

Peer Feedforward for Enhancing Preservice EFL Teachers' Academic Writing

Evaluación prospectiva entre pares para apoyar la escritura académica de profesores de inglés en formación

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This exploratory study investigated peer feedforward as a strategy to enhance academic writing coherence and cohesion among preservice EFL teachers. Employing a corpus content analysis of a three-week scaffolded process involving cycles of self-reflection and peer feedforward on academic writing tasks, findings revealed that implementing scaffolded peer reviews during the writing process, before task submission, improved the quality of participants' text coherence and cohesion, metacognitive awareness, and critical self-assessment skills, as revealed by peer comments. Results suggest that integrating peer feedforward may help participants address the dual demands of mastering and teaching academic writing while they develop as reflective, autonomous, and collaborative writers.

Keywords: academic writing, coherence, cohesion, EFL preservice teachers, peer feedforward

Esta investigación exploratoria sobre la evaluación prospectiva entre pares buscó mejorar la coherencia y la cohesión en la escritura académica de estudiantes de pedagogía en inglés como lengua extranjera. El análisis de corpus de un módulo de tres semanas, que involucró andamiaje en ciclos de reflexión y evaluación prospectiva entre pares durante el proceso de escritura académica, antes de la entrega final, evidenció una mayor calidad de los escritos en cuanto a coherencia y cohesión, y mayor conciencia metacognitiva y pensamiento crítico en las autoevaluaciones, según los comentarios de los pares. Esto sugiere que la estrategia empleada puede ayudar a los participantes a dominar la escritura académica mientras se desarrollan como escritores reflexivos, autónomos y colaborativos.

Palabras clave: coherencia, cohesión, escritura académica, evaluación prospectiva entre pares, formación docente en enseñanza de lenguas

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Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that writing coherently and cohesively is essential for effective communication and teaching (Sun, 2020). While coherence requires logical flow and overall unity of ideas, cohesion is tied to the linguistic mechanisms that link sentences and paragraphs effectively (Brown, 2022; Chen & Cui, 2022). Learning to write coherently and cohesively seems more challenging to preservice English as a foreign language teachers (henceforth, PETs) since cohesion, consistency, and relevance—essential for coherence—are harder to attain in English as an additional language (Al-Issa et al., 2017; Nilopa et al., 2017; Tardy, 2025). Owing to the complexity of academic texts, EFL learners, particularly PETs, require explicit instruction to develop these language aspects; otherwise, they may struggle to model effective writing practices and provide adequate support to their learners (Kwan & Yunus, 2014). Unlike prior research that views peer feedforward as comments and advice towards future assignments (Gambhir & Tangkiengsirisin, 2017), our research seeks to unveil whether this strategy may enhance academic writing coherence and cohesion among PETs during their writing process prior to task submission, using reflection journals as precursors of more advanced academic writing.

While extensive research exists on feedback in L2 writing, much of the literature deals with corrective feedback, the effectiveness of which is debated (Cheng & Zhang, 2022). Recently, studies have shifted emphasis to the potential of feedback to encourage metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory practices, including critical self-assessment skills (Gao et al., 2018; Tran & Ma, 2024). Research suggests that engaging in assessment—whether by commenting on peers' texts or reflecting on one's own writing—sharpens learners' ability to identify and address gaps in their understanding (Gao et al., 2018; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). This aligns with sociocultural theories of learning, which situate interaction as a catalyst for

cognitive development and skill refinement (Mackey & Gass, 2015). Multiple benefits of both receiving and providing feedback (Yu & Lee, 2016) position learners as co-constructors of knowledge while they engage in reciprocal interactions, critique, and reflection. We propose that the dialogic approach to writing involved in peer feedback be extended into the realm of peer feedforward, by which insights gained through peer review serve as anticipatory strategies to improve students' drafts as they engage in peer-feedforward loops during the process prior to summative assessment, thereby transforming writing into a dynamic, iterative process (Carless & Boud, 2018) fed by collaboration.

Even if peer feedforward as a pedagogical strategy is gaining interest (Gambhir & Tangkiengsirisin, 2017), the concept is still evolving. Given limited knowledge of how best to implement it to address the specific challenges PETs face in mastering L2 academic writing (L2AW)—as introduced by Tardy (2025)—we agree with Carless (2020) that activating the learner role in peer-assessment processes is crucial. Further research is needed not only to explore how PETs may become more feedback literate but also to gain a deeper understanding of the types of peer-feedforward loops that may be more effective in promoting coherence and cohesion in this population (Baroudi et al., 2023). As Tardy (2025) suggests, a more intricate understanding of such concepts is necessary to develop effective interventions since current studies rely mostly on quantitative data, which may not capture the rich, contextualized experiences of PETs.

In our research, we posit that peer feedforward may provide a platform for learners to analytically engage with textual features through reflection, promoting an enhanced awareness of discourse organization, and enabling more purposeful revisions prior to summative submissions. In this context, coherence and cohesion emerge as focal points in L2AW, as L2 learners, including PETs, often struggle to meet the linguistic and rhetorical demands required to produce unified, logically structured texts. In this sense, we

hypothesize that, by participating in peer-feedforward reflective cycles, PETs may develop a deeper understanding of coherence and cohesion in L2AW, which means heightened awareness of decisions at both local and global levels to attain textual logical flow and lexicogrammatical accuracy.

Consequently, we address this complex gap by exploring how, when engaging in peer-feedforward loops regarding their peers' self-reflections on L2AW, PETs may develop greater sensitivity to textual coherence and cohesion while providing peer formative assessment as part of their learning. Besides offering a novel intervention explicitly targeting coherence and cohesion, we seek to contribute to the evolving conceptualization of peer feedforward by proposing its use within the framework of peer assessment as learning (Yu, 2024). We also offer a window to explore the interconnected roles of metacognition, reflection, and peer feedforward in promoting coherence and cohesion as PETs mutually collaborate in their writing process. Finally, we aim to contribute to the field of applied linguistics by enriching the knowledge of how peer feedforward may impact L2 learners' writing abilities, while providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of this strategy as a pedagogical tool for PETs and offering practical implications for TESL/TEFL education programs.

In sum, we pursue a two-fold aim: to explore how peer feedforward as a recursive prospective strategy may support PETs' effective use of coherence and cohesion necessary for L2AW success, and to examine the potential of peer feedforward as a tool for ESL/EFL teacher formation.

Literature Review

This section includes theoretical tenets and empirical research. It focuses on two interrelated areas: (a) coherence and cohesion in L2AW and (b) the roles of peer feedforward and metacognition in supporting L2 writing development.

Coherence and Cohesion in L2 Academic Writing

It is well-known that L2AW is key in teacher education, requiring the ability to master linguistic accuracy and rhetorical conventions at an advanced level to articulate complex ideas, develop arguments, and engage critically with formal discourse. As an interdisciplinary field drawing on applied linguistics, rhetoric, composition, education, and anthropology, L2AW addresses how to teach, learn, and write in an additional language (Tardy, 2025), a process that presents unique challenges compared to writing in an L1. In Chile, both foreign and Chilean college students may indeed face particular challenges. The former need to communicate competently in Spanish (the country's official language) as a vehicular language (Pastor Cesteros & Ferreira Cabrera, 2018). The latter are required by national standards to achieve C1 level in English (according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* [CEFR]) before graduation. However, their texts in the foreign language often lack fluency and effectiveness (Silva, 1993) since they struggle with grammatical precision, lexical variety, and coherent organization, which contributes to the perception of L2AW as an onerous endeavor (Lin & Morrison, 2021; Pineteh, 2013).

Such difficulties seem greater for PETs, who must also demonstrate textual organization competence, genre awareness, and rhetorical precision (Lloyd, 2007; Sparks et al., 2014) as well as skills in synthesizing sources, maintaining coherence, using evidence persuasively, and, as in the case of our participants, mastering citation conventions when they work on their undergraduate thesis and other academic tasks. In fact, L2AW, rather than sentence-level accuracy, is more about critical thinking, analysis, and information synthesis (Castillo-Martínez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2021). It requires developing a specific style marked by a formal tone, discipline-specific terminology, and adherence to genre conventions (Septiwan & Hafizh, 2021). Since the development of coherence and cohesion in L2AW

is closely linked to learners' linguistic competence and their awareness of discourse structure, let us examine both in more detail.

