Meaningful Grammar Feedback in English Writing Teacher Education

Researching Perspectives on Feedback-as-an-artefact, Feedback Reception, and Feedback Provision

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor

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2020
Acknowledgements

Without the generosity of good people who have taken interest in my work, this thesis would not have come into existence. I would like to express my gratitude to the University of Oslo, more specifically, the Faculty of Educational Science, Department of Teacher Education and School Research, and the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, formerly University College Stord Haugesund. It has been a great adventure and experience.

First of all, I owe endless gratitude to my main supervisor, Professor Glenn Ole Hellekjær, who combined genuine care for my health and well-being with professionalism and the highest standards of scholarship and hard work. You were always available and always responded quickly to my questions and mails. Your constructive comments, particularly in relation to readability and good academic writing, have been extremely valuable to me. You gave me a lot of detailed and very useful instructions on my project. All our meetings were incredibly fruitful because you have always been a good discussion partner. Your pragmatic guidance with constructive criticism and lots of humour has been truly enriching.

I would also like to express my most profound gratitude to my two co-supervisors, Professor Eva Thue Vold and Professor Knut Steinar Engelsen. Your targeted and thought-provoking comments on my texts have been extremely useful. I particularly remember Eva Thue Vold’s deep reading of all my texts and all the spontaneous and useful discussions in relation to figures and tables with Knut Steinar Engelsen at his office, which is close to my office.

Another person who I am indebted to is Associate Professor Janus Mortensen from the Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (CIP) at the University of Copenhagen. Your concrete, constructive, and thought-provoking commenting on my work at two key stages – mid-term and final evaluations – greatly contributed to the growth of my work.

I am also indebted to the research groups Oracy in Teacher Education (ORITE) at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Campus Stord, and Teachers’ Professional Development and Educational Change (TEPEC) at University of Oslo.
I owe special thanks to Professor Sissel Høisæter for her professionalism, her valuable guidance, and fruitful comments on Bakhtin. In a similar vein, I would like to thank my former colleague Kari Jorunn Lunde. Without you, there would be no thesis. And a special thanks also goes to Trond Egil Arnesen; your door was always open, and we had many fruitful discussions regarding my project.

Further, many thanks go to the following people for either commenting on my drafts or sharing their insights in different contexts: Frøydis Hertzberg, Harald Eriksen, Hege Myklebust, Brita Høyland, Gry Tuset, Lars Røsseland Kvinge, Christine Øye, Eva Biringer, Arne Kaldestad, Steinar Westrheim and Kari Jeanette Langseth Hjelmen. I am also grateful for all coffee breaks and table tennis sessions with my dear colleagues as well as Friday pizzas with my lovely neighbours.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, which stood by me during these four difficult years. Heartfelt thanks go to my wife Sigrid for her endless support in so many ways. My sons, Jacob and Simon, and particularly my daughter Rebecca who struggles a lot with an illness I wholeheartedly hope will pass, have all suffered on account of my working late evenings and during entire weekends. I am proud of you. It would not have been possible without your personal sacrifice. I dedicate this thesis primarily to my children and their bright future.

Michel Alexandre Cabot

Stord, December 2020
Summary

This thesis investigates corrective grammar feedback in English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education from three different perspectives: feedback-as-an-artefact, feedback reception, and feedback provision. This article-based thesis comprises three articles and an extended abstract. Part I includes the introduction, the theoretical and conceptual framing, the literature review, the methodological design and a summary, which is followed by a discussion of the three articles and recommendations for teacher education and future research. The three articles in Part II of the thesis investigate different aspects of the same overarching research question: What makes grammar feedback meaningful in EFL writing teacher education? Methodologically, the thesis uses a qualitative multimethod design to study different aspects of the practices involved in the provision and reception of grammar feedback. The general theoretical framing of the thesis is the concept of an assessment community, in which grammar feedback becomes meaningful when students and lecturers promote assessment literacy and dialogic and linguo-didactic processes in EFL teacher education.

Article 1 is a single-case study based on an analysis of a lecturer’s written (WCF) and individual oral (OCF) corrective feedback on essays written by 18 student teachers enrolled at a Norwegian university college. It reveals three main trends: (1) unfocused feedback predominated in both modes; (2) direct and metalinguistic feedback were more frequent in OCF, thus complementing WCF; and (3) OCF comprised slightly more elicitative feedback than WCF did. The study provides interesting examples of how a lecturer can combine different feedback types and modes to improve grammar feedback. Indeed, it may be considered an example of best-practices with regard to feedback.

Article 2 is a stimulated-recall-interview study with 10 students from the sample used in Article 1. The students’ reflections on their past, present, and future writing were analysed. Three main findings are revealed in terms of feedback preferences: students greatly appreciated (1) direct and metalinguistic, (2) elicitative, and (3) focused as well as unfocused corrective feedback (CF). Specifically, most students considered indirect CF as frustrating. However, they deemed it important to receive repetitive feedback with a high focus on accuracy for their development as writers and future teachers. In fact, the students perceived essential learning moments when the feedback was concrete and they...
paid attention to it. In sum, this study reveals the important role of metalinguistic CF, which often occurs in the form of fine-tuned CF.

Article 3 is also an interview study on feedback perceptions, but in this case with experienced lecturers. This study investigates feedback practices and aspects that motivate feedback choices. It has three main findings: (1) the lecturers provided predominantly metalinguistic and indirect CF; (2) many lecturers favoured local feedback over global and unfocused feedback over focused feedback; (3) only a few lecturers used oral and/or elicitative feedback. The lecturers’ individual reasons for their feedback choices were multifaceted, including positive beliefs about metalanguage and autonomy-promoting feedback, and negative beliefs about elicitative questions associated with testing. Various contextual factors (e.g. feedback-providing vs. feedback-receiving situations, formal vs. informal contexts, common use of correction codes) were also reported as being important for the lecturers’ feedback choices. Thus, this study provides an overview of individual beliefs regarding feedback practices as well as a list of contextual factors that may influence teachers’ feedback decisions.

Based on the findings of the three articles, the main contribution of this thesis is the increased knowledge about how feedback can become meaningful in EFL teacher education. First, from a feedback-as-an-artefact perspective, this thesis indicates that combining WCF and subsequent OCF in writing conferences may improve grammar feedback. Second, from a feedback receiver’s perspective, ecological-agentic and linguo-didactic perspectives can help explain how and when students experience important learning moments. Last, from a feedback provider’s perspective, lecturers might be well advised to reflect on their own feedback practices to ensure the successful use of a dialogical and student-tailored approach to providing corrective feedback. Theories on both individual (e.g. teacher cognitions) and contextual (e.g. learning ecologies) factors can help describe specific feedback recommendations related to teacher education. In sum, these three perspectives epitomise EFL teacher education as an assessment community that can promote lecturers’ and students’ feedback engagement.
Sammendrag


Artikkel 1 er en enkel kasanusstudie basert på analyse av en forelesers skriftlige (WCF) og påfølgende individuelle muntlige samtaler (OCF) knyttet til korrigerende feedback (CF) på tekster skrevet av 18 lærerstudenter ved en norsk høgskole. Funnnen kan oppsummeres i tre hovedtendenser: (1) ikke-fokusert feedback dominerte i begge modalitetene, (2) direkte og metaspråklig feedback var hyppigere i OCF og utfylte dermed WCF, og (3) OCF hadde noe mer stimulerende feedback enn WCF. Denne studien viser interessante eksempler på hvordan ulike typer feedback kan bli kombinert for å forbedre grammatikkfeedback. Studien kan derfor anses som en anbefaling for beste praksis.

Artikkel 2 er en studie basert på stimulated recall-intervjuer med ti tilfeldig utvalgte studenter fra samme utvalget som i artikkel 1. Denne studien analyserte studentenes refleksjoner om fortidig (tekst 1), nåtidig (tekst 2) og fremtidig skriving. Tre hovedfunn kom fram: studentene satte stor pris på (1) direkt og metaspråklig, (2) stimulerende og (3) både fokusert og ufokusert feedback. Mer spesifikt oppfattet studentene indirekte feedback som frustrerende. Men de kommenterte at gjentagende feedback med høy grad av nøyaktighet var av stor betydning for deres utvikling som
skrivere og framtidige lærere. Faktisk opplevde studentene viktige læringsmomenter når feedback var konkret og de selv var konsentrert. Samlet sett viser denne studien at metaspråklig feedback, som ofte forekommer i form av finjustert feedback, spiller en viktig rolle for studentene.


Basert på funnene i de tre artikkene er denne avhandlingenens hovedbidrag økt kunnskap om hvordan tilbakemeldinger på tekst kan bli meningsfylte i lærerutdanning innenfor EFL. For det første, ut ifra et artefaktperspektiv, kan kombinasjonen av WCF og påfølgende lærer–student-skrivesamtaler forbedre grammatikkfeedback. For det andre, ut ifra mottakerperspektivet, kan økologisk-agentiske og språkdidaktiske perspektiver bidra til å forklare hvordan og når studentene opplever viktige læringsmomenter. Til slutt, ut ifra senderperspektivet, er det anbefalt at forelesere reflekterer over sine egne praksiser for å garantere en dialogisk og studenttilpasset tilnærming til feedback. Teorier om både individuelle (f.eks. lærerkognisjoner) og kontekstuelle (f.eks. læringsøkologier) faktorer kan være med på å beskrive spesifikke lærerutdanningsrelaterede anbefalinger. I sum er de ovennevnte tre perspektivene et uttrykk for EFL-lærerutdanningen som et tilbakemeldingssamfunn, dvs. et assessment community, som kan fremme foreleseres og studenters engasjement når det gjelder tilbakemeldinger.
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<td>A/L</td>
<td>Assessment for learning</td>
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<td>AoL</td>
<td>Assessment of learning</td>
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<td>CF</td>
<td>Corrective feedback</td>
</tr>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>Error correction</td>
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<td>FA</td>
<td>Formative assessment</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
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<td>L1</td>
<td>First language</td>
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<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
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<td>OCF</td>
<td>Oral corrective feedback</td>
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<td>PTE</td>
<td>Pre-service teacher education</td>
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<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research question</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>Summative assessment</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second language acquisition</td>
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<td>SR</td>
<td>Stimulated recall</td>
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<td>TE</td>
<td>Teacher education</td>
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<td>WCF</td>
<td>Written corrective feedback</td>
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A mes enfants et mon épouse.

A mon papa et ma maman décédés.

A ma famille.

Pour tous leurs sacrifices, leur amour, leur tendresse et leur soutien tout au long de mes études interminables.
PART I: Extended Abstract
1. Introduction

"Psychologiquement, pas de vérité sans erreur rectifiée."
[Psychologically, no truth without error rectified.]

This quote by French philosopher Gaston Bachelard illustrates the importance of errors in daily life. Indeed, learning (as a process) or knowledge (as a result) often presupposes errors. Thus, errors may be considered positive events, although they can be perceived as *epistemological obstacles*. According to Bachelard, one task of epistemology is to clarify the mental patterns used in science to help teachers and students overcome obstacles to knowledge, which is being continuously constructed. Interestingly, French scholar Astolfi (2017) draws a connection between Bachelard’s views and error treatment. More specifically, he associates errors with ‘interesting symptoms of obstacles facing the thinking of students’ (p. 15). As already emphasised by Corder (1981) and Selinker (1972), errors made are thus no longer blameworthy errors or regrettable bugs: they lie at the very heart of the learning process and indicate the conceptual progress that must be made. In fact, Bachelard’s views can explain why corrective feedback (CF) – with its particular focus on grammar errors – remains pivotal in English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education. This brings us to the present thesis, in which I investigate how grammar feedback becomes meaningful to students and lecturers.

My own teaching experiences were part of the impetus for my interest in this research topic. When observing EFL pre-service teachers at university, I often noticed that many individuals had problems with the process of providing CF to their pupils. For example, they provided answers with only vague explanations or without any explanations at all or struggled to explain the difference between a subject and a verb or an adjective and an adverb.

Extensive research reveals that feedback can have an important influence on students’ learning and achievement (e.g. Hattie & Timperley, 2007). However, there is a commonly experienced dilemma in higher education: the teaching staff provides feedback, but students do not engage with it (e.g. Henderson et al., 2019). Winstone and Carless (2020) consider this to be one of the major conundrums of higher education. Related more specifically to foreign language teaching, certain studies indeed reveal that students fail to benefit from the teacher feedback they receive (e.g. Bitchener, 2017; Mackey et al., 2000; Yoshida, 2010). We also know that pre-service (henceforth referred to as students) and novice teachers reveal low levels of grammatical content knowledge (e.g. Alderson & Hudson, 2013; Burgess et al., 2000; Harper & Rennie, 2009; Hislam & Cajkler, 2005; Kolln & Hancock, 2005) and often struggle to provide feedback on writing (e.g. Drew, 1997; Ferris, 2011; Pawlak, 2014, 2020; Rødnes et al.,
In line with these concerns and questions regarding feedback utility and efficiency, there is a clear need to investigate feedback practices in language teacher education.

In international research, it is also widely recognised that feedback is likely to be influenced by the beliefs of feedback providers (e.g. Kagan, 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2007, 2009; Strijbos & Müller, 2014). In fact, EFL teacher trainers (henceforth referred to as lecturers) have distinctive beliefs about feedback effectiveness (e.g. direct vs. indirect CF) and, thus, follow best-practice recommendations from writing research (e.g. Ferris, 2014; Hyland & Hyland, 2006) to varying degrees. However, little is known about how lecturers’ beliefs are connected to formative feedback practices (e.g. Black & Wiliam, 2009) in EFL teacher education, either internationally (e.g. Borg, 2011; Mellati et al., 2015) or in the present context of Norwegian English teacher education (e.g. Lund, 2014).

Against this background, the main aim of this thesis is to enhance and extend our knowledge about how EFL teacher education develops meaningful formative grammar feedback. To do so, this thesis investigates the potential complementarity of different feedback strategies and the perceptions of students and lecturers of such strategies in writing instruction.

The implications of conducting research in writing teacher education are numerous (e.g. Flórez & Sammons, 2013). First, from a student perspective, grammar feedback may help students improve their own writing while at the same time developing their feedback practices. In fact, this is particularly important for students who need to understand grammar well enough to use it to improve their own and their students’ writing (Andrews, 2007; Myhill et al., 2013). Second, from a lecturer perspective, another implication is the need to broaden the discussion of how to improve feedback quality at both the practical and conceptual levels. In other words, lecturers are well advised to develop a varied repertoire of feedback practices, to reflect on their own beliefs, and to adjust their feedback to best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014). For example, Winstone and Carless (2020) recommends moving from ‘transmission-focused old paradigm approaches’ to ‘new paradigm practices adopting a more learning-focused orientation’ (p. 9). Finally, at a more conceptual level, another question is whether teacher education needs to develop its own best-practice recommendations (e.g. Lund, 2014) which do not necessarily correspond to the best-practice recommendations for upper and lower secondary schools. In fact, feedback is context-dependent and must be carefully designed (e.g. Aben et al., 2019). This leads us to the specific purpose and research questions of this thesis.

1.1 Overarching Research Aim and Questions

The overall aim of my research on formative assessment (FA) in writing is to *analyse the role*
of grammar feedback in EFL writing teacher education. To do so, this thesis investigates grammar feedback with the aim of describing potential complementarity between written and oral feedback and students’ and lecturers’ perceptions of feedback practices. It is anchored by the following overarching question:

What makes grammar feedback meaningful in EFL writing teacher education?

This thesis understands meaningful grammar feedback (see Figure 2 in section 6.5) as feedback that is understood and used by students to improve present and future writing (e.g. Sadler, 1989). More specifically, best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014) and taxonomies of feedback types and modes (e.g. Ellis, 2009b) were used as a theoretical background in the three articles that comprise this thesis (see Appendix 2). In order to maintain contextual wholeness in relation to grammar feedback practices, I examined EFL teacher education as an assessment community (see section 2.5) from three perspectives: grammar feedback-as-an-artefact (content), grammar feedback receivers (students), and grammar feedback providers (lecturers). This triadic content–student–lecturer relationship and its exploration of meaningful grammar feedback lies at the core of the present thesis. In other words, although the main research question (RQ) is echoed in all three articles, each article investigates the didactic triangle (see section 2.3) from a different perspective, using different methods and different combinations of data sources. Thus, in Article 1, which draws on a feedback-as-an-artefact perspective, I analysed the feedback provided on 18 essays and 18 transcriptions of follow-up writing conferences between a lecturer and his students in lower secondary teacher education (Grades 5–10). More specifically, I addressed the following sub-questions:

1. Which specific grammar feedback types does the feedback provider use when providing written CF (WCF) and oral CF (OCF) on grammar?
2. How do WCF and OCF complement one another in general?

This article has been published as:


In Article 2, I used the feedback described in Article 1 as prompts during 10 in-depth interviews with 10 randomly selected students from the sample used in Article 1. These interviews were conducted to elicit potential self-perceived learning moments based on the students’ reflections on two essays, one with WCF and OCF and the other without any feedback at all. Article 2 placed the students under scrutiny and investigated the following research sub-questions:

1. What characterises students’ feedback preferences?
(2) How do students link these preferences to learning moments in their writing development?

This article has been published as:


*Article 3* (submitted to the *Nordic Journal of English Studies*) investigated the third corner of the didactic triangle: meaningful feedback from a feedback provider perspective. Interviewing 12 experienced lecturers, my aim was to answer the following research sub-questions:

1. Which feedback types and modes are used by the lecturers?
2. What factors influence their decisions to employ these feedback practices?

This article has the following title:

*Experienced lecturers’ reasoning behind grammar feedback practices in EFL writing teacher education.*

When considered together, the three articles move from a feedback-as-an-artefact perspective (Article 1) to feedback receiver and feedback provider perspectives and, thus, describe and analyse *grammar feedback*, which challenges both the students who want to use it to improve their EFL writing skills (Article 2) and lecturers who must provide it (Article 3). In other words, it is possible to view the thesis from a holistic and integrative perspective by relating the three articles to the three corners of the didactic triangle (see chapter 2.3): content (Article 1), student (Article 2), and lecturer (Article 3). In doing so, we are likely to better understand what makes grammar feedback meaningful in Norwegian EFL teacher education.

However, before delving into the specifics of meaningful feedback, I will first provide further information about the Norwegian context and two important concepts or ‘macro-theories’ (Blaikie, 2010, p. 131), each representing the different ways of thinking in relation to assessment and grammar teaching.

1.2 The Norwegian Context

1.2.1 English as a Foreign or Second Language in Norwegian Teacher Education  
There appears to be a general consensus regarding ‘the teaching and learning of English in Scandinavia [being] a success story’ (Simensen, 2010, p. 482). Indeed, Norway ranks third in the world in terms of general English proficiency (Education First¹, 2019). This high level of general proficiency, in addition to high levels of exposure to English (e.g. through media, the

¹ Note that the EF Standard English Test only tests receptive skills.
Internet and gaming), may explain the growing use of the term English as a second language (ESL) in the Norwegian context (Brevik, 2015; Chvala & Grædler, 2010; Rindal, 2013). However, the new national curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training], 2020) does not use the term ‘second language’ to describe the linguistic situation of English in Norway. It only assigns a special status to English in relation to the other foreign languages. Furthermore, a closer look at English proficiency in Norway reveals imbalances between receptive and productive skills and speaking and writing. Indeed, Norwegian students appear to score poorly in writing, compared to the other three skills: reading, listening and speaking (e.g. Bonnet, 2004; Drew, 1997; Lehman, 1999; Nygaard, 2010; Rødnes et al., 2014). This research tallies with substantial international research suggesting that students’ verbalised and nonverbalised grammar, which is particularly important in writing, is often limited (Alderson & Hudson, 2013; Ellis et al., 2008; Harper & Rennie, 2009; Hislam & Cajkler, 2005). In other words, English in Norway does not fully qualify as ESL (Graddol, 2006). Against this background, the present thesis uses the term English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to describe the status of English in Norway.

1.2.2 Writing Teacher Education in Norway

Writing has – compared with the other productive skill speaking – a facilitative role in language development because it entails ‘a greater need and a better opportunity for focus on form [e.g. grammar]’ (Williams, 2012, p. 325). In fact, ample research supports the need to emphasise second and foreign language (L2) writing in teacher education (e.g. Lee, 2010). In order to understand the Norwegian context, it might be helpful to examine two official documents. The first relates to what pre-service teachers will actually have to implement in their own teaching as in-service teachers (curriculum currently at use in Grades 5–10); the second concerns the lecturers and the content they will have to cover in teacher education (national guidelines currently in use for lower secondary teacher education in Grades 5–10). With regard to the first, the new national curriculum for the lower secondary school level (Utdanningsdirektoratet [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training], 2020) states that writing is – along with oral, reading and digital skills – a basic skill. This central role of writing instruction is reflected in the second document. In fact, the national guidelines (NRL, 2016, see extracts in Appendix 1) state that student-teachers must develop the ability to effectively communicate in English and use writing as a tool in their language learning process. In other words, writing is of particular importance in the 60-ECTS course, which is an obligatory requirement in English to be allowed to teach English at lower secondary schools in Norway. After the 2017 reform
(Kunnskapsdepartementet [Ministry of Education], 2016), in which lower secondary teacher education became a five-year master’s degree programme, writing became even more important because all student-teachers must now write a research paper (e.g. Maagerø et al., 2019, p. 11).²

The aforementioned de jure guidelines for lower secondary teacher education (NRL) indicate the content and foci that EFL instructors must include in their teaching. However, as is the case with international research (e.g. Lee, 2010), little research is available on how writing is de facto implemented in teacher education in Norway. There are, to the best of my knowledge, only two recent papers in addition to two older doctoral theses. The first doctoral thesis (Drew, 1997) reveals that students’ writing only developed marginally during a one-year English teacher-training course, whereas their perceptions of teaching written English in schools changed considerably. In the second doctoral thesis, Lehman (1999) reveals the students’ general lack of written competence: for example, the tendencies to write as they speak. This indicates the need to focus on writing as a distinct part of language teaching.

In contrast, the two recent papers describe writing education with different foci. First, Rødnes et al. (2014) describe the challenges novice in-service teachers face with regard to teaching writings skills in the classroom, which are partially attributable to weaknesses in the teaching of grammar and writing in Norwegian teacher education. For example, these teachers struggled with shifting from a traditional focus on sentence grammar to the teaching of how to produce more advanced and situation-based texts. Finally, Lund’s (2014) study indicates that while writing is a central element in teacher education³, the required writing primarily functions as a vehicle to ensure adequate study progression and to provide a basis for assessment in the different areas of the courses. In other words, teacher education appears to focus on the notion of writing to learn, which implies using writing as a tool in the language learning process to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills (Manchón, 2011). This stands in contrast to learning to write, for example ‘learning about syntax, text structures and typical text formats, and how to build up a text in accordance with relevant genre conventions’ (Lund, 2014, p. 2). Lund’s article calls for guidelines geared more toward a pedagogy that focuses explicitly on the purposes and the expected outcomes of different writing activities.

1.2.3 Grammar Feedback in Norwegian EFL Teacher Education

The third, for this study, important aspect of the Norwegian context is the difficult question of

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² In other words, the reform of 2017 will produce the first Master’s students in spring 2021. However, the informants of this thesis still followed the former four-year programme, without a Master’s degree.

³ The national guidelines described in Lund’s article were revised in 2016 (NRL, 2016). In my view, these new guidelines do still not clearly link writing education to writing to learn and learning to write.
how grammar feedback is generally perceived in Norway and implemented in teacher education.

According to Brøyn (2014), Grov (2018), and Hertzberg (2014), the term *grammar* has a bad reputation in Norway. One reason for this may be that – similar to UK’s situation regarding the grammar of the first language (Myhill & Watson, 2014) – there is a strong association between grammar teaching and prescriptivist, old-fashioned teaching methods among primary and secondary school teachers. This may partially explain why the most recent national guidelines (NRL, 2016) have replaced the term *grammar* with other terms such as *structure*¹ in lower secondary English teacher education. In fact, the underlying teaching philosophy in Norway is that grammar teaching must be integrated into communicative language teaching and, thus, adopt a ‘lenient stance on linguistic errors’ (Simensen, 2010, p. 476). This is clearly reflected in the aforementioned guidelines and the new national curriculum² in Norway (*Utdanningsdirektoratet* [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training], 2020), both of which are informed by the fundamental principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for the teaching and assessment of English (Council of Europe, 2020).

The above-mentioned national guidelines (NRL, 2016, pp. 23–25) also emphasise the importance of teachers being able to provide constructive feedback based on solid knowledge. As we can see (cf. extracts in Appendix 1), the guidelines do not clearly link feedback to writing, particularly *grammar*, despite the ample evidence showing the benefits of *grammar feedback* in writing education (e.g. Ellis et al., 2008; Pawlak, 2014, 2020). However, before elaborating further on such theoretical considerations, I first present two important concepts or ‘macro-theories’ (Blaikie, 2010, p. 131) that represent different ways of thinking. This is important for an appropriate understanding of the ongoing debates on assessment and grammar teaching in Norway.

### 1.3 Central Concepts

#### 1.3.1 Assessment of Learning, Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning

The concept of assessment is of particular importance for this thesis. Numerous scholars make a dichotomous distinction between assessment of learning (AoL) and assessment for learning

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¹ According to the new guidelines, students must ‘have knowledge (...) of structures in both oral and written English’ (my translation from NRL, 2016, p. 23). The original version of the guidelines used the adjective *grammatical*: ‘has detailed knowledge about nuances (...) in grammatical structures used in the language’ (my translation from *Rammeplanutvalget* [National Planning Committee], 2010, p. 41).

² The new national curriculum stipulates for example that ‘knowledge about how to use sounds, vocabulary and structures at word, sentence and text levels provides the pupils with choices and opportunities for communication and interaction’ (my translation from *Utdanningsdirektoratet* [Directorate for Education and Training] 2020, p. 2).
A good example of AfL, or FA\(^6\) (Assessment Reform Group, 2010; Black & Wiliam, 1998), is when students use the feedback to improve their texts and lecturers do not provide any grades on essays. In fact, Sadler (1998) emphasises that ‘grades and marks do not deliver as much formative effectiveness as tailored comments, and in some situations can be counterproductive, particularly with learners of lower ability’ (p. 77). In this sense, AfL is regarded as an important means for supporting students as self-regulated learners (Randi, 2004; Schunk, 2005). In contrast, AoL – or summative assessment (SA) – uses specific goals and criteria that are set beforehand to assess students’ learning at the end of a unit, term, or year (Wiliam, 2011). Thus, it has a feed-out function in that ‘the grades and classifications can be treated as a performance indicator for the student, department, institution, employer, funding body, quality agency, or compilers of league tables’ (Knight, 2002, p. 276).

However, many researchers criticise the above-mentioned dichotomous distinction between AoL and AfL (e.g. Bennett, 2011; Taras, 2005). For example, Taras (2005) advocates more realistic definitions, stating that FA is ‘summative assessment plus feedback which is used by the learner’ (pp. 466) because both types of assessment justify any judgements against the stated goals and criteria. In addition to these more-or-less dichotomous distinctions, the term assessment as learning has also been coined (Dann, 2002; Earl, 2013). This concept draws on the notion that students must metacognitively understand their own learning progress and goals through a range of processes. In other words, self-assessment lies at the heart of assessment as learning (Sadler, 2010). Both assessment as learning and AfL can be considered forms of FA, which is important in Norway. In fact, the use of FA has been mandatory in primary and secondary education since 2009 (Kunnskapsdepartementet [Ministry of Education], 2009) and was incorporated in the new 2020 school curriculum (Burner, 2020, p. 54).

In sum, teacher education must prepare EFL student-teachers to acknowledge a dual and, occasionally, contradictory role when teaching writing: that of teachers simultaneously being respondents and evaluators (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). On the one hand, lecturers in higher education or teachers in lower secondary education must clearly focus on AfL, which is designed to promote learners’ development as they advance through a process. On the other hand, they also must provide AoL in the form of scores and grades\(^7\), which summarise how successfully a learner has met predetermined criteria at the end of an assignment or course.

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\(^6\) The two terms are often used interchangeably. However, Bennett (2011, p. 8) makes an interesting distinction between AfL and FA by labelling AfL (and AoL) as assessment purposes, in contrast to FA (and SA) that are called assessment types.

\(^7\) However, AoL is of minor importance for lower secondary EFL school teachers in Norway because only the assessment in Grade 10 can be summative. Assessment is supposed to be formative in Grades 1–9 (Burner, 2020).
1.3.2 Explicit and Implicit Learning

The next concepts of importance for this thesis relate to the role of grammar in second language acquisition (SLA) or, more specifically, error correction (EC). In fact, the need to effectively respond to students’ errors must be perceived as an important pedagogic intervention, not only as an ‘isolated phenomenon that just happens in the classroom’ (Pawlak, 2014, p. 1). When discussing responses to students’ errors, the concepts of explicit and implicit learning are of particular importance. Explicit (learnt) knowledge is conscious and declarative and can be verbalised, whereas implicit (acquired) knowledge is held unconsciously and is procedural (Pawlak, 2014, p. 14). There is consensus that implicit knowledge is particularly important for language acquisition and that learners must participate in communicative activities to develop it (Brown, 2014; Krashen, 1981). In contrast, explicit knowledge about grammar is only useful for communication if students can actively use this knowledge in actual performance, such as writing. This brings us to the interface hypothesis, which addresses the role of explicit knowledge in SLA. According to Ellis (2008, p. 3), we can identify three positions: (1) non-interface, (2) interface and (3) weak interface. According to Krashen’s (1981) non-interface position and zero grammar approach, a transfer between explicit and implicit knowledge is not possible. In contrast, DeKeyser’s (1998) strong interface position argues that explicit knowledge can be easily converted into implicit knowledge if students have the opportunity for plentiful communicative practice. Similarly, Ellis’s (1993) weak interface position claims that explicit knowledge facilitates the processes involved in acquiring implicit knowledge.

This discussion of the interface between explicit and implicit learning is inescapably tied to the topic of this thesis: EC or, more specifically, corrective grammar feedback. Despite extensive debates regarding the efficacy of corrective grammar feedback (e.g. Ferris, 2004; Krashen, 1985; Truscott, 1996), a growing body of research (e.g. Norris & Ortega, 2000; Pawlak, 2014) supports the interface position, regardless of whether it is strong or weak. From a pedagogical perspective, the problem of interface may be rather dichotomous because the main goal of grammar feedback is not the conversion of explicit knowledge into implicit knowledge or developing explicit knowledge, but facilitating language development. However, explicit knowledge is paramount for student-teachers because they need it to function as feedback providers in the classroom. In fact, student-teachers might be well advised to think about not only their own writing development but also their future role as feedback providers in the classroom (Cabot, 2020). In this sense, student-teachers certainly benefit from a ‘toolkit’ that shows them how they can ‘intervene in [their pupils’] interlanguage development’ (Ellis, 8

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8 Corder (1981) suggests that the language learner develops a latent and dynamic interlanguage (see section 2.3).
The question then arises whether Norwegian EFL teacher education is geared towards developing ‘toolkits’ or repertoires for student-teachers.

1.4 A Note on Terminology

This section presents some guiding notes with regard to the terminology used in this thesis.

First, feedback can be both positive and negative (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). In this thesis, however, only negative feedback – namely corrective feedback (CF) – was under scrutiny. Given the importance of combining CF with teaching writing (Sheen, 2010, p. 208) and grammar learning strategies (Pawlak, 2013, p. 195), this thesis uses the notion of meaningful (corrective) grammar feedback.

Second, in this thesis, oral corrective feedback (OCF) relates only to feedback on written errors provided in writing conferences, namely dyadic (lecturer–student) one-to-one interactions after the provision of written corrective feedback (WCF).

Third, in contrast to the terminology used in the three articles, I choose henceforth to refer to all informants as either students or lecturers. The only exceptions are the situations in which I refer to particular sources and authors. In doing so, my goal is to avoid confusion among words such as student-teachers, teachers, and teacher educators, which all include the word teacher.

Fourth, many teachers and scholars do not make a clear distinction between assessment and feedback. However, this thesis uses the terms assessment at the macro-level and feedback when the information given on the quality of essays is under scrutiny.

Finally, grammar is ‘concerned with language in its entirety’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 20), comprising morphology at the word level, syntax at the sentence level, and text grammar at the paragraph and text levels. My holistic definition of grammar includes problems with punctuation and spelling, word order and unidiomatic sentences, which cannot always be explained by grammar rules.

9 Note that the data, but not the analyses, included positive feedback.
10 In Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies, OCF relates to oral classroom feedback and not writing conferences. In order to exploit the explanatory power of these taxonomies, this thesis borrowed a few categorisations (see elicitative feedback in Appendix 2) that can also apply to writing conferences.
11 Assessment is the process of judging the value or quality of essays at the macro-level. In contrast, feedback is ‘any information that is provided to the performer of any action about that performance’ (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 53) at the micro-level. However, the two concepts of assessment and feedback overlap strongly because providing feedback without making some kind of assessment is improbable.
12 In contrast to standard definitions, but in line with grammar books that are currently used in Norway (e.g. Dypedahl & Hasselgård, 2018; McGarrighan & Rugesæter, 2018), I included spelling rules and punctuation. The thesis predominantly considered errors and not mistakes (e.g. typos) (Brown, 2014). This distinction is, in my view, important for implementing a pedagogical grammar that is cognitive and communicative (Newby, 2020, 2015).
1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

This article-based thesis comprises two parts: Part I, the extended abstract, includes seven chapters, which are followed by the appendices. Part II includes three peer-reviewed articles. Following this introduction, the extended abstract includes six more chapters.

In *Chapter 2*, I first discuss the theoretical and conceptual framing of the present thesis. *Chapter 3* is a review of grammar feedback research, both internationally and in Norway. In *Chapter 4*, I then present the methodological choices of my thesis. *Chapter 5* provides a short summary of the three articles, including the main findings from each article and their discussion. In *Chapter 6*, I discuss the findings at the thesis level. *Chapter 7* is the concluding chapter that draws on the previous chapters and outlines general and specific recommendations.

2. Theoretical Framing

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents multiple theoretical approaches that describe the concept of meaningful feedback in EFL teacher education this thesis draws upon. First, section 2.2 discusses meaningfulness in relation to feedback use. Next, section 2.3 describes linguo-didactic theories, and section 2.4 goes on to analyse the notion of dialogic feedback, which creates the foundation for the conceptualisations of an assessment community and assessment literacy in section 2.5. Finally, section 2.6 relates meaningfulness to agency and ecological transitions.

2.2 Grammar Feedback Becoming Meaningful Through Feedback Use

In contrast to Krashen (1985) and Truscott (1996), this thesis proceeds on the assumption that grammar instruction can be efficient and has positive effects on not only students’ declarative knowledge but also their communicative skills (Ferris, 2011; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Spada & Tomita, 2010). However, a key element of successful L2 grammar instruction for communicative skills is formative feedback. The management theorist Ramaprasad (1983) provides a popular and universally accepted definition of formative feedback that is illustrated with the examples of a manager and a salesman:

> The manager’s awareness of the shortfall in an employee’s performance is not feedback. … Even if the accounting department has information on a salesman’s overexpenditure, it is not feedback unless it is utilized to alter the salesman’s expenditure in some way.

(p. 8)

As outlined, Ramaprasad’s definition of formative feedback implies that feedback becomes formative when the feedback provider uses the feedback information. Transposed to EFL
teacher education, this would mean that a lecturer must use the information about a student struggling with ‘run-on sentences’ to find a satisfactory means of helping the student to overcome this syntax problem. In contrast to this exclusive focus on feedback-providers’ use of feedback, educational researcher Sadler (1989) includes feedback receivers in his definition:

Feedback provides for two main audiences, the teacher and the student. Teachers use feedback to make programmatic decisions with respect to readiness, diagnosis and remediation. Students use it to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of their performances, so that aspects associated with success or high quality can be recognized and reinforced, and unsatisfactory aspects modified or improved. (pp. 120–121)

This excerpt underscores the holistic approach of this thesis: feedback becomes meaningful when the provided feedback (Article 1) is used by both students (Article 2) and lecturers (Article 3). As mentioned, feedback is formative ‘only when it is used to alter the gap [between the level of performance and the standard being aimed for]’ (Sadler, 1989, p. 121, italics in original).

When feedback is not used, ‘the control loop cannot be closed and “dangling data” substitute for effective feedback’ (p. 121). To close feedback loops, lecturers and students must thus engage in appropriate action. This is a key goal of meaningful feedback processes.

In line with such meaningful feedback processes, Ferris (2011) enumerates the following arguments for feedback on errors:

- error feedback helps students revise and edit their texts
- error feedback leads to accuracy gains over time
- students and lecturers value error feedback
- written accuracy is important in the real world. (pp. 12–15)

As noted, Ferris believes in the efficacy of grammar feedback. In fact, providing feedback is indispensable in language teaching, particularly in teacher education (Freeman et al., 2009; Pawlak, 2014). However, research shows that a large number of students do not utilise feedback (e.g. Winstone & Carless, 2020); consequently, lecturers may believe that it is pointless to provide feedback at all (Jonsson, 2013). An important aim of this thesis is therefore to investigate how grammar feedback can be used and thus again become meaningful.

### 2.3 Grammar Feedback Becoming Meaningful in a Linguo-Didactic Framework

According to Selinker’s (1972) and Corder’s (1981) interlanguage theory, the L2 learner’s language can be considered an idiosyncratic dialect. This interlanguage, with its latent structures between the mother tongue and target language, is ‘regular, systematic, meaningful, that means it has a grammar and is, in principle, describable in terms of a set of rules’ (Corder
According to Selinker (1972) and Corder (1981), the further development of interlanguage presupposes opportunities for meaningful practice, such as producing output.

Writing and speaking are output situations that have, according to Swain (2000), three functions: (1) a noticing function, (2) a testing and hypothesis formulation and (3) a metalinguistic function. First, output helps students notice what they do not know: for example, when they encounter grammar problems during the writing process or when they talk to the lecturer during writing conferences. Second, output allows students to test new syntactic structures or grammatical forms. The third function refers to a cognitive process: a negotiation over grammar, for example a discussion about when choosing verbs in the active or passive voice, which arises in collaborative dialogues or writing conferences (e.g. Ammar & Hassan, 2018; Weissberg, 2006).

These aforementioned theories of second language acquisition (SLA) tie in with didactic issues, which lie at the core of the instructional process in EFL teacher education. In fact, the provision of meaningful feedback will depend on the lecturer, the student and the content in the essay written by the student. The following figure illustrates this:

Figure 1. Meaningful Feedback and the Didactic Triangle (adapted from Kansanen, 1999)

In this triadic student–content–lecturer relationship, feedback becomes meaningful when it relates to content (Article 1) and engages both students (Article 2) and lecturers (Article 3). By selecting three different perspectives in the three articles of this thesis, I have adopted a holistic and integrative perspective, which can do justice to each vertex of the didactic triangle in Figure 1. This didactical research particularly relates to meaningful processes between these three vertices. In other words, feedback represents the lecturer’s possibility of making grammar as content (mediated through errors) understandable to students. In order to use it efficiently, lecturers must vary feedback by employing different feedback types (e.g. direct versus indirect).
and modes (e.g. written-oral). For example, lecturers need to adapt their feedback specifically to individual learners. De Kleijn et al. (2015) coined this ‘feedback adaptivity’ (p. 119) to emphasise the importance of tailoring feedback to the needs of individual students.

However, feedback as a meaningful process might be challenging because students and lecturers who engage with feedback have different backgrounds and beliefs (see Figure 1). As for lecturers’ belief systems (Article 3), I borrow Borg’s (2003) term language teacher cognition to describe what ‘teachers think, know, and believe and the relationships of these mental constructs to what teachers do’ (p. 81). More specifically, Phipps and Borg (2009) distinguish between core (more influential) and peripheral (less influential) beliefs. In their conceptualisations, core beliefs are stable and more influential in shaping lecturers’ instructional decisions than peripheral beliefs, although the precise relationship between their beliefs and practices is complex (Borg, 2020). Students can create similar self-belief systems (e.g. Yorio, 1986): for example self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986) or academic belief systems (Cassidy & Eachus, 2000). In other words, lecturers’ and students’ beliefs are important when engaging with feedback. Whereas students’ beliefs influence the use of feedback, lecturers’ beliefs can decide how feedback content is shaped (Strijbos & Müller, 2014).

To sum up, in this thesis I argue that feedback becomes meaningful when students and lecturers agree, in some manner, on what constitutes good feedback and are actively involved in a dialogical feedback process that I examine next.

2.4 Meaningfulness Through Dialogical Feedback and Best-Practice Recommendations

Feedback becomes dialogical when communication between a feedback provider and receiver occurs, for example via words, as illustrated by the etymology of the term itself: in ancient Greek dia (English: via) and logos (English: word). Accordingly, feedback can contain metalinguistic words, such as ‘‘influence’’ is a noun’ or ‘‘influential’’ is an adjective’. To elicit knowledge, changing the word order is also possible in feedback comments, for example by using elicitative questions (see Appendix 2) instead of statements. In sum, there is a plethora of possibilities to use or combine words to make grammar feedback dialogical and, thus, meaningful.

These feedback strategies echo with Bakthin’s (1981) distinction between ‘authoritative discourses’ and ‘internally persuasive discourses’ (pp. 345–346). Authoritative discourses derive their authority from tradition, authorised truths, official authorities or people approved as authorities. For example, a student can perceive a lecturer’s provision of one specific feedback type – for instance, direct CF (providing the correct answers) or unfocused CF
as an authoritative discourse. Such discourses position feedback as a monological one-way process in which ‘an authority pronounces on another less powerful person’ (Jolly & Boud, 2013, p. 115). In contrast, *internally persuasive discourses* come from the outside (e.g. another person), encounter our own thoughts and experiences and become ‘half-ours and half-someone else’s’ (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). A good dialogue lies in the tension, interaction and confrontation between the many voices or discourses (Dysthe, 1997, p. 85): *internally persuasive, authoritative and new discourses* are created in the community through a dialogical learning process to which lecturers and students contribute useful information and clarify different positions and contradictions. Bakhtin’s (2004) dialogic pedagogy of grammar is an important element in the definition of dialogical feedback. However, the main challenge with dialogical feedback is to listen to all the voices and make space for the learner’s *internally persuasive discourses* – for example, by adapting the feedback specifically to individual learners.

Dialogical feedback also tallies with several of Ferris’s (2014) or Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) best-practice recommendations. For example, Ferris’s first suggestion states that ‘the focus of response should depend upon individual students’ needs’ (p. 8). Moreover, her recommendations include the following two suggestions in relation to feedback types:

1. Where possible, questions are preferable to imperatives, as they are less directive and promote student autonomy.
2. If feedback on errors is provided, indirect error feedback (in which the error is indicated but not corrected) is more beneficial to long-term student development than direct correction (in which the teacher or peer provides the correct form to the writer).

(p. 8)

Clearly, these recommendations tie in with Bakhtin’s (2004) aforementioned dialogic pedagogy of grammar, whose ‘fundamental characteristic is that it exists as communication between and in response to others’ (Godley, 2004, p. 54). Using these recommendations, lecturers can avoid monological feedback, which appears to prevail (Molloy & Boud, 2013; Nystrand et al., 1997; Yaqubi & Rashidi, 2019). For example, writing conferences can be an opportunity to explain grammar and limit ‘final vocabulary’ (Rorty, 1989, p. 73), such as ‘good’ or ‘poor’ in WCF.

Dialogical feedback also has a lot in common with *fine-tuned, finely-tuned, or fine-tuning* (henceforth ‘fine-tuned’) CF. Han (2001) describes fine-tuned CF as a process whereby

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13 Bakhtin (1981, 2004) has been influential in contemporary writing research (Bazerman, 2005; Godley, 2004). For example, Bakhtin’s (2004) description of the stylistic force of parataxic sentences in Russian indicates that every grammatical form is a representation of reality and must be taught in relation to stylistic choices.

14 Comments can be final in the sense that non-negotiable terms are used. This leaves no room for manoeuvre.
the provider of feedback ‘tunes in to the true causal factors of an error and successfully brings the learner’s attention to the learning problem’ (p. 584). According to several researchers (e.g., Doughty, 1994; Kepner, 1991; Lee, 2007; Lee et al., 2015), research on fine-tuned CF associated with EFL grammar as a part of FA remains relatively scarce. The concept of attempting to fine-tune feedback, which implies to ‘bring successfully the learner’s attention to the learning problem’ (Han, 2001, p. 584, emphasis added), is interesting because it reminds us of Bakhtin’s (1981) concept of internally persuasive discourses. Thus, feedback can be made dialogical and meaningful.

To conclude, Bakhtin’s (1981) dialogism can be linked to Dann’s (2014) concept of assessment as learning. Assessment as learning suggests that ‘teachers may need to consider … more about how learners interpret and understand feedback from their self-regulatory and self-productive identities’ (Dann, 2014, p. 149). This resonates with Bakhtin’s aforementioned claim that feedback must create space for internally persuasive discourses. However, according to Godley (2004), ‘a short visit to any English/Language Arts classroom would reveal how much the subject of grammar is still presented in what Bakhtin would call monologized pedagogical dialogue’ (p. 53). To change this situation, lecturers and students must be convinced that ‘the meaning of feedback comments is not transmitted from the teacher to the student; rather, meaning comes into being through interaction and dialogue’ (Nicol, 2010, p. 507). Indeed, the provision of dialogic feedback creates the foundation for what I have chosen to call an assessment community, a concept under scrutiny below.

2.5 Meaningfulness Through Assessment Literacy in an Assessment Community

Students and lecturers form an assessment community when both parties are involved in the feedback process. They must collectively answer three key questions: “Where are they going?” [feed up], “How are they going?” [feedback] and “Where to next?” [feed forward] (The “they” refers to both the teacher and to the student)’ (Hattie, 2009, p. 37). To answer these important questions, an assessment community needs to form a group of assessment literates who are required ‘to speak the same language’ (Engelsen & Smith, 2014, p. 93) and to develop assessment literacy either through own experiences or the institutions they work for.

Seen from a feedback-provider perspective, Stiggins (1991) describes assessment literacy as the ability ‘to seek and use assessments that communicate clear, specific, and rich definitions of the achievement that is valued’ (p. 535). In the language testing context, Popham (2011) defines it as ‘an individual’s understandings of the fundamental assessment concepts.

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15 The term ‘community’ tallies with Wenger’s (1998, p. 73) notion of ‘Communities of Practice’ that requires three components: (1) mutual engagement, (2) a joint enterprise and (3) a shared repertoire.
and procedures deemed likely to influence educational decisions’ (p. 267, italics in original). Indeed, a crucial issue in teacher education is the need to develop assessment literacy that can help improve lecturers’ assessment capacity (e.g. Crusan et al., 2016; DeLuca & Johnson, 2018). However, seen from a feedback-receiver perspective, Smith et al. (2013) suggest conceptualising assessment literacy in the following manner:

Students’ understanding of the rules surrounding assessment in their course context, their use of assessment tasks to monitor or further their learning, and their ability to work with the guidelines on standards in their context to produce work of a predictable standard. (p. 46)

Related to grammar, this implies that students must comprehend the purpose of grammar assessment in EFL teacher education, need to be aware of the processes of grammar assessment that might help them to improve their writing and must practise judging their own responses according to given standards. This thesis uses these definitions to conceptualise grammar assessment literacy as an umbrella term comprising the literacies of both lecturers (e.g. Popham, 2011; Stiggins, 1991) and students (e.g. Carless, 2019b, 2015; Smith et al., 2013) in an assessment community.

Another important element of assessment literacy is the community’s ability to analyse the different contexts in which they engage (e.g. Aben et al., 2019; Miller, 2005). To do so, this thesis draws upon Van Lier’s (2004a, p. 24) concept of learning ecologies. In fact, in terms of feedback provision and reception, EFL lecturers and students are learners themselves who need to adapt to multiple settings created by a learning ecology. Van Lier (2010) defines a learning ecology as an approach that examines ‘the multi-layered nature of interaction (…), in all their complexity and as a network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting’ (p. 3). These settings can play an important role in a learner’s development, which makes research in this domain particularly interesting. However, according to Lee (2014), there is a dearth of research that discusses the lecturers’ and students’ contextual dimensions. Thus, Articles 2 and 3 in the present thesis employ two important concepts from the ecological perspectives of learning, namely agency and ecological transitions, on which I elaborate next.

2.6 Feedback Agency and Ecological Transitions

Goller and Harteis (2017) distinguish between ‘agency as something individuals do’, that means a performance, and ‘agency as a personal feature’ (p. 88), that is, a capacity or prerequisite of individuals. In contrast to this definition related to individual agents, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) consider more contextual dimensions. They define agency as
a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects with contingencies of the moment). (p. 963)

As described, students or lecturers may repeat past events (habits), assess present contexts (judgment), and develop plans for the future (imagination) (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). During this process, students or lecturers may show feedback agency, which is the transaction or level of feedback engagement between students or lecturers (actors) and feedback in different situations (contexts). Interestingly, a high level of feedback agency can occur when moving from one context to another – that is, in ‘ecological transitions’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26). Articles 2 (e.g. Figure 2, p. 147) and 3 (e.g. Appendix C) provide interesting examples of such changing contexts that can afford essential learning moments or ‘moments of contingency’ (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 10), that is to say meaningful critical points where learning changes direction depending on feedback (Leahy et al., 2005, p. 6). As discussed next, research has given little attention to these questions.

3. Review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises relevant research, identifies possible research gaps and supplements the review sections of the three articles included in Part II. In line with Grant and Booth (2009), it examines ‘recent and current literature’ (p. 97). However, it lacks ‘comprehensive searching’ and systematic ‘quality assessment’ (p. 94). In other words, this review is primarily thematic and conceptual.

The research literature on CF in L2 writing is extensive. Moreover, the grammar feedback domain touches upon different disciplines, inter alia linguistics and pedagogy. For these reasons, this review used the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Table 1. Exclusion and Inclusion Criteria for Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication type</th>
<th>Excluded</th>
<th>Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference proceedings, BA and MA theses, book reviews, blogs</td>
<td>Peer-reviewed articles, books, book chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Studies published before 1982</td>
<td>1982–2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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16 This conceptualisation is also called the ‘chordal triad’ (Biesta & Tedder, 2006, p. 15). The ability to solve problems in the future is an important element in the definitions of ‘sustainable feedback’ (Carless et al., 2011, p. 397) and ‘Feedback Mark 2’ (Molloy & Boud, 2013, p. 22).

17 Students’ feedback agency is illustrated in Article 2, Figure 1, p. 135.
My searches covered ERIC, Google Scholar, Web of Science and various journals, such as *Assessing Writing, Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, Journal of Second Language Writing, System*, and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. I focused on books and peer-reviewed articles. Investigating L1 literature was outside the scope of this thesis, even though the L1 may affect the L2 (see research on translanguaging by Vogel & Garcia, 2017). Last, I included studies of novice in-service teachers because teacher education may still be quite fresh in this group’s memory. This might help us describe pre-service teacher education (PTE), which is under-researched from an FA perspective (Borg, 2015). The following section begins with an overview of feedback research. Thereafter, the chapter presents a more elaborate literature review drawing on perspectives particularly important to this thesis. These include feedback as an artefact (section 3.3), students’ perceptions of feedback (section 3.4), and agreements and disagreements between students’ and lecturers’ perceptions (section 3.5). Finally, I relate these feedback perceptions to research in Norway (section 3.6), the context of this thesis.

### 3.2 Overview of Feedback Research

This feedback investigation starts by looking at different, but sometimes intertwined research fields that examine how feedback becomes meaningful. To give a proper overview of feedback in higher education, Esterhazy (2018, p. 8) suggests grouping current feedback literature into three major strands: studies focusing on the (1) effectiveness of different feedback interventions, (2) perceptions of feedback and (3) feedback engagement. This classification is also used in SLA and L2 writing education, traditionally considered two distinct philosophical approaches to feedback research (Ferris, 2010). Many studies lie within the first strand, namely ‘laboratory’ studies using mainly quantitative approaches to evaluate the ‘effectiveness’ of certain feedback types (e.g. Lalande, 1982; Pashazadeh, 2017; Sheen, 2007). The second strand comprises self-report data from surveys or interviews that examine students’ or teachers’ cognitions and outline definitions of meaningful feedback (e.g. Borg, 2015; Farrell, 1999). The

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18 Myhill et al. (2012) provides robust evidence of the benefits of contextualised L1 grammar teaching.
last strand analyses the provision and use of feedback and its relation to feedback uptake (e.g. Carless, 2019a; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey et al., 2000; Sheen, 2004). All three strands show research gaps regarding CF in teacher education (Bartels, 2005; Borg, 2015), a topic under scrutiny here.

These three strands reflect the tendency to search for ideal CF models (e.g. Lalande, 1982; Pashazadeh, 2017). However, feedback is a complex phenomenon; thus, feedback research often provides contradictory findings (Guénette, 2007). According to Boggs (2019, p. 2), these contradictory results are attributable to (1) differing philosophical approaches, (2) learner-specific factors and (3) types of CF provided. The first reason is due to tendencies to classify CF into either SLA or L2 writing approaches. SLA studies may, for example, limit their focus to one or two grammatical features (Sheen, 2007; Shintani et al., 2014). However, owing to its focus on the writing process, L2 writing research needs to enhance its ecological validity and thus consider more varied CF (Boggs, 2019; Pashazadeh, 2017). The second reason for contradictory findings lies in learner diversity. Therefore, a number of studies have looked into diverse forms of learner scaffolding (Granott, 2005; Littleton, 2013; Mascolo, 2005). However, context-dependent factors of feedback (Aben et al., 2019; Miller, 2005; Thoms, 2014) are still under-researched. The third factor relates to the plethora of different feedback types, which might overlap and need clear definitions (see Appendix 2). For example, when combining indirect CF with direct CF, the students do not get the opportunity to guess the correct forms and indirect CF thus loses its intended meaning.19

In this context, it has therefore been paramount for many researchers to offer some best-practice recommendations (see also section 2.4), such as Ferris (2014) and Lyster and Ranta (1997). Researchers have also discussed the issue of what meaningful feedback should include. For example, the studies have addressed types and modes of CF, such as written or oral (e.g. Bitchener et al., 2005), global or local (e.g. Montgomery & Baker, 2007), focused or unfocused (e.g. Pashazadeh, 2017), direct or indirect (e.g. Van Beuningen et al., 2008), metalinguistic or non-metalinguistic (e.g. Borg, 1999), and elicitative or non-elicitative feedback (e.g. Lyster, 2004). The following review provides further detail.

3.3 Feedback as an Artefact: Feedback Types and Modes

To begin with grammar feedback as a an artefact or ‘tool kit’ for students and lecturers, the distinction between feedback types (e.g. direct vs. indirect) and modes (e.g. written vs. oral)

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19 Therefore, Article 1 counted such instances of indirect CF as direct CF.
might be useful (Ammar et al., 2016; Ellis, 2009b). The following table provides an overview of some important research on different feedback types and modes (see also Appendix 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Written and/or Oral</th>
<th>Global and/or Local</th>
<th>Focused and/or Unfocused</th>
<th>Direct and/or Indirect</th>
<th>Metalinguistic and/or Non-metalinguistic</th>
<th>Elicitative and/or Non-elicitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studies</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: N stands for the number of participants in the studies.</td>
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</table>

This list is by no means exhaustive, and, in addition, many studies deal with overlapping feedback types or modes. For example, elicitative CF can be provided in both oral classroom situations (e.g. Sheen, 2004) or in individual oral (lecturer–student) writing conferences (e.g. Weissberg, 2006), the latter being the focus of this thesis. In other words, both forms of oral CF provide important findings on learner uptake and repair. With regard to methodology, few studies draw on (1) qualitative, (2) longitudinal and (3) holistic approaches that combine feedback effectiveness with student and lecturer perspectives, approaches that would ensure high ecological validity (see also Li, 2010 and Liu & Brown, 2015).

To sum up thus far, much of the available research is quantitative, with particular emphasis on grammatical accuracy. On the one hand, research on feedback modes suggests that combining written/oral feedback sequences have a significant effect on student writing (e.g.

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20 Many studies have analysed elicitations in oral feedback. This thesis, however, found elicitations in both the OCF (i.e. lecturer–student writing conferences) and the WCF of the data.
Bitchener et al., 2005). On the other hand, research on feedback types remains inconclusive as to whether focused CF is more effective than unfocused CF (e.g. Ellis et al., 2008; Hartshorn et al., 2010; Pashazadeh, 2017) and whether indirect CF is more effective than direct CF (e.g. Ferris, 2014; Van Beuningen et al., 2008). Conversely, research thus far tends to agree on the benefits of global, metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF (e.g. Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Shintani & Ellis, 2013). However, only a minority of the aforementioned international studies have examined how lecturers and students use and combine different feedback types in WCF–OCF feedback sequences in EFL writing teacher education.

3.4 Students’ Perceptions of Feedback

A holistic approach to feedback, which is the focus of this thesis, will include not only perspectives on the effectiveness of feedback types and modes, but also on the students’ or lecturers’ perceived feedback preferences. This is why research on students’ perceptions (i.e. perception-oriented research on CF) is included in this review. Interestingly, a comprehensive review of assessment and feedback in higher education revealed that only 7% of 460 studies during 2000–2012 explored student perceptions of feedback (Evans, 2013, p. 78).

Concerning general tendencies, Dowden et al. (2013) emphasise that students’ emotions may influence their perceptions of written feedback. In the case of teacher education, the focus of this thesis, most students have the advantage of receiving feedback from former schoolteachers who have considerable pedagogical knowledge and experience to draw from (Torenbeek et al., 2010). Thus, these lecturers appreciate the importance of encouraging students and avoiding unduly negative feedback.

It is also clear that effective written feedback should be aligned with pedagogies that encourage dialogue. This is because difficulties in understanding the feedback may limit students’ use of CF. To overcome these difficulties, students need a repertoire of relevant knowledge (Sadler, 2010, p. 537). This is particularly important in PTE, in which ‘assessment is not only a methodology but also part of the learning content’ (López-Pastor & Sicilia-Camacho, 2017, p. 89).

Regarding students’ specific preferences for feedback types, several studies provide interesting findings (e.g. Karim & Nassaji, 2015; Liu, 2009). First, Liu’s (2009) study (N = 115), which combined questionnaire and interview data at a US university, suggests that the students want the lecturer to use unfocused CF (i.e. correcting all errors). Furthermore, Yeh’s (2016) study using questionnaires and interviews with 34 EFL university students in Taiwan finds that many students expect direct CF (i.e. providing the correct forms) from the lecturer.
during writing conferences. Lee (2008) (N = 60) confirms such positive perceptions of direct CF. In contrast, Ferris (2006) in the US (N = 92) and Westmacott (2017) in Chile (N = 10) indicate that highly motivated students prefer indirect CF (combined with metalinguistic codes) over direct CF. In sum, as already noted by Ferris and Roberts (2001) and Saito (1994), research remains rather inconclusive on whether students prefer indirect or direct CF. Next, Ferris (1995) (N = 155) suggests that students favour local CF (on grammar and mechanics) over CF on global writing issues (ideas, content and organisation). Cohen’s (1998) study in various university language classes (N = 217) confirms this strong preference for local CF. Moreover, Chen et al. (2016) collected quantitative and qualitative data from 64 EFL university students in China, who show an overall favourable attitude towards metalinguistic CF. Amrhein and Nassaji’s (2010) study with ESL students (N = 64) in Canada and Katayama’s (2007) study with English learners (N = 588) in Japan confirm these positive perceptions of metalinguistic CF. Finally, studies by Brandl (1995) with students studying German (N = 21) in the US and Yoshida (2008) with Japanese learners (N ≈ 60–75) in Australia provide some evidence of a preference for elicitative CF when proficient learners receive OCF.

With regard to students’ specific preferences for written or oral feedback, several studies suggest that students rate the helpfulness and success of lecturer–student writing conferences (labelled as OCF in this thesis) higher than WCF because WCF occasionally appears ambiguous to them (e.g. Liu, 2009; Warner, 1998; Yeh, 2016). For example, Yeh (2016) indicates a generally positive experience of conferences when the lecturer frequently uses direct CF. However, research in this field is relatively rare (Ferris, 2014). Only few studies, such as Yeh (2016) and Article 2 of this thesis, focus on student perceptions of OCF. Similar research gaps exist with regard to differences and similarities in student and teacher perceptions, which I examine next.

### 3.5 Agreements and Disagreements Between Student and Lecturer Perceptions

There are differences and similarities between student and lecturer (often labelled as teacher) perceptions of good feedback. Areas of disagreements are of particular interest because knowing about these could facilitate desired learning outcomes in the university classroom. For example, surveys in Australia (Ferguson, 2011) suggest that students are concerned about the lack of meaningful feedback, whereas lecturers believe their feedback is meaningful (Carless, 2006). Improved assessment dialogues might help bridge this gap between student and lecturer perceptions. L2 lecturers must communicate more with their students and implement student perceptions and preferences into the feedback provided (Zhan, 2016).
Unfortunately, a growing body of research has uncovered gaps between student and lecturer perspectives on feedback in higher education (Gabillon, 2012, 2013; Schulz, 1996, 2001). For example, Schulz’s (1996, 2001) studies on US (N = 824) and Colombian (N = 607) foreign language university students and their lecturers (N = 92, 122) reveal few disagreements on questions regarding the desirability of WCF\textsuperscript{21}, but many disagreements on oral classroom feedback. In fact, most of student respondents were surprisingly positive towards negative feedback and in favour of oral classroom feedback, which the lecturers tended to refrain from providing. However, little research has compared students’ and lecturers’ preferences of OCF in writing conferences, which are investigated in this thesis. As has already been mentioned, students appreciate this form of OCF (e.g. Liu, 2009; Yeh, 2016), although its provision is rare owing to its resource-demanding nature (Jamoom, 2016; Winstone & Carless, 2020).

3.6 Writing Research on Feedback and Grammar in Norway

To return to Norway, studies of student and lecturer perceptions of feedback, in general, or of corrective grammar feedback, in particular, are rare in research on Norwegian teacher education. This is surprising because studies such as Orafi and Borg’s (2009) or Freeman et al.’s (2009) clearly show the importance of teachers’ pedagogical and linguistic competence for classroom writing instruction. Most EFL/ESL feedback research in Norway focuses on primary and secondary education (Askland, 2019; Burner, 2014, 2016; Horverak, 2015, 2016; Otnes & Solheim, 2019; Salih-Abdulahi, 2019; Salih-Abdulahi, Hellekjær, & Hertzberg, 2017). The exceptions include three recent papers (Bader et al., 2019; Lund, 2014; Rødnes et al., 2014) and two doctoral theses (Drew, 1997; Lehman, 1999). However, the theses relate more to deficits in students’ writing competence than to the provision of grammar feedback in teacher education. Bader et al.’s (2019) study is one of few to investigate feedback, but in this case feedback as part of portfolio assessment. In fact, it examines students’ (N = 40) perceptions of formative teacher and peer feedback as part of portfolio assessment at two English teacher education institutions in Norway. Drawing on the qualitative analysis of 128 reflective texts, it describes students’ positive attitudes towards teacher feedback and the portfolio-writing process and suggests that students would benefit from more opportunities to revise and resubmit their work.

Similarly, Lund’s (2014) study shows that only a few assignments in teacher education require that students get course instructor feedback ‘on one or even two early versions of their

\textsuperscript{21} Some lecturers are uncertain about what it achieves and what use students make of it (e.g. Bailey & Garner, 2010).
texts’ (p. 14). Moreover, she emphasises that there is a clear preference for writing-to-learn activities. These involve writing as a tool to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills (Manchón, 2011) in the different areas of study in the courses. More specifically, grammar feedback, the focus of this thesis, applies to writing on different topics, such as literature, didactics or civilization, which have a long tradition in English teacher education in Norway (Drew, 1997). Such writing-to-learn activities function primarily as a vehicle to ensure proper study progression and to provide a basis for assessment (see also Dysthe et al., 2010). However, this contrasts with learning-to-write activities, which can range from work with morphology at the word level and syntax at the sentence level to text grammar at the paragraph and text level. In fact, instructors give little attention to helping students master writing tasks, and barely any assignments offer clear instructions with regard to correctness, precision, and appropriacy.

Rødnes et al. (2014) describe the challenges of novice in-service teachers who struggle with providing meaningful grammar feedback in the classroom. They link this to Norwegian language and writing teacher education, which accords low priority to text grammar and written text production, not to mention to teaching-to-write activities. Despite a limited number of informants, the study suggests that writing teacher education in the UK and the US appears to better prepare student-teachers for writing and writing instruction, for example, by focusing more clearly on accuracy and metalinguistic explanations. In sum, this study tallies with other accounts (Drew, 1997; Hellekjær, 2001; Lund, 2014) suggesting that formative writing instruction, including grammar, is unsystematic and largely neglected in Norwegian EFL teacher education.

To summarise, more research on grammar feedback in EFL teacher education is needed, in general as well as in Norway; this future research must most definitely give voice to both feedback providers and receivers. It should also focus on the importance of making grammar feedback meaningful for students and teachers who together form an assessment community. The purpose of this thesis is, therefore, to address some of these knowledge gaps by investigating the numerous possibilities of varying CF (e.g. written-oral, direct vs. indirect) and students’ and lecturers’ perceptions of engagement with formative feedback.

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to elaborate on the methods section of the three articles and on how these studies complement one another. I first argue for the multiple-methods research design used in my thesis. Next, I elaborate on piloting, sampling, collecting and analysing the different data in
the three studies. Finally, I address the issues of validity, reliability, generalisability and research ethics.

4.2 Research Design

The first question in this chapter relates to the research design at the thesis level. The present research design draws on a generic qualitative approach (Cooper & Endacott, 2007; Kahlke, 2014; Percy et al., 2015). Generic studies are ‘not guided by an explicit or established set of philosophic assumptions in the form of one of the known [or more established] qualitative methodologies’ (Caelli et al., 2003, p. 4), namely phenomenology, grounded theory and ethnography (Richards & Morse, 2007). However, this thesis uses Ellis’s (2009b), Lyster and Ranta’s22 (1997) and Ferris’s (2011, 2014) taxonomies as a common unit of analysis in all studies (see Appendix 2). Table 3 provides a detailed overview of the methodological issues in the three studies.

Table 3. Detailed Study Overview – Articles with Reference to Research Questions, Research Designs, Participants, Data Sources and Re-use of Samples, Data, and Units of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1 (Article 1)</th>
<th>Study 2 (Article 2)</th>
<th>Study 3 (Article 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main research question</td>
<td>How does grammar feedback become meaningful in EFL writing teacher education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>(1) Which specific types of grammar feedback did the lecturer use when providing WCF and OCF? (2) How do WCF and OCF complement each other?</td>
<td>(1) What are the characteristics of the feedback the students prefer? (2) How do students link these preferences to learning moments in their writing development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
<td>• Qualitative • Single-case study • Feedback analysis • Descriptive quasi-statistics (Becker, 1970)</td>
<td>• Qualitative • Interview study • Thematic analysis • Stimulated recall (SR) interviews with prompts (WCF, OCF and learner uptake)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>1 lecturer, 18 students</td>
<td>12 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 This thesis borrowed three feedback types (i.e. elicit completion moves, elicitative questions and reformulation requests) from Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) oral classroom feedback research to describe oral one-to-one lecturer–student writing conferences (OCF) and WCF.
This thesis followed a *multiple method design*, or more specifically, a *multimethod design*, because I used ‘more than one method but restricted to within [one] worldview’ (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 11), namely qualitative research. Two data collection procedures served to answer the main RQ. One involved a single-case study (Study 1); the other comprised two interview studies (Studies 2 and 3). While Study 1 draws upon a more variable-oriented approach (feedback analysis and descriptive quasi-statistics), Studies 2 and 3 follow more process-oriented approaches (thematic analyses) (Maxwell, 2004, p. 5).

### 4.3 Piloting

The second question in this chapter relates to piloting. Piloting in qualitative research can help ‘test your ideas or methods’ (p. 66) and ‘develop an understanding of the concepts and theories held by the people you are studying’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 67). This was true for Studies 2 and 3 that drew upon interviews. Study 1, however, was exploratory and drew on content analysis as a ‘non-reactive method in which the researcher does not have an influence on the participants’ (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 32). Thus, the lack of piloting in Study 1 was in line with Miles et al.’s (2014) ‘arguments for little prior instrumentation’ (p. 38). However, Studies 2 and 3 clearly required piloting. One of Miles et al.’s (2014) main arguments is that ‘an overload of data will compromise the efficiency and power of the analysis’ (p. 39). Therefore, piloting of Studies 2 and 3 aimed to increase research quality, particularly with regard to identify ‘the necessity to modify questions or other procedures that do not elicit appropriate responses’ (Malmqvist et al., 2019, p. 3). To do so, I adapted the first version of the interview guide for both studies. For example, in Study 3, I changed the order of the questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) to

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23 According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003, p. 11), mixed methods designs are also multiple method designs. However, in contrast to multimethod designs, mixed methods designs relate to more than one worldview.
avoid repetitive questions on current feedback practices and reduce the number of questions (compare Appendices 7 and 8). I also added ‘general questions’ and ‘warm-up questions’ in Study 2 (see Article 2, Appendix A, p. 150). However, qualitative ‘piloting differs from [quantitative] piloting in that we do not have to discard the obtained data after these “trial runs” but can use it for the final analysis’ (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 75). As Richards (2005) notes, differences were ‘food for analysis, not a problem for consistency’ (p. 78).

4.4 Sampling and Data
Another interesting question is how the three studies were integrated in terms of sampling and data. In fact, the feedback analysis of essay 1 was used in all three studies. In addition, feedback provider 1 appears in Studies 1 and 3, whereas 12 students are informants in Studies 1 and 2. In other words, the thesis design may show elements of methodological congruence because ‘purposes, questions and methods of research are all interconnected and interrelated so that the study appears as a cohesive whole’ (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 50). Before elaborating further on research tools and data, I will detail the sampling in the three studies.

4.4.1 Sampling Study 1
Study 1 is a single-case study (Stake, 2000) based on the analysis of feedback provided by a lecturer on 18 essays, and 18 transcriptions of follow-up writing conferences between this lecturer and his students at a Norwegian university college. I chose only one highly experienced lecturer to focus clearly on possible complementarities between WCF and OCF provided to the 18 students. Thus, the sample is by no means representative of the average Norwegian teacher educator. However, according to Creswell (2014, p. 189), this purposive sample of only 1 lecturer (and 18 students) is a reasonable number of participants for narrative research because the investigation aimed to not compare different lecturers but unpack possible complementarities between WCF and OCF as a phenomenological issue.

4.4.2 Sampling Study 2
In Study 2 (2 pilot, 10 semi-structured and 4 member-check interviews), 12 students reflected on the role of meaningful feedback and possible learning moments. This is an extension of Study 1 with 12 of the 18 students, more specifically six male and six female participants randomly chosen from Study 1. The students were in their fourth year of teacher education and EFL was their third subject (in addition to pedagogy). The students had to write a new essay approximately one month after the provision of WCF and OCF during Study 1. As in Study 1, all students had attended Norwegian schools and thus had about 11 years of EFL education.
4.4.3 Sampling Study 3
In study 3 (comprising 1 pilot, 12 semi-structured and 4 member-check interviews), 12 EFL lecturers from 6 teacher training institutions reflected on their use of feedback strategies and possible explanations for their feedback practices. The selection of the lecturers can be described as either typical sampling or criterion sampling (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 128). On the one hand, this is a typical sampling because each participant had at least 15 years of EFL teaching experience. In other words, this sample made it possible to investigate long-term developments of feedback practices because the alignment between feedback beliefs and practices is relatively high in the case of experienced lecturers (Basturkmen, 2012). On the other, it is a criterion-based sample because I excluded those participants who did not integrate grammar feedback into the teaching of literature, civilisation or didactics.

4.5 Research Tools and Data
Drawing further on the argument for consistency, students and lecturers form an assessment community with a given level of assessment literacy. Thus, a description of meaningful feedback in teacher education must occur from a holistic and integrative perspective including feedback as an artefact (Dataset 1/Study 1), students (Dataset 2/Study 2) and lecturers (Dataset 3/Study 3). I will elaborate on this below.

4.5.1 Dataset 1: Written and Oral Feedback Samples
The first study is an analysis of feedback provided on 18 literary essays and 18 transcriptions of follow-up writing conferences between a lecturer and 18 students (see excerpts in Appendices 3 and 4). The lecturer commonly provided both WCF and OCF in writing conferences. Thus, the present study has the characteristics of an intrinsic case study ‘in which the focus is on the case itself…because the case presents an unusual or unique situation’ (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 99). In accordance with Pawlak (2014, p. 121), I would contend that the observed systematic and time-consuming combination of both WCF and OCF in one feedback sequence is rather unique in teacher education.

4.5.2 Dataset 2: Interviews with Students
The second dataset comprises 10 in-depth interviews. The interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 5), which combined prepared, spontaneous and open-ended guiding questions. The questions tapped into background issues (e.g. preparation time,

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24 The term ‘experts’ is ambiguous and presupposes an asymmetric relationship between the interviewee and interviewer (Bogner & Menz, 2009, p. 68). Thus, I favoured the term ‘experienced lecturers’.
language challenges) and questions on their past (essay 1), present (essay 2) and future writing. To do so, the interviews used two different literary essays of 750–1,100 words as prompts. Thus, the interviews constitute qualified verbal report data with a particular focus on ‘introspective and retrospective self-observation’ (Cohen, 1998, p. 34). These reflective interviews used multiple prompts (i.e. essay 2 without any feedback and essay 1 with WCF) as well as audio recordings and transcripts from OCF (on essay 1). Therefore, they also represent stimulated recall (SR) interviews with a delayed recall (Gass & Mackey, 2017, p. 52). Grasping the understanding of feedback using a questionnaire would have been difficult because the students might have struggled with feedback terminology. They thus may have had difficulties in identifying feedback types and modes. The SR interviews, however, were a more flexible form than the questionnaire because they facilitated the ‘[explaining] and understanding’ (Blaikie, 2010, p. 72) of self-perceived feedback preferences and learning moments.

4.5.3 Dataset 3: Interviews with Lecturers

The third dataset, with its particular focus on lecturers’ feedback practices, comprised 12 semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview questions related to current feedback practices, reasons for feedback choices and future feedback development (see Appendices 8 and 9). They revealed that the lecturers often struggled to explain their feedback choices, especially because of the dichotomous terminology from Ellis’ (2009b), Ferris’ (2014) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies that was used in the interviews. For example, they occasionally found it difficult to provide a clear answer on whether they favoured unfocused over focused, direct over indirect or written over oral CF. Nevertheless, during these interviews, the lecturers had the time and opportunity to explain their feedback practices and understanding of terminology and approaches to learning. This clearly showed the value of using semi-structured interviews instead of questionnaires (Phellas et al., 2011, p. 182). I conducted 10 of the interviews in the interviewees’ mother tongues (9 in Norwegian and 1 in English), and 2 in English for non-Norwegian lecturers with English L2 or third-language (L3) backgrounds. The main objective was to ensure the informants’ ease of expression (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 154).

4.6 Analyses

4.6.1 Inductive and Deductive Category Construction or Coding Procedures

Creswell (2014, p. 199) distinguishes between three different coding procedures: (a) developing

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25 Essay 1 submissions taken from the aforementioned Study 1 included WCF and OCF, whereas essay 2 submissions, written two months later, came without any grammar feedback.
26 However, I used a questionnaire as a prompt during the member-check interviews (see Appendix 10).
codes only on the basis of emerging information (inductive), (b) using predetermined codes and then fitting the data to them (deductive) and (c) using a combination of emerging and predetermined codes (inductive and deductive). This thesis used a combination of inductive and deductive coding procedures. For example, Table 3 of Article 2 (p. 144) shows the codes *awareness* and *concreteness*, which refer to the actual language of some informants found in the transcriptions (In Vivo coding, Saldana, 2016, p. 105). In this sense, the analyses of the interview transcriptions were more data-driven or inductive because the codes *awareness* or *concreteness* were not predefined but derived directly from the information the informants provided. In contrast, Ellis’s (2009b), Ferris’s (2014) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies served as a unit of analysis in all three articles, which followed a predefined or theory-driven deductive approach. Appendix 2 outlines the different feedback strategies used. Last, it has to be said that the demarcation between inductive and deductive coding is not always clear.

### 4.6.2 Content Analysis and Quantifications Within Qualitative Approaches

Another important data coding procedure was content analysis that categorises data by ‘similarity’ (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2013, p. 3). Rossman and Rallis (2017) suggest that content analysis describes categories as words or phrases describing some ‘segment of your data that is relatively discrete (a variable, if you will)’ (p. 240). Maxwell (2010) and Silverman (2014) even recommend quantifications of categories. Table 4 outlines such an approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1 (Article 1)</th>
<th>Study 2 (Article 2)</th>
<th>Study 3 (Article 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content analyses</strong></td>
<td><strong>Table 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Table 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCF (median)</td>
<td>Preferred feedback (average of coding occurrences):</td>
<td>Self-reported frequencies of feedback types:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct: 42.5%</td>
<td>• Cognitive push: 2.9</td>
<td>• High use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect: 44%</td>
<td>• Complementarity: 2.9</td>
<td>• Medium use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic: 12%</td>
<td>• Iterativity: 2.6</td>
<td>• Low use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative: 2.5%</td>
<td>• Real-world writing: 2</td>
<td><strong>Table 4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understandability: 4.2</td>
<td>Influences from feedback-providing: 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Table 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Table 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCF (median)</td>
<td>Learning moments (average of coding occurrences):</td>
<td>Influences from formal and informal forums: 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct: 53.5%</td>
<td>• Awareness (Student): 2.9</td>
<td>Influences from feedback-receiving: 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect: 0%</td>
<td>• Concreteness (Feedback): 4.9</td>
<td>Influences from artefacts: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic: 41.5%</td>
<td>• Sustainability (Feedback): 3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative: 4.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown above, Studies 2 and 3 used simple category counting (coding occurrences), whereas the quantifications in Study 1 (Article 1, pp. 9–10) included percentages. In fact, Study 1 used
a more variable-oriented approach to qualitative research (Maxwell, 2004, p. 5). In doing so, Study 1 quantified the different feedback types and modes to describe their distributions and frequencies. Because the total number of errors varied from student to student, each feedback type was calculated for each student using percentages. Becker (1970) called this descriptive quasi-statistics, which provides a valuable description of the quantifications because their descriptive validity does not involve any statistical inference. However, Saldana (2016) asserts that such ‘quantitizing may be better applied to content analytic studies’ (p. 26). In other words, quantifications are not the recommended approach in thematic analyses, which I examine next.

4.6.3 Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Approaches

The aforementioned quantitative method in qualitative content analyses can serve as the first step of analysis. Kuckartz (2014, p. 30) indicates that qualitative analyses complementing a quantitative overview are important. Thematic analysis is such a form of qualitative analysis used in all three studies. According to Braun and Clark (2006), ‘thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set – be that a number of interviews or focus groups, or a range of texts – to find repeated patterns of meanings’ (p. 86). Maxwell and Chmiel’s (2013) distinction between categorising and connecting analyses may help understand the difference between thematic and content analyses. As Table 5 illustrates, the thematic analyses clearly focused on more connecting analyses or ‘contiguity-based relations’ (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2013, p. 3) in which different codes were interrelated.

Table 5. Thematic Analyses in the Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic analyses</th>
<th>Study 1 (Article 1)</th>
<th>Study 2 (Article 2)</th>
<th>Study 3 (Article 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Possible intrinsic and extrinsic complementarities between focussed, mid-focussed and unfocussed CF.</td>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Traces of interrelated learning moments afforded by focused, unfocused, direct, indirect and metalinguistic CF in different essays: Non-meaningful CF, Meaningful pushed CF, Meaningful agentic CF.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I checked the themes (in italics) against each other, which were originally derived from a content analysis based on similarities between the codes. For example, Study 1 connected the

---

27 The first research question in all three articles can be labelled as a ‘what’ question, which facilitates content analysis. As Blaikie (2010, p. 64) noted, researchers must often answer ‘what’ before ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions.

28 The analysis in Study 3 resembles an evaluative qualitative text analysis because it involved ‘assessing, classifying, and evaluating content’ (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 88, italics in original).
categories focussed CF (1–2 error categories), mid-focussed CF (3–5 error categories), and unfocused CF (more than 5 error categories) to WCF and OCF and produced the themes intrinsic complementarity (feedback types within the same feedback mode) and extrinsic complementarity (feedback distribution across WCF and OCF). Rossman and Rallis (2017) suggest that themes ‘state an argument regarding your interpretation’ (p. 240). Such themes emerged in all three studies and were internally ‘coherent, consistent and distinctive’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 36). For example, non-meaningful and meaningful CF were distinctive themes because the former only occurred in essay 1 and the latter included essay 2 and/or ‘future essays’ in addition to essay 1 (see Article 2, Figure 2, p. 147).

In sum, the demarcation between content and thematic analyses is not always clear. There is a constant movement between the two forms of analyses. Clearly, both content and thematic analyses have strengths and limitations. However, thematic analysis is essential for the developing of new theories and interpreting study findings.

### 4.7 Research Credibility

Looking into research credibility issues will help assess the quality of the research design. Table 6 summarises the possible issues related to research credibility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1 (Article 1)</th>
<th>Study 2 (Article 2)</th>
<th>Study 3 (Article 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inter-rater and intra-rater reliability tests on WCF</td>
<td>• Testing rival explanations, negative cases and triangulations (Patton, 1999)</td>
<td>• Peer-check of code reliability and validity (RQ 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intra-rater reliability tests on OCF</td>
<td>• Triangulations: analysis of WCF (essay 1), OCF (essay 1) and learner uptake (essay 2)</td>
<td>• Inter-rater and intra-rater agreement tests (RQ 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Naturally occurring data and ecological validity</td>
<td>• Peer validation of 10 SR interviews</td>
<td>• Triangulations: feedback samples, in-depth interviews and member-check interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 pilot and 4 member-check interviews</td>
<td>• 1 pilot interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limitations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited number of participants: 1 lecturer and 18 students</td>
<td>Limited number of participants: 1 teacher, 10 students and 2 essays</td>
<td>Limited number of participants: 12 lecturers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-reports may have validity problems</td>
<td>• Self-reports may have validity problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Many factors (e.g. time, context, essay topic and preparation) may influence learner uptake</td>
<td>• Many factors (e.g. time, context, essay topic and preparation) may influence feedback provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only theoretical generalisation is possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted, the three studies have multiple strengths and limitations. I will detail these in the next sections, moving from issues on validity through reliability to generalisability.
4.7.1 Validity

Validity as a result or validation as a process in qualitative research entails ‘an attempt to assess the “accuracy” of the findings’ (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 259). Creswell and Poth (2018) advise researchers to engage in at least two of the three validation strategies in any given qualitative study: researcher’s lens, participant’s lens and reader’s or reviewer’s lens.

Validation strategies seen through the researcher’s lens include ‘discovering negative case analysis or disconfirming evidence’ and ‘corroborating evidence through triangulation of multiple data sources’ (Creswell & Poth, 2018, pp. 260–261). These strategies were particularly important in this thesis. For example, three techniques enhanced the validity of Study 2: testing rival explanations, looking for negative cases, and conducting triangulations (Patton, 1999). Rival explanations arose when the interviewees contrasted WCF (e.g. written metalinguistic end comments) to OCF (e.g. oral metalinguistic explanations). Further, Study 2 searched for negative cases by examining contradicting statements of the students who valued or disvalued certain feedback types and modes. Occasionally, students’ viewpoints differed from the main body of evidence (e.g. indirect CF preference in the beginning versus direct CF preference in nearly the entire interview). In these cases, I used the member-check interviews to find a final answer. Finally, Studies 2 and 3 employed triangulation methods. For example, I used three different kinds of secondary data analyses in Study 2: WCF (essay 1), OCF (essay 1) and learner uptake (essay 2). In Study 3, however, I triangulated the feedback samples with the respective in-depth and member-check interviews to increase validity. Thus, I contributed to emic–etic validity by combining an outsider view (etic) to the lecturers’ view (emic).

Concerning the participant’s lens, iterative questioning in all interviews improved the research stability (Shenton, 2004). For example, four member-check interviews took place in Studies 2 and 3 (Stanley, 2015). In Study 2, I chose at random two female and two male interviewees who could confirm or disconfirm my findings. These interviews used the same prompts as the in-depth interviews – that is, WCF and OCF in essay 1 and learner uptake in essay 2 (see Article 2, p. 152). In Study 3, however, I used the questionnaire for prompts (see Appendix 10) and triangulated it with the samples and in-depth interviews.

Regarding the reader’s or reviewer’s lens, all three articles underwent peer review. I also discussed the categories and codes used in all studies with colleagues, particularly those who were willing to conduct inter-rater reliability tests in Studies 1 and 3 (see Appendix 11). In fact, qualitative data generate a thick and rich description. Stake (2010) considers a

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29 It was important to use the description of learner uptake (see Article 2, Appendix B) only as prompts because a plethora of factors (e.g. time, context, essay topic and preparation) may influence learner uptake.
description as rich ‘when it provides abundant, interconnected details’ (p. 49). This was true for all three studies, in which the NVivo 12 software helped categorise and compare the categories (see codebook for study 3 in Appendix 6).

Finally, both theoretical and ecological validity concepts characterise the three qualitative studies. First, the three studies showed theoretical validity because they used Ellis’s (2009b), Ferris’s (2014) and Lyster & Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies as a common unit of analysis. In other words, the aim of my three qualitative enquiries was not to provide an exhaustive picture of EFL grammar feedback in Norwegian teacher education. However, the results are, in principle, theory-driven and generalisable to theoretical propositions – that is, ‘the development of a theory of the processes operating in the case studied’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 138, italics in original).

Second, my aim was to enhance ecological validity in my research by ‘taking advantage of naturally occurring data’ (Silverman, 2014, p. 429). This meant avoiding courses that were tailored to my research. Studies 1 and 2 approximated the real world by not intervening in the regular teaching of EFL teacher education because the students customarily wrote literary essays every spring term. I also opted for a specific-genre approach to grammar feedback by excluding the lecturers who did not integrate grammar feedback into the teaching of writing in literature, civilisation or didactics. I consider ecological validity particularly important in this thesis because its primary aim is to analyse the current state of and views on CF in a realist and ecological approach to learning in an assessment community (Barron, 2006; Biesta & Tedder, 2006; Van Lier, 2004b, 2010).

4.7.2 Reliability
Reliability within qualitative research deals with replicability. It addresses ‘whether or not some future researchers could repeat the research project and come up with the same results, interpretations and claims’ (Silverman, 2014, p. 83). Moisander and Valtonen (2006, p. 27) suggest methodological and theoretical transparency as a means of satisfying reliability criteria within qualitative research. Specifically, Creswell and Poth (2014, p. 264) recommend intercoder agreement based on the use of multiple coders to analyse transcript data.

In Studies 1 and 3, I thus asked external raters to rescore parts of the different feedback strategies (see Appendix 11). The inter-rater reliability scores in Study 1 (ranging from 0.744 Cohen’s kappa for direct to 1.0 for elicitation-based CF) and Study 3 (ranging from 0.700 for global to 0.875 Cohen’s kappa for focused CF) were satisfactory. Apart from these inter-rater agreement tests, I personally rescored the feedback samples and interview transcriptions. These
intra-rater reliability tests showed satisfactory scores for all studies.\textsuperscript{30} Last, assistant researchers and colleagues peer-checked the codes’ reliability in relationship to RQ 2 in all three studies.

In sum, to enhance reliability, I conducted intercoder and intracoder agreement tests (Cresswell, 2014, p. 203). I also discussed the interviews several times with researchers and peers and validated them via pilot and member-checking interviews. In the three studies, research reliability facilitates claims with regard to generalisability, as discussed next.

4.7.3 Generalisability

Generalisation refers to extending research results, conclusions or other accounts from a particular study. Maxwell (2013) distinguishes between \textit{internal generalisability}, namely ‘a generalizability of a conclusion \textit{within} the case, setting, or group studied, to persons, events, times, and settings that were not directly observed, interviewed, or otherwise represented in the data collected’, and \textit{external generalisability}, namely ‘generalizability \textit{beyond} that case, setting, or group, to other persons, times, and settings’ (p. 137). Internal generalisability is clearly pivotal in qualitative research. Conversely, external generalisability may be insufficient in qualitative studies because they cannot represent a larger population. However, Maxwell advocates external generalisability for qualitative research with regard to theoretical generalisability and face generalisability. The former refers to extending the results by developing a theory of the processes operating in the case studied. The latter implies that generalisability is possible because ‘there is no obvious reason not to believe that the results apply more generally’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 138).

A key issue in internal generalisability within qualitative research is to ‘understand the \textit{variation} in the phenomena of interest in the setting or group of people studied’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 137). Thus, sampling issues are particularly important for internal generalisability. Indeed, to study grammar feedback in a specific course, selectively focusing on particular students or kinds of interactions and ignoring others can jeopardise the account of that course as a whole. Therefore, I chose an equal number of male and female students in Study 2. For similar reasons, the lecturers in Study 3 came from three teacher-training institutions in eastern and southeastern Norway, and three similar institutions in western and northwestern Norway.

However, Studies 1 and 2 have limitations that affect the external generalisation or interpretation of the results because only a single course with one teacher underwent scrutiny. Thus, the studies by no means provide an exhaustive picture of Norwegian teacher education.

\textsuperscript{30} Due to word count restrictions, Article 2 did not mention the satisfactory scores of the intra-rater reliability tests on learner uptake between essay 1 and 2 (see Article 2, Appendix B), obtaining a reliability between 0.82 and 1.0 Cohen’s kappa in essay 1 and 0.79 and 1.0 Cohen’s kappa in essay 2.
in general or, in particular, of all grammar feedback perceptions within the students’ learning ecologies. Self-reports such as the interviews in Studies 2 and 3 may also have generalisability issues because the data might reflect the reported rather than the actual practices (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Mays & Pope, 1995). To avoid such reliability issues, Study 2 used several prompts (e.g. WCF and OCF) during the SR interviews. Similarly, Study 3 collected at least two feedback samples from nine informants and then used them to confirm the findings on the self-reported feedback practices (e.g. global CF). Reliability also presupposes sound research ethics, which I discuss in the following section.

4.8 Research Ethics

The Norwegian Social Science Data Services gave permission to conduct this project’s three research studies (see Appendix 12). The informants could withdraw their consent to participate at any time and without stating any particular reason. The informants provided both written and oral informed consent. I de-identified all information about the informants during all the different research phases and conducted these in line with the ethical guidelines established by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH, 2019).

Tangen’s (2014, p. 682) ethical matrix distinguishes between three important phases of the research process: (a) planning the project, (b) conducting the research (data collection, analysis, and reporting the results), and (c) disseminating the research (including its public discussion). In the project planning stage, choosing voices to target in the research is important. In my research, I wanted to elucidate the voices of lecturers who struggle with providing good feedback and of students who want to improve their grammar in writing. In fact, my research focuses on listening to both voices in an emic approach – that is, the students in Studies 1 and 2 and the lecturers in Study 3. Conversely, comparing the feedback perceptions with Ellis’s (2009) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies and Ferris’s (2014) best-practice recommendations is an attempt to describe an etic approach.

In the conducting stage, listening to voices is particularly important. According to paragraph 18 of the NESH (2019) guidelines, researchers have a responsibility to act with clarity. For example, the interviewees in Study 2 indirectly assessed the feedback their lecturer provided. In this case, it was my responsibility as a researcher to emphasise that the research aim was not to assess the lecturer but to describe the students’ feedback preferences. The etic perspective of the study (e.g. Ellis’s [2009b] taxonomy) helped in distancing the interview focus from the lecturer to revolve around the feedback as an artefact.
Finally, in the disseminating stage, representing voices was at stake. To do so, two issues were of particular interest (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012, p. 46): objectivity and dedication. For objectivity, I had to suspend any tendency to draw upon or involve my own pedagogical views. An obvious preference for a particular abstraction (e.g. Ellis’s [2008] interface position) can blind researchers to data and perspectives that contradict their convictions (epistemological determinism). Last, dedication was equally relevant because research dissemination implies dedication to guarantee a beneficial interplay between informant-related ethics and ethics within the research community. To do so, I presented my findings to my informants (e.g. through member-check interviews), research groups and diverse international conferences. This leads us to the findings of this thesis that I present in the next chapter.

5. Findings

5.1 Introduction

This article-based thesis addresses the overarching question: What makes grammar feedback meaningful in EFL writing teacher education? The thesis reveals that – despite the advent of FA, which is rarely used in higher education (Henderson et al., 2019; Dysthe & Engelsen, 2011) – the feedback practices studied in the present case diverge from current best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014). For teacher education, the findings of this study have two main implications: One is that combining different feedback strategies may improve grammar feedback. The other is the need to show both lecturers and students how useful grammar feedback is, what it can comprise and how to provide it. In the following account, I present the findings of the three articles in further detail.

5.2 Summary of the Articles

5.2.1 Article 1

Article 1, entitled ‘The need to supplement written grammar feedback: A case study from English teacher education’, was co-authored with my colleague Arne Kaldestad (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences) and published in the 2019 winter issue of the Swedish journal Moderna Språk. Drawing on a feedback-as-an-artefact perspective, it investigated feedback with the aim of describing elements of complementarity between WCF and OCF.

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31 These included the research groups of Teachers’ Professional Development and Educational Change (TEPEC) at University of Oslo and Oracy in Teacher Education (ORITE) at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Campus Stord.
32 These included the International Conference on Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching (ALLT), Taipei, Taiwan, 2018; the European Association of Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI), Special Interest Group 1 (SIG1) Assessment and Evaluation, Helsinki, Finland, 2018; the Third International Conference on Teaching Grammar, Congram 19, Barcelona, Spain, 2019, and the EARLI Conference, Aachen, Germany, 2019.
(N.B.: lecturer–student writing conferences) through an in-depth analysis of one lecturer’s use of different types of grammar feedback. The study addressed the following RQs:

1. Which specific grammar feedback types does the lecturer use when providing WCF and OCF on grammar?
2. How do WCF and OCF complement each other in general?

Based on these questions, this qualitative single-case study analysed the feedback provided on 18 essays and 18 transcriptions of follow-up writing conferences between a lecturer and their students. The lecturer did not grade the essays and provided computer-typed WCF in the end comments as well as handwritten feedback in marginal and in-text comments. Although the current study is qualitative, we used what Becker (1970) coined ‘descriptive quasi-statistics’, to quantify the different feedback types to describe their distributions and frequencies.

This study revealed three main findings concerning the distribution and complementarity of the feedback types in the two modes:

- Unfocussed CF predominated in both modes.
- Direct and metalinguistic CF were more frequent in OCF, thereby complementing WCF.
- OCF had slightly more elicitations, although it was generally infrequent in both modes.

This study provides interesting examples of how a lecturer might distribute and balance different feedback types in two feedback modes. Certain feedback types proved more meaningful in OCF than in WCF. For example, OCF afforded more elicitative and metalinguistic CF than WCF. Thus, OCF had an important complementary function in terms of clarifications and metalinguistic explanations. Moreover, the study revealed both intrinsic (within the same feedback mode) and extrinsic (across different feedback modes) complementarity. For example, OCF shifted from focused CF during the first 5–8 min to unfocused CF during the last 22–25 min of the writing conferences. Extrinsic complementarity occurred in numerous other instances. For example, the teacher turned indirect CF in WCF to direct CF in OCF because indirect CF (not providing the correct forms) felt unnatural in OCF.

With regard to teacher education, the implications of the research are twofold: On one hand, combining WCF and OCF may improve feedback; on the other hand, the present case may also function as an example of exemplary practice in relation to varied use of feedback types.
5.2.2 Article 2

Article 2, of which I am the sole author, is titled ‘Unpacking meaningful feedback: An analysis of EFL students’ feedback preferences and learning moments’. This article aimed to elucidate EFL students’ perceptions of learning ecologies (see section 2.5, page 18) related to grammar feedback. It was particularly concerned with the question of how grammar feedback becomes meaningful in students’ self-perceived learning ecologies. Therefore, the study addressed the following RQs:

1. What are the characteristics of the feedback that students prefer?
2. How do students link these preferences to learning moments in their writing development?

Based on these questions, 12 students – enrolled in 2017 at a Norwegian university college – discussed and reflected on the role of meaningful feedback and possible learner uptake. The main data sources of this study comprised 2 pilot, 10 semi-structured in-depth and 4 member-check interviews. These in-depth interviews used two different literary essays of 750–1,100 words as prompts. Essay 1 included WCF and OCF, whereas essay 2 that was written two months later was not provided with any grammar feedback.

Drawing on interviews, this study aimed to analyse the students’ reflections on their past (essay 1), present (essay 2) and future writing. The study revealed three main findings regarding the characteristics of feedback preferences (RQ 1):

- Students appreciated direct and metalinguistic CF because they seldom made the effort to look up grammar issues marked with indirect CF, and the metalanguage made the feedback more concrete.
- Most students appreciated the use of elicitations because of cognitive pushes.
- All students appreciated both focused and unfocused CF because focused CF made it manageable to improve their grammatical accuracy for future writing and unfocused CF included all errors, as with extensive proofreading in the real world.

With regard to the perceptions of learning moments (RQ 2), many students reported on meaningful learning moments associated with metalinguistic and direct CF. Generally, the students’ awareness and the concreteness of the feedback played important roles. Specifically, most students considered indirect CF as frustrating. However, they deemed focused and unfocused CF as being important. In fact, the particular use of unfocused and focused CF was assigned to the category sustainability when the students linked their perceptions of past and/or present learning moments to future needs as writers or EFL language teachers in the classroom.
The findings of this study have a number of pedagogical implications. The first is the importance of varied feedback strategies that can create important learning moments. Second, learning ecologies may include direct and unfocused CF in teacher education, in contrast to best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris 2014). Third, the findings demonstrate the role of metalinguistic CF, which often occurs in the form of fine-tuned CF. Such feedback is meaningful because students can bring the feedback they receive and the knowledge about grammar errors they develop into their own future teaching.

5.2.3 Article 3
Article 3, of which I am the sole author, is titled ‘Experienced lecturers’ reasoning behind grammar feedback practices in EFL teacher education’ and has been submitted to the Nordic Journal of English Studies. Drawing on a grammar feedback provider perspective, this qualitative study investigated experienced feedback providers’ self-perceived practices and reasons motivating their feedback choices. It addressed the following RQs:

(1) Which feedback types and modes are used by the lecturers?
(2) Which factors influence their decisions to employ these feedback practices?

I used a qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews because the description of feedback choice would have been difficult to grasp through a questionnaire. In fact, feedback choices are often difficult to explain, particularly because of the complex terminology in Ferris’s (2014), Ellis's (2009b) and Lyster and Ranta's (1997) taxonomies and the inherent tensions concerning dichotomies such as global vs. local, unfocused vs. focused, and direct vs. indirect CF. Therefore, the lecturers extensively explained their feedback choices and understanding of terminology during the interviews. Finally, I used a questionnaire as a prompt during the member-check interviews to confirm the findings (Appendix 10). This study revealed three main findings concerning RQ1:

- All lecturers provided predominantly metalinguistic and indirect CF.
- Many lecturers favoured local CF over global and unfocused CF over focused CF.
- Only a few lecturers used oral and/or elicitative feedback.

With regard to RQ 2, the lecturers’ reasons behind their feedback decisions were multifaceted, including individual (e.g. positive beliefs about metalanguage and autonomy-promoting CF) and contextual reasons (e.g. formal or informal situations and the common use of marking codes). Thus, the study generated both an overview of current perceptions of feedback practices as well as – and this might be a particularly valuable outcome – a list of possible individual and
contextual factors that may shape feedback practices. Moreover, it provides an example of research that considers perspectives on both teacher cognitions and learning ecologies.

The results can be used in EFL teacher education. First, at a practical level of assessment, the study can stimulate lecturers to reflect on their individual feedback practices and beliefs in relation to corrective grammar feedback (teacher self-awareness). Second, at a conceptual level, focusing more clearly on context-dependent factors may broaden discussions on how to improve the quality of feedback in teacher education. Accordingly, the question arises of whether EFL teacher education requires specific recommendations that might differ from general best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014). Examples are the use of unfocused in-text comments (in addition to focused end comments) when few feedback opportunities exist. In any case, we need more research on how context-dependent and individual factors can shape meaningful grammar feedback. This is discussed in the next chapter.

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction
This chapter discusses the theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions of the present thesis. First, it uses linguo-didactic perspectives (section 6.2) and conceptualisations of ecological assessment communities and assessment literacy (section 6.3) to discuss the findings. Then, section 6.4 delves into the specific feedback types and describes how grammar feedback can become meaningful through dialogic processes. The chapter concludes with theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions in section 6.5 and a description of the overall transferability of the findings in section 6.6.

6.2 Feedback in a Linguo-Didactic Perspective
The answers to the main RQ are multifaceted and multi-layered. In this first subsection, I use the linguo-didactic framework to explore different answers at the macro level. To this end, Table 7 provides the foundation for an informed discussion of the three studies.
Table 7. Research Questions and Findings in the Three Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main research question</th>
<th>How does grammar feedback become meaningful in EFL writing teacher education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Article 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspectives</strong></td>
<td>Content (Feedback as an artefact)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| RQ 1 and 2             | (1) Which specific types of grammar feedback did the lecturer use when providing WCF and OCF on grammar?  
(2) How do WCF and OCF complement each other in general? |
| **Main findings: RQ 1**| ● Unfocused CF predominates in both modes.                                   |
|                       | ● Direct and metalinguistic CF are more frequent in OCF.                     |
|                       | ● OCF has slightly more elicitations.                                       |
| **Main findings: RQ 2**| ● Indirect WCF complements the lack of indirect OCF, and direct, metalinguistic and elicitative OCF complements WCF.  
● Intrinsic complementarity: focused/mid-focused WCF in end/marginal comments complements unfocused WCF in in-text comments.  
● Extristic complementarity: focused/mid-focused WCF in end/marginal comments complements the low proportion of focused/mid-focused CF in the entire OCF. |
| **Perspectives**       | Student (Feedback receiver)                                                  |
| RQ 1 and 2             | (1) What are the characteristics of the feedback the students prefer?  
(2) How do students link these preferences to learning moments in their writing development? |
| **Main findings: RQ 2**| ● Students’ awareness, feedback concreteness and feedback sustainability play important roles in the perception of learning moments.  
● Students comment positively on repetitive feedback with a high focus on accuracy.  
● Meaningful learning moments are associated with metalinguistic, direct, focused and unfocused CF. |
| **Perspectives**       | Lecturer (Feedback provider)                                                 |
| RQ 1 and 2             | (1) Which feedback types and modes do the lecturers use?  
(2) Which factors influence their decisions to employ these feedback practices? |
| **Main findings: RQ 2**| ● Lecturers predominantly provide metalinguistic and indirect CF.            |
|                       | ● Many lecturers favour local CF over global and unfocused CF over focused. |
|                       | ● Few lecturers use oral and/or elicitative CF.                            |

As displayed above, the triadic content–student–lecturer relationship (see the three perspectives in the table) indicates that feedback can become meaningful when it relates to content (Article 1) and engages both students (Article 2) and lecturers (Article 3). In fact, the *linguoididactic* framework (Figure 1, section 2.3) lies at the core of the instructional process.

With regard to answering the main RQ, *linguistic* theories in this framework can aid in understanding the general helpfulness and success of OCF, which only relates to one-to-one lecturer–student writing conferences in this thesis. One reason may be that OCF resembles *mettalks*, namely discussions that have an important metacognitive function because ‘learners use language to reflect on language use’ (Swain, 1998, p. 68). For example, negotiations over
form and *languaging* arise. These are beneficial for developing *interlanguage*, the learners’ language between the mother tongue and the target language (Corder, 1981). Producing language is vital to the language acquisition process. In certain cases, such as discussions about the feedback ‘incomplete sentence’ in Article 2 (pp. 141-142), all three functions of Swain’s (2000) output hypothesis were present. In other words, feedback included (1) the noticing function, (2) the testing and hypothesis formulation and (3) the metalinguistic function. In fact, metatalks helped develop both metalinguistic (knowledge about language, e.g. writing complete sentences with a subject and a verb) and metalingual knowledge (knowledge of metalanguage, e.g. the feedback comment ‘missing verbal’) (Berry, 2005). This knowledge is particularly important in teacher education because students can use it for both their own writing improvement and future feedback situations in the classroom.

The second element in answering the main RQ relates to *didactic* issues. Feedback becomes meaningful when lecturers use the plethora of possibilities (e.g. feedback types and modes) that feedback offers to vary the feedback provided. De Kleijn et al. (2015) coined the term ‘feedback adaptivity’ (p. 119), which stands close to the notions of extrinsic and intrinsic complementarity used in Article 1. Such possibilities of complementarity are important as a strategy of *feedback adaptivity*, which ‘comprises the elements of diagnosing students’ understanding and adapting support to that understanding’ (De Kleijn, 2015, p. 119). Intrinsic complementarity includes different combinations of feedback types within the same feedback mode. For example, in Article 1, the mid-focused OCF of the first 5–8 min complemented the unfocused CF, which tended to predominate the entire OCF. Extrinsic complementarity, however, describes feedback distribution across WCF and OCF. For example, Article 1 elucidated a link between the mid-focused CF provided in the written end comments and the feedback provided during the first 5–8 min of the OCF. This is interesting because it may inform EFL lecturers about the need to concentrate more on written end comments if mid-focused CF is the favoured feedback strategy for the OCF. There is no guarantee that lecturers re-use the mid-focused written end comments in the OCF, but if they do, these can at least help lecturers to make the OCF more mid-focused. However, comparing the findings of Articles 2 and 3 in this respect – despite their differences in samples and research aims – reveals that students and lecturers also appreciated unfocused CF (in addition to focused or mid-focused CF). In contrast to best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014), the question arises of whether unfocused in-text comments may also contribute to feedback quality in EFL teacher education.

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33 One definition of ‘languaging’ is ‘the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language’ (Swain, 2006, p. 98). Studies on languaging are relatively new (Knouzi et al., 2010).
The third answer to the main RQ relates to lecturers’ or students’ background, in particular, to their beliefs that have been formed by many years of feedback experience. These personal beliefs regarding feedback play an important role in the linguo-didactic framework, a field that seems to be under-researched (e.g. Akkuzu, 2014; Junqueira & Kim, 2013; Vattøy & Smith, 2019). Beliefs can, inter alia, inform the lecturers’ or students’ feedback engagement (Strijbos & Müller, 2014). For example, Article 3 indicates that lecturers’ beliefs can determine the shape of feedback content. Lecturers’ fundamental beliefs in the effectiveness of indirect CF can explain their feedback practices that were in line with Ferris’s (2014) recommendations. Given that the alignment between feedback beliefs and practices appears to be relatively high in the case of experienced lecturers (Basturkmen, 2012), these convictions can be labelled as core beliefs (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 387). Interestingly, the lecturers’ preferences stand in contrast to the students’ preferences in Article 2 of this thesis as well as in many other studies (e.g. Ur, 2012, p. 93), which reveal that students generally favour direct over indirect CF.

In sum, many pieces of a puzzle form an overall picture of what meaningful grammar feedback comprises. A first but central element of meaningful grammar feedback is that students and lecturers must use grammar feedback, be it for own writing improvement or future feedback situations. This echoes with Sadler’s (1989) definition of meaningful feedback, which is formative for both students and lecturers ‘only when it is used to alter the gap’ between the actual level of performance and the standard aimed for. When the feedback is not used, ‘the control loop cannot be closed and “dangling data” substitute for effective feedback’ (p. 121). For example, feedback becomes meaningful when the lecturer manages to find a satisfactory way of helping student informant John in Article 2 (Appendix B, p. 152) to overcome the syntax problem ‘run-on sentence’. This lecturer might be inspired by what is described as complementary feedback in Article 1 (see Figure 1, p. 11) or other colleagues’ perceptions of reasons for and against CF strategies in Article 3 (see Table 3, p. 21). Conversely, John must also ‘engage in appropriate action’ (Sadler, 1989, p. 121). As Article 2 describes, he might learn from other students who describe interesting learning moments (see Table 3, p. 144). In other words, it is essential that both John and the lecturer close the control loop (Sadler, 1989, p. 121). This is an important element of an assessment community, a concept I examine next.

6.3 Feedback in an Ecological Assessment Community Promoting Assessment Literacy

Grammar feedback becomes meaningful when it occurs in an assessment community. This thesis describes a holistic assessment community through three perspectives. These represent
all agents involved in the feedback process: grammar feedback as an artefact (Article 1), feedback receivers (Article 2), and feedback providers (Article 3).

Within this assessment community, students and lecturers need to develop assessment literacy. Webb (2002) defines assessment literacy as ‘the knowledge of means for assessing what students know and can do, how to interpret the results from these assessments, and how to apply these results to improve student learning and program effectiveness’ (p. 1). Students and lecturers must form a group of assessment literates who, according to Engelsen and Smith (2014), must ‘speak the same language’ (p. 93). However, the findings of this thesis suggest that communication between students and lecturers is not always optimal, or even satisfactory. Although generalisations are not possible owing to differences in sample and research scope, Table 8 shows some disagreement between students and lecturers:

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<tr>
<td>Oral vs. written</td>
<td>Complementarity (extrinsic)</td>
<td>Students favour oral CF</td>
<td>Lecturers favour written CF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused vs. unfocused</td>
<td>Complementarity (extrinsic and intrinsic)</td>
<td>Students favour unfocused CF</td>
<td>Lecturers favour unfocused CF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct vs. indirect</td>
<td>WCF: more indirect than direct CF OCF: almost no indirect CF</td>
<td>Students favour direct CF</td>
<td>Lecturers favour indirect CF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic vs. non-metalinguistic</td>
<td>OCF: 41.55% metalinguistic CF WCF: 12% metalinguistic CF</td>
<td>Students favour metalinguistic CF</td>
<td>Lecturers favour metalinguistic CF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitive vs. non-elicitative</td>
<td>WCF: 2.5% elicitations OCF: 4.5% elicitations</td>
<td>Students favour elicitations</td>
<td>Lecturers favour non-elicitative CF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global vs. local</td>
<td>Predominance of local CF34</td>
<td>Students favour local CF35</td>
<td>Lecturers favour local CF35</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note. □ = conflicting views; □□ = concurrent views

On the one hand, students and lecturers appeared to favour unfocused, metalinguistic and local CF. Such concurrent views (in solid grey above) might make feedback more meaningful for students and lecturers. On the other hand, students’ and lecturers’ views conflicted (in hatching above) in terms of oral vs. written, direct vs. indirect and elicitive vs. non-elicitative CF. Several studies support the existence of such conflicting feedback perceptions (e.g. Borg, 2015; Gabillon, 2012, 2013; Schulz, 2001).

When lecturers’ feedback perceptions do not coincide with students’ perceptions, the students either learn from the feedback practices they do not like (‘pushed’ feedback) or the situation negatively influences their learning (e.g. Brown, 2009; Gabillon, 2012, 2013; Jean &

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34 - 35 Data omitted in the analysis because of word count restrictions.
Simard, 2011; Schulz, 2001). Concurrent views, however, might enhance the likelihood for learning. In fact, when an assessment community like EFL teacher education manages to reduce such conflicting views, it might qualify as a learning ecology. Such a learning ecology embodies ‘the multi-layered nature of interaction and language use, in all their complexity and as a network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting’ (Van Lier, 2010, p. 3). Such interdependencies were evident in the three individually conducted studies that borrowed several concepts from ecological theories of language (e.g. Van Lier, 2004a, p. 23).

For example, Article 1 revealed interdependencies between feedback types (e.g. focused, mid-focused and unfocused CF) and modes (WCF and OCF). In particular, intrinsic and extrinsic complementarities helped make feedback meaningful (see Figure 1, p. 11). Indeed, the mid-focused WCF in the end comments not only complemented the unfocused CF in WCF’s in-text comments (intrinsic complementarity) but also facilitated a more mid-focused CF approach in the entire OCF (extrinsic complementarity). One example of this is student informant Frank’s feedback sample (Article 1, p. 10) and its three foci, namely ‘concord’, ‘the apostrophe’, and ‘tense shift’ in the mid-focused WCF, which were initially reused in the first few minutes of the OCF and then mentioned throughout the entire OCF.

Article 2 indicated interdependencies as feedback types in shifting contexts afforded interrelated learning moments or ‘moments of contingency’ (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 10): namely, the students experienced agency by re-activating feedback from the past (essay 1) in the present (essay 2) and by planning to use some of the feedback in future essays (see Figure 2, p. 147).

Finally, Article 3 listed other interesting interdependencies – that is, individual and contextual factors that can influence lecturers’ feedback practices. For example, many lecturers (see Article 3, Appendix C) reported on feedback changes (e.g. from focused to unfocused CF or from local to global CF). In fact, when they moved from one setting to another, they needed to adapt the feedback to new settings in what is called ecological transitions. These ‘ecological transitions’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26) created essential learning moments in the lecturers’ feedback career and were beneficial for the development of assessment literacy (Crusan et al., 2016; Nassaji & Kartchava, 2020).

In sum, Article 1 showed how feedback (modes and types) as content can be complementary, Article 2 described feedback receivers’ perceptions of essential learning moments (e.g. agency), and Article 3 concentrated on feedback providers’ individual and contextual factors (e.g. ecological transitions). Thus, the three articles together describe a theoretical model of an assessment community, which can foster meaningful learning
processes. An important element of such an assessment community is the possibility to communicate. In other words, we need dialogic feedback, a concept which is discussed in the next section.

6.4 Meaning Coming About Through Dialogical Feedback

In contrast to answering the main RQ at a broad level, this section details the findings with specific reference to feedback types and modes. One important answer to the RQ is immediately evident: feedback tends to become meaningful when communication between a feedback provider and receiver occurs. In this respect, Bakhtin’s (1981) theories on dialogism (see section 2.4) may help explore how feedback can become meaningful in an assessment community (see section 2.5). Amongst the plethora of possibilities to combine feedback types and modes (see Appendix 2), the following subsection examines the link between dialogic feedback and fine-tuned CF.

6.4.1 Fine-Tuned Feedback

Doughty’s (1994) and Han’s (2001) concepts of ‘fine-tuned’ CF tally with Bakhtin’s dialogism. Han (2001) advocates that students will more effectively engage with CF when feedback ‘tunes in to the true causal factors of an error and successfully brings the learner’s attention to the learning problem’ (p. 584). This endeavour presupposes that the lecturer gains access to students’ *internally persuasive discourses* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). These discourses come to the students from the outside, encounter their own thoughts or experiences and become ‘half-[theirs] and half-someone else’s’ (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). In contrast, *authoritative discourses* position feedback as a monological, one-way process in which ‘an authority pronounces on another less powerful person’ (Jolly & Boud, 2013, p. 115). One underlying argument in this thesis is that the absence of fine-tuned CF can trigger such monological feedback. However, students need fine-tuned CF, a form of adaptive CF that aims at ‘diagnosing students’ understanding and adapting support to that understanding’ (de Kleijn et al., 2015, p. 119).

To meet this need, research must focus more on how fine-tuned CF can make grammar feedback dialogical in EFL teacher education. However, research on fine-tuned CF on writing remains relatively scarce (Kepner, 1991; Lee, 2007; Lee & Coniam, 2013; Lee et al., 2015). Therefore, this thesis fills an important research gap in this field. For example, Article 2 unpacked two interesting examples of fine-tuned CF that appeared to convince or at least ‘talk’ to the students’ *internally persuasive discourses*. First, in student informant Grace’s OCF (Article 2, pp. 141-142), the lecturer explained the problem of missing verbs in incomplete sentences by emphasising that incomplete sentences frequently occur in oral speech and that
we often confuse oral English with written English. This implied that the lecturer integrated possible reasons for making such errors into his CF, which appeared to apply to this specific student. The second example (Article 2, p. 142) occurred when the lecturer explained to Ruth that concord is a common problem for Norwegians because Norwegian is a low-inflectional language with respect to conjugation. In other words, Norwegian does not have many verb endings, and this makes it difficult to learn other foreign languages that have more verb endings or special forms in the third-person singular. This feedback appeared to fulfil Ruth’s *internally persuasive discourse*, which was revealed by the fact that she incorporated the feedback into her own world when comparing her learning to her foreign boyfriend’s, who only had to learn ‘*jeg har, du har, han har*...’[I have, you have, he has...’]. The iterativity of such feedback can increase students’ language awareness and make feedback generally more dialogical during the writing process. Other possibilities of making feedback more dialogical are elicitations.

### 6.4.2 Elicitative Feedback

Eliciting or guiding students to self-correct is a generally meaningful principle in language pedagogy (e.g. Harmer, 1983; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). This thesis finds that lecturers do not follow the well-researched recommendations emphasising the benefits of using elicitations (e.g. Ferris, 2014; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Articles 1 and 3 of this thesis revealed that elicitations in both WCF and OCF were rare, although students greatly appreciated this feedback type in Article 2. More specifically, this thesis dealt with three types of elicitations: ‘reformulation requests’, ‘elicitative questions’, and ‘elicit completion moves’ (see examples in Appendix 2).

The most frequent elicitations were ‘reformulation requests’ in Article 1. These might qualify as less dialogical because the students were asked to ‘rephrase’ or ‘rewrite’ without knowing exactly what was grammatically wrong. For example, the CF ‘*incomplete sentence and far too heavy, so rewrite*’ (p. 15) comprised a reformulation request. Here, the student might want to know what is missing in the sentence. In addition, the use of vague terms36 such as ‘*incomplete sentence*’ can hamper dialogical processes. Moreover, the feedback comment ‘*far too heavy*’ might come across as an *authoritative discourse* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345) because it does not sufficiently address the students’ own thoughts. The comments ‘*far too heavy*’ and ‘*incomplete sentence*’ might thus position the entire feedback as ‘*monological*’ (Jolly & Boud, 2013, p. 115). The question arises whether lecturers should avoid such potentially vague

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36 Simplifying terms can lead to misconceptions (Myhill, 2013, p. 79). For example, the term ‘*doing-word*’ is confusing because ‘*to be*’ does not relate to ‘*doing*’, although ‘*to be*’ is a verb (Paraskevas, 2004).
reformulation requests. For example, an elicitative question such as ‘Where is your verb?’ would be more informative.

In fact, elicitative questions were generally rare but more common in the OCF Article 1 examined. Questions such as ‘Is your subject in the plural or singular?’ were easier to understand than feedback comments such as ‘concord’. They seemed to come closer to students’ *internally persuasive discourses* (Bakhtin, 1981) and, thus, were more dialogical and meaningful than other feedback types. The findings also reveal that the lecturer struggled with asking good questions to elicit grammatical knowledge. Doing so appeared easier in the OCF, which is understandable because questions can become too wordy in WCF. Generally, lecturers have limited resources and time, and there might be space constraints in the margin if feedback is provided on paper, like in Article 1. Furthermore, numerous lecturers in Article 3 deemed using questions during OCF unnatural because questions came across as ‘testing’. The question is, however, whether an increased use of elicitative questions in OCF might be the key to unlocking the dialogical potential of WCF–OCF feedback sequences.

A superb example of how dialogical feedback can become in OCF is the third type, namely ‘elicit completion moves’, which emerged in student informant Lucy’s writing conference (Article 1, p. 11). The lecturer strategically paused to allow Lucy to ‘fill in the blank’ and correct her own mistake in the sentence ‘he doesn’t really regret it because he needs it more than who* he stole from’. She and the lecturer then had an interesting ‘metatalk’ (Swain, 2000, p. 68) about the difference between relative pronouns used as subjects or objects. Such moves seem to represent a particularly interesting strategy for turning CF into ‘feedback dialogues’ (Van der Schaaf et al., 2013, p. 228).

Regarding all three aforementioned types, Article 2 revealed that most students greatly appreciated elicitations because of the resulting cognitive pushes, which stimulated them to reflect on grammar issues. For example, the teacher asked Brad, ‘What is the difference between “reluctant” and “reluctance” here and “choice” and “choose” there?’ (Article 2, p. 141). Such questions made Brad think about different word classes throughout his essay. The lecturer’s use of several examples from the student’s own text made the feedback more understandable so that it could inform the student’s own thoughts and experiences – that is, his *internally persuasive discourses* (Bakhtin, 1981).

Article 3 revealed that most lecturers provided scarce elicitative CF and when they did, they predominantly used reformulation requests in both OCF and WCF. It appeared to be easier for lecturers to write or say ‘rephrase’ than to ask questions. This is a questionable feedback practice. In fact, the preference for less elicitative CF stands in contrast to Erlam et al.’s (2013)
study and a replication study by Yeşil (2016), which recommend elicitative CF. These studies show an increase of self-corrections with elicitative, particularly graduated\footnote{Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) coined the term \textit{graduated feedback}. They developed a regulatory scale (from 0 to 12) going from implicit (e.g. elicitative, indirect CF) to explicit WCF. This reflected the lecturers’ graduated assistance that occurred when helping learners to correct errors. Direct CF only occurred at levels 10 to 12.} CF, at least in the short term. In line with Eckstein’s (2013) study, elicitative CF might also be more beneficial for highly proficient language users. However, students with lower proficiency levels need less elicitative CF, which implies more explicit CF. Comparing Article 2 with Article 3 in this respect, the discrepancies between lecturers’ and students’ perceptions might be attributable to different estimations of proficiency levels. In other words, lecturers might provide more explicit CF because they underestimate students’ proficiency (Article 3), whereas the students prefer elicitative CF because they overestimate their own proficiency levels (Article 2). In any case, the advantage of more explicit CF is that it can take place easily and quickly. According to Erm et al. (2013), ‘the current pedagogic emphasis on eliciting self-correction from learners bears some rethinking if the aim is to correct in an efficient manner’ (p. 266).

In sum, all three articles suggested the need for more elicitative CF that can make feedback more dialogical. Meeting this real need is supported by ample research indicating that elicitative CF is effective in enabling students to self-correct (e.g. Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Ferris, 2014; Jafarigohar & Gharbavi, 2014). Increasing lecturers’ awareness in that respect might improve the situation. In fact, one reason for using elicitative CF less frequently can be that the lecturers are not fully convinced that elicitative CF is a good feedback strategy. Phipps and Borg (2009) labelled this a ‘peripheral belief’ (see section 2.3 and particularly Article 3). In this respect, the findings of this thesis contrast with those of international studies in which many teachers report on their beliefs in elicitations promoting efficient discovery learning and self-correction (Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016; Sanchez & Borg, 2014). The lecturers in Article 3, however, believed more firmly in other feedback types, such as metalinguistic CF, which I examine next.

6.4.3 Metalinguistic Feedback

Feedback comments can contain metalinguistic terms, such as “good” is an \textit{adjective} and “well” is an \textit{adverb}, and extensive research has demonstrated the importance of such feedback (Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007; Shintani & Ellis, 2013). The question, however, is how this feedback strategy makes feedback dialogical and thus potentially meaningful in EFL teacher education.

In Article 1, metalinguistic CF occurred more frequently in OCF than in WCF. It served
an important complementary role for clarifications and elaborations. For example, the lecturer used a plethora of metalinguistic terms to explain feedback comments. By explaining difficult terms such as ‘non-defining relative clause’ or ‘run-on sentence’ (Article 1, p. 11), the lecturer enacted dialogical teaching that gave space for the learner’s internally persuasive discourses (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). This clarifying role of metalinguistic CF is a perfect example for a good dialogical process.

Similar to these findings, Article 2 revealed that students greatly appreciated metalinguistic CF that was concrete and understandable (see Table 3, p. 144). In fact, the students often associated less metalinguistic CF with non-essential learning moments. For example, Faith criticised her former teacher who had only underlined the lowercase ‘i’ without any metalinguistic comment in her essays. She thought teachers should provide concrete feedback and write ‘capital letter’ in the margin, as her lecturer did at university college (Article 2, p. 145). Most students prefer such concrete metalinguistic CF over indirect CF. In other words, students occasionally need at least metalinguistic hints in addition to indirect CF (e.g. only underlining the error), particularly in cases of errors that are non-rule governed38, such as unidiomatic sentence structures. This can make feedback understandable and thus dialogical.

Furthermore, Article 2 emphasised that the iterativity of metalinguistic CF may be an important characteristic of preferred feedback. Indeed, many informants considered the recurrent use of terms, such as ‘concord’, which the teacher had explained several times, as beneficial to their learning. According to Pauline, such repeated metalinguistic explanations were necessary because they led to more learning uptake in essay 2 (Article 2, p. 152).

Similarly, Article 3 hinted at the epistemic power of metalinguistic CF. The lecturers’ fundamental belief in the effectiveness of such feedback seemed to make them choose metalinguistic CF more frequently (Phipps & Borg, 2009). This is particularly true in teacher education in which metalinguistic awareness is pivotal. Teachers need ‘a higher degree of grammar consciousness than most direct learners are likely to need or want’ (Leech, 1994, p. 18). Indeed, limited grammatical knowledge may hamper the teaching of writing (Hudson, 2004, p. 113). This is supported by Myhill et al.39 (2013) who state that ‘teaching grammar is knowing how best to define and explain grammatical metalanguage, and this challenge is substantially increased for teachers whose own grammatical content knowledge is limited’ (p. 79). In this context, the lecturer Eva emphasises the importance of metalinguistic CF in marking codes, which helped her distinguish mistakes from errors so that it was easier to write focused

38 Ferris (2011) qualified these errors as untreatable errors because they are less amenable to self-correction.
39 Myhill et al.’s (2013) study relates to L1. This thesis advocates that metalanguage is equally important in L2.
end comments for students (Article 3, p. 34). Such ‘correction codes’ (Hyland, 2019, p. 176) encourage students to hunt for and identify problems. However, lecturers might be well advised to avoid vague terms such as ‘incomplete sentence’, which could be replaced by elicitative questions such as ‘Where is your verb?’. To conclude, providing metalinguistic CF to students can facilitate dialogic processes in future situations. Kamler (1995) confirms this by advocating that teachers need metalinguistic knowledge to ‘make appropriate pedagogical decisions in the classroom’ (p. 49).

6.4.4 Indirect and Direct Feedback
Indirect and direct CF are other important feedback strategies. The question discussed here is how indirect or direct CF can appear as dialogical. To what extent indirect or direct CF is the better option remains open for interpretation. No data from this thesis can confirm the optimal option. This would, in any case, depend on specific contexts (e.g. feedback mode, attitudes, error type, proficiency level, etc.).

With regard to feedback modes, Article 1 mentioned an interesting shift from indirect WCF to direct OCF in individual lecturer–student conferences (i.e. extrinsic complementarity). For example, the lecturer orally corrected the concord error marked with indirect WCF (double underlining) in Bill’s phrase ‘unmarried women who *has passed’ to direct feedback ‘unmarried women who have passed’ in the OCF (Article 1, p. 12). Direct feedback was more frequent in the OCF (median 53.5%) than in the WCF (median 42.5%). In contrast, indirect CF was almost completely absent in the OCF. In fact, providing direct CF in OCF seemed more natural and dialogical. This aligns with Van Beuningen et al.’s (2012, 2008) recommendations.

Concerning students’ attitudes, Article 2 revealed that the students greatly appreciated direct CF because it allegedly helped them write capital letters for nationalities, months or the personal pronoun ‘I’ in essay 2 (p. 148). For example, Eva considered indirect CF as non-meaningful in WCF. She did not understand why the lecturer had underlined the verb ‘becoming’ in the sentence ‘Malachy’s storytelling inspired Frank to write stories himself, and to *becoming an author.’ She needed oral direct CF to understand why she could not use an –ing form here. These impressions align with Yeh’s (2016) study, which suggests that students hold high expectations and give high ratings on the helpfulness and success of the individual writing conferences. Conversely, Ruth was the only student who understood that indirect CF might increase learning: ‘When you can easily guess the correction, indirect feedback might be a good choice.’ In other words, the lecturer’s gauging of the student’s understanding and language proficiency in advance is a good example of dialogical feedback. In this, the lecturer
gives space for the students’ *internally persuasive discourses*.

However, a comparison of Articles 2 and Article 3 also reveals a dialogical challenge: the lecturers’ predominant use of indirect CF (Article 3) is not in line with the students’ preferences for direct CF (Article 2). This predominant choice could be attributable to a strong belief in the effectiveness of indirect CF. In other words, lecturers who are strongly convinced of the advantages of a certain feedback type may use it more often (Strijbos & Müller 2014). In fact, this belief, which can be labelled a *core belief* (Phipps & Borg, 2009), is a surprising finding in this thesis. One might believe that the lecturers used indirect CF more frequently because they have limited time and resources. However, my informants strongly believed in a discovery approach to grammar, which implies that students must discover the right answers by themselves. This stance is supported by research on *graduated* CF, thereby suggesting that the use of indirect CF during writing conferences is effective in enabling learners to self-correct in the short term (e.g. Ḷepni, 2016; Erlam et al., 2013). This, however, contrasts with some lecturers’ use of direct CF in Article 3. Indeed, the use of direct WCF and OCF aligns with Van Beuningen et al.’s (2012, 2008) and Bitchener and Knoch’s (2010) recommendations. Their research indicates that direct CF is a better option because it has a significant long-term effect and is more effective for grammar items. For example, underlining comma splices does not necessarily help the students find the right solutions. Diab’s (2005, p. 33) study confirms these findings and emphasises the difficulty of only pointing out errors without correcting them.

To conclude, lecturers’ predominant use of indirect CF may contribute little to dialogical processes. The apparent overuse can hamper the meaningfulness of grammar feedback (e.g. Li, 2020, p. 155). In contrast to Ferris (2014), direct CF might be preferable when students have few opportunities to receive feedback and do not look up grammar issues marked via indirect CF. EFL teacher education needs a balanced approach to the uses of direct and indirect CF (e.g. Dabboub, 2019), which both can make feedback dialogical. The equation *direct CF = one-way monological process* seems too simple. It is feedback engagement that must be dialogical. Even direct CF can trigger dialogical processes if the student is motivated and gives space for *internally persuasive discourses* (Dysthe, 1997, p. 85). Instead, lecturers would be well advised to combine indirect or direct CF with metalinguistic CF. For example, Diab’s (2015) and Sheen’s (2007) studies revealed that direct CF in combination with metalinguistic CF was more effective than direct CF alone. This could also make feedback more dialogical.

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40 See the explanations on graduated feedback in section 6.4.2.
41 However, this might depend on the error type. For example, Ferris (2006) showed that teachers were more likely to give indirect CF on treatable errors and direct CF when the error was considered as untreated error.
6.4.5 Global and Local Feedback
The aforementioned use of direct CF (i.e. providing the correct form) often relates to local issues, such as problems with the third-person -s and the wrong use of apostrophes at the micro level of a written text. However, global CF at the macro level of a text is equally important. A good example from Article 1 is the marginal feedback comment ‘tense shift’ in a paragraph, marked in the text via underlined verb forms and thus qualifying as indirect CF. Six lecturers (N = 12) in Article 3 mentioned that they provided little global CF.

Research appears to agree on the benefits of global CF and questions the overuse of local CF (e.g. Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). More-proficient language users seem to value global CF more than less-proficient users (e.g. Eckstein, 2013). Relating this dichotomy to dialogical feedback, this thesis advocates that providing dialogical feedback means constantly analysing one’s own feedback practices and checking whether the feedback provided is well balanced. Students might interpret the overuse of local CF as ‘monological’ feedback because these comments often relate to accuracy. This contrasts with global CF that touches more upon fluency (e.g. text grammar) and coherence. In this sense, meaningful dialogical feedback can entail that lecturers are well advised to vary their feedback and treat local and global issues as equally important.

6.5 Theoretical, Empirical and Methodological Contributions
Methodologically, this thesis does not limit itself to studying one aspect of the feedback process. It investigates multiple issues: feedback as an artefact (Article 1) in a single-case study, and the students’ (Article 2) and lecturers’ (Article 3) feedback perceptions in interview studies (see section 4.2). It considers feedback, which offers a plethora of different possibilities of complementarity and variations (e.g. global vs. local, written vs. oral), as a source of meaningful communication between students and lecturers. In particular, it highlights the conflicting perceptions between lecturers and students (see Table 8, section 6.3). When the lecturers’ beliefs diverge from the students’ beliefs, this gap can cause discrepancies between teaching and learning, which can negatively influence the latter (e.g. Brown, 2009; Gabillon, 2012, 2013; Jean & Simard, 2011; Schulz, 2001). In other words, the findings in this thesis indicate that ensuring similar views on feedback among lecturers and students can support and facilitate meaningful grammar feedback. Based on the three articles, the following figure may help illustrate typical traits of meaningful grammar feedback in EFL writing teacher education:
Grammar feedback becomes meaningful when students and lecturers …

**Level 1 Facilitators**

- believe in and draw on linguistic and didactic theories (e.g. De Kleijn et al. 2015; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Swain, 2000).
- use the feedback provided (e.g. Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Sadler, 1989; Van Lier, 2010) and …
- engage in dialogic and fine-tuned processes (e.g. Bakthin, 1981; Han, 2001).
- develop assessment literacy (e.g. Carless, 2019b; Popham, 2011).
- form an assessment community (e.g. Wenger, 1998).

**Level 2 Facilitators**

As displayed above, it is evident that researchers (e.g. Sadler, 1989) commonly agree that grammar feedback must be used. Using the feedback makes grammar feedback potentially meaningful to both students and lecturers, be it for lecturers’ programmatic decisions or students’ development as writers and future teachers (level 1 facilitators). At a deeper theoretical level, however, it is interesting to note other factors that can lay the ground for and, thus, facilitate feedback use (level 2 facilitators). In fact, grammar feedback can be used when several of the above-mentioned actions (believe in, draw on, engage, develop or form) take place. For example, grammar feedback is used in EFL teacher education when students and lecturers develop assessment literacy and form an assessment community in which they draw on linguistic and didactic theories to engage in dialogic and fine-tuned processes. This would, inter alia, mean that lecturers must reap the full benefits of OCF that offer the opportunity to complement WCF (Article 1), consider students’ learning moments (Article 2) and adjust feedback practices (Article 3). In line with this holistic and dialogical perspective, this thesis adds new knowledge to the domain of formative grammar feedback in teacher education.

### 6.6 Limitations and Transferability of the Findings

This thesis has a number of limitations. Some of these have been discussed in section 4.7. First, the limited number of lecturers and students who participated in this study means that the findings are not generalisable. Thus, this thesis does not show the general status quo of EFL feedback practices in Norwegian teacher education. Second, interview studies are self-report studies. This remains a main limitation, particularly in Study 3, for which I managed to collect feedback samples only from nine lecturers to confirm the perceptions of feedback practices.
Third, quantifications such as semi-statistics in Article 1 and NVivo coding occurrences in Articles 2 and 3 have limitations that affect the external generalisation or interpretation of the results. Large-scale surveys of EFL lecturers’ feedback practices and students’ feedback experiences are needed to confirm the findings. In fact, little is known about how grammar feedback is perceived in Norwegian EFL teacher education. Fourth, the use of single-draft writing like in Articles 1 and 2 of this thesis only provides limited insight into FA. Although I attempted to recruit lecturers who use multiple drafting, I ended up with an experienced lecturer who provided formative feedback on single drafts only. Finally, I am aware of the possible causality issues, particularly in relation to feedback uptake and feedback preferences, which can be influenced by many different factors such as general motivation, time, context, essay topics or general language proficiency of the students.

However, the findings of this thesis resonate with other studies on feedback (e.g. Brevik et al., 2018; López-Pastor & Sicilia-Camacho, 2017). For example, regarding English L2 grammar feedback, numerous studies agree on the benefits of global, metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF (e.g. Lyster, 2004; Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Sheen, 2007). Nevertheless, many lecturers struggle with feedback strategies that can make feedback more dialogical, such as oral and elicitative CF (e.g. Lyster et al., 2013; Nassaji, 2014). Research on other languages, such as French (e.g. Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Swain, 1998) or Japanese as a foreign language (e.g. Yoshida, 2008), supports the findings of this thesis. Such similarities suggest that problems in EFL writing resemble those in other foreign languages. Hence, I would contend that several findings from this thesis are probably transferable to other comparable contexts, both locally and internationally.

7. Conclusions

This chapter draws on the findings of the thesis to make recommendations that have the potential to enhance the use of meaningful grammar feedback. I discuss recommendations for teacher education at both a general level and, more specifically, for lecturers. Before my closing remarks, I also elaborate on recommendations for future research.

7.1 General Recommendations for Teacher Education

This thesis has found multiple difficulties with grammar feedback practices in Norwegian EFL teacher education, leading to the following general recommendations. First, the national guidelines for lower secondary teacher education (NRL, 2016, pp. 23–25) would be well advised to more clearly link the teaching of grammar to formative feedback on writing. In doing
so, EFL teacher education could create a ‘third space’ (Holmbukt & Son, 2020, p. 5) and conform to the ample evidence showing the benefits of contextualised grammar (e.g. Ellis et al., 2008; Myhill, 2020). Second, feedback practices do not seem to take effective direction from research and theoretical principles. For example, the interviews in Article 3 indicate a general lack of multiple-draft writing before the last semester of the 60-ECTS course. Despite restrictions owing to time and resources, teacher education needs to use more multiple-draft writing so that feedback can become formative (Bader et al., 2019). Third, linguo-didactic reasons (see section 6.2) may explain why specific feedback practices are more suitable than others. For example, writing conferences can be advantageous because the three functions of output (Swain, 2000) can occur at the same time (linguistic reasons). However, in contrast to best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014), didactic reasons can legitimise the use of unfocused CF when students have few feedback-receiving opportunities. Fourth, the concepts of assessment community and literacy (see section 6.3) can promote students’ and lecturers’ engagement and raise awareness of disagreements between students and lecturers. Lecturers must reflect on their feedback practices to guarantee a dialogical and student-tailored approach to feedback. Fifth, students and lecturers need to think of what influences their feedback engagement. Ecological-agentic learning perspectives can help explain how and when they experience important learning moments.

To conclude, this thesis recommends combining diverse theories and perspectives, such as ecological-agentic with linguo-didactic perspectives (Articles 1 and 2) or theories on teacher cognitions with learning ecologies (Article 3). It may also broaden concrete discussions on how to improve feedback quality in EFL teacher education, as elaborated below.

7.2 Recommendations for Feedback Design

In general, best-practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris, 2014) may help lecturers design teacher education–specific feedback practices. In addition to these recommendations, the findings of this thesis suggest the following: First, some lecturers need to provide more fine-tuned CF (see section 6.4.1). Second, oral conferencing must be used extensively and consistently (Lee, 2013). Such writing conferences can be conducted digitally (e.g. on Skype or Zoom) and do not need to be time-consuming. Bitchener et al.’s (2005) conferences lasted only five minutes. Third, lecturers need to ask themselves how much elicitative CF they provide (see section 6.4.2). For example, they should examine whether they have balanced their use of elicitative questions in relation to reformulation requests, which do not necessarily make feedback dialogical. Fourth, lecturers should constantly ensure that the metalinguistic terms used in feedback (see section
6.4.3) are understandable. Fifth, lecturers should avoid the predominance of indirect CF (see section 6.4.4), although indirect CF allows greater cognitive engagement. Sixth, lecturers should clearly focus on global CF (see section 6.4.5). Seventh, the use of varied feedback might be advantageous (e.g. combining direct with metalinguistic CF, WCF with OCF, or focused with unfocused CF). In sum, to obtain meaningful feedback, lecturers need to find the right balance between two extremes on a scale of feedback strategies that are often dichotomous (see Appendix 2). Hopefully, this thesis will inspire EFL lecturers to reflect on their feedback practices and promote meaningful feedback, both in Norway and internationally.

7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Developing perspectives on how to make grammar feedback meaningful in EFL teacher education can change not only how lecturers teach but also how students learn. Thus, further studies are needed to examine lecturers’ feedback practices and students’ grammar feedback uptake. Given the lack of longitudinal research, such studies would preferably follow lecturers or students over an entire academic year. It would also be interesting to conduct additional qualitative studies on lecturers’ perceptions of agency and students’ perceptions of individual and contextual influences. Finally, it is necessary to conduct large-scale surveys of EFL lecturers’ feedback practices and students’ feedback experiences in Norway. These could further analyse ‘the relationship between individual (e.g. culture, gender, cognitive styles) and contextual variables (e.g. subject-specific requirements of feedback)’ (Evans, 2013, p. 107).

7.4 Closing Remarks

Since 2012, when I began teaching in higher education, I have constantly noticed a lack of research on grammar feedback in Norwegian EFL teacher education. The present thesis is my humble contribution towards redressing this situation. Its findings have the potential to productively influence EFL grammar teacher education and development contexts. For example, by focusing on assessment literacy, this thesis broadens the discussion on how to improve grammar feedback quality in teacher education as an assessment community.

To come full circle and return to the opening chapter, this thesis confirms Bachelard’s (1938) view on error treatment. Students and lecturers may always address errors to improve grammatical accuracy and fluency. Meaningful grammar feedback in writing instruction is paramount because errors are stimulating events that shape future situations. The following words of the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1944) echo this sentiment:

La vérité de demain se nourrit de l’erreur d’hier
[The truth of tomorrow grows out of yesterday’s error]. (p. 48)
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Appendix 1: Excerpts from the National Guidelines for Lower Secondary Teacher Education Grades Five to Ten in Norway (NRL, 2016)

**In relation to writing skills** *(my translations in brackets)*

**Engelsk 1 [English 1]**

- kan bruke engelsk muntlig og skriftlig, sikkert og selvvstendig [can use English in oral and written, with confidence and autonomously]
- kan diskutere, muntlig og skriftlig, et utvalg av skjønn- og faglitteratur [can discuss in oral and in written a certain amount of fictional and discipline-based literature]

**Engelsk 2 [English 2]**

- kan bruke engelsk muntlig og skriftlig, sikkert og funksjonelt i ulike sjangre [can use English in oral and written, effectively and with confidence in different genres]
- kan diskutere muntlig og skriftlig et rikt utvalg skjønn- og faglitteratur [can discuss in oral and written a vast amount of fictional and discipline-based literature].

**In relation to grammar and/or feedback** *(my translations in brackets)*

**Engelsk 1 [English 1] and Engelsk 2 [English 2]**

- har kunnskap (...) om strukturer i engelsk fra lyd- til tekst nivå [have knowledge (...) about structures in both oral and written English]
- kan kartlegge og vurdere grunnleggende språkferdigheter [can map and assess basic language skills]
- kan vedlikeholde og utvikle egen språklig og didaktisk kompetanse [can maintain and develop linguistic and didactic competence individually]
- kan bruke undervis- og sluttvurdering for å veilede elever i engelskoppæringen [can use formative and summative assessment to guide pupils’ learning of English].
### Appendix 2: Feedback Strategies Used in the Different Studies and Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral</strong> (studies 1, 2 and 3)</td>
<td>The lecturer provides oral feedback during writing conferences, i.e. individual teacher-student conferences (e.g. Ferris, 2014).</td>
<td>What is your subject? Is it in the plural or singular?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Written** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | The lecturer provides either computer-typed or hand-written corrective feedback in end and/or marginal and/or in-text comments (e.g. Ellis, 2009b). | This is a very good essay. As to the language, I have a few comments:  
- Avoid incomplete sentences  
- Avoid heavy/unclear sentences  
- Be aware of concord |
| **Global** (mainly study 3) | Correcting grammar above the sentence level (e.g. Ferris, 2011). | You change tense! You must stick to either the present or the past tense. |
| **Local** (mainly study 3) | Correcting grammar under the sentence level (e.g. Ferris, 2011). |  
- Missing apostrophes (e.g. “the *sister behaviour” instead of “the sister’s behaviour”)  
- Concord errors (e.g. “Constantia *develop” instead of “Constantia develops”) |
| **Focused** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | Correcting one to two error categories, mostly in end and marginal comments (e.g. Ferris, 2014). | ‘concord’  
‘run-on sentence’ |
| **Mid-focused** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | Correcting three to five error categories, mostly in end and marginal comments (e.g. Liu & Brown, 2015; Pashazadeh). | ‘concord’  
‘run-on sentence’  
‘tense shift’ |
| **Unfocused** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | Correcting more than five error categories, mostly in marginal and in-text comments (e.g. Ellis, 2009b). | ‘concord’  
‘run-on sentence’  
‘tense shift’  
‘incomplete sentence’  
‘word classes’  
‘apostrophes’ |
| **Treatable** (mainly study 1) | Treatable errors are rule-governed (e.g. Ferris, 2011). | Missing plural endings, commas in defining relative clauses and missing apostrophes in genitive + ‘s’ constructions |
| **Untreatable** (mainly study 1) | Untreatable errors are more complex because the feedback provider cannot point to clear ‘rules to resolve the problem’ (Ferris 2011, p. 36). | Word order problems  
Unidiomatic sentence structure |
| **Direct** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | The lecturer provides the student with the correct form (e.g. Ellis, 2009b). | You have to write “mice”, not “mouses”. |
| **Indirect** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | The lecturer provides no correction but points at or indicates (e.g. typographically) the error. | We do not say “mouses” in English. |
| **Metalinguistic** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | Feedback contains metalanguage regarding errors (e.g. Ellis, 2009b). | “Influence” is a noun.  
“Influential” is an adjective. |
| **Elicitative** (studies 1, 2 and 3) | Reformulation requests | Asking the student to reformulate to improve comprehensibility (e.g. Lyster & Ranta, 1997). | Can you say this another way? |
| **Elicitative questions** | Asking a question to elicit knowledge (e.g. Lyster & Ranta, 1997). | How do we form the present continuous in English? |
| **Elicit completion moves** | Strategic pausing to allow students to ‘fill in the blank’ (e.g. Lyster & Ranta, 1997). | No, not that.  
It’s a…? |
Appendix 3: Excerpt of a Written Feedback Analysis

In this essay I will be looking at the first three paragraphs of Angela’s Ashes, the book is an autobiography/memoir by Frank McCourt. McCourt uses the first three paragraphs to sum up what made his childhood so miserable. He writes “A happy childhood is not worth your while”. I will be relating these reasons to the rest of the book as a whole and give specific examples.

First of all, I am going to comment on the “mood” or “tone” of the book. I have then decided to divide the paragraphs into the different themes of the book, which also corresponds with the elements that McCourt explains made his childhood miserable. Lastly, I will comment on the title of the book.

The “mood” of the book is not at as miserable as you would expect it to be, all things considered. There is nothing but tragedy and awful things that happen to him as he grows up. Still, he manages to convey his story in a sort of funny and cheerful way. Angela’s Ashes is written in 1st person point of view. The book starts off with his childish view of the world and how he thinks things work, for example, the Angel on the 7th step, who brings babies into the world. McCourt tells the story as he perceived it when he was a child with all his curiosity and wonder. The reader gets to know his confusion, his anger, the loss of siblings and friends and the constant hunger he and his family is put through.

The first problem McCourt conveys, which is also one of the main problem, and also the root of all their misery as he perceives it; moving away from America to Ireland. The book starts off in America where Frank McCourt and his family lives in a small apartment. He has four siblings. The twins, Malachy jr. and the youngest sibling is their sister Margaret. After Margaret’s death, her parent can’t stand staying. So they move to Ireland, hoping they will get help from Angela’s family.

Death is one of the themes in this book; Margaret dies, the twins die, some of Frank’s friends from school die. One of them even hopes his sister won’t die during the summer vacation because then he won’t get a week off from school. It is sort of morbid, but it is their way of surviving with humour. Eventually, he dies as well, which Frank finds a bit ironic. The girl at the hospital dies, and the girl that Frank delivers mail to and has a sort of relationship with dies. It seems like they all get used to death being around them. Death just
happens, and there is nothing they can do about it. The death of Margaret was a real tragedy for their parents. They really wanted a girl, and when she was born their father even stopped drinking, and all was good. Until she died. After that, everything goes back to being miserable. Their mother was never the same after that. She sort of gave up, and never recovered entirely from the loss. Their neighbours have to help the family because Angela is completely helpless and lies in bed all day. Frank even mentions that he would like Minnie and Mrs Leibowitz to be his mothers, because they were so lovely and always had food.

Poverty; Their father's drinking problem, and the fact that he doesn't bring home his wages, leads to the family's poverty (although it could be argued that Angela doesn't have any work either). Angela was sent to America by her family because she was useless and couldn't hold a job. Malachy Sr came to America because he worked with the IRA and now he has a price on his head. It may be argued that his alcoholism could be some sort of a trauma after working with the IRA.

When they get to Ireland Malachy Sr wants his pay for working for the IRA, but there is no record of this, so he has to go on the dole. Still, he manages to drink all the money. After the twins die, the family moves again. They move to a lane where there is a latrine outside their window, which is used by everyone in their building, so it always smells horrible. During most of the year, the downstairs floor is flooded. They call upstairs “Italy” because that is a nice and warm place. They all have to share the same flea-infested bed.

Patriotism; Their father is very patriotic to Ireland. He comes home drunk in the middle of the night after drinking his wages and makes the boys sing songs for Ireland and promise to die for his homeland. The father’s patriotism is kind of a paradox. First of all, he doesn’t get paid for what he did during the war, and second, he struggles a lot to find a job because he comes from the North, so it seems like his country doesn’t like him back.

There are a lot of class differences in this book. We get to know about the life living in a lane. Frank knows there are people better off, people who have electricity and a bed without fleas in them. They also see the class difference at school; some of the children don’t even have shoes. Even the church discriminates according to class. Frank is not allowed to be an altar boy because of his low class.
Religion: Frank has a Catholic upbringing, he calls the priests pompous. He talks about sins and confessions. Still, he loves it when he finds a priest who is almost deaf so he can confess without the priest actually knowing what he is saying. Frank steals food, he steals money, and yet he doesn't really regret it because he needs it more than who he stole from.

Perseverance - Despite all, Frank McCourt never gives up. He is hard working and wants to work more than he wants to go to school. His first job is selling papers with his uncle. He then helps his neighbour with unloading coal to the people in Limerick. Eventually, he gets to work in the post office where he really gets to see how other people live. All he wants in life is to be able to afford going back to America.

The book is also about Coming of age. We follow Frank from his early years till he is 19 and finally on his way to America. Frank is really confused about the fact that the church wants them to be saints and die for their beliefs. But their father wants them to die for Ireland. He want's to know who wants them to stay alive, and live life to its fullest?

The title: Angela's Ashes: First of all ashes is something dead and lifeless, nothing can grown from ashes, ashes is what is left after something has burnt up and is gone. Ashes are mentioned a few times; when Angela looks into the fireplace all vacant and hopeless, and also her cigarette which she smokes when she is stressed and don't know what to do.
Appendix 4: Excerpt of a Teacher-Student Conference Analysis

(Translated From Norwegian)

| Teacher: (Reads a sentence from the essay) *We get to know about the life living in the lane...* Who is living in the lane? Whose life? *How it is to live for the Mc Courts,* something like that, perhaps... |
|---|---|
| Lucy: Yes, here I should have written *who* or *which*. I see it now... |

| Teacher: Yes. *How it is to live for the Mc Courts* or something like that...Yes, don’t you agree? Religion...hmmm... *Run-on sentence...* He calls the priest pompous...Here, you must use a full stop. And a capital letter in the word at the beginning of the sentence *He calls the priest pompous*. This might be a possibility... Next, here, in this sentence, you write, *he doesn’t really regret it because he needs it more than who* (raises his voice)... *he stole from*? |
|---|---|
| Lucy: *Whom* (also raises her voice)... *he stole from*? |

| Teacher: Yes. *Whom he stole from*. You can’t have two subjects. It is a little bit old-fashioned, but grammatically correct at least. Or perhaps *those he stole from, maybe*... You could say this as well... Perseverance, ok... Here, you have the adjective... *hard working*. You need to hyphen these two words... |
|---|---|
| Lucy: Ok... Yes... |

| Teacher: Yes, *hard-working...Wants to work more than he wants to go to school...It’s clumsy*.... |
|---|---|
| Lucy: Yes, I totally agree. This sentence is very clumsy. |

| Teacher: It is not easy to understand. But then again... You wrote *want’s* with the **apostrophe** in the **third person singular**... |
|---|---|
| Lucy: Yes, sorry about that. Obviously, it must be *wants* without the apostrophe. I wonder whether the computer corrects my text wrongly because I haven’t noticed this... Because it is a repetitive mistake in the text. But it might be that I... |

| Teacher: Yes, maybe... Because this mistake occurs at several places... |
|---|---|
| Lucy: Yes, you are right... |

| Teacher: This is very odd. I think you shouldn’t trust too much your computer... Next sentence (the teacher reads) is *to be able to afford*... *Afford takes* |

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**DCF** = Direct corrective feedback

**ICF** = Indirect corrective feedback

**MCF** = Metalinguistic corrective feedback

**ECF** = Elicitative corrective feedback
an infinitive... This is one of those verbs that take the infinitive and not the –ing form...

Lucy: Yes, … absolutely...
Teacher: It is not easy to know but if you had checked it in a dictionary… because you know that you are allowed to use a dictionary during the exam.... That means you can look up afford in the dictionary and see what comes after afford.

Lucy: Yes, I didn’t know that.
Teacher: Yes, use your dictionary for things like that… But you can’t always look up every single thing in your dictionary… This is too time-consuming... But things like that are a little bit difficult… You can do that....Next sentence: The book is also about (raises his voice) the coming of age. And he wants to know that ...You can’t use the comma here. Anyway, this sentence is odd. This is why I wrote in the margin "This sounds unclear to me".

Lucy: Yes, you are right
Teacher: And why a question mark? (Reads the sentence) He wants to know who wants them to stay alive and live life to its fullest...
Lucy: Yes, I also wonder what I wanted to write here…
Teacher: Yes,
Lucy: I think I wanted to write that he wrote that… they were supposed to do it for Ireland … but I didn’t find a good way to express myself here…
Teacher: Ok, yes. Now, I understand. The title... (reads) First of all, ashes is something dead and lifeless...nothing can grown...
Lucy: Nothing can grow, obviously, not grown... That means nothing can grow from ashes.
Teacher: But, here again, there is a run-on sentence.
Lucy: Yes.
Teacher: Don’t you see it? Because … this sentence can stand alone. Thus, you must use a full stop here and start a new sentence. And use a capital letter at the beginning of the word nothing ....Next sentence... Ashes are (raises his voice)....True? Because it is a plural.
Lucy: Yes, absolutely... Why didn’t I see these mistakes?
Teacher: Ashes are... It’s actually what you wrote in the next sentence... Angela looks into the fireplace all... who is vacant and hopeless? ...Who/which is vacant....?!
Lucy: Yes, obviously, Angela, she is vacant and hopeless...
Teacher: But you can’t say vacant about a person ...
Lucy: No, no. But, I thought of the expression a vacant stare... This is what I wanted to write somehow ...like...vacantly...
Teacher: Yes, this is difficult… Perhaps she gazed into the fireplace with vacant eyes...But anyway… This is
a strange word…(reads the next sentence)...*When she is stressed and doesn't know what to do...*

Lucy: Yes...
Teacher: You see… It is like … There are many minor mistakes of various kind … But I have specified which mistakes you made, such as all the concord errors… You must get rid of these concord errors...And also these apostrophes …
Lucy: Yes, you are absolutely right...
Teacher: You have to be careful. Contentwise, your essay has an excellent structure....Thus, I am somehow annoyed by these minor mistakes, you know…
Lucy: Yes, obviously...
Teacher: When you go home now, and you take away all these expressions such as «sort of», you will see at once how this already improves your text. If I were you, I would do this. I would go through the whole essay and I would only change all the things that must be changed … And these are the things I have pinpointed… *Sort of*, *kind of*.. and all the other mistakes. And finally, I would fix all the concord errors and also all unclear sentences...And all the rest, I would keep it. I would read the whole text once again and I would actually see what a wonderful essay I wrote… You will get this feeling when you re-read your text …
Lucy: Yes, thank you. Because I saw it at once when I re-read my essay before this conference. I understood how incomprehensible some sentences of my essay are for another person who reads the text … Actually, there are some sentences in which I do not exactly know what I wanted to write. Another person who reads my text would not even understand what I wanted to write…

Teacher: Yes, so nice that we agree… I have also written that you must check whether you change the tenses in your essay … I didn’t do that because I wanted to avoid too many underlinings in my feedback …Ok...Best of luck.
Lucy: Thank you. See you around...
Appendix 5: Student Interview Guide

The following questions were used as a starting point.

General Questions

- **Preparation / time**: How much time did it take to write the two essays? How difficult was it to write the essays?
- **Language**: Did you have any language-related challenges? Did you use a dictionary or other digital tools?

Specific Questions

Mapping CF in the Iterative Past (Essay 1):

Written Corrective Feedback

- **Marginal comments**
  - **Metalinguistic CF**: What kind of metalinguistic CF was beneficial for you? Which CF was difficult / easy to understand? Did you like / dislike it? Why?
  - **Focused vs unfocused CF**: Do you think that the teacher provided too many / not enough comments? Why or why not?

- **In-text comments**
  - **Direct CF**: Was there enough direct CF or not? Why did you like / dislike direct CF?
  - **Indirect CF**: Was there enough indirect CF or not? Why did you like / dislike indirect CF? How much effort did you put into finding the correct answers?
  - **Focused vs unfocused CF**: Should the teacher have corrected even more or not? How important is it for you that all mistakes are corrected? Was the CF focused enough or not?

- **End comments**
  - **Evaluation of CF**: What did you do with the end comments? What do you think of the end comments? How beneficial were these?
  - **Focused / intensive CF**: Was the CF focused enough?

Oral Corrective Feedback

- **Warm-up questions**: How useful was the preparation time before the OCF? Did you take some notes during the conferencing? What did you do with the oral (and written) comments after the conference?
- **Iterational element / iterative past / selective attention**: Which concrete feedback was mentioned several times, both in WCF and OCF? Which oral comments do you remember and why? Which WCF did you understand better thanks to the OCF?
- **Metalinguistic CF**: Which metalinguistic terms were difficult to understand? Why or why not?
- **Level of CF**: Which CF was difficult or easy to understand? Which things were still unclear after the OCF?
- **Ecological transitions**: Which concrete and essential learning moments do you remember from the OCF? Do you remember any moments that were not beneficial to your learning?

Mapping the Practical-Evaluative Present (Essay 2)

- **Warm-up questions**: Did you go through your text before submitting your essay? How much time did you use for this grammar check-up?
- **Uptake**: As I can see here in this essay, you have improved / not improved the following three problems pinpointed in the end comments of the first essay:
  1. ...
  2. ...
  3. ...
  Why and how did you improve? Or why did you not improve?
- **Practical evaluative / problematization**: What are your main grammatical challenges? Why are these issues challenging?
- **Agentic moment / ecological transitions**: Are there any concrete grammatical explanations (from the teaching or the provided WCF or OCF) that you considered very useful and used while writing the essay? Are there any un-useful explanations? Please elaborate on these.
Mapping the Projective Future

- **Warm-up questions**: Do you think that you will like or dislike English grammar or grammar feedback in the future? Why or why not?
- **Projective / narrative construction and hypothetical resolution**: Which mistakes will you make less in the future? How do you want to improve your grammar? What do you want to improve?
Appendix 6: Codebook for Lecturer Interviews
Appendix 7: Lecturer Interview Guide (Before Piloting)

Grammar Feedback Perceptions

Tentative Main Research Question:
What role does grammar feedback play in the self-perceived past, present and future of the EFL grammar feedback providers?

Tentative Research Sub-Questions:
a. Which feedback types and modes are or are not used by the feedback provider and what is the reason for using or not using these types and modes?
b. How have the feedback practices developed?

Interview Questions (Translated from Norwegian)

A Your use of and your opinions about feedback (e.g. feedback types og modes)

1. How would you define meaningful or fine-tuning feedback?
2. Which feedback modes (oral vs. written) and feedback types (e.g. direct vs. indirect, metalinguistic, elicitations) do you use and why? Where do you write your comments in the WCF (marginal, in-text and/or end-comments)?
3. Do you prefer focused or unfocused CF? Why?
4. How much do you manage to focus on local or global issues?
5. What do you think of the distinction made between treatable and untreatable errors?

B Your development of feedback habits and routines

B.1. Past (at school or university or at the beginning of your career)

1.1. How has your feedback developed through the years? Can you mention some important moments? How was it during the first years?
1.2. Which feedback modes (oral vs. written) and types (e.g. direct vs. indirect, metalinguistic, elicitations) were used in the feedback you received in the English classes at school or university? What kind of feedback did you favour?
1.3. How focused or unfocused was the feedback you received or provided?
1.4. Which concrete feedback was recurrent in the essays you wrote at school or university? Which written or oral comments do you remember? Why do you remember them so well?
1.5. To what extent did your English teacher focus on global issues or local issues?

B.2. Present and Future

2.1 How is your feedback today, i.e. this semester or year? How is it perceived and used?
2.2. Which kind of grammar feedback is easiest or most difficult?
2.3. Are there any concrete comments from your teacher at school or university or from your early career that you re-use today? Which and why?
2.4. What is the best method for teaching and learning grammar, in your opinion?
2.5. Which feedback types will you provide more or less in the future? Why? How do you want to improve as a grammar feedback provider?
Appendix 8: Lecturer Interview Guide (After Piloting)

The following questions were used as a starting point.

What kind of feedback do you provide today?

1. How is your grammar feedback today? How is it perceived and used?
2. How would you define good grammar feedback?
3. Which feedback modes (written vs. oral) and feedback types (e.g. direct vs. indirect, metalinguistic, elicitations) do you use? Where do you write your comments in your written corrective feedback (marginal, in-text and/or end-comments)? Why?
4. Do you favour focused or unfocused CF? Why?
5. Which kind of grammar feedback is easiest or most difficult? Why?
6. How much do you manage to concentrate on local or global issues? Why?
7. What do you think of the distinction made between treatable and untreatable errors?

What are the factors motivating these feedback practices?

1. What are your reasons for providing oral/written, focused/unfocused, direct/indirect, metalinguistic or elicitation-based feedback? Why do you believe that some of these feedback strategies are better than others?
2. What are your reasons for focusing on local/global and/or treatable/untreatable errors? Why do you believe that some of these feedback strategies are better than others?
3. How did your feedback develop during the last years? Could you mention some essential moments? How was your feedback at the beginning of your career compared to today?
4. What influences your feedback? (e.g. courses, own experiences from studying, influences from colleagues)? How and why did it change?

Concluding Questions

1. Which feedback types and modes will you provide more or less in the future? Why?
2. How do you want to improve yourself as a grammar feedback provider?
3. Do you have any additional comments?
Appendix 9: Excerpts of Lecturer-Interview Transcript Analyses

Ken

Readable version of the excerpt above

0. A. Okay. How did your feedback develop? If you think of the first years as a teacher and now, what can you tell me about it?

0. B. Okay. The first years… in my first two years, first of all the students in general wrote much better English than they do now, sorry, that they do at present. So, I didn’t have to write that much feedback. I focused more on content. Sometimes it was also very interesting because the students were able to argue back. This was quite all right then. But, with the years I realised that some of them needed to improve their written or oral English, [00:30:41 inaudible] written English in that matter. So, I introduced more grammar. A few years ago I reached my average feedback with this insertion of remarks, inserting remarks in the text, then adding general comment at the end with a paragraph. What I say is, “Thank you for this essay,” trying to be as encouraging as I could, then detailing the mistakes in the language and style, then structure and content, then a few words of conclusion asking for second versions for instance. It has changed recently, because four years ago I would still use a few more symbols like T for tense, C for concord, P for punctuation. I no longer do that. I just highlight in green.

0. A. Why?

0. B. Because it’s too easy. It’s applied. The students didn’t have to think.
Translation of the Excerpt

L: I rarely give the right answer. I mostly use the indirect method you mentioned because I want them to. It's a bit like, discovery-based. They must find out what kind of error this is. There's something here, but what is it? But, there must be enough guidance so that you are not alone and get enough good help. After all, they should get help. And sometimes. One example may be for example. When they have concord errors. So instead of saying there is a concord error here, I often have a question in the margin. I underline the verb. And then I ask. Who is doing this? What is the subject of this verb in the sentence? Because then they have to go and see and discover. Uhhh. It was singular. Then I may have to change this form.

I: Very interesting. Because here you have also used something that is another feedback type, namely an elicitation.

L: Hmm. Yeah! Correct!

I: You used a so-called elicitative question.

L: Indeed, an essential element of my approach is a dialogical wish. I often use questions in the margin to elicit knowledge. I talk to my students through my feedback. I often ask my students to imagine a conversation with me while reading my feedback in the margin. It is somehow an attempt to have a written dialogue with the students.

I: Yes. Very interesting. In other words, you also use questions.

L: Yes. Think yourself. Try to think yourself. This is my message. For example, good supervision consists of stimulating the students to find the references themselves.
Appendix 10: Lecturer Member Check Interview Guide With Questionnaire Used as Prompts

The following questions were used as a starting point.

Questions

1. Which feedback types and modes do you use when you provide grammar feedback?

2. What are the reasons for your feedback choices and practices? What influences or affords your feedback (e.g. courses, own experiences from studying, influences from colleagues)?

Questionnaire

To answer more precisely question 1, try to assess what kind of feedback you generally provide most (3), least (1) or approximatively to an equal amount (2)

The six feedback strategies are explained below.

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<th>Feedback on global Issues (vs. local)</th>
<th>Focused feedback (vs. unfocused)</th>
<th>Oral feedback (vs. written)</th>
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Notes. 3 = high use; 2 = medium use; 1 = low use

Your estimates are based on dichotomies. For example, high use of global feedback means less use of local feedback and vice versa. Medium use means that you provide approximately an equal amount of both feedback types.

Explanations on feedback modes and types:
- oral vs written (e.g. writing conferences)
- global vs local (correcting grammar above or under the sentence level)
- focused vs unfocused (correcting less or more than five error categories)
- direct vs indirect (providing the correct form or no correction, i.e. only indicating the existence of an error)
- metalinguistic (use of metalanguage or no metalanguage)
- elicitation-based CF (1. allowing the student to fill in the blank, 2. asking a question to elicit knowledge or 3. asking to reformulate versus none of these three cases)
Appendix 11: Excerpts from the Inter-Rater Agreement Tests in Study 1

Crosstabs

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b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

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| 2,00               | 0    | 2    | 2     |
| Total              | 16   | 2    | 18    |

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Appendix 12: NSD Form

Michel Cabot
Avdeling for lærerutdanning og kulturfag Høgskolen Stord/Haugesund
Klingenbergvegen 8
5414 STORD

Vår dato: 11.10.2016
Vår ref: 49709 / 3 / LJ

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 05.09.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

49709 The Role of Fine-tuning Grammar Teacher Feedback in Process-oriented Writing
Behandlingsansvarlig: Høgskolen Stord/Haugesund, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarelig: Michel Cabot

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepålagt i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjenomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskriver. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, [http://pro.nsd.no/prosjekt](http://pro.nsd.no/prosjekt).


Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal Ida Jansen Jondahl

Kontaktperson: Ida Jansen Jondahl tlf: 55 58 30 19

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjennet.
UNIVERSITETET I OSLO
Det utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet

Required enclosure when requesting that a dissertation be considered for a doctors degree

Declaration

Describing the independent research contribution of the candidate

In addition to the dissertation, there should be enclosed a declaration describing the independent research contribution of the candidate for each paper constituting the dissertation.

The declaration should be filled in and signed by candidate and co-authors. Use the back of the page if necessary.

The declaration will show the contribution to conception and design, or development and analysis of a theoretical model, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, contribution to drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content etc.

Article no. 1

Title: The need to supplement written grammar feedback: A case study from English teacher education. Moderna Språk, 113(2), 1-19.

The independent contribution of the candidate:
Data collection was solely carried out by Michel Cabot. He also conducted the main analysis and wrote approximately 90 percent of the article. Arne Kaldestad carried out minor parts of the quantitative analysis and wrote approximately 10 per cent of the article.

Signature of candidate

Signature of co-authors

Article no. 2


The independent contribution of the candidate:
The article was researched and written solely by Michel Cabot.

Signature of candidate

Signature of co-authors
UNIVERSITETET I OSLO
Det utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet

Article no. 3

Title: Investigating EFL grammar feedback: Practices and affordances of highly experienced lecturers. (Under review)

The independent contribution of the candidate:
The article was researched and written solely by Michel Cabot.

..........................................................  ..........................................................
Signature of candidate                            Signature of co-authors
PART II: Articles


Article 1

The need to supplement written grammar feedback: A case study from English teacher education

MICHEL CABOT & ARNE KALDESTAD
University of Oslo, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

Abstract
The value of oral corrective feedback for the development of metalinguistic knowledge has been acknowledged in the research literature for decades. Yet, teachers in second language teacher education programmes still tend to provide written feedback almost exclusively, leaving untapped potential for successful formative assessment. This study aims to investigate the potential complementarity of written and oral feedback through a qualitative case study of one teacher educator’s grammar feedback practices in English as a second language. Eighteen student teachers at a Norwegian university college received individual written and oral corrective feedback on their essays. The provided feedback was analysed using Ellis’s (2009) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies. Inter- and intra-rater reliability tests confirmed the findings. The analysis shows that written and oral feedback fulfil different functions and have complementary roles. The described case may function as an inspiring example of exemplary practice for teacher educators and language teachers.

Key words: EFL grammar feedback, EFL teacher education, oral corrective feedback, written corrective feedback

1 Introduction
The role of grammar feedback is a particularly problematic area in current English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education. Despite the extensive debate on the efficacy of grammar correction and teaching (Krashen 1985, Truscott 1996), ample evidence favours its positive benefits (Swain 1998, Ellis et al. 2008, Pawlak 2014). However, Ellis et al. (2008) suggested that this is likely to depend on learner grammatical knowledge. Substantial research has shown that student teacher knowledge in this area is often limited (Hiskam & Cajkler 2005, Harper & Rennie 2009, Alderson & Hudson 2013: 99). Another problem is the trend to favour written corrective feedback (WCF) at the expense of oral corrective feedback (OCF) in higher education (e.g. Black & McCormick 2010, Nicol 2010, Evans 2013) without considering the potential disadvantages of focussing on the written mode only. In fact, there is good reason to ask whether teacher educators know enough about different feedback modes to provide appropriate and useful grammar feedback to their students.

We posit that teacher educators play a special role in higher education because they provide feedback to student teachers who are future feedback providers. In other words, feedback in teacher education may function as ‘exemplary’ or ‘best practice’ suggestions (Ferris 2014). Indeed, there is ample evidence that student teachers’ experiences as learners can inform cognitions to exert an influence on
teachers (e.g. Holt-Reynolds 1992, Borg 2015.). Educators should thus help student teachers understand feedback better and use it more efficiently (Jonsson 2013). This challenge was partially met by an increased quantity of feedback in process-oriented writing and portfolios (e.g. Klenowski, Askew & Carnell 2006, Burner 2014), yet often provided only in written form (e.g. Nicol 2010, Evans, Hartshorn & Strong-Krause 2011). However, we advocate a combination of both oral and written feedback, even in the less than optimal situation of single-draft writing, which is very common in higher education (Lee 2014). In fact, few research studies have been conducted on combinations of written and oral feedback, either internationally or especially in the present context of Norwegian English teacher education. This is part of the motivation for the current article.

The present study’s main aim is to investigate an EFL teacher educator’s use of different grammar feedback types in a combined written/oral feedback sequence at a university college in Norway. The article begins with key definitions followed by a review of the existing research on feedback types and modes. We then present the findings on grammar feedback from both feedback type and feedback mode perspectives. Finally, we discuss how different feedback types complement each other in different feedback modes.

2 Key definitions
The term ‘grammar feedback’ needs further clarification. Consisting of the notions of both ‘grammar’ and ‘feedback’, it is twofold. On the one hand, grammar is a superordinate term in our research, comprising morphology at the word level, syntax at the sentence level and text grammar at the text level. Our grammar definition, in relation to feedback, includes word order problems and unidiomatic sentences, which grammar rules cannot always explain. This definition evokes Ferris’s (2011) dichotomy between ‘treatable’ and ‘untreatable’ errors. Treatable errors (such as missing plural endings, commas in defining relative clauses and missing apostrophes in genitive + ‘s’ constructions) are rule-governed ones. Conversely, untreatable errors are more complex because the feedback provider cannot point to clear ‘rules to resolve the problem’ (Ferris 2011:36).

Opposed to grammar, feedback deals with all the pedagogical approaches and reflections that inform the teacher when providing corrective comments. In the current study, feedback is formative by nature because it is actively used to fill the gap between ‘the actual (or current) level of performance’ and ‘the standard (or goal, or reference level) being aimed for’ (Sadler 1989:121). This is true because the teacher educator first provided written feedback, and then reused that corrective feedback (CF) to provide oral feedback in teacher–student conferences or writing conferences.¹

¹ This means that we do not consider research on immediate ‘online oral corrective feedback’ (Sheen 2010: 204), which regularly happens in the classroom.
Thus, our study had to distinguish clearly between feedback modes and feedback types. The feedback modes are WCF and OCF. The feedback types comprise the following:

- Focussed (correcting one to two error categories) or mid-focussed (correcting three to five error categories) versus unfocussed (correcting more than five error categories)
- Direct versus indirect (providing corrections versus only indicating that an error exists)
- Metalinguistic (using metalanguage to correct errors)
- Elicitative (prompting completion moves, using questions or requesting reformulation)

We will now look into the existing research on these feedback types and modes.

3 Existing research
In terms of feedback modes, OCF provides an important opportunity in grammar teaching for clarification, instruction and negotiation that written feedback might lack. Ferris’s (2014) best practices suggestions emphasise OCF’s importance. Furthermore, several studies have shown the benefits of OCF in terms of its helpfulness (Patthey-Chavez & Ferris 1997, Ewert 2009, Van der Schaaf et al. 2013, Yeh 2016, Hamloua & Fellahi 2017). For example, Hamloua and Fellahi’s (2017) study found that EFL learners showed progress in grammatical accuracy over time by eliminating subject–verb disagreements and run-on sentences when receiving OCF. However, most of these studies did not examine how OCF complements WCF. Bitchener, Young and Cameron’s (2005) quantitative study is exceptional in that regard, as it found that a combination of WCF and OCF had a significantly greater effect over time than WCF alone in the accuracy levels of 53 adult migrant English-for-speakers-of-other-languages students’ use of prepositions, the simple past tense and the definite article. The study also found that the combined written/oral feedback option helped improve treatable errors (simple past tense or definite articles) in contrast to untreatable ones (prepositions). However, Bitchener et al.’s (2005) study only examined direct CF and did not include other feedback types, such as indirect and elicitation-based CF, which the current study analyses.

Concerning the above-mentioned focussed versus unfocussed error treatment, evidence has supported the efficacy of focussed CF (Sheen 2007, Ellis et al. 2008). Still, researchers debate how focussed CF should be. For example, Hartshorn et al. (2010) supported unfocussed CF because real-world writing expects a high degree of accuracy and thus extensive error treatment. Conversely, Liu and Brown (2015) recommended the use of mid-focussed feedback. However, Pashazadeh’s (2017) quantitative study of 77 EFL learners from a Tehran language school did not show any lasting accuracy gains for mid-focussed corrections.
Ferris (2014), Lee (1997) and Li (2010) emphasised the importance of indirect CF, which agrees with Lalande’s (1982) longitudinal study that involved 60 university students (with an intermediate level of German knowledge). Those who received indirect CF in five essays during the spring of 1979 outperformed students of a direct correction group in 11 out of 12 non-lexical error categories comprising grammatical and orthographical errors. Lalande’s study also suggested that indirect CF positively affects a wide range of error types, including untreatable errors. However, more research is needed to describe and analyse the possible link between indirect CF and untreatable grammar errors.

The findings of both Sheen (2007) and Van Beuning, De Jong and Kuiken (2008) stand in contrast to Lalande (1982). Sheen (2007) conducted a study on adult intermediate ESL learners, indicating that direct CF can expedite the acquisition of specific grammatical features, such as articles. Furthermore, Van Beuning et al. (2008) showed in their longitudinal study of two Dutch secondary schools that both direct CF and indirect CF have short-term effects, but only direct feedback has a significant long-term effect. A later study by the same researchers (2012) showed that direct feedback is more effective for grammar items, but indirect feedback is more effective for non-grammar items. However, Van Beuning et al.’s (2008, 2012) approaches focussed on WCF, not a combination of WCF and OCF.

Much research has demonstrated the importance of metalinguistic feedback (e.g. Sheen 2007, Ellis et al. 2008, Shintani & Ellis 2013). However, students must understand metalinguistic terms to benefit from this type of feedback and educators should avoid vague terms such as ‘verb form’ (Lee 1997:470). Sheen’s (2007) and Shintani and Ellis’s (2013) results also showed that a combination of metalinguistic and direct CF is more effective than direct CF alone.

Many studies emphasise the positive benefits of elicitation-based CF (e.g. Swain 1995, Lyster & Ranta 1997, Swain 1998, Sheen, 2004, Ferris, 2014). As an example, Ferris (2014:8) touched on elicitation in her best practices suggestions: ‘Where possible, questions are preferable to imperatives, as they are less directive and promote student autonomy.’ Furthermore, Lyster and Ranta (1997) analysed 100 hours of audio recordings in six French immersion classrooms in the Montreal area to find that elicitation led to successful student-generated repairs, initiating a beneficial negotiation of form.

To sum up, research suggests that combined written/oral feedback modes have a significant effect (e.g. Bitchener et al., 2005). In terms of feedback types, however, research appears inconclusive as to whether CF that is focussed, mid-focussed, unfocussed (e.g. Ellis et al. 2008, Hartshorn et al. 2010, Pashazadeh 2017) or indirect, in contrast to direct CF (e.g. Van Beuning et al. 2008, 2012, Ferris 2014), is more beneficial to language learning. Conversely, research seems to agree on the positive benefits of metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF (e.g. Lyster & Ranta 1997, Shintani & Ellis 2013). Only a minority of the aforementioned international studies have examined how teachers use different feedback types to vary their feedback in its written and oral modes. In addition, we know of no Scandinavian research study analysing feedback modes and types in EFL teacher education. Most
of the existing research has been quantitative, with a particular emphasis on grammatical accuracy gains. We argue the need for qualitative studies that analyse the distribution of feedback types in different feedback modes to unlock the potential of the complementarity between WCF and OCF in grammar teaching. In a first step to fill this research gap, the present study investigates feedback types and modes with the aim of describing elements of complementarity between WCF and OCF in teacher–student writing conferences through an in-depth analysis of different types of grammar feedback. We address this issue by asking the following questions:

(1) Which specific grammar feedback types does the teacher educator use when providing WCF and OCF on grammar?
(2) How do WCF and OCF complement each other in general?

4 Materials and Methods
The present qualitative study is a single-case study (Stake 2000) based on an analysis of feedback provided on 18 essays and 18 transcriptions of subsequent conferences between an EFL teacher educator and student teachers at a university college in Norway. According to Creswell and Poth (2018:96), case studies explore ‘a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case)...through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.’ Considering the provision of both WCF and OCF, the present study has the characteristics of an intrinsic case study ‘in which the focus is on the case itself...because the case presents an unusual or unique situation’ (Creswell & Poth:99). In accordance with Pawlak (2014:121), we consider the observed systematic and time-consuming combination of both WCF and OCF in one feedback sequence to be rather unusual in teacher education.

In the present study’s setting, the teacher educator commonly provided written CF and teacher–student conferences every spring term to improve student teacher literary essays. The student teachers had approximately two months to write a literary essay on either the short story “The Daughters of the Late Colonel” by Katherine Mansfield (2010) or the novel Angela’s Ashes by Frank McCourt (1999). The teacher did not grade the essays. The assessment was used to help the student teachers develop their interlanguage (Selinker 1972, Corder 1982). All students had attended grammar lectures before writing the essays, which were 750 to 1,100 words in length. The students received computer-typed WCF in the end comments as well as handwritten feedback in marginal and in-text comments. In the marginal and in-text comments, the teacher used brief grammatical descriptions but did not use an error code system. On a separate page, he also provided end comments typically comprising a list of grammatical issues. The WCF comprised comments on content and language; however, the current study considered only language comments related to grammar. After receiving the WCF and before the OCF in the conferences, the students had the task of studying their corrections. The oral

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conferences took place in Norwegian one to two weeks after providing the WCF. The OCF began with a review of all end comments during the first five to eight minutes. In the last 22 to 25 minutes of the OCF, the teacher went through all other in-text and marginal comments. Each conference lasted about 30 minutes.

A highly experienced teacher with more than 30 years of teaching experience was responsible for both the grammar and literature. The 18 student teachers (de-identified using pseudonyms in this study) each had approximately 10 years’ worth of EFL instruction experience at school and were randomly chosen from a course in which 24 out of the 30 students signed the informed consent form. To achieve high ecological validity, we did not choose a writing course that focussed only on grammar, but instead selected a 15-credit course in English literature, culture and civilisation. In other words, the study approximated the real world by not intervening in the regular teaching of EFL teacher education.

For the data analysis, we developed a qualitative codebook. The codes fell into in-text, marginal and end comments. We coded the data into focussed CF (correcting one to two error categories), mid-focussed CF (three to five) and unfocussed CF (more than five). Furthermore, we used Ellis’s (2009) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies to analyse the CF. Table 1 outlines the different feedback types in the present study.
Table 1. Different types of written and oral corrective feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of feedback</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct feedback</td>
<td>The teacher provides the student with the correct form.</td>
<td>You have to write “mice”, not “mouses”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ellis 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect feedback</td>
<td>The teacher provides no correction but points at or indicates (e.g. typographically) the error.</td>
<td>We do not say “mouses” in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ellis 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic feedback</td>
<td>Contains metalanguage regarding errors</td>
<td>“Influence” is a noun. “Influential” is an adjective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ellis 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative feedback</td>
<td>Elicit completion moves</td>
<td>Strategic pausing to allow students to “fill in the blank”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Lyster &amp; Ranta 1997)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No, not that. It’s a…?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative questions</td>
<td>Asking a question to elicit knowledge</td>
<td>How do we form the present continuous in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refomulation requests</td>
<td>Asking the student to reformulate to improve comprehensibility</td>
<td>Can you say this another way?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To code WCF and OCF, we used the above-mentioned feedback types. When indirect CF was combined with direct CF, the students did not get any opportunity to guess the correct forms; therefore, we counted such instances as direct CF. Similarly, crossing out a word constituted direct feedback. We considered CF to be indirect when the teacher passively indicated the existence of an error (e.g. underlining in WCF or pointing it out in OCF) without providing any corrections or using other feedback types to elicit knowledge. Comments such as ‘unclear sentence’ signified metalinguistic grammar rather than content feedback when the error was due to syntactical issues (e.g. word order problems, too many subordinate sentences).

Although the current study is qualitative, we used what Becker (1970) coined ‘descriptive quasi-statistics’, quantifying the different feedback types to describe their distributions and frequencies. This is in line with Maxwell (2010) and Silverman (2014), who recommend simple category counting and quantification in qualitative research. Since the total number of errors varied from student to student, we had to calculate each CF type for each student using percentages. The numbers
in this paper were derived from the frequency counts of the written and oral modes. We combined direct, indirect, metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF into a single group (100%), and then calculated the percentages of each feedback type in relation to this group. For example, Faith’s essay had 79% direct, 15% indirect, 3% metalinguistic and 3% elicitative CF, which formed the entire WCF provided to Faith (100%).

Finally, we asked a second rater to rescore the different CF types in the WCF of all 18 essays. The inter-rater reliability score was a .744 Cohen’s kappa for direct, .817 for indirect, .86 for metalinguistic and 1.0 for elicitation-based CF. To determine intra-rater reliability, the main author rescored all 18 essays five months after the initial coding, obtaining a reliability of .745 Cohen’s kappa for direct CF, .91 for indirect CF, .85 for metalinguistic and 1.0 for elicitation-based CF. This showed satisfactory scores for both inter- and intra-rater reliability in WCF. Thus, the main author alone rescored the OCF, achieving an intra-rater reliability of .82 Cohen’s kappa for direct, .93 for indirect, .79 for metalinguistic and 1.0 for elicitation-based CF.

The current study has limitations that affect the interpretation or generalisation of its results. First, only one teacher educator and 18 student papers underwent scrutiny. Thus, the study does not provide an exhaustive picture of all feedback types used by this teacher educator or generally in Norwegian teacher education. Second, the descriptive validity of quasi-statistics does not involve any statistical inference. Consequently, although similar studies (e.g. Bitchener et al. 2005) support the findings of the present qualitative research, we can make no claims regarding its generalisability.

5 Findings
The first and second parts of this section present the feedback analysis findings from the essays and conferences (research question 1). The third part provides a more in-depth analysis of the complementary relationship between these two feedback modes (research question 2). To illustrate our findings, we will use several examples from the essays and conferences with the student teachers.

5.1 Written corrective feedback
Research question 1 asked which grammar feedback types the teacher educator used. General findings for this question revealed that all marginal and end comments had more focused CF (addressing 1–5 error categories) than the in-text comments, which treated all errors extensively (addressing more than 5 error categories). Both direct and indirect CF occurred frequently while metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF were relatively rare. In this section, we will analyse the distribution of these feedback types further.

We began by examining whether the teacher educator’s feedback was focussed, mid-focussed or unfocussed in its distribution between end, marginal and in-text comments. Here, our findings revealed that all end comments (18 essays) were mid-focussed CF. The feedback written in the margin varied between mid-focussed (11
essays) and focussed CF (7 essays) and all in-text comments were unfocussed (18 essays). In sum, the findings revealed a tendency to move from unfocussed CF in the in-text comments to more focussed CF in first the marginal comments and eventually in the end comments. This is interesting because it may tell feedback providers to concentrate more on marginal and end comments when focussed or mid-focussed CF is the favoured feedback strategy.

Furthermore, we analysed the distribution of the other aforementioned feedback types. The following table provides an overview.

Table 2. Distribution of written feedback types (n = 18).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Lowest %</th>
<th>Highest %</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The percentages include both marginal and in-text comments.

Table 2 shows slightly more indirect than direct feedback. The teacher tended to use direct feedback for treatable errors (e.g. plural endings, concord and ‘s’-genitives) and indirect feedback for untreatable errors (e.g. underlined verbs in a paragraph, unidiomatic sentences and word order problems). Thus, we carried out a more elaborate in-depth analysis of direct and indirect feedback, which revealed that the students received more indirect feedback on untreatable errors (medians: 59.7% versus 40.3%) and more direct feedback on treatable errors (medians: 76.2% versus 23.9%). Examples from the feedback analysis of two student essays written by Frank and Ned illustrate this point. On the one hand, Frank’s main problem was tense shifts in a paragraph, typographically marked in the essay with underlined verb forms and thus qualifying as indirect feedback. Ned, on the other hand, received many direct corrections, mostly addressing the following problems:

- Incorrect capitalisations (e.g., *“Aunt” instead of “aunt”)  
- Missing apostrophes (e.g., *“the sister behaviour” instead of “the sister’s behaviour”)  
- Concord errors (e.g., *“Constantia develop” instead of “Constantia develops”)  

Clearly, this list only comprised treatable errors at the word or local level, where it is easier to refer to a rule.

Regarding metalinguistic WCF, the distribution varied from 2–23% (median 12%), illustrating its rarity. One example of such feedback was the teacher’s comment ‘incomplete sentence’ in the margin of the following text excerpt from Ralph’s essay:

We follow two middle-aged sisters experiencing life without their recently deceased father.  
A life living under the shadow of their demanding Colonel father.
Interestingly, the feedback ‘incomplete sentence’ did not include any additional information on why the sentence was incomplete.

Generally, the WCF revealed only 0–8% (median: 2.5%) elicitations with the most being found in Bill’s essay. However, the elicitations used in his essay comprised only reformulation requests in the marginal comments. The elicitations in the other essays also comprised mostly reformulation requests (14 in 9 out of 18 essays) and few elicitive questions (5 in 5 out of 18 essays). Thus, it is possible to say that reformulation requests predominated at the expense of elicitive questions.

5.2 Oral corrective feