against Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Class", by John Truscott of National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan, appeared in the June edition of *Language Learning*. In his essay, Truscott argued that empirical research, second language acquisition (SLA) theory, and practical concerns show written grammar correction (WCF) in the L2 writing classroom to be both "ineffective" and "harmful," and that, therefore, it "should be abandoned" (p. 327). Since the time that Truscott originally expressed his concerns, much recent SLA theory and empirical research have indicated the potential efficacy of written corrective feedback (hereafter referred to as WCF) in the L2 writing classroom, and have suggested that, if undertaken prudently, WCF may not entail many of the harmful side-effects theorized by Truscott. Much of the research methodology employed in these studies remains controversial, however. Yet, while the relative effectiveness of various forms of WCF are still uncertain, WCF can and should play a limited role in the L2 writing classroom. How this limited role should be undertaken depends on many factors, but the age of the students, the second language proficiency level of the students, and the country in which the students are studying are all of significance. This thesis emphasizes the distinctions between a university level English as a Second Language (ESL) writing classroom and a university level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classroom. This thesis also recognizes a distinction between WCF aimed at grammatical accuracy improvement and WCF aimed at idiomatic usage, such as word order and word choice, recommending the former

and cautioning against the latter. This thesis recognizes that the amount and type of WCF should be manageable for the teacher and self-empowering for the student. This thesis recognizes that written grammatical accuracy improvement should not be the primary objective of the L2 writing class, but can and should play an effective minor role. This thesis advocates Minimal Marking as an effective WCF technique for the advanced proficiency L2 writing classroom and Modified Minimal Marking as an effective WCF technique for the intermediate proficiency L2 writing classroom.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Preface	1
Chapter 1 – Background Issues, Introduction, and Thesis	11
Chapter 2 – Review of Literature	26
Chapter 3 – Analysis of a Recent Paper on Written Corrective Feedback	50
Chapter 4 – Conclusions, Reflections, and Ideas for Future Research	61
References	72
Curriculum Vitae	78

Preface

Part 1. Before Coming to EWU

Language Learning Experiences

I have studied a bit of three languages in my life – Spanish, Mandarin, and Japanese. I studied each of these languages in a quite different fashion.

When I was in ninth grade I studied Spanish. I was told by a junior high school advisor that some universities, such as the University of Washington, only accepted students who had studied a foreign language for at least two years. In my schools, in a middle-class/working-class neighborhood in the suburbs of Seattle, almost all of the students were native-born Caucasians. No one that I knew either at school or in the community spoke a foreign language. Therefore, the idea of devoting time and energy toward studying a foreign language was of little interest to me. Never-the-less, I did so because of potential university admission requirements. The funny thing is that my former school district of Tukwila, WA, has, since about 2000 or so, become the most multiethnic school district in the entire nation. According to the New York Times, there are now over 30 different languages spoken in the Tukwila School District. I remember reading an article online a few years ago stating that there were at least seven different languages spoken in the football huddle alone. The change was quite rapid from the Tukwila School District being overwhelmingly predominately native-born Caucasian Americans to being the most multi-ethnic in the country, but all of this happened a few years after my five siblings and I had graduated from Foster High School. When I attended Foster High School, as far as I can recall, in my class there were only two Japanese-American families and one native-American family. One year ahead of me,

there was one African-American student and one Pilipino-American student (who was one of my best friends). But all of these students were also native-born Americans who did not, as far as I know, speak anything but English. So, the motivation to study a foreign language was not strong for students in our school district at the time, during the mid-to-late 1970s. However, I was fortunate in that the Spanish teacher at my junior high school was also my favorite teacher of all-time – Mr. Norboum. I have always loved history, and I had already taken two years of World and American History from Mr. Norboum when I enrolled in his Spanish class. Not only did Mr. Norboum peak my interest in history, but he also must have been influential in initiating my interest in travel. Mr. Norboum used to take his summer vacations in Spain, and when he came back to teach each fall he would return with boxes full of European travel magazines, which he would use to teach European geography and history. We would make our own maps with crayons and nylon stockings, and then we would cut out photos from the travel magazines depicting castles and monuments and so on from each country in Europe and paste these in the respective chapters in our notebooks. It was a very fun and educational activity. In Spanish class, we did a lot of pair work. While my interest in history lead me to receive straight A's in Mr. Norboum's history classes, unfortunately, my relative lack of interest in Spanish lead to much poorer results, of which I was not proud. I continued to study Spanish for another quarter or two during my sophomore year in high school, but without Mr. Norboum's teaching style and personality, I soon lost all interest, received a "D" grade, and dropped out of Spanish class entirely.

Even though I did not study Spanish very hard or very long in junior and senior high school, apparently I was young enough when I started that some of what I learned

stayed with me a number of years later when I started working for the Los Angeles Unified School District, in predominantly Hispanic East Los Angeles. At that time, during the mid-to-late 1990s, I began to study up on Spanish again on my own. I even took a few hours of private, one-to-one classes in Antigua, Guatemala, during the late 1980's. I traveled to Mexico and Guatemala during the summer several times with my friends, and we all studied and spoke Spanish a bit. Antigua is a beautiful, old city in Guatemala that was a popular destination for backpackers who wanted to study Spanish. There were numerous small language schools where one could study with a tutor one-to-one for very little money.

A few years later, when I first arrived in Taiwan, in 1990, I immediately fell in love with the people and country. I decided to stay and teach English part-time in private language schools. The small language schools in Taiwan at the time did not often supply work visas, so most of the backpacker-type English teachers had to either enroll in a Mandarin class or make visa runs to Hong Kong, Thailand, or the Philippines every three months. Like most backpacker English teachers in Taiwan, I choose the visa runs for the travel and adventure for my first few years, but eventually enrolled in some Mandarin language classes as I stayed on longer and the government offices started to become highly suspicious of my lack of student or work visa. I was finally starting to make some good progress with my Mandarin when I left for Korea, and then Japan, for some new adventure and travel, and to live and work. I remember when I first arrived in Osaka, looking out at the horizon toward the inner city from the rooftop of my guest house, and lamenting that I was once again back to square one on my language ability in a new country.

In Korea, I did experiment a bit with recording some key phrases on a cassette and listening to it on my Walkman as I jogged around the hills of downtown Seoul. And while I was able to learn a few key survival phrases this way, I no longer remember almost any of the little Korean that I did learn.

In Japan, while I never did study formally at a language school, I did do language exchanges for a while. These did not work out so well, however, as my Japanese language partners were always able to speak English much better than I was able to speak Japanese, and so by far, to my disappointment, chagrin, and contrary to my stated desires, most of the time spent in the language exchanges was spent communicating in English. I truly regret not having enrolled in a language class somehow immediately upon my arrival in Japan. But then again, I was working 40 hours a week teaching English from almost the day I arrived in Japan, and I continued to do so non-stop for the next five years. If I had known that I would stay so long in Japan I would have done things differently. Then, I intended to go Russia or the Ukraine, but, by chance, was offered an interesting part-time job as security in a hip-hop disco in downtown Sapporo on the weekends, and so I stayed in Japan even longer than I had anticipated. And finally, I landed an excellent job teaching English to predominantly university students at TOM English Club in Sapporo, and I stayed in Japan even longer still. Throughout this time, I would occasionally get inspired to listen to my Pimsleur language mp3 lessons at home and on my mp3 player, and so I did develop enough Japanese for survival purposes. But in the end, I believe that my limited and dated Spanish ability still trumps whatever I may have learned about Mandarin and Japanese.

Pre-M.A. Teaching Experience in the U.S. and Abroad.

I will go into my long and extensive teaching career in a fair amount of detail in the body of my thesis, and so I will not say much about my 25 years of teaching in East Los Angeles, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan, here. I would like to add, however, that I anticipated that I might like to travel and teach English abroad during my final year at the University of California at Santa Barbara. I talked my best friend, Blaise, whom I had met on a geography class field trip to the San Andreas Fault, into taking a linguistics course with me during the final quarter of our senior year. We studied a lot about Communicative Competence, Total Physical Response, and Stephen Krashen, if I recall correctly. Blaise also followed in my footsteps and taught on an Emergency Teaching Credential for a few years in Santa Ana, in Orange County, California. Later, I first blazed the way by teaching in Taiwan, and I sent both Blaise and our good buddy Geff extremely enthusiastic letters about the wonders and joys of Formosa (which means "beautiful island," in Portuguese). Within a short time, Blaise and Geff had both ended up following my lead and coming over to Taiwan to teach English. Blaise has been happily married and living in Taiwan ever since, and Geff, much like me, first went to Taiwan, and then to Korea, where he also got married, and Geff has now been teaching at university in Hong Kong for almost twenty years. We all met together in Taiwan when I was there last for vacation a few years ago, and we stay in touch through Skype as often as possible.

As a teacher, I believe that one of my strengths has always been my compassion and empathy. When I was working at NOVA, in Japan, at several different schools under several different managers, I was at times asked to teach adult students that other teachers at the schools found to be problematic for one reason or another. This was never a

problem for me, however, as I just accepted these students for who they were, blemishes and all. I have always considered myself somewhat of an outsider in some ways, and I have always felt that I can easily relate to others who also fall into a similar category, whether they be friends or students.

Part 2. During the M.A. Program

I will explain about my teaching experience at EWU in the body of my thesis, as my teaching experience directly relates to the topic of this thesis, which is Written Corrective Feedback. I will say here, however, that I am very impressed with the openness and enthusiasm of the many Saudi Arabian students with whom I have worked and studied. Coming from Japan, I am used to the relatively more inhibited nature of many of my former Japanese students. In Japan, societal harmony is highly valued. This is wonderful in that society in Japan is very congenial – people tend to get along, and people show great concern not to play their music too loudly or talk on their cell phones on the subway, for example. However, a corollary is, I believe, that in order to promote societal harmony, Japanese are taught that conformity is a virtue. As the traditional Japanese saying goes, the nail that stands up is the nail that gets hammered down. Therefore, Japanese often prefer to maintain a low profile and to keep their opinions to themselves. So it was refreshing for me to hear the Saudi Arabian students actively volunteering to participate, as well as openly talking about their lives, experiences, and opinions, in class. I do think, however, that there is a lot that I, and perhaps some other Americans as well, can learn from the Japanese style of doing things. Japan is a very pleasant, clean, and safe country in which to live, and the Japanese people are generally very easy to get along with and polite to and respectful of others.

I have learned a lot about teaching English here at EWU, and so I will close my preface to my thesis with my teaching philosophy for a university level EAP writing course, which I have included in my Curriculum Vitae that I have sent out to potential employers:

Building a Community of Writers

Writing as a collaborative process

We learn to write by writing, writing in a meaningful context every day, both inside and outside of the classroom. With this in mind, I try to build a community of writers in my classroom; writers who share their ideas, who provide feedback to one another, who help each other to both crystallize their thoughts in the pre-writing process and to revise their essays for improved form, function, clarity, and grammatical accuracy in the drafting process.

Teacher as facilitator and participant

The role of the teacher in this process is both that of facilitator and participant. As facilitator, the teacher assumes the traditional role of structuring lessons to achieve the desired ends – in this case, providing a classroom environment conducive to the development of a community of writers. Just as importantly, however, is the teacher's role as active participant in this community. As participant, I too write, along with my students; I provide examples from my life, from my experiences, and from my point of view to serve as a model, but also in order to become a part of the classroom writing community.

Content-based, whole language approach

Studies have shown that most advanced proficiency second language students come to class without having ever read an English language book, fiction or non-fiction, in its entirety. I believe that students learn best when they can make connections between what they learn one day and the next day, one week and the next week, when the entire curriculum of a course is connected as a whole. A content-based curriculum is based on one specific concept or topic, such as a biography of a famous person. A whole language approach provides students with the opportunity to garner knowledge and language acquisition skills from working with such content in its entirety, emphasizing the making of connections through context, rather than working with language in fragmented form and disjointed exercises. I believe that students maintain higher motivation, improved comprehension, and more lasting retention if language and writing skills are developed in such a holistic, content-based, whole language approach.

Language rich environment

In addition to the intensive and sustained reading of an entire English language biography, second language students benefit most from a language rich environment that is multi-genre and that incorporates all seven of the language arts. A multi-genre curriculum incorporates not only the reading of a text and the writing of related journals and essays, but also such activities as the viewing of related documentary, newsreel, and music videos, the reading, recital, and writing of related poetry, and the study of and commentary on related newspaper articles, maps, photographs, paintings, and other artwork. Such a curriculum incorporates all seven of the language arts: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, drawing, and visually representing**.**

Post-modern, humanistic emphasis

Second language students who study abroad are generally interested in much more than merely improvement in their second language skills. In addition, they desire to experience and learn from the new culture and the different way of thinking and understanding the world and their place in it. Therefore, I favor a post-modern curriculum design, incorporating many different voices and perspectives, with a humanistic emphasis on the investigation of values, morals and the question of how best to live and contribute in an ever-changing society and world. Such a curriculum motivates students to make the most of their new, foreign culture and environment, and in the process increases their desire to acquire and develop new second language knowledge and skill.

Intensive, reflection-based writing

William Labov wrote, "There is no knowledge but personal knowledge"; that is, knowledge doesn't become real to us unless we can personalize it on some level. Thus, as part of a learner-centered curriculum, I have my students write daily journals, often based on their own lives, experiences, thoughts, and emotions, in relation to what has been studied in the text or in class. In addition, my students write weekly or bi-weekly essays, based on our readings or classroom activities, consisting of several rough drafts with peer review, revision, and teacher counseling. In total, it is my goal to have my students write at least one thousand words a week.

Self-assessment

If my students have undertaken all of the above, and have gained confidence in and enthusiasm for writing in English, have gained a better understanding of basic English essay form and content strategy, have improved their writing in grammatical accuracy and structural complexity, have grasped a better understanding of the course

content and how it relates to their own lives as individuals, and can take pride in themselves as a valuable part of a new community of writers, then I will consider the course to have been a success.

Chapter One: Background Issues, Introduction, and Thesis

Language Learning and Teaching Background

I have nearly 25 years of teaching experience, including over 20 years of experience teaching English abroad. I calculate that in total this may come to somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000 in-class hours. I began my teaching career immediately upon graduation from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1986. For three years I taught for the Los Angeles Unified School District in predominantly Hispanic East Los Angeles on an Emergency Teaching Credential. An Emergency Teaching Credential is a temporary teaching credential that was offered to recent holders of a B.A. degree to teach public school primarily in inner-city neighborhoods where a supply of certified teachers was lacking. Once hired by the school district, the emergency credentialed teacher had to pursue a regular teaching credential through taking night classes in order to continue working. I pursued my regular teaching credential by taking night classes at the nearby California State University at Los Angeles.

I began teaching as a day-to-day substitute and my first few days were almost a disaster. In one class during my first week, my third or fourth graders went wild, and there was almost no way for me to regain control of the class. The teacher in the adjoining classroom finally ended up buzzing the principal to come to my aid to reprimand the children and control the chaos. When the day was over, the principal called me in to her office a meeting where she asked me if I really thought that I was cut out to do that kind of work. I really didn’t know. But I carried on, with the encouragement of my girlfriend, who was also substituting on an Emergency Teaching Credential and doing a fine job of it.

It wasn't long before I was offered a long-term substitute position of about three months in a third grade classroom at John F. Kennedy Elementary School in East Los Angeles. The classroom set-up at this elementary school was unique in that there were three or four different classes going on at the same time all in the same large, more or less open-space room. This proved very beneficial to me as a teacher as I was able to receive the invaluable, real-time advice and assistance of the experienced, dedicated, and kind teachers in the adjoining spaces. When the regular teacher for that class returned from her prolonged illness, I began substituting in a kindergarten class at Soto Street Elementary School in East Los Angeles. At this school, after I finished out the year as a long-term substitute, I was offered the position fulltime for the following year, and subsequently for a third year.

At the time, the Los Angeles Unified School District was attempting to implement a bilingual education policy. This bilingual policy was in response to a 1974 Supreme Court decision on Lau versus Nichols, requiring the San Francisco school system to provide English language instruction classes to recent Chinese immigrants in order to conform with the Equal Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination based "on the ground of race, color, or national origin," in "any program or activity receiving Federal assistance" (pp. 565-569). To implement this bilingual policy was almost impossible to do, however, as almost none of the teachers in East Los Angeles were fully bilingual. In fact, I have often thought that one of the reasons that the principal who originally offered me the fulltime position at Soto Street Elementary, Mr. Silva, did so, is because he actually thought that English immersion was a better way for the young children to master English than a bi-lingual approach, and as my Spanish language abilities were

limited, he chose me. On the other hand, my other two colleagues in the kindergarten classroom at the time I was offered the job were no better at Spanish than me, so he may not have had much choice in the matter. Never-the-less, I did continue to study Spanish in my spare time, and I even went to Mexico and Guatemala during my summer vacations in order to practice and study more. And we were able to teach the class in a somewhat bilingual fashion, at least to the best of our abilities, as we had experienced Hispanic teacher's aides who proved invaluable in every way.

In our kindergarten class at Soto Street Elementary, as with most other kindergarten classes in East Los Angeles at the time, the student population was almost entirely Hispanic, and at Soto Street Elementary it could be divided fairly evenly into three linguistic groups. About one third of the children spoke only Spanish, about one third spoke only English, and about one third spoke both Spanish and English. One of the teachers I worked with during my first few months at the school, who also did not speak much Spanish but was actually fully credentialed, soon moved on the following year to a better school district in the suburbs. Thus, during my second year, our school received a new emergency credentialed teacher, Mr. Gann, who also did not speak much Spanish. At the same time, however, our school was given a full-time Hispanic bilingual coordinator by the school district, and a new Hispanic principal as well, Mrs. Gamez. While I don't know her true feelings on bilingual education, Mrs. Gamez seemed much more willing to toe the official line on the bi-lingual policy than did Mr. Silva, and from then on out the bilingual policy was much more strongly implemented and supported. Finally, during my third and final year at the Soto Street Elementary, as Mr. Gann also soon moved on, we were fortunate enough to receive another novice teacher who this

time was Hispanic, fully credentialed, and fully bilingual. Due to the training I received and my experiences working for the Los Angeles Unified School District in East Los Angeles, I have always fully supported bilingual education, and I hope that the situation in East Los Angeles is much better now than it was when I was teaching there. I hope that there is an adequate supply of bilingual teachers for at least the lower elementary school classes, and I hope that the new teachers stay on longer and continue to improve as teachers in the inner-city schools.

English Language Teacher in Taiwan, Korea, and Japan

After teaching in East Los Angeles and studying and traveling in Mexico and Guatemala, I moved on to teach and live in Taiwan, Korea, and eventually Japan. In Taiwan, I taught English to mostly children, sometimes in immersion or semi-immersion kindergartens, and sometimes to elementary and secondary school students in cram schools. Cram schools are very common in Taiwan, Korea, and Japan. A cram school is a private school that kids go to after their regular school classes. Some cram schools focus on English, while others, particularly those for junior and senior high school students who are prepping for placement tests for elite secondary or tertiary schools, may focus on mathematics and/or science. In an English language cram school, the children usually come for two 50-minutes classes each week – 30 children or so in each class. At the time, during the early-to-mid 1990s, this would have been these children's only exposure to English, as the public schools in much of the northeast Asia did not seriously start implementing English education at the primary school level until about the late 1990s. English in cram schools was sometimes taught by team teachers, one a semi-bilingual, locally born teacher and the other an almost always mono-lingual, native-born English-

speaking teacher. At other times, however, such classes were taught solely by the mono-lingual, native-born English speaking teacher, without any help whatsoever from a locally-born teacher. I taught for several years in both Taiwan and Korea under both scenarios.

I also taught various adult conversation and company classes in Taiwan and Korea, including a year teaching university students and Samsung Company managers, engineers, and staff in a series of three-month long immersion programs at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, in Seoul. Later, when I went to Japan, I taught small group adult conversation classes to students of all ages and levels at NOVA, which was at the time the largest chain language institute in Japan. These students, who usually had full-time jobs, would only come to the institute about once a week on average, and for most of them the language institute was their only regular exposure to English (though most had studied English for at least six years previously in junior and senior high school). Finally, I spent about seven years teaching and doing editing work at TOM English Club, a small privately owned language institute in Sapporo, Japan. There, I was allowed to design my own curriculum and taught everything from beginner to advanced, one-to-one to small group, children to adults, and discussion to TOEIC to presentation skills.

Lack of Experience Teaching Writing

I have gone on in detail about my teaching background primarily for two reasons. Firstly, though I like to think that I have taught students at just about all levels in just about all conceivable kinds of situations (including private tutoring in the student's homes), I have not actually taught much in the way of adult writing skills. The reason for this is simple. At private language institutes for adults, the classes are usually one-on-one

or fairly small, and the students pay a fair amount of money to the institute for their time spent with the teacher. The students generally want to pay for face-to-face time, and so, unless otherwise specially requested by the student that a lot of time is spent by the teacher perusing the student's written work, which is very rarely the case, this face-to-face time is almost always spent on oral communication skills.

The fact that I have do not actually have a lot of experience teaching writing is very relevant to my thesis. The Master of Arts in English with a TESL emphasis at Eastern Washington University focuses somewhat heavily on the development of writing skills, as well it should for the teaching of intermediate to advanced proficiency second language students at the university level. This is all well and good as far as I am concerned, as this is exactly the kind of teaching that I don't have much experience with and is the next step in the further development of my career – teaching intermediate to advanced proficiency second language students at the university level. In addition, as at EWU a significant number of the graduate students in the English Department are awarded a financial stipend to teach English 112: Composition for Multi-Lingual Writers, and English 101 and 201, introductory and advanced composition courses for mainstream students, it is only fitting that, as was described to me when I applied to the program, "This is a writing intensive degree." Yet, as I have said, my knowledge and experience of teaching writing, especially academic writing, is quite limited. Thus, my interest in all aspects of the writing process, and in particular in regard to this thesis, the value of written corrective feedback for second language university level students.

Rationale for Current Research

Written corrective feedback (WCF) may be defined as written feedback given by the teacher on a student paper with the aim of improving grammatical accuracy (including spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) as well as written feedback on idiomatic usage (such as word order and word choice). I first became interested in the efficacy of WCF for the long-term improvement of second language writing while taking Composition Pedagogy: Theory and Practice during my first winter quarter at EWU. While I looked through various second language teaching and research academic journals in search of a research topic for my class, I noticed that the debate over the value of written corrective feedback in second language writing has been a long and contentious one. As I read through various articles concerning this debate, it struck me that even though I had already taken, or was in the midst of taking, several different courses on the teaching of university level native language and second language writing and composition, to date little had been said about the place of WCF, for either native language or second language students, in the university writing and composition classrooms. Indeed, I noted how I had received little WCF on my own papers up to that point in my graduate studies; I had received some positive and encouraging comments, which made me feel better about myself and more confident in my own ability as a writer, but I had not received much input on any grammar mistakes I may have made that might have helped me to improve my writing.

Furthermore, while interning in English 112: Composition for Multi-lingual Writers, during the drafting process and conferencing sessions when students asked me for help with their papers, I found that I usually concentrated much more on helping them with grammar correction than did the regular instructor. I even noticed that when I helped

students with returned drafts which the regular instructor had already gone over, I found that she had generally only made very few grammatical corrections in each essay and had overlooked the vast majority of such mistakes, whereas I, in contrast, would typically go painstakingly through each essay attempting to rectify what I perceived to be most every significant such mistake.

In addition, while tutoring the EWU student athletes in the Student Athlete Study Table Program, I found that when they asked me to help them with their composition papers, they almost always phrased the request in the form of, "Could you proofread my paper, please?" And this I did for them. And while I tried to help the students with form and content as well as grammar mistakes, perhaps because I find it easier and seemingly less intrusive to do so, I tended to concentrate on the latter over assistance in all other areas. So clearly, I thought, I have much to learn about how best to help students, whether they be native language or second language writers, with their writing assignments in additional ways other than primarily that of placing so much focus on WCF.

Definition of Terms

ESL versus EFL.

I have gone on in detail about my teaching experience abroad for another important reason, which I will address further later in this thesis. That is, what I perceive to be a significant distinction between the kind of English teaching that I have generally undertaken abroad, which I will refer to as *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)* teaching, and the kind of English teaching that is undertaken for international university level students studying away from home and immersed in the language and culture of a predominantly English-speaking country, which I will refer to as *English as a Second*

Language (ESL) teaching. I believe that the two, EFL teaching and ESL teaching, are very different. The specific Master in English degree that I have undertaken at EWU is called an MAE:TESL, or *teaching English as a second language,* whereas most of my experience is in *TEFL,* or *teaching English as a foreign language.* When teaching English as a second language, one assumes that, at least for the moment, the language students are immersed in the language and culture of which they study, whereas for typical EFL students, their only contact with the language and culture that they study is the one or perhaps two hours a week of contact time in the classroom with the foreign English language teacher. Once again, I believe that the difference between the ESL writing classroom and the EFL writing classroom is significant. I believe that the lack of English language immersion for EFL students, as well as the generally lower proficiency level of EFL students, has a direct impact on the method of written corrective feedback best suitable in the EFL writing classroom. Conversely, I believe that the opportunity for English language immersion for ESL students studying away from home in a predominantly English-speaking country, and the generally higher proficiency level of ESL students, requires a substantially different approach to WCF in the ESL writing classroom.

TESL, TEFL, and TESOL.

In this thesis, when I am not specifically distinguishing between teaching English as a second language, (TESL), and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), I will use the all-encompassing acronym for *teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL).* TESOL does not specifically distinguish between TESL and TEFL, but includes both forms of teaching English in its meaning.

LI versus L2.

I would also like to define two more terms which will appear often in this thesis: *L1* and *L2*. Quite simply, L1 stands for one's native language, while L2 stands for one's acquired language, whether that be in an ESL or EFL context.

Written corrective feedback versus written feedback.

This thesis is meant as an investigation of the value of written corrective feedback (WCF) in the ESL and EFL writing classrooms. As mentioned above, written corrective feedback refers to written teacher feedback on a student essay with the aim of improving grammatical accuracy (including spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) as well as idiomatic usage (such as word order and word choice). The term *written feedback,* in contrast, refers to written commentary by the teacher as feedback on the form and content of a student essay. Therefore, the term written corrective feedback, the main emphasis of this thesis, has a very different meaning from that of the term written feedback. To slightly oversimplify, one could say that written corrective feedback refers to teacher commentary on grammatical concerns in an essay, while corrective feedback refers to teacher commentary on the message the essay is trying to convey. While the two are intertwined and go hand-in-hand, and while both written corrective feedback and written feedback are addressed in this thesis, the primary focus of this thesis is meant to be an investigation into the efficacy of written corrective feedback.

World Englishes.

The term *World Englishes* refers to all of the various types of linguistically, culturally, and historically unique forms of English that are spoken throughout the world today. Traditionally, we have spoken of British English, American English, Australian

English, and so on, and the various unique dialects thereof. In these countries, English became the lingua franca during the period of British colonization. For hundreds of years, however, and ever more so in the twenty-first century, English has been widely spoken, and even at times the predominant language in government, law, and education, in many non-European settler populated countries throughout the world. From former colonies of the British Empire, such as India, Honk Kong, Singapore, and Jamaica, to countries that have never been subject to British colonialism, such as Nigeria, the Philippines, and Belize, English has long been widely spoken by significant sectors of the populace. With the recent growth in globalization, large sectors of the populace in many European, Middle Eastern, and northeast Asian countries now study English in school and speak English at work on a daily basis. These countries and people have all developed their own unique brands of English resulting from a mixture of their own unique native tongues, cultural traditions, and historical influences. With recent advances in linguistic theory, as all languages seen to evolve over time so can no one particular vernacular of a language be considered to be superior to another as they all have equal legitimacy as forms of communication. This rather recently acknowledged linguistic insight has profound implications on the best practices for WCF.

WCF and L2, EFL Writing

As I began my research into the history of the debate over the efficacy of WCF, I was interested in, and even suspicious of, the seeming lack of concern or even mention in my classes of the value and proper role of WCF in both the L1 and L2 writing classrooms. I wanted to know just why WCF was seemingly so frowned upon, and why WCF had fallen so much out of favor since the days that I was a university undergraduate

in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Now that I have done much research on this matter, I believe that my initial concerns were valid, at least in regard to L2, EFL writing. Much of my research has backed up at least some of my skepticism as to the reputed non-value of WCF, in L2, EFL writing, at least. Much contemporary second language acquisition research seems to be saying that the theorized abundant and comprehensible naturalistic input, as popularized by prominent linguist Stephen Krashen in the early 1980s is no longer sufficient to ensure that L2 student speaking and writing progress to high levels of grammatical accuracy, and that at least some amount of WCF is helpful in aiding L2 students (and particularly L2, EFL students, in my opinion) to reach these desired ends.

"Please correct my grammar mistakes."

I would like to add just one more thought concerning a possible reason for my interest in WCF. When I first went to Taiwan to teach English, I taught primarily children in cram schools. We did plenty of choral repetition, sang a lot of songs, played a lot of games, and tried to make everything as educational and enjoyable as possible for learners at a very basic level. But at that time and for students at such lower proficiency levels, I did not place much emphasis on the correction of grammar mistakes, either written or spoken. However, when I went to Korea I taught mostly adults, and when I asked my adult Korean students how I could best help them with their English, they were often quite insistent in their response that the best way I could do so was to "Please correct my grammar mistakes." I received this as a response to my question, or just as often as simply an unsolicited request stated adamantly and consistently enough, that I took their desire to heart, and I have ever since, given the appropriate situation, always striven my best to help my students with their grammar mistakes. And so I did, when appropriate,

when I moved on from Korea to teach small group conversation and discussion classes to adults in Osaka and Sapporo, Japan. I hope that I have never overemphasized this aspect of language teaching, but I have always felt satisfaction in that my students have always been most comfortable with and most appreciative of my style of helping them with their grammar mistakes. These experiences have helped to form my current interest in the place of WCF in the L2 writing classroom.

The Debate over the Efficacy of Written Corrective Feedback in the L2 Writing Classroom

Statement of the problem.

In 1996, an essay entitled "The Case against Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Class" by John Truscott of National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan, appeared in the June edition of *Language Learning*. In his essay, Truscott argued that empirical research, SLA theory, and practical concerns show written grammar correction in the L2 writing classroom to be both "ineffective" and "harmful," and that, therefore, it "should be abandoned" (p. 327). Although the debate over WCF in the L2 writing classroom did not begin with Truscott's essay, it did renew in intensity; Dana Ferris (1999) reports, "When I first encountered Truscott's essay and told colleagues about it, the reaction was instantaneous and consistent: veteran teachers recoiled as if they'd been punched in the stomach" (p. 2). In her response to Truscott's essay, Ferris made the point that many of her experienced TESOL colleagues, who devoted considerable time and energy to the offering of WCF in their L2 classrooms, were shocked and even offended by Truscott's arguments about the non-value and negative consequences of WCF.

In the intervening years since Truscott and Ferris initially battled over the efficacy of WCF in the L2 writing classroom, though the debate still rages in some quarters, much empirical study and SLA theory have turned in favor of at least some value in the grammatical accuracy improving potential of WCF, and much of this theory and research has indicated that, if implemented properly, WCF may be undertaken without the harmful side-effects for either the teacher or student as theorized by Truscott.

Researcher's assumptions.

I began my investigation into the efficacy of WCF in the L2 writing classroom with the experience that in my English Department graduate classes to date I had received little instruction as to the value and role of WCF in either of the L1 or L2 teaching of writing courses in which I was or had been enrolled. Nor had I received much WCF on my own papers in any of my classes at the time I began my investigation. This situation changed greatly in regard to teaching L2 writing in my Pedagogical Grammar and Composition class during spring quarter of my first year at EWU, where I received much instruction on the role, value, and proper implementation of WCF in the L2 writing classroom. Never-the-less, by this time my interest had been pricked, and I had begun my investigation into this long and still somewhat controversial debate, learning much about the theory and research, the positives and negatives, the best practices for and even the potential dangers of WCF along the way.

It had been my own personal experience, however, during my more than twenty years of teaching EFL abroad to a wide variety of ages and L2 proficiency levels, that grammar instruction and feedback, both written and spoken, were highly valued by both my employers and my students. One of my major concerns at the time I began my

research was that grammar instruction and WCF may have somewhat different roles to play depending on the age and L2 proficiency level of the students, and just as importantly, depending on whether the students are studying in a fully immersed ESL context in a predominantly English speaking country or studying just one or two hours a week in an EFL context in their home country. Through my English Department graduate classes at EWU and the research I have done for this thesis, I have learned much about the proper role and implementation of WCF in the L2 writing classroom over the last two years. I hope this thesis to show that as my knowledge about teaching L2 students and L2 writing have increased, so too have my views on the time, place, and best practices for the implementation of WCF in the L2 writing classroom progressed.

Research Question.

Is there a role for WCF to play in the L2 writing classroom, and if so, what are some effective methods for implementing WCF that are both practical for the teacher and self-empowering for the student at various language proficiency levels in both ESL and EFL university settings?

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

A Highly Influential Paper by John Truscott Intensifies the Debate over the Efficacy of WCF in the L2 Writing Classroom

I began my investigation into the long debate over the efficacy of WCF in the L2 writing classroom by reading recent publications about WCF in academic journals. Nearly each and every one of these recent research papers had one thing in common: they all heavily citied a highly influential paper by John Truscott (1996) as their starting point. Moreover, the concerns and issues these contemporary papers addressed were all almost entirely based on the concerns and issues that Truscott had originally raised in his 1996 paper. In 1996, Truscott introduced his paper as follows:

> This paper argues that grammar correction in L2 writing classes should be abandoned, for the following reasons: (a) Substantial research shows it to be ineffective and none shows it to be helpful in any interesting sense; (b) for both theoretical and practical reasons, one can expect it to be ineffective; and (c) it has harmful effects. (Truscott, 1996, p. 327)

It is clear that the views advocated by Truscott in 1996 were, at the time of publication and continue to be until the present day, tremendously influential in the field of WCF theory and research. Hence, in this review of literature I shall look in detail at many of the concerns and issues that Truscott originally raised, and I shall report in depth on contemporary responses to these concerns and issues by leading academicians currently active in the field today.

Teachers' Perspectives on WCF

Truscott (1996), in his polemic against what he perceives to be the inefficacy and harmfulness of WCF began his essay by acknowledging that "nearly all L2 writing teachers do it in one form or another," and "nearly everyone who writes on the subject recommends it" (p. 327). Later in his essay he also acknowledges that "Abundant evidence shows that students believe in correction," but claims that "this does not mean that teachers should give it to them" (p. 359).

> When students hold a demonstrably false belief about learning, the proper response is not to encourage that belief, but to show them that it is false. In this case, that will mean educating them on the nature of the learning process, on the nonvalue of correction, and on correction's harmful effects. (Truscott, 1996, p. 359)

Ferris (1999), in her initial response to Truscott's essay, though she disagreed with some of his views, claimed to secretly hope that he was right, as, "Like most people, I find responding to student's written errors time-consuming and mostly tedious" (p. 2). The question then presents itself, if so many L2 teachers find providing WCF to be so distasteful, why do so many L2 teachers go to such lengths to provide it?

Evans, Hartshorn, and Tuioti (2010), in the belief that, "Understanding teacher perspectives on corrective feedback is integral to our understanding of the place of [written] corrective feedback in L2 writing," conducted an international survey completed by 1,053 L2 writing practitioners in 69 different countries, focused on two fundamental research questions: "(a) To what extent do current L2 writing teachers

provide WCF?, and (b) What determines whether or not practitioners choose to provide WCF?" (p. 47) The authors claim that of particular note in their study is the advanced level of education and TESOL experience of the vast majority of the respondents: over 70% having more than ten years of experience teaching ESL/EFL, over 50% having in excess of ten years of experience teaching L2 writing, and 87% having a master's or higher degree in a discipline related to language teaching (pp. 63-64). In their study, the authors found that approximately 99% of the L2 practitioners surveyed use some form of WCF to at least some degree. Those who typically use WCF as part of their teaching represented 92% of the respondents. The authors note that, "This response should not be surprising given the fact that respondents identified 'grammatical errors' as their students' greatest single struggle" (p. 63). Furthermore, the authors note that, "This highly educated and experienced group of teachers" identified "teaching experience, academic training, and research and conferences" as being the "top three factors…most influential to their WCF practices" (p. 64). The vast majority of highly experienced and educated L2 teachers provide WCF, then, according to this study, because they are trained to provide it, and they believe that their students need it. The findings of the study were, however, somewhat more ambiguous as to how confident these teachers were in the overall effectiveness of their WCF. Some of the teachers claimed to be "fairly confident" (p. 64) that their students benefited, while others were much less so. In answers to open-ended questions on a survey, responses such as "it is one way to help," "it helps to some degree," and "if students are motivated, it helps," were fairly typical (p. 65). It appears clear from this study that although the vast majority of highly educated and experienced L2 teachers give their students at least some degree of WCF because

they believe that it is needed and useful, many of these teachers express serious concerns about the overall effectiveness of their WCF. As student motivation to effectively learn from the WCF offered is a primary concern of many of these teachers, it would seem that implementing a WCF methodology that promotes student self-responsibility and self-empowerment to amend their own mistakes in order to best learn from the WCF offered is of utmost significance.

Research on Terms and Methods in WCF

Direct versus indirect WCF.

One concern of research is the relative effectiveness of *direct* versus *indirect* WCF. With direct WCF the teacher provides the corrected form of the mistake, while with indirect WCF the mistake is simply indicated by the teacher with a mark or coding, leaving the student to independently determine the correct form.

Bitchener and Knoch (2008) state that advocates of indirect WCF (Ferris, 1995; Lalande, 1982) have suggested that it may foster deeper language processing by requiring the student to engage in "guided learning and problem solving," thus resulting in the "type of reflection that is more likely to foster long-term acquisition" (p. 415). Therefore, advocates of indirect WCF have suggested that indirect feedback, by requiring the student to determine the correct form of the mistake independently, may be more useful for learners at higher proficiency levels as they have relatively advanced linguistic knowledge. Bitchener (2012) states that advocates of direct WCF (Chandler, 2003) have suggested that it may be more useful than indirect WCF because it "reduces confusion," provides students with information to "resolve more complex errors," offers "more explicit feedback on hypothesis that are tested by learners," and is "more immediate" (p.

355). Therefore, advocates of direct WCF have suggested that direct WCF may be more useful for learners at lower proficiency levels as they have relatively more limited linguistic knowledge.

Bitchener (2012), however, reports that three recent studies (van Beuningen, De Jong & Kuiken 2008, 2012; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010b) suggest that, "Direct error correction has a more significant long-term effect than indirect [W]CF" (p. 355), but Bitchener concludes that further research is needed. Hartshorn and Evans (2012) concur that research on the relative benefits of direct versus indirect WCF is as of yet "inconclusive" (p. 4). Yet, to further complicate matters, a recent study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012), contrasting direct comprehensive and indirect comprehensive WCF for both lower proficiency and higher proficiency L2 students, found that, "Direct correction is better suited for grammatical errors and indirect correction is better suited for nongrammatical errors," with the caveat that, "Only direct [W]CF has the potential to yield long-term grammatical gains" (p. 33). In addition, this study did not find "a significant interaction between the effectiveness of the [W]CF treatments and learners' educational level" (p. 33). I investigate this 2012 study by van Bueningen, De Jong, and Kuiken in detail later in this thesis. It may suffice to say for the moment, however, that while the overall efficacy of WCF in the L2 writing classroom is gaining wider acceptance, there remains considerable debate as to the best practices for its implementation.

Focused Versus Comprehensive WCF.

A second concern of research is the relative effectiveness of *focused* versus *comprehensive* WCF. Focused WCF targets only one or a few mistake types while

comprehensive WCF targets many or all mistake types. Bitchener (2012) suggests that focused WCF may be more useful for students at lower proficiency levels as such students might be more likely to notice and understand corrections targeted at only one or a few categories at a time (p. 357). Such an understanding is in line with limited capacity models of L2 acquisition (Robinson, 1995, 2003; Skehan, 1998, 2003; Skehan & Foster, 2001; Schmidt, 2001; Van Patten, 1996, 2004). Limited capacity models assume that L2 learners at lower proficiency levels should not be overwhelmed with too many linguistic concerns at one time. Conversely, for learners at higher proficiency levels, Bitchener (2012) suggests that comprehensive WCF may prove more effective as it would enable such students to attend to a larger range of linguistic concerns (p. 357). However, Bitchener concludes that, "It is clear that the jury is still out on whether focused or unfocused [W]CF is more effective," and that further research is needed (p. 357).

Van Beuningen (2010) reports that eight recent tightly controlled studies (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010b; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, 2010b) "all found robust positive effects of focused [W[CF," and moreover that "the reported accuracy gains proved to be very durable" (p. 15). However, most of these studies targeted only a very narrow range of grammatical features selected for maximal simplicity, primarily that of article usage, and so their applicability to a broader spectrum of grammatical and linguistic concerns has recently been called into question (van Beuningen, 2010, p. 15).

While Hartshorn and Evans (2012) acknowledge that most researchers currently favor focused over comprehensive WCF in order that learners' processing load be kept

manageable and attentional capacity not be overloaded, they voice concern that students could employ avoidance strategies when WCF relates to only such limited target structures in real writing tasks. Thus, Hartshorn and Evans believe that if teachers only target, for example, mistakes concerning the use of subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs in student papers, their students may simply choose to avoid constructing sentences that employ such grammatical forms. Hartshorn, Evans, Merrill, Sudweeks, Strong-Krause, & Anderson (2010), along with Bruton (2009; 2010), Storch (2010), and van Beuningen (2010), favor comprehensive feedback as being more "authentic" in that it focuses on "the accurate production of all aspects of writing simultaneously" (p. 89). In addition, Hartshorn and Evans (2012) cite several studies (Anderson, 2010; Ferris, 2006; Leki, 1991) that indicate L2 learners express a clear preference for comprehensive over focused WCF (p. 5).

In response to the growing concern that too much emphasis has been placed on demonstrating the effectiveness of focused feedback at the expense of ignoring the potential of comprehensive feedback, and largely merely for the relative ease and clarity with which focused WCF empirical research can be undertaken vis-à-vis comprehensive WCF empirical research, van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) claim to be "the first to show that…pupils whose errors were corrected comprehensively made fewer errors in new pieces of writing than learners who did not receive [W]CF," and furthermore that "accuracy gains on new writing were visible both in the posttest and the delayed posttest" (p. 32). Therefore, much contemporary research points toward the efficacy of comprehensive WCF over that of focused WCF regardless of student L2

proficiency level. Once again, as mentioned above, I shall investigate this study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) in detail later in this thesis.

Hartshorn and Evans (2012), in their continuing effort to develop a practical comprehensive WCF pedagogy, have found that direct comprehensive WCF, coupled with insight from skill acquisition theory, "can be both practical and effective in improving accuracy" (p. 1). Implementing what they term Dynamic WCF, ensuring that "instruction, practice, and [direct comprehensive] feedback are manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant" (p. 7), they found "positively influenced L2 writing accuracy for the mechanical, lexical, and some grammatical domains" (p. 1). In other words, Hartshorn and Evans believe that word order, word choice, and some grammatical aspects of student papers may benefit from the implementation of direct comprehensive WCF that is manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant.

WCF and Skill Acquisition Theory

One major concern regarding corrective feedback has always been its practicality for both teacher and student. Hartshorn and Evans (2012) have addressed this concern utilizing insight from skill acquisition theory. Skill acquisition theory holds that for input to be most effective, it must be manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012). Implementing what they term Dynamic Written Corrective Feedback, Hartshorn and Evans suggest that in order to ensure that corrective feedback be manageable an L2 writing classroom where a certain portion of each day is devoted to the writing of short, ten-minute, classroom relevant essays, which are then marked and returned to the students the next day for grammatical revision. They suggest, in order to ensure that the corrective feedback in this classroom be timely and constant, that the

student then return the essay to the teacher, who again checks it for error and again returns it the following day, and that the process be repeated until the essay is either finally deemed by the teacher to be error free or until one week since the original writing assignment was given has passed. In addition, they suggest, in order to ensure that the corrective feedback be meaningful, that the students keep the following: (a) daily error tally sheets – a list of error frequency counts from each piece of writing; (b) comprehensive error lists – a complete inventory of all errors produced throughout the course; and (c) edit logs – an ongoing record of the number of times an essay has been submitted before it is deemed to be free of errors. Similarly utilizing insight from Skill Acquisition Theory, Suziki (2012) proposes that students perform "written languaging," in which they write out their own explanations in their native language on the WCF received in order to internalize the new knowledge for long-term acquisition.

Treatable versus untreatable errors.

A third concern of research is the distinction made by Ferris (1999) between what she refers to as *treatable* and *untreatable* errors. Ferris describes treatable errors as those governed by systematic rules, such as "subject-verb agreement, run-ons and comma splices, missing articles, [and] verb form errors" (p. 6). Untreatable errors are described as those governed by idiomatic usage, such as "lexical errors and problems with sentence structure, including missing words, unnecessary words, and word order problems" (p. 6). Ferris (2006) tested among a number of treatable and untreatable error categories and found verb errors to be the most amenable to WCF. Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005), in a similar analysis, found past simple verb tense errors and article errors more

amenable to WCF than preposition errors. Hartshorn and Evans (2012) report that to date "most research has supported the treatable-untreatable distinction" (p. 3).

Here, I would like to inject a note of caution as to the degree to which these so-called "untreatable errors," those regarding idiomatic usage such as word order and word choice, even ought to be addressed through WCF. Due to the recent recognition of the legitimacy of World Englishes, I caution against over concern in the area of word order and word choice. The main emphasis of WCF should be on what Ferris refers to as "treatable errors," which I define as mistakes in grammatical accuracy (including spelling, capitalization, and punctuation), such as the aforementioned subject-verb agreement, verb form, run-on and comma splice concerns.

Addressing Truscott's Concerns about WCF

Addressing Truscott's theoretical concerns about WCF in regard to second language acquisition theory.

In the section of his essay under "Theoretical Problems" entitled "Problems Involving Order of Acquisition", Truscott points out that acquisition of L2 grammar structure is acquired through a series of developmental sequences, and that when a teacher gives feedback on a grammatical structure for which a student is not yet ready, no intake will occur and frustration may result. Furthermore, Truscott states that teachers cannot base their correction on knowledge of the proper order of developmental sequences because "researchers do not yet adequately understand them" (p. 344). To complicate matters further, Truscott believes that "there is some evidence that different groups of learners may differ on the details of the sequences they may follow" (p. 345). Truscott acknowledges that with future research one day these sequences may be better

understood, but concludes that "correction that respects natural sequences of acquisition is not realistic now and is not likely to become so soon" (p. 345). I believe that Truscott's argument is based largely upon Krashen's (1982) natural order hypothesis and Pienemann's (1989) teachability or learnability hypothesis, as well as Pienemann's processability theory (Pienemann, 1998, 2007; Pienemann & Johnston, 1987; Pienemann & Kebler, 2012a,b). According to these naturalistic SLA theories, knowledge of L2 grammatical structures are acquired in a particular order which cannot be altered by teacher input; therefore, if learners are presented with input on grammatical structures which are beyond their current stage of development and which they have not yet internalized, no intake will take place.

However, Polio (2012), while acknowledging the stages of processability theory to be "well attested and uncontroversial, at least for some morphosyntactic structures," questions whether, since the theory was formulated on oral "speech data," it is even "relevant" to written production, and adds that, "It seems that in writing tasks, learned rules would overtake processing constraints" (p. 379). She, thus, concludes that, "The relationship [of processability theory] to writing is not clear" (p. 384). Yet, while acknowledging that according to processability theory no amount of input could ever alter the order of sequence of L2 acquisition, she also wonders whether WCF, if offered at the appropriate level and with the proper scaffolding, might not aid in speeding up the stages in the acquisition process (p. 384).

Personally, I would suggest going even further. By the time an L2 English student enrolls in a university writing class, in most cases that student already has undertaken anywhere from six to ten years of intensive English language grammar instruction. Thus,

I would suggest that such students should not only be well past the developmental stages to benefit from WCF on most linguistic features governed by systematic rules, such as article usage, subject-verb agreement, plurals, and run-ons, but they should even be advanced enough in the language acquisition process to be able to benefit from WCF on more idiosyncratic language features such as word choice, word order, and compound-complex sentence structure. Therefore, I would suggest that Truscott's concerns about the order of acquisition of L2 developmental sequences are, at minimal for rule-based error types, for the most part not relevant to most L2 writing at the university level for the majority of students concerned. In other words, I believe that most university level L2 writing students have already developed enough linguistic knowledge of the L2 to benefit from most forms of written corrective feedback, and particularly that which pertains to grammatical accuracy.

In the section of his essay under "Theoretical Problems" entitled "The Problem of Pseudolearning", Truscott (1996) claims that grammar correction is a form of "pseudolearning," in that it merely produces "pseudoknowledge," which is "superficial," and "transient" (p. 345).

> Interlanguage develops through subtle, poorly understood processes. It would be surprising if all types of teaching/learning were consistent with them. Rather, some will fail to affect the underlying, developing system, instead producing only a superficial and possibly transient form of knowledge, with little value for actual use of the language. Such learning would be better described as

> pseudolearning. If the knowledge acquired through grammar correction is, or can be, pseudoknowledge, then teachers have additional reason to doubt the techniques' value. (Truscott, 1996, p. 345)

In Second Language Acquisition theory, *explicit knowledge* refers to the conscious awareness of the grammatical rules of a language, while *implicit knowledge* refers to the unconscious ability to use a language. According to Krashen (1982), it is implicit knowledge that allows for fluent online communication, and explicit knowledge cannot be converted into implicit knowledge. I believe that Truscott's claim that pseudolearning is pseudoknowledge is based on this model of the relative value of unconscious, implicit knowledge vs. conscious, explicit knowledge. Truscott holds that grammar feedback promotes pseudolearning that results in psudoknowledge because grammar feedback promotes the conscious acquisition of explicit grammatical knowledge, which Krashen and Truscott believe cannot be converted into the unconscious implicit knowledge required in fluent online communication.

Focus on the role of implicit knowledge in 2L acquisition can be traced back to the emergence of communicative competence theories in the early 1970s. In response to the prevailing heavily grammar based approach of second language instruction pedagogy at the time, communicative competence theories stressed the acquisition of L2 fluency through a naturalistic process. Based on the assumption that L1 and L2 fluency develop in a similar fashion, communicative competence theories held that abundant and comprehensible naturalistic input in realistic and meaningful circumstances would result in second language fluency, and moreover, that increased grammatical, syntactical, and

lexical accuracy would naturally follow (Krashen, 1982). Current SLA theory, however, holds that the cognitive processes in L1 and L2 acquisition are not identical, and so abundant and comprehensible naturalistic input under realistic and meaningful circumstances are no longer held to be sufficient for the development of increased grammatical, syntactical, and lexical accuracy (Polio, 2010). Once again, I would like to add a note of caution here, as, as I have already mentioned above, recent widespread acknowledgment of the existence of many varieties World Englishes makes WCF on idiomatic usage such as some syntactic (word order) and lexical (word choice) concerns at times highly problematic. Suffice for the moment to say that word order and word choice are highly variable among the World Englishes, and so in many cases the concept of word order or word choice accuracy is consequently an invalid one. I will address World Englishes and the accompanying problematic aspects of WCF on idiomatic usage such as word order and word choice in more detail later in this thesis.

Van Beuningen (2010) asserts that in order for an L2 speaker to develop "proficiency on all levels, including accuracy…a fully meaning-based approach to L2 instruction does not suffice" (p. 4). She points out that all contemporary communicative methodologies "incorporate some form of grammar instruction," without which, "L2 acquisition could be expected to be slower, more difficult, and less successful" (p. 4). In particular, she believes that three proposals in SLA theory, Swain's output hypothesis, Long's focus-on-form approach, and Schimidt's noticing hypothesis, may provide support for the role of WCF in 2L acquisition.

Firstly, Swain's output hypothesis (1991) argues that learner output plays a vital role in the L2 acquisition process as producing output requires more mental effort and

deeper language processing than mere listening and reading (van Beuningen, 2010). Moreover, Swain (1991) added that the production of output alone may not suffice "if students are given insufficient feedback or no feedback regarding the extent to which their messages have successfully (accurately, appropriately, and coherently) been conveyed" (p. 98). Therefore, according to Swain, students need not only to produce output in the form of speaking and writing, but they also need to be given feedback on the communicative appropriateness and grammatical accuracy of that output.

Secondly, Long's (2000) focus-on-form approach to second language acquisition within a communicative context "involves briefly drawing students' attention to linguistic elements…in context as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (p. 185). Van Beuningen (2010) suggests that WCF may be an unobtrusive way to draw students' attention to such linguistic elements as it does not interrupt the flow of communication (p.5).

Thirdly, Schimidt's (2001) noticing hypothesis argues that "subliminal SLA is impossible, and that it is only through conscious attention that input can be converted into intake" (van Beuningen, 2010, p. 5). According to Schmidt (2001), L2 learners need to be made aware of "a mismatch or gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce, as well as between what they produce and what target language speakers produce" (p. 6). I would like to insert a disclaimer here, in that as I understand him, Schmidt was referring to so-called grammatical, lexical, or syntactic "mistakes," and in no way meant to infer that the teacher should intrude upon their students' own unique World Englishes or expropriate their students of their own unique linguistic and cultural autonomy and identity. Van Beuningen (2010), in agreement with Schmidt, suggests that

students may benefit by noticing the gap between their own English language output and the WCF provided by their English teachers.

Polio (2012), in her analysis of contemporary SLA theory in regard to WCF, notes that "even Krashen, who took an extreme position on the role of explicit knowledge in SLA, pointed out that in writing, writers had time to monitor and apply knowledge from learned rules" (p. 384). She concludes that, "If we assume that written corrective feedback increases explicit knowledge, then it should help learners write better in at least some cases" (p. 384). Van Beuningen (2010), in her analysis of contemporary SLA theory and empirical study concerning WCF, concludes that, "The fact that the accuracy improvement brought about by written CF was shown [in recent studies] to be durable, rebuts Truscott's (1996) claim that correction can only lead to a superficial and transient type of L2 knowledge" (p. 2). On the contrary, van Beuningen suggests that, "By offering learners opportunities to notice the gaps in their developing L2 systems, test interlanguage hypotheses, and engage in metalinguistic reflection, written CF has the ability to foster SLA and to lead to accuracy development" (p. 21). Therefore, according to two of the most currently active and widely published scholars in the field today, Charlene Polio and Catherine van Beuningen, contemporary SLA theory now supports the potential benefit of WCF in L2 writing.

Addressing Truscott's practical concerns about WCF in regard to teacher and student time and motivation.

In the section of his essay entitled "Practical Problems", Truscott assumes that ESL teachers (1) often are not consistent in their ability to spot grammar mistakes, (2) often do not fully understand grammar mistakes themselves when they do spot them, (3)

often are unable to clearly explain grammar mistakes to their students when they do understand them, and (4) often don't have the time to explain grammar mistakes clearly even when they spot them, understand them, and are capable of explaining them. Truscott claims that ESL students (5) often are unable to understand teachers' grammar explanations when teachers are capable of offering them, (6) often forget the explanations even if they do understand them, and (7) often fail to use such new knowledge in future writing through lack of motivation.

Truscott does back up each assumption with a brief reference to a study supporting his stance, yet I would maintain that Truscott underestimates the capabilities of both L2 teachers and students to deal with the physical and cognitive demands of WCF, and that, in fact, some of his concerns have subsequently been and are currently being addressed by SLA theory and research. To address a few of these assumptions:

> For a particular instance of grammar correction to be effective, a large number of requirements must be met; if any one of them is left unsatisfied, it will render the correction ineffective…First, the teacher must realize that a mistake has been made. (Truscott, 1996, p. 349)

It has been my experience in over twenty years of teaching English and proofreading papers for academic journals abroad, that in much L2 writing at any level nearly every sentence contains one or more grammar mistakes. I believe that given enough time most ESL teachers can spot most grammar mistakes, but that given time constraints doing so is not usually realistic. That said, I would argue that the unsurprising fact that ESL teachers often fail to spot and mark all grammar mistakes, and can even be

quite inconsistent and unsystematic in the grammar mistakes that they do spot and mark, is of little relevance the question of whether the correction of the grammar mistakes that ESL teachers do spot and mark is of value in the long-term acquisition of second language knowledge and writing skills for the L2 student.

> If teachers do recognize an error, they still may not have a good understanding of the correct use—questions regarding grammar can be very difficult, even for experts, and someone who speaks or writes English well does not necessarily understand the principles involved…Thus, a teacher may well know that an error has occurred but not know exactly why it is an error. (Truscott, 1996, p. 350)

Indeed, many EFL teachers do not have a solid explicit grasp of the rules of English grammar. While a teacher may be able to spot and correct a grammatical mistake, the explanation of why it is a mistake can often be difficult to understand and explain. Of course, this is only true for some teachers and for some grammar mistakes. Some mistakes are, in fact, relatively easy to spot, correct, and explain, while some teachers do, in fact, have a very solid explicit grasp of the rules of English grammar. If anything, Truscott's objection would seem to be a call for L2 writing teachers to first have a solid foundation in the rules English grammar and formal training in the ability to explain and teach these rules clearly to their students before such teachers ever step into the L2 writing classroom.

> If they do understand it well, they might still be unable to give a good explanation; problems that need explaining are often very complex. (Truscott, 1996, p. 350)

The very real fact that many ESL teachers do have problems explaining some grammar mistakes also begs the question of whether simply spotting a mistake and either correcting it or indicating it for the student isn't useful in itself. If students benefit from teacher input by noticing the gap between what they produce and what the teacher might produce in a similar situation, and if implicit knowledge of how a language is actually used is more valuable than explicit knowledge of the grammatical rules of that language, wouldn't a simple insertion of an English teacher's amendment, even without a grammatical explanation, also at times be of value?

> Even if capable of explaining the problem well, they still might fail to do so; busy teachers grading large numbers or written assignments have serious problems with time and patience, problems that can easily affect the quality of their comments. (Truscott, 1996, p. 350)

Certainly, lack of time and patience on the part of teachers, all teachers everywhere, is universal. Certainly, due to time and patience constraints, teacher WCF will necessarily be partial and inconsistent at times. Yet when Truscott refers to the "quality of their comments," I am confused. It is my understanding that WCF may be direct or indirect, and focused or comprehensive, but I do not believe that metalinguistic grammar explanation is considered to play a major role in most WCF. Certainly, written comments on form and content are constrained by time, energy and patience factors, and

partial and inconsistent grammar correction (WCF) is necessitated by time, energy and patience constraints, but my understanding is that metalinguistic grammar explanation, when desired, is undertaken either orally in a classroom or conferencing context or as a written or spoken practice exercise or drill. Thus, while the question of the role that metalinguistic grammar explanation should play in relation to any given WCF is indeed a large and important one, I believe that its role in the actual WCF on any given L2 essay is practically nil.

> Even if teachers express the principles clearly, students may well fail to understand the explanation…And a learner who understands a comment—well enough even to rewrite the composition correctly—may not grasp the general principle involved and may repeat the error later in other contexts. (Truscott, 1996, pp. 350-351).

Once again, nowhere in the literature on WCF is it suggested that the teacher attempt to explain the rules of English grammar in their written comments on student papers. The point of WCF is merely to note, either through direct or indirect WCF, that a mistake exists. If the student is unable to understand why the mistake is a mistake, then further teaching and practice may be required in order to ensure that the student eventually does understand and learn from the mistake.

> And if students do understand, they are likely to forget the new knowledge rather quickly, especially if the explanation is complex and especially if this is only one of many errors for which they are receiving correction. This problem is

> compounded by the fact that…L2 teachers are generally not consistent or systematic in their corrections…This inconsistency naturally makes it harder for students to understand and remember corrections. (Truscott, 1996, p. 351)

As many L2 university writing students have had at least six or more years of English grammar instruction, much of the WCF they receive will not be "new knowledge." Hence, the real question becomes that of the relative value of focused WCF aimed only at review and further expertise in knowledge that has already been acquired, vs. that of comprehensive WCF, which would necessarily include some as of yet "new knowledge," and consequently again, the role of metalinguistic feedback and practice exercises in the L2 writing classroom.

In regard to L2 teachers generally being "not consistent or systematic in their corrections," much of this simply cannot be helped. Once again, given that nearly every sentence often contains one or more mistakes, it is nearly impossible, and usually not even desirable, that the teacher to attempt to catch them all. However, the Truscott's supposition that "inconsistency" on the part of the teacher may make it somewhat more difficult for students to understand and remember areas of concern, while very possibly a correct assumption, says little about whether students, in the final analysis, might benefit overall from any WCF.

Hartshorn and Evans (2012), in advocating WCF that is manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant, suggest that in order to ensure that students do not forget any new knowledge garnered, teachers must return the corrected draft by the following day for

immediate revision, and that in order to promote the internalization of the new knowledge for long-term acquisition, students should keep a running daily log of their corrected grammar mistakes (p. 7).

> Even if the teacher does give a good explanation and the students can deal with it, they may not be sufficiently motivated to do so…And, even if sufficiently motivated to look at and figure out the corrections, they may not be motivated enough to think about them in future writing. (Truscott, 1996, p. 351)

Certainly, student motivation is a very real concern. As mentioned above, Hartshorn and Evans (2012) suggest that students keep a running daily log of their corrected grammar mistakes to ensure that the knowledge garnered with each writing exercise stays with them long-term. Suzuki (2012) recommends written "languaging", where the students write out explanations of their grammar mistakes in an L1 journal each day in order to ensure that the knowledge garnered with each writing exercise stays with the long-term. While the practicality of either a running daily log or a daily journal may not be feasible due to time limitations and overall general focus of the course in many L2 writing classrooms, these are ideas worth considering for some L2 writing classrooms.

Addressing Truscott's theoretical concerns over the harmful effects of WCF in regard to structural complexity in student papers.

In the section of his essay under "Theoretical Problems" entitled "Grammar Correction Has Harmful Effects", Truscott assumes that grammar correction is harmful

for four reasons: (1) it is stressful and discouraging for students to see their papers marked full of grammar corrections, (2) it will cause students to shorten and simplify their writing, (3) it will consume students' time and energy that could better be spent on improving form and content in their writing, and, (4) it will consume teachers' time and energy that could better be spent on helping students to improve form and content in their writing (Truscott, 1996, pp. 354-355).

A close analysis of Truscott's assumptions will show that they are largely based on speculation and intuition. Each assumption that Truscott makes in this section is marked by a speculative hedge: Students who receive returned papers with red ink all over them "*probably* find the experience extremely discouraging;" Uncorrected students in a cited study wrote longer papers "*presumably* because of their better attitude;" If such students continued to write longer papers over time, "it *might* well result in the eventual superiority of the uncorrected students;" "The *probable* source of these problems is, again, the inherent unpleasantness of correction" (Truscott, 1996, pp. 354-355). Perhaps the most testable assumption Truscott makes in this section is that, "Students shorten and simplify their writing in order to avoid corrections" (p. 355). Van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) report that Truscott's assumptions here are "in line with limited capacity models of attention that also predict a trade-off between accuracy and complexity" (p. 9). According to SLA theorists who advocate limited capacity models (Robinson, 1995, 2003; Skehan, 1998, 2003, Skehan & Foster, 2001; Schmidt, 2001; Van Patton 1996, 2004), L2 students' writing will become more complex when they are unafraid to experiment with the language, and conversely their writing will become more simplified as more emphasis is placed on accuracy. Polio (2012), however, asserts that

the limited capacity model “is open to debate” (p. 384), while van Beuningen (2010) adds that other SLA theorists (Robinson, 2003, 2005) argue that, “Linguistic accuracy and complexity are not presumed to be in competition because these two form-related aspects of learner output are thought to be closely connected” (p. 10). In the following chapter, I shall investigate a recent study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) which attempts to test, among other things, whether WCF does, indeed, cause students to limit the structural complexity of their writing.

Chapter 3: Analysis of a Recent Article on Written Corrective Feedback

A recent study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) on the effectiveness of comprehensive corrective feedback, designed with one of its aims being to test Truscott's assumptions that WCF is harmful because it promotes shortening and simplification in student writing and because it consumes time that could be better spent on form and content, found both claims to be unsupported. Employing what they claim to be a tightly controlled research methodology incorporating a pretest, a posttest, and a delayed posttest, the authors claim that, "The new texts written by pupils who received [W]CF were more accurate than those of learners who were allowed an extra opportunity to practice their writing skills, and [W]CF did not lead our participants to produce structurally or lexically less complex writing" (p. 33). These findings may be not only surprising but also controversial to some scholars in the field, and so I have chosen to investigate the research methodology employed in this study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012), as well as the research methodology employed in some earlier studies, in the following sections in more detail.

History of Empirical Research on the Long-term Efficacy of WCF

Much of the initial research in response to Truscott's (1996) claims focused on the role of WCF in the revision process. However, while these studies demonstrated that WCF can be a successful editing tool during revision of a single text, they did not provide evidence as to whether WCF facilitated the acquisition of linguistic knowledge of the corrected grammatical forms in the long-term.

Therefore, under the assumption that evidence of the long-term acquisition of linguistic knowledge can only be documented when accuracy in a new text is contrasted

with inaccuracy in an earlier text, a second wave of studies was undertaken. However, these studies, subsequently criticized for "methodological issues" (van Beuningen, 2010, p. 14) and "flaws in design, execution, and analysis" (Bitchener, 2012, p. 353), proved "inconclusive" (Hartshorn & Evans, 2012, p. 4), producing "mixed results" (van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012, p. 4). More recently, however, "tightly controlled" (van Beuningen, 2010, p. 15) studies have focused on the long-term effects of WCF by comparing students' accuracy performance on a pretest, a posttest, and a delayed posttest. According to Bitchener (2012), these studies have demonstrated improved accuracy in both the short- and long-term, and thus provide "clear evidence of the potential of written CF to facilitate certain aspects of language learning" (p. 353). Van Beuningen (2010) concurs that, "There now seems to be a growing body of evidence that error correction is an effective means of improving L2 learners' written accuracy over time" (p. 18).

Critical Analysis of Recent Study by van Bueningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) on the Long-term Efficacy of WCF

As stated above, much empirical research has been done over the years in attempt to understand the efficacy of various types of WCF, as well as to analyze WCF's potential harmful side effects, especially in regard to Truscott's supposition that WCF may overload L2 writers' attentional capacity, and that WCF may, thus, lead to avoidance strategies on the part of students, resulting in the use of more simple grammatical structures and, therefore, less structurally complex writing. Van Bueningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012), in their paper entitled "Evidence of the Effectiveness of Comprehensive Error Correction in Second Language Writing", appearing in the March, 2012 edition of *Language Learning*, attempted to investigate numerous such concerns regarding WCF.

As there has been much criticism of the research methodology of earlier studies, and there is still some fair amount of controversy as to the overall and specific contributions that various types of WCF may play in the acquisition of L2 writing long-term grammatical accuracy, I felt that it was desirable for me to fully understand the methodology employed in this empirical research study of interest. My thoughts on the validity of this research methodology will follow.

Research questions.

In their paper, the authors cite eight specific research questions which their study hopes to answer:

- RQ1 – "Is comprehensive written CF useful as an editing tool…?" (p. 10)
- RQ2 – "Does comprehensive written CF yield a *learning effect*…?" (p. 10)
- RQ3 – "Is comprehensive CF more beneficial to learners' accuracy development than having the opportunity to correct their own writing (without feedback)?" (p. 10)
- RQ4 – "How effective are direct and indirect (comprehensive) CF relative to each other and to no CF?" (p. 10)
- RQ5 – "Are grammatical errors less amenable to correction than other types of errors…?" (p. 10)
- RQ6 – "Is comprehensive CF more beneficial to learners' accuracy development than writing practice?" (p. 10)
- RQ7 – "Does error correction lead to avoidance of lexically and structurally (more) complex utterances?" (p. 10)
- RQ8 – "What (if any) is the influence of pupils' educational level on CF efficacy?" (p. 11)

Settings and participants.

The study was undertaken at four Dutch multilingual secondary schools of which over 80% of the students come from non-Dutch language backgrounds. All four of these schools utilize a "language-sensitive instructional approach" (p. 11), in which language instruction plays a central role not only in classes where language teaching is the main focus but in classes in which content, such as biology, math, etc., is the main focus, as well. The authors of this study targeted students in biology class, and, therefore, the writing tasks incorporated were based on biology-related topics.

Treatments and Controls

- Experimental Group I: Direct CF
- Experimental Group II: Indirect CF
- Control Group I: Self-Correction
- Control Group II: Additional Writing Practice

Procedure

Session 1: pretest (week 1)

- All students were given a vocabulary test in order to determine their overall relative language proficiency.
- All students were given a 20-minute, at least 15 line biology-based essay writing assignment to serve as a "baseline measure" of their "written accuracy and structural and lexical complexity" (p. 13). Before the essay writing assignment, students were informed that their essays would be judged both on content and linguistic adequacy. "To give them an idea of the form-related features they could attend to while writing, pupils were given a handout listing common types of errors and an example for each

error category" (p. 15). The students were not told that some of them would be receiving corrective feedback at a later date on their essays. The authors note that they drew the attention of all four groups of students to form as well as to content in session 1 for several reasons, one reason being the following:

> …by directing every learner's attention to linguistic form at the start of the experiment, we strove to foster stable and equal task representations. Had the task instructions in session 1 emphasized only content issues, the way in which pupils in the experimental (but not the control) groups interpreted the task would have been likely to change over time because students are known to attune their task representations toward the task demands set by the teacher (p. 15).

Session 2: treatment/control (week 2)

- Experimental Group I: Direct CF – Essays returned for revision with direct CF provided.
- Experimental Group II: Indirect CF – Essays returned for revision with indirect CF provided along with handout and oral explanation on how to interpret error coded corrections.
- Control Group I: Self- Correction – Essays returned for revision without any markings.
- Control Group II: Additional Writing Practice – No revision of earlier essays, but instead given a new 20-minute biology-based essay writing task.

Session 3: posttest (week 3)

- All groups given new biology-based topic and 20 minutes to write an at least 15 line essay.

Session 4: posttest (week 6)

- All groups given new biology-based topic and 20 minutes to write an at least 15 line essay.

Linguistic Measures for the Dependent Variables.

The authors then analyzed the essays for linguistic accuracy, structural complexity, and lexical diversity. To measure the relative efficacy of WCF on grammatical and nongrammatical errors, overall linguistic accuracy was broken down into two such components. Grammatical accuracy was calculated as the ratio of grammatical mistakes to the total number of words times ten, while nongrammatical accuracy was calculated as the ratio of nongrammatical mistakes to the total number of words times ten. Structural complexity was calculated as the ratio of the number of subclauses to the total number of clauses times 100. Lexical diversity was calculated using Guiraud's Index, a type-token ratio that corrects for text length (p. 18).

Findings

Without going into the statistical analysis used in the above research, the findings indicate the following regarding each proposed research question:

- RQ1 – "Is comprehensive written CF useful as an editing tool…?" (p. 10)

  The study found that "comprehensive CF enables learners to enhance the linguistic correctness of a certain text during revision" (p. 31), which is in line with all previous studies concerned.

- RQ2 – “Does comprehensive written CF yield a *learning effect*…?” (p. 10)

  While previous studies had indicated that direct focused feedback on a very narrow range of linguistic errors resulted in long-term improved grammatical accuracy on the targeted linguistic forms, this study claims to be, “The first to show that…pupils whose errors were corrected comprehensively made fewer errors in new pieces of writing than learners who did not receive CF” (p. 32).

- RQ3 – “Is comprehensive CF more beneficial to learners’ accuracy development than having the opportunity to correct their own writing (without feedback)?” (p. 10)

  The study found that “Pupils who received direct CF outperformed learners in the self-correction group on both grammatical and nongrammatical accuracy” (p. 29).

- RQ4 – “How effective are direct and indirect (comprehensive) CF relative to each other and to no CF?” (p. 10)

  The study found that “only direct correction promoted durable grammatical accuracy improvements…whereas pupils’ non-grammatical accuracy benefited most from indirect CF, in that it was the effects of indirect CF that were retained the longest” (p. 32).

- RQ5 – “Are grammatical errors less amenable to correction than other types of errors…?” (p. 10)

  The study found that “both grammatical and nongrammatical errors are amenable to CF but that they benefit from different types of corrections; direct correction is better suited for grammatical errors and indirect correction is better suited for nongrammatical errors” (pp. 32-33).

- RQ6 – “Is comprehensive CF more beneficial to learners’ accuracy development than writing practice?” (p. 10)

  The study found that “The new texts written by pupils who received CF were more accurate than those who were allowed an extra opportunity to practice their writing skills…” (p. 33).

- RQ7 – “Does error correction lead to avoidance of lexically and structurally (more) complex utterances?” (p. 10)

  The study found that “…CF did not lead our participants to produce structurally or lexically less complex writing” (p. 33).

- RQ8 – “What (if any) is the influence of pupils’ educational level on CF efficacy?” (p. 11)

  The authors state that “we never found a significant interaction between the effectiveness of the CF treatments and learners’ educational level” (p. 33).

My Views on the Validity of this Study

Over the course of the long WCF debate, empirical research study methodology has evolved. While earlier studies often utilized a two-stage process, with a pretest and posttest, which purported to show that WCF can be an effective tool in the revision process of a single essay, contemporary studies often utilize a three-stage methodology, with a pretest, a posttest, and a delayed posttest, and one or more instrumental and control groups, and have purported to show that WCF can be effective in the acquisition of long-term L2 grammatical accuracy, and in the case of the recent study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012), that this improvement in grammatical accuracy was achieved without Truscott’s theorized accompanying loss in structural complexity.

However, I consider even this latest empirical research methodology to be flawed. Van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) claim that their study shows that long-term acquisition of grammatical accuracy was achieved without a loss in structural complexity. In their study, students in the instrumental groups were given various kinds of WCF on their initial pretest essay, while students in the control group were not given any WCF on their initial pretest essay. For the posttest and delayed posttest, no groups, either control or instrumental, were given any WCF. A statistical analysis of the posttest and delayed posttest showed that the students in the instrumental groups achieved higher grammatical accuracy without loss in structural complexity. In order to insure that the students in the instrumental groups were no more likely to consider grammatical accuracy to be a significant factor in the scoring of their essays than would the students in the control groups, all groups were given an explanation and handout on the various types of grammatical errors that were to be considered relevant in the scoring of their essay.

I believe this research methodology to be flawed for three reasons: 1). While all groups were given an initial explanation and handout on the types of grammar mistakes that would be considered relevant in the scoring of their essay, only the instrumental groups were given WCF on their pretest essay. Thus, I would assume that the instrumental groups were more likely to focus on grammatical accuracy in their posttest and delayed posttest essays than was the control group; 2) The improvement in grammatical accuracy with no loss in structural complexity shown by the instrumental groups in their posttest and delayed posttest essays was achieved in two brief, artificial settings, not on a sustained basis in a regular classroom environment in daily writing. Thus, I would assume that the research findings are not indicative of the writing

strategies that the students in the instrumental groups applied in daily writing; 3) The WCF given to the instrumental groups was applied only once, in their initial pretest essay in an artificial setting, not on a sustained basis in a regular classroom environment in daily writing. Thus, I would assume that its relevance had little impact on their daily writing strategies.

In short, I believe that 1) contemporary WCF research methodology, with pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest, with a control and instrumental groups, is too artificial and insubstantial to prove any long-term acquisition in grammatical accuracy by the instrumental groups, and so such improvement could only have been achieved if the students in the instrumental groups were aware of the special, artificial circumstances of the posttest and delayed posttest essays, and 2) that a one-time application of WCF in a brief, artificial setting could have had no long-term impact on the daily writing strategies employed by the instrumental group students.

My Conclusion on the Current State of WCF Theory and Empirical Research

Much recent second language acquisition theory and empirical research have indicated the potential of written corrective feedback in aiding students to notice areas of grammatical, lexical, and syntactical concern (Bitchener 2012; van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012; Polio 2012; Hartshorn & Evans, 2012). At the moment, indirect comprehensive WCF is receiving much acclaim and attention. However, the methodology employed in much of this research, as well as many of the specific findings still remain somewhat controversial, and it is widely acknowledged that further research needs to be undertaken in order to reach more definitive and conclusive answers. Research has shown that most L2 teachers believe in and give WCF, and that most L2

students want and expect WCF (Evans, Hartshorn, & Tuioti, 2010). At the same time, however, giving WCF is often dreaded as overly taxing and time-consuming on the part of many L2 teachers, and receiving papers overwhelmed in red ink may be viewed as extremely discouraging and alienating on the part of many L2 students (Ferris, 2006). Moreover, in line with the statement from The National Council of Teachers of English (2012), it is the written message itself, and the form and content of that message which should be the main focus of both L2 teacher and L2 student attention. Hence, while the general contemporary consensus among L2 researchers, teachers, and students favors the value of WCF in the L2 writing classroom, the question remains as to the best practices for the implementation of WCF in the L2 writing classroom.

Chapter 4: Conclusions, Reflections, and Ideas for Future Research

Implications for L2 Writing Teachers and Students

SLA Theory and ESL versus EFL.

While some highly influential second language acquisition theorists such as Krashen and Truscott have proposed that abundant and comprehensible naturalistic input under meaningful and realistic circumstances alone is sufficient for the eventual production of fluency and grammatical accuracy, and that grammar knowledge, drill, and correction are useless and even harmful, one major factor this theory does not take into consideration is the distinction between the ESL classroom and the EFL classroom. In the latter, where students have no opportunity for immersion in the language, but only attend English class in their home country for one or two hours a week or so, and particularly when such students are at a lower L2 proficiency level, then grammar, drill, and corrective feedback do have a fundamental role to play in basic L2 acquisition. At universities in predominantly English-speaking countries, in contrast, L2 students are immersed in the language that they study, taking all of their classes in English every day, and must use the language to provide for a wide variety of daily needs, as well. Thus, much SLA theory and research, often though not always undertaken by professors in their home country where the students are in an immersive ESL environment, downplays the necessity for grammar instruction and drill for lower proficiency EFL students studying in their home country, as well as downplays the necessity for written corrective feedback for EFL students at higher proficiency levels studying in their home country.

Exercising restraint in WCF due to respecting students' right to their own languages.

WCF has been indicated to have a positive effect on long-term grammatical accuracy without necessarily harming structural complexity. However, it can, indeed, be discouraging for students to have their papers covered in corrective red ink with little or no feedback on the message they have been trying to convey. Hence, the primary focus of any writing activity should be the form and content of the writing, not the grammatical accuracy, and certainly not idiomatic usage such as word order and word choice, which are often based on the students' own unique World Englishes or cultural norms. Yet, WCF can and should play an important and helpful role in improving student's long-term grammatical accuracy. WCF should perform this function, however, in a way that encourages students to maintain and take pride in their own unique linguistic and cultural identities in their L2 writing. Therefore, WCF should focus on concerns of grammatical accuracy without undue regard to idiomatic usage based on the students' own unique World Englishes or cultural norms, as long as such idiomatic usage does not impede the understanding of the reader. WCF should not appropriate students' unique cultural and personal voices by demanding that students conform to the so-called Queen's English, so-called Standard American English, or any other so perceived standard English norm. English teachers must respect and encourage their students' in expressing their own unique brand of World Englishes and unique cultural styles of communicating in both the spoken and written English language. Yet, English teachers must not ignore what former EWU MAE:TESL graduate student Jillion Andre describes in her master's thesis as the "elephant in the room…which is error correction, or written corrective feedback" (p. 170). WCF does have an important role to play in the development of long-term grammatical accuracy. Yet, WCF must be undertaken with all proper caution and

restraint. Therefore, as teachers must respect the validity of their students' own linguistically and culturally distinct World Englishes and must allow their students ample leeway for personal self-expression and creativity in their L2 writing, I suggest that WCF should be limited to concerns of grammatical accuracy, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, while more idiomatic usage such as word order and word choice should only receive WCF when they impede the understanding of the reader.

Exercising restraint in WCF due to valuing the content of the message the student is trying to convey.

In addition to limiting WCF to grammatical accuracy in order to respect and promote students' own unique World Englishes and cultural norms, Andre also notes that even focusing too much on grammatical accuracy alone can be counterproductive and expropriating when such an emphasis takes too much attention away from the content of the written message itself. Andre notes that, "Written corrective feedback, when it usurps the focus of written feedback, can act as its own type of appropriation, taking the attention away from the agenda of students' writing and redirecting it toward grammar"(p. 170). Andre's advice is to "exercise restraint" (p. 170). She adds further that:

> As individuals, we ideally would practice restraint and respect in verbal conversation in order to give other individuals the chance to communicate what they wish to say effectively; written exchanges should, although separated by space and time, adhere to the same principles. (Andre, 2011, p. 170)

Andre is correct that English teachers must exercise restraint in the application of WCF. One very important and easy way for the teacher to exercise restraint in the application of WCF is to make a very strong distinction between an *error* and a *mistake*. An error may be understood as an inaccuracy of the kind we all make when we speak or write in haste. Writers are able to recognize their own errors when they carefully review their work. Errors may not impede the understanding of the reader, and, therefore, errors usually do not require WCF by the teacher. A mistake, on the other hand, may be understood as an inaccuracy writers would not recognize on their own. Mistakes may impede the understanding of the reader, and, therefore, mistakes often do require WCF by the teacher in order to alert students that revision is needed. However, even for apparent mistakes, restraint on the part of the teacher is required. I did not mention this distinction earlier in this thesis as doing say may have confused the reader, especially during the Literature Review section. I learned about this very important and useful distinction between an error and a mistake in Pedagogical Grammar and Composition class at EWU, and while I emphasize and follow this distinction in my own teaching and writing, many of the scholars I quote throughout this thesis do not make this distinction. Therefore, for purposes of clarity and understanding on the part of the reader, I have not specifically mentioned this valuable distinction until now.

Practical WCF Techniques for the L2 Writing Classroom

Both contemporary second language acquisition theory and empirical research have indicated the positive potential of WCF in helping students to notice their grammar mistakes and to improve the grammatical accuracy of their writing, and such theory and research have indicated that WCF can play a vital role in empowering students toward the

goal of self-autonomy in their writing. Minimal Marking for higher proficiency university level L2 writing classes, and Modified Minimal Marking for more intermediate proficiency university level L2 writing classes, are two WCF techniques that can help to alleviate some of the main concerns with the negative consequences for both L2 writing teachers and L2 writing students in giving and receiving WCF that can be implemented in a manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant fashion.

Minimal marking.

Richard H. Haswell, in his 1983 paper on Minimal Marking, suggests a method of WCF that "shortens, gladdens, and improves the act of marking papers" (p. 601) for teachers, thereby allowing teachers to spend more time and energy on the more substantial issues of student writing form and content. In keeping with Knoblauch's and Brannon's (1981) "model of beneficial written commentary" (Haswell, 1983, p. 600), Haswell suggests that his proposal for Minimal Marking WCF benefits students in that it "1) facilitates rather than judges, 2) emphasizes performance rather than finished product, 3) provides double feedback, before and after revision, and 4) helps bridge successive drafts by requiring immediate revision." (p. 600). Haswell's Minimal Marking is an indirect WCF technique that saves the teacher time by requiring only a series of checks at the end of each line of student writing which indicate the number of mistakes (grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) in that line of student writing. Student papers with these checks and other relevant commentary are then returned to students at least fifteen minutes before the end of class, allowing students the time to find, circle, and correct each mistake. This technique reduces the often discouraging amount of teacher markings on student papers, prompts students to self-edit their own papers, an invaluable

skill the students must learn to master, thereby empowering the them with a sense of proprietorship over their own work, and finally creates within the students a self-motivating factor for taking responsibility for their own self-improvement. Haswell claims that he, as the teacher, can save up to four minutes per student paper utilizing the Minimal Marking method, and moreover, that his students, after receiving minimal marking on weekly essays for a period of sixteen weeks and being required to identify and their own correct mistakes, are typically able to find and correctly rectify between sixty to seventy percent of their mistakes. This approach, according to Haswell, fosters autonomy in writers (pp. 600-604).

Modified minimal marking.

While Minimal Marking may be a very effective and efficient technique for more advanced L2 writers, a modified version of minimal marking, utilizing coded symbols instead of simply checks to indicate student mistakes at the end of each line of writing, may better serve L2 writers at less advanced levels of writing proficiency. For example, the coded symbol “S/V” may indicate a subject/verb agreement mistake, “VT” may indicate a verb tense mistake, “CS” may indicate a comma splice, and “FR” may indicate a sentence fragment.

Both contemporary second language acquisition theory and empirical research have indicated the positive role of WCF in helping students to notice and overcome their grammar mistakes, and both theory and research have indicated that WCF can play a vital role in pushing students “toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately” (Swain, 1985, p. 249). Minimal Marking for higher proficiency university level L2 writing classes and Modified Minimal

Marking for more intermediate proficiency university level L2 writing classes are WCF techniques which can help to alleviate some of the main concerns with the negative consequences for both L2 writing teachers and L2 writing students in giving and receiving WCF that can be implemented in a manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant fashion.

Where is the Field Going Now and Why?

While there is still some uncertainty regarding the relative value of direct versus indirect WCF and focused versus comprehensive WCF, as well as to exactly what qualifies as a treatable or untreatable error or mistake, numerous empirical studies have indicated that WCF, at the very least for rule-based grammatical structures, can foster long-term L2 acquisition and improved accuracy. While earlier studies focused primarily on verifying whether WCF can be effective in the long-term by utilizing the more easily verifiable research methods based on simple rule based grammatical structures and focused WCF, more recent studies have begun to report the long-term value of more authentic comprehensive WCF on more varied linguistic features. Recent studies have also indicated that WCF may not necessarily result in intimidated and overstressed L2 students producing overly simplified sentence structures resulting in the loss of structural complexity in their writing. For the time being, at least, it appears that comprehensive WCF, coupled with insight from skill acquisition theory, is receiving much empirical research support and attention.

Recommendations for Future Research

While much recent research has turned in favor of the relative efficacy of comprehensive WCF over focused WCF, the debate over the relative efficacy of indirect

WCF versus direct WCF continues for learners at various proficiency levels continues. The most common suggestion in the research literature is that direct WCF may be most effective for L2 learners at relatively lower proficiency levels while indirect WCF may be most effective for L2 learners at relatively higher proficiency levels. Yet, van Beuningin, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) claim that their study indicates that direct comprehensive WCF is better suited for grammar mistakes and that only direct WCF has "the potential to yield long-term grammatical gains," while indirect comprehensive WCF is "better suited for non-grammatical…correction" (p. 33). Furthermore, van Beuningin, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012) claim that "there was no correlation between the effectiveness of the [W]CF treatments [direct comprehensive and indirect comprehensive] and learners' educational level" (p. 33). Thus, further research into the relative efficacy of direct comprehensive WCF versus indirect comprehensive WCF is needed, and in particular as regards learners at specific proficiency levels.

Proposal for a Reliable, Realistic, and Sustained WCF Empirical Research Methodology

I would propose a study which would employ an experimental, quantitative research strategy. The purpose of this study would be to determine the relative efficacy of direct comprehensive WCF, indirect comprehensive WCF, and no WCF on long-term structural complexity and grammatical accuracy in an L2 university writing class. This study would utilize a statistical analysis of the relative long-term grammatical accuracy acquisition of a control group, a direct comprehensive WCF group, and an indirect comprehensive WCF group, along with a statistical analysis of the relative accompanying loss or gain in structural complexity of all three groups. Most significantly, in order to

ensure that findings were reliable, this study would implement this research methodology consistently over the course of a full term L2 university writing class, and this study would analyze the relative efficacy of these methodologies with a pretest at the beginning of the term, a posttest at the end of the term, and a delayed posttest at a later date.

Conclusions

The teaching English to speakers of other languages field is vast, encompassing students at all ages and proficiency levels in a huge range of educational circumstances, from toddlers to senior citizens, from true beginners to the functionally bi-lingual, from ESL to EFL, from one-to-one private tutoring to classes with 35 students or more, and from university students studying full-time, to working adults studying part-time, to refugees trying to survive in a new country and culture. While a communicative-based immersion or bi-lingual approach starting at the pre-school age is most ideal for the acquisition of a new language, clearly no one solution can best fit all such conceivable real world 2L language learning environments.

Years of real world teaching experience abroad has taught me that for lower proficiency level cram school students and lower proficiency level working adults whose only exposure to English is one or two hours a week in their home country, a certain amount of grammar instruction and drill is required. I contend that for more intermediate proficiency students studying five hours a week in secondary or tertiary school in their home country, a certain amount of WCF can also be useful. And much recent SLA theory and empirical research have indicated that for more advanced proficiency students matriculating into university composition courses in a predominantly English-speaking country, a certain amount of WCF can be beneficial as well.

Yet there those who would still contest the findings of much of this SLA theory and empirical research, and those who support these findings will readily admit that much is still uncertain and more research needs to be done. I investigated the research methodology of a recent study by van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2012), and I am not fully convinced of the validity of the methodology employed. Yet, regardless of the widely acknowledged uncertainty regarding the efficacy of WCF, the general consensus appears to be that if undertaken prudently and cautiously WCF can be an effective tool for the long-term acquisition of grammatical accuracy without loss of structural complexity in L2 student writing. Never-the-less, the concerns of those who caution against WCF remain valid: Too much red ink on student papers can be discouraging, overwhelming teachers and students with WCF can take away from focus on other important aspects of the writing process, and WCF that does not promote student self-empowerment or that intrudes upon the linguistic and cultural identity or the linguistic spontaneity and artistic creativity of the student can result in many negative consequences, including a decrease in motivation. Moreover, even in more advanced proficiency secondary and tertiary level English writing classes, WCF should not play a primary role. The focus of a content-based, writing intensive, EAP course, for example, while incorporating some WCF on first and second drafts of student papers, should still be communicative activities. Even an L2 university composition course should focus primarily on communicative competence, and most corrective feedback should be centered on form and content in student papers. This thesis recognizes that WCF has an effective but limited role to play in the intermediate to advanced secondary and tertiary level writing classrooms. In the promotion of a WCF methodology that is both

manageable for teachers and students and self-empowering for student writers, this thesis advocates Minimal Marking as an effective WCF technique for the advanced proficiency L2 writing classroom and Modified Minimal Marking as an effective WCF technique for the intermediate proficiency L2 writing classroom.

References

Anderson, T. (2010). The effects of tiered corrective feedback on second language academic writing. An unpublished thesis from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Andre, J. M. (2011). *Negotiating meaning in written response to ELL writers at the college level: avoiding appropriation, encouraging a sense of ownership, and acting as cultural brokers to help students "remind [themselves] of audience"* (Master's thesis). Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA.

Bitchener, J. (2008). Evidence in support of written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing 17*(2), 102-118.

Bitchener, J. (2012). A reflection on the language learning potential of written CF. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 21,* 348-363.

Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. R. (2012). *Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing.* New York. Routledge.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2008). The value of written corrective feedback for migrant and international students. *Language Teaching Research 12*(3), 409-431.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010a). The contribution of written corrective feedback to language development: A ten month investigation. *Applied Linguistics 31*(2), 193-294.

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010b). Raising the linguistic accuracy level of advanced L2 writers with written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing 19*(4), 207-217.

Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). The effect of different kinds of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing 14*(3), 227-258.

Bruton, A. (2009). Improving accuracy is not the only reason for writing, and even if it were…. *System, 37,* 600-613.

Bruton, A. (2010). Another reply to Truscott on error correction: improved situated designs over statistics. *System, 38,* 491-498.

Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing 12*(3), 267-296.

Ellis, R., Sheen, Y., Murakami, M., & Takashima, H. (2008). The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in an English as a foreign language context. *System 36*(3), 353-371.

Evans, N. W., Hartshorn, K. J., & Tuioti, E. A. (2010). Written corrective feedback: Practitioners' perspectives. *International Journal of English Studies,* 10(2), 47-77.

Ferris, D. (1995). Teaching ESL composition students to become independent self-editors. *TESOL Journal 4*(4), 18-22.

Ferris, D. R. (1999). The case for grammar correction in l2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*(1), 1-11.

Ferris, D. R. (2006). Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the short- and long-term effects of written error correction. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (pp. 81-104). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hartshorn, K. J., & Evans N. W. (2012). The differential effects of comprehensive corrective feedback on l2 writing accuracy. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching, 3*(2), 25-50.

Hartshorn, K., & Evans, N., Merrill, P., Sudweeks, R., Strong-Krause, D., & Anderson, N. (2010). Effects of dynamic corrective feedback on ESL writing accuracy. *TESOL Quarterly, 44*, 84-109.

Haswell, R. H. (1983). Minimal marking. *College English 45*(6), 600-604.

Knoblauch, C. H., & Brannon, L. (1981). Teacher commentary on student writing. *Freshmen English News, 10*, 1-4.

Kobayashi, T. (1992). Native and nonnative reactions to ESL compositions. *TESOL Quarterly 26*(1), 81-112.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Oxford: Pergamon.

Lalande, J. F. (1982). Reducing composition errors: An experiment. *Modern Language Journal 66*(2), 140-149.

Leki, I. (1992). Understanding ESL writers: A guide for teachers. Boyton/Cook Heinemann, Portsmith, NH.

Long, M. H. (2000). Focus on form in task-based language teaching. In R. Lambert & Shohamy, (Eds.) *Language policy and pedagogy. Essays in honor of A. Ronald Walton* (pp. 179-192), Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Pienemann, M. (1989). Is language teachable? *Applied Linguistics 10*(1), 52-79.

Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language processing and second language development: Processability theory*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Pienemann, M. (2007). Processability theory. In B. Van Patten and J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 137-154). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Pienemann, M., & Johnson, M. (1987). Factors influencing the development of language proficiency. In D. Nunan (Ed.) *Applying second language acquisition research* (pp. 45-141). Adelaide, Australia: National Curriculum Resource Centre, AMEP.

Pienemann, M., & Kebler, J. (2012a). Processability theory. In S. Gass & A. Mackey (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 228-247). New York: Routledge.

Pienemann, M., & Kebler, J. (Eds.), (2012b). Studying processability theory. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Polio, C. (2012). The relevance of second language acquisition theory to the written error correction debate. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 21,* 375-389.

Robinson, P. (1995). *Attention, memory, and the "noticing" hypothesis. Language Learning, 45,* 283-331.

Robinson, P. (2003). Attention and memory during SLA. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 631-678). Oxford: Blackwell.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-22). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly 41*(2), 255-283.

Sheen, Y. (2010b). Differential effects of oral and written corrective feedback in the ESL classroom. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition 32*(2), 201-234.

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Skehan, P. (2003). Task-based instruction. *Language Teaching, 36,* 1-14.

Skehan, P., & Foster, P. (2001). Cognition and tasks. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 183-205). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Storch, N., (2010). Critical feedback on written corrective feedback research. *International Journal of English Studies, 10,* 29-46.

Suzuki, W. (2012) Written languaging, direct correction, and second language writing revision. *Language Learning, 62,* in press.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input and second language acquisition* (pp. 235-256). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Swain, M. (1991). French immersion and its offshoots: Getting two for one. In B. Freed (Ed.) *Foreign language acquisition: Research and the classroom* (pp. 91-103). Lexington MA: Heath.

Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in l2 writing. *Language Learning, 46*(2), 327-369.

Van Beuningen, C. (2010). Corrective feedback in L2 writing: Theoretical perspectives, empirical insights, and future directions. *International Journal of English Studies, 10*(2), 1-27.

Van Beuningen, C., De Jong, & Kuiken, F. (2008). The effect of direct and indirect corrective feedback on L2 learners' written accuracy. *ITL International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 156,* 279-296.

Van Beuningen, C., De Jong, N. H., & Kuiken, F. (2012). Evidence on the effectiveness of comprehensive error correction in second language writing. *Language Learning, 62*(1), 1-41.

Van Patten, B. (1996). *Input processing and grammar instruction in second language acquisition.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Van Patten, B. (2004). *Processing instruction: Theory, research, and commentary.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Curriculum Vitae

Education

Master of Arts in English: TESL Emphasis June, 2014
Eastern Washington University
Cheney, WA

Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies 1986
University of California at Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA

Teaching Experience

Student Athlete Study Table Tutor 2012 - 2013
Eastern Washington University

- Paid position as composition tutor for several hundred student athletes in the Student Athlete Study Table Program

TOM English Club 2004 - 2011
Sapporo, Japan

- Responsible for curriculum design and the teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Special Purposes (ESP) to professors, doctors, students, and staff from Hokkaido University and Hokkaido University Hospital
- Edited scientific and social sciences research papers for journal publication
- Taught presentation skills at Hokkaido University

NOVA Language Institute 1999 - 2004
Osaka/Sapporo, Japan

- Taught adult grammar and conversation classes

Cambridge English School 1996 - 1998
Taipei, Taiwan

- Taught primary and secondary student grammar and conversation classes

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies 1994 - 1995
Seoul, Korea

- Taught discussion, listening, audio-visual, and TOEIC classes

Gloria English School 1990 - 1993
Taipei, Taiwan

- Taught children, adult, and company grammar and conversation classes

Los Angeles Unified School District 1986 - 1989
Los Angeles, CA

- Taught bilingual kindergarten and third grade