The role of coherence and cohesion as prime textual features is acknowledged in theoretical and empirical work (Hyland, 2006; Lee, 2002; McNamara et al., 2010). Presenting ideas in a clear and logical manner is key to helping readers understand the writer's train of thought, which is central to effective writing (Brown, 2022; Chen & Cui, 2022). Coherence involves macro-organization of ideas relevant to the topic with clear development (Lee, 2002; Reinhart, 1980). Meanwhile, cohesion requires the use of lexico-grammatical devices—such as conjunctions, reference, substitution, ellipsis, and lexical connections, including pronouns—that link ideas across clauses and sentences to glue paragraphs together (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; McCarthy, 1991; Samuels, 2024; Saputra & Hakim, 2020). Empirical research suggests that these devices—particularly reference, conjunction, and lexical cohesion—may predict fluency and writing quality (Tian et al., 2021). Indeed, discourse connectors provide the logical scaffolding for constructing persuasive arguments (Hyland, 2005), with more coherent L2 texts using more varied and appropriate connectors (Schiftner-Tengg, 2022). Thus, mastering the use of connectors compensates for limitations in vocabulary and syntax, enabling writers to communicate complex relationships effectively. Without such tools, writing seems disjointed, hindering comprehension and rhetorical impact (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Interestingly, texts that display cohesion might still not achieve coherence (Lee, 2002; Nilopa et al., 2017), as many learners overuse or misuse cohesive markers, resulting in technically cohesive texts that lack logical flow. McNamara et al. (2010) argue that cohesion is not merely about surface-level textual links but about underlying semantic and conceptual connections supporting overall comprehension. As Crossley et al. (2016) state, both local (e.g., within-sentence) and global (e.g., paragraph-level) cohesion contribute to

text coherence. Their computational analyses of learner corpora evidenced that more proficient writers were more purposeful and strategic in their use of cohesive devices. For Mallia (2017), achieving coherence requires an understanding of rhetorical structure and awareness of audience and purpose, while Hyland (2011) posits that students learn what counts as good writing through an understanding of their discipline and the conventions and genres regarded as representative.

Hence, explicit instruction that targets both coherence and cohesion (Al Shamalat & Ghani, 2020; Bahaziq, 2016; Bui, 2022; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Kadiri et al., 2016) is important to align L2 learners' writing with disciplinary expectations that will enable them to effectively engage with academic communities. Indeed, explicit instruction is key to improving students' writing skills, enabling them to produce more organized, logically structured texts (Nilopa et al., 2017). Riazi's (1997) study on Persian ESL learners found that their use of lexical cohesion and reference increased as their proficiency improved. Conversely, overuse of certain cohesive devices, particularly conjunctions, among L2 students led to mechanical or unnatural-sounding texts, as Liu and Braine (2005) found when comparing texts written in English by Chinese students and native speakers. This suggests that, while cohesion may be taught explicitly, coherence seems to result from cognitive processes and rhetorical awareness (Connor & Johns, 1990; Hyland, 2003) that can be targeted through reflection.

Consequently, teaching coherence and cohesion poses significant challenges, particularly in ESL/EFL contexts, since students may lack the language resources or rhetorical knowledge to organize ideas logically and fluently (Hinkel, 2001). Instructional strategies aimed at improving coherence and cohesion typically include the use of model texts, rhetorical moves, and explicit instruction in cohesive devices; however, the literature points to approaches that integrate form-focused instruction with higher-order skills such as idea development and discourse organization. Wette

(2017) stresses logical progression and thematic development in writing tasks to enhance both discourse features. Knoch et al. (2015) allude to the importance of raising students' awareness of textual organization through targeted instruction on genre-based writing, metacognitive strategies, and feedback mechanisms. They argue that L2 learners tend to make more informed linguistic and structural choices when exposed to scaffolded instruction, aiding in their understanding of coherence and cohesion. From the teacher's perspective, writing instruction may overemphasize cohesive devices while neglecting idea development and discourse structure, thereby hindering genuine coherence (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005; Silva, 1990). It seems sensible to teach coherence and cohesion as integral components of academic literacy in authentic writing tasks scaffolded by strategies that foster metacognitive awareness and reduce anxiety.

Peer Feedforward and Metacognition

Studies seeking to support learning during the writing process have largely focused on written corrective feedback (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferreira, 2017, 2022; Sheen, 2011), mostly by teachers. Fewer studies deal with prospective formative approaches (Contreras & Zúñiga, 2017), peer feedback, or agency (Farini & Scollan, 2023) through collaborative writing. Peer feedback, or peer assessment, is a well-known collaborative approach in which learners judge each other's work using given criteria, encouraging dynamic idea exchange and evaluative comments. This structured arrangement enables learners to assess and elaborate on their peers' work and engage in discussions that enhance understanding and skill development (Topping, 2017). In L2AW, peer feedback's unique contribution lies in promoting collaborative learning and audience awareness while reducing the perceived authority gap of teacher feedback (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Ruegg, 2015). Zaccaron and Xhafaj (2020) observed that students'

uptake of teacher feedback (which the participants assumed was peer feedback) was "quite similar to the ones who received peer-feedback" [sic] (p. 50). This prompted the authors to disguise the teachers' comments on lexis and grammar as peers' comments (Zaccaron & Xhafaj, 2024), confirming their hypothesis that "the social representations of teachers and peers seem to bias their feedback processing" (p. 59)—authority and trust do play a role. When learners act as assessors, peer feedback enhances writing self-efficacy and promotes self-regulatory behaviors (Lee & Evans, 2019). Farini and Scollan (2023) posit that facilitating agency—the synergy between one's action and participation in social interactions—can help legitimate learners as "authors of knowledge" (p. 13). This is evident in Gambhir and Tangkiengsirisin's (2017) study on peer feedback and peer feedforward towards EFL argumentative writing, where comments in the form of praise, advice, and critique—including acknowledgment of progress for improvement and advice towards future tasks (a form of peer feedforward)—enabled learner uptake in a subsequent assignment, resulting in improved learner goal setting and positive perception of both strategies, indicating that receiving and giving both peer feedback and peer feedforward helped improve argumentative essay writing.

Similarly, Ubilla Rosales and Gómez Álvarez (2015) and Ubilla Rosales et al. (2017, 2020) applied cognitive and sociocultural principles of second language acquisition to design a learner-centered blended course for collaborative writing to improve Chilean PETs' argumentative essays, including peer-review cycles (as we understand feedforward now, though not coined at that time) while performing drafter, reviewer, and editor roles in triads. They found improvements in the L2AW process and text quality, a significant correlation between participants' perceptions of collaboration and written performance self-assessments, and evidence of the importance of using online writing tools in explicit instruction of writing as a process. Álvarez and Difabio

de Anglat (2017) noted that peer feedback enhanced reflective practice and improved writing at different educational levels.

With increased interest in strategies aiming at engaging students actively in the writing process by means of formative assessment, collaboration, and reflection, peer feedforward emerges as an alternative encompassing them all. In a systematic review on ESL/EFL learner gains from online peer feedback (OPF) in English writing, Cao et al. (2022) found that both writing cohesion and coherence improved in terms of local error correction and global text revisions. They also found that students perceived that OPF improved the flow, organization, and transitions of their essays, and helped them focus on local aspects such as grammar, sentence structure, and vocabulary. More recently, empirical research points at peer feedback and peer feedforward as tools not just for error correction but for enhancing critical evaluation skills and deeper awareness of writing issues (Yang & Zhang, 2023), encouraging planning and reflection to enable learners' self-regulation in their revision process (Chen et al., 2023; Li & Hebert, 2024; Yang & Zhang, 2023), and developing feedback literacy to empower learners to assess and act on peer comments strategically (Weng et al., 2024).

When Carless (2007) and Carless et al. (2006) introduced the concept of feedforward in education as learner-oriented assessment, they meant guidance offered before or during the writing process. Sadler (2010) contributed to this paradigm shift of learners actively developing evaluative judgment skills to become self-regulated learners with capabilities of assessing and improving their own work while also engaging in purposeful peer assessment during the learning process. In contrast to feedback, peer feedforward is designed to inform future performance and help writers anticipate challenges for strategic decision-making while writing (Carless & Boud, 2018). Understood as a feedback cycle, feedback loop, or feedback spiral (Carless, 2020), what makes feedforward innovative is the timing of its

delivery: during the writing process and with a focus on future action (Carless, 2006; Carless & Boud, 2018; Orsmond et al., 2013; Sadler, 2010). We may add the potential to reflect on the writing process before summative assessment (i.e., assessment as learning; Yu, 2024).

Although a comprehensive review of assessment paradigms is beyond the scope of this work, suffice it to stress that assessment *of* learning typically centers on summative outcomes and grading; assessment *for* learning emphasizes formative, process-oriented feedback aimed at improvement; and assessment *as* learning takes a step further by engaging learners in reflection as they set goals, monitor progress, and participate in self-assessment (Yu, 2024). By actively engaging in assessment *for* and *as* learning, PETs may improve their own L2AW as they develop the evaluative and reflective skills needed in their teaching practice. In the context of peer feedforward, assessment as learning is particularly relevant, as it supports learners' development of self-regulation and metacognitive strategies (Lee & Evans, 2019), allowing students to receive and critically evaluate peers' comments and apply them thoughtfully while developing their rhetorical understanding and L2AW competence (Yu & Lee, 2016). Research suggests that peer feedforward can bridge writing instruction and professional development by helping learners consider real audiences and clarify their rhetorical intentions (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Ruegg, 2015), which are essential for PETs. When implemented through peer interaction, feedforward may serve a dual function—scaffolding writing development while encouraging critical reflection and evaluative judgment—providing students with opportunities for active learning as they give and receive constructive comments and suggestions on writing-in-progress.

Peer feedforward seems most effective when embedded in a pedagogical model integrating metacognition (Flavell, 1976, 1979; Hart, 1965), that is, learners' awareness and regulation of their own cognitive (and, in this case, writing) processes. Chen and Cui (2022) posit

that dialogic peer engagement promotes metacognitive growth and writing awareness. As part of learning processes, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) identify three types of metacognitive strategies: planning (organizing actions to perform a task), monitoring (awareness of what one is doing during a task), and evaluating (judging what has been done). To these, Cross and Vandergrift (2018) add problem solving (identifying and solving comprehension problems). In writing, evidence suggests that metacognitive strategies enhance coherence by promoting intentional revisions and reflective writing decisions (De Mello et al., 2023; Rosdiana et al., 2023). Yu and Lee (2016) claim that deciding whether to incorporate peer suggestions into one's own revisions is itself a metacognitive exercise. Indeed, it requires learners to assess the relevance, validity, and potential impact of feedback, mobilizing critical thinking, rhetorical judgment, and reflective practice. Mohamad and Tasir (2023) emphasize the importance of reflective questioning to help students assess whether their ideas are logically connected and clearly communicated, connecting metacognition to the act of providing feedback to others, as it requires learners to engage in reflection, compare their own writing with peer texts, and evaluate the effectiveness of various rhetorical choices.

In sum, the literature points to the advantages of blending peer feedforward and metacognitive instruction to support learners in developing cohesive and coherent texts, as well as the reflective skills needed for long-term academic and professional writing, and for effective L2AW instruction. Consequently, our research question is: How can peer feedforward—centered on coherence and cohesion—support metacognitive awareness and writing development among PETs?

Method

In this exploratory study, we used a non-experimental design (Creswell & Creswell, 2023) and conducted content analysis of a corpus of reflection journals and peer-feedforward moves. This was done in order to

unveil evidence of improvement in PETs' L2AW coherence and cohesion, as shown in peer comments.

Context and Participants

This study was conducted within the context of a required advanced L2AW course offered by the first author and taught by a trained teaching/research assistant, at a publicly-supported private Chilean university. Data were collected for three weeks on a course management platform (Canvas) in a blended class that included a four-hour-per-week face-to-face writing lab, during the seventh semester of a five-year TEFL program, whose final year is devoted to writing an undergraduate thesis and conducting the professional teaching practicum for licensing. The course focused on developing students' ability to write academic texts aligned with international standards, with emphasis on coherence, cohesion, and rhetorical structure.

Although 35 Chilean PETs from intact classes initially signed up for the study via an online Google Forms form, 30 (nine men and 21 women) completed the writing tasks within the allotted period. These participants were native speakers of Spanish with a B2 level of English (according to the CEFR), as measured by a home-based IELTS mock-examination at the end of semester six. They had previously completed coursework in English grammar, composition, and language pedagogy, and received instruction in reflective writing and peer feedforward as part of the course introduction. The participants were familiar with the online platform, which was used throughout the study for submitting reflections and engaging in peer feedforward on the discussion board. This context provided an authentic environment to explore how peer feedforward, as a pedagogical strategy, could support the development of L2AW skills among PETs.

Analysis

The written corpus for analysis was downloaded from the course management platform. Each writing cycle

involved two tasks: (a) writing a 200-word reflection journal on personal writing development, and (b) providing peer feedforward on two classmates' reflections. Feedforward was in the form of comments of praise, advice, acknowledgment of progress, suggestions for improvements, and clarification questions. Participants had several means on which to base their comments, including exemplary texts to set clear expectations, content regarding academic writing, coherence and cohesion, the teacher's instructions they could use as a checklist, and the IELTS band descriptors (British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia, & Cambridge Assessment English, 2023) as a guide for their self- and peer-review process. The instructions explicitly stated that this process was not about opinions but about text quality appraisal. Once participants received peer comments, they individually revised their drafts for improvement before submitting them to the teacher for scoring. Since peer feedforward was not a common practice in previous courses and learner autonomy needs scaffolding, we thought involving the teacher as a final assessor would serve as a step towards agency in collaborative writing. The score was given strictly for adherence to task instructions and helping students transition from teacher-only feedback into student-based revision. The teacher did not participate in the discussion board to avoid influencing the participants' ideas. Only when students were off task did the teacher add a metacognitive comment to the score to redirect their task compliance; no comments on coherence, cohesion, or language use were provided, since the focus was on peer feedforward. This recursive process was designed to foster metacognitive engagement and support collaborative improvement of the task at hand, not subsequent writing tasks.

We used RStudio for statistical analysis and Python to generate figures. Qualitative coding and interpretation were conducted manually. After thematic coding of both peer comments and reflection entries, we analyzed the data quantitatively to identify patterns of improvement in coherence and cohesion. Quantitative data

resulted from the categorization of peer feedforward across weekly cycles based on the linguistic focus of each comment (i.e., coherence and cohesion, vocabulary and lexical resources, or grammatical accuracy), extracted from peer responses to reflection journals submitted to Canvas. The categories that emerged from qualitative data analysis were confirmed through repeated discussions among researchers to ensure consistency. This approach enabled a week-by-week tracking of shifts in attention and writing focus, capturing the emergence of metacognitive awareness. By triangulating peer feedforward, self-reflections, and textual revisions, we were able to map patterns of development over time, particularly in relation to coherence and cohesion. This integrative analysis revealed how peer feedforward supported both the identification of areas of improvement and the internalization of organizational strategies in L2AW.

The study was approved by the institutional research ethics committee. Participants signed a consent form, which included a general description of the study and an invitation to participate voluntarily and anonymously. Participants who did not consent to the study or did not complete the tasks were excluded.

Findings

We collected 66 reflection journals and 122 peer comments. On average, each student submitted 2.2 reflections and received approximately four comments per reflection. Descriptive statistics tracked participation and engagement, while qualitative analysis focused on the discursive features in the reflections and comments.

As Table 1 shows, coherence and cohesion were the center of discussion each week, with 27 comments in week one and 34 in week two. Frequency dropped during week three, suggesting that as participants improved in coherence and cohesion, these features became less of a concern in their writing, and peer comments focused on idea organization and overall text coherence.

Table 1. Feedforward Categorization by Week

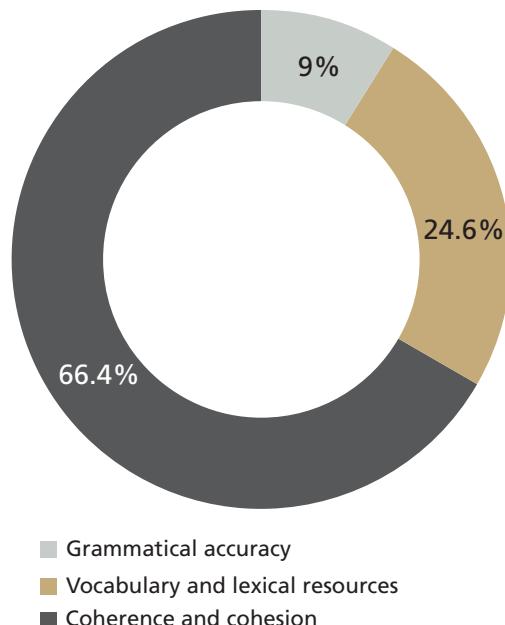
Ability	f (%)		
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Coherence & cohesion	27 (60)	34 (73.91)	20 (64.52)
Vocabulary & lexical resources	13 (28.89)	10 (21.74)	7 (22.58)
Grammatical accuracy	5 (11.11)	2 (4.35)	4 (12.9)

Vocabulary and lexical resources decreased over time. Frequency started with 13 mentions, dropped to 10, and collapsed to seven in week three. This may indicate improvements in vocabulary usage and reduced attention to this aspect as coherence took precedence. Comments on grammar were minimal, ranging between two and five mentions, compared to the other categories, suggesting that grammatical issues were less significant or less emphasized compared to coherence and vocabulary. As students approach the CEFR C1 level, grammar seems to be less of a concern in favor of aspects such as coherence and cohesion.

In sum, coherence and cohesion seemed to be key aspects of peer feedforward in the discussion

forum, as they received the most frequent comments. Vocabulary and lexical resources showed a declining frequency as weeks progressed, signalling improvement in this area.

Figure 1 shows that 66.4% of the peer comments addressed coherence and cohesion, reflecting their critical importance as a primary focus for improvement. Vocabulary and lexical resources accounted for 24.6% of the comments, indicating moderate emphasis on word choice and expression. Nine percent of the comments focused on grammar accuracy, reinforcing the idea that grammar was not a major concern in this context. In conclusion, peer feedforward to participants primarily focused on coherence and cohesion.

Figure 1. Feedforward Categorization (Overall Distribution)

The 122 peer comments revolved around three aspects of coherence and cohesion, as Table 2 shows: global coherence, local coherence, and use of connectors. These dimensions were discussed frequently, ranging from 27 to 34 mentions, which reveals improvement in

these areas since participants incorporated their peers' comments into their revisions, anticipating possible mistakes in subsequent reflection journal drafts and hence feeding forward not only within the task at hand but also into future productions.

Table 2. Coherence: Examples per Week

Subcategories	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Global coherence (<i>f</i> = 39)	<p>“I recommend you keep practicing so that you can organize your ideas more concretely.”</p> <p>“It’s a pleasure for me to read your texts. They are well-organized and easy to follow.”</p> <p>“Great job following the 4-paragraph structure!”</p>	<p>“I also liked how you expressed your ideas, as it was easy to read.”</p> <p>“I think your text is well-written and structured.”</p> <p>“Your reflection is well-structured and precise.”</p>	<p>“Your reflection is clear, concise, and coherent.”</p> <p>“I think your ideas and comments are fully developed. Your response is easy to read, and the message is understandable.”</p> <p>“Your reflection is well-organized and concise.”</p>
Local coherence (<i>f</i> = 22)	<p>“I think a good option is to vary sentence lengths to avoid making your paragraphs hard to read.”</p> <p>“Maybe as advice, you could combine smaller ideas to strengthen your paragraphs.”</p> <p>“You should pay more attention to sentence length.”</p>	<p>“I think you should review the punctuation, as the sentences in your paragraphs are quite long.”</p> <p>“Your paragraphs are well-organized and easy to read.”</p>	<p>“I think you could further develop the idea in the second paragraph, as it seems too short compared to the rest.”</p> <p>“Your ideas per paragraph are well-developed.”</p>
Use of connectors (<i>f</i> = 20)	N/A	<p>“I would suggest using connectors in the first paragraph to make it easier to read.”</p> <p>“You could use more connectors.”</p> <p>“I liked how you used connectors to make transitions.”</p>	<p>“You could improve by including more transition words, such as connectors.”</p>

By the end of the intervention period, participants demonstrated significant improvements in organizing ideas and structuring arguments, achieving coherence at the global level, as per peer comments. Specifically, they emphasized overall text organization and clarity in writing, perceived as well-structured, clearly developed, and easy to follow. There was also mention of organizational structure, with praise for participants' paragraph flow and a suggestion to practice organizing ideas more concretely.

Local coherence addressed sentence-level clarity and paragraph balance. Comments showed that the paragraphs were well-organized and that the ideas in each were well-developed. Areas of improvement were length, punctuation, and shorter paragraphs.

Connectors or transition words were effective in shifting between ideas, according to peer comments. Recommendations included incorporating connectors more often to improve flow and cohesion within the text.

Finally, participants provided balanced, constructive advice, with a clear emphasis on improving readability and coherence, both globally and locally. This shows that participants were aware of the hierarchical nature of writing, as they observed and discussed elements from overall organization to finer details. It seems that peer feedforward prompted more purposeful revisions and enhanced participants' ability to identify gaps in their writing.

Conclusions

This study aimed to examine how peer feedforward, as a recursive and prospective strategy, supports PETs' development of coherence and cohesion in L2AW, and to assess its potential in ESL/EFL teacher formation. We have proposed a scaffolded peer-feedforward writing process, using reflection journals posted on an online discussion board as precursors to more advanced L2AW, in a recursive cycle of reflection and process writing.

Findings suggest that engaging as peer reviewers helped PETs become more reflective about their own

writing processes and more aware of the role that organizational features, such as coherence and cohesion, play in effective L2AW. Participants' peer comments and journal reflections evidenced improvements in text organization and idea development, mirroring earlier findings that peer assessment benefits the reviewer's own writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

These findings expand our understanding of peer feedforward in EFL/ESL instructional settings, revealing benefits in metacognitive skills development as participants engaged in immediate revision as part of an assessment for learning (formative) process-approach to writing (Contreras & Zúñiga, 2017; Tardy, 2025) within—not across—(a) task(s), prior to submission (summative assessment) learning framework.

Through this evaluative and dialogic process, PETs began to internalize writing criteria and apply them meaningfully, developing autonomy, clarity of expression, and awareness of audience expectations (Ferreira, 2017, 2022). These results emphasize the pedagogical value of interaction and collaboration in developing both linguistic competence and reflective teaching practice.

Despite the need to prepare PETs to improve writing and their ability to teach it (Damnet, 2021), few targeted interventions exist so far, particularly in Latin American settings. Traditional approaches treat writing as a monological activity, emphasize product over process, and provide minimal feedback, which can lead to superficial engagement, low motivation, and poor results (Tao & Qin, 2025). The emphasis on coherence and cohesion in our dialogic model suggests that these aspects are key in developing writing skills beyond grammar and lexis and beyond written corrective feedback (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferreira, 2017, 2022; Ferris, 2010; Sheen, 2011; van Beuningen et al., 2012).

Although perceptions of digital tools were not directly assessed, the hybrid modality (face-to-face + discussion board) enabled asynchronous, scaffolded, and formative peer interaction, consistent with previous studies (Li & Hebert, 2024; Yang & Zhang, 2023).

Further research could focus on how peer feedforward develops coherence and cohesion over longer periods and across genres. Also warranted is an exploration of the role of self-assessment as a preparatory stage for effective peer feedforward. The development of a blended peer-feedforward model guided by clear rubrics could offer a replicable framework for L2AW instruction and teacher preparation.

In sum, this study contributes to the field by positioning peer feedforward as a meaningful pedagogical strategy to enhance writing quality (especially coherence and cohesion), prompt metacognitive skills, and develop teacher agency. Moreover, it invites a rethinking of writing as a dialogic, collaborative, and developmental process. While limitations such as the short timeframe, small sample, and descriptive focus constrain generalizability, the findings offer a valuable foundation for future pedagogical innovations in L2AW and teacher formation.

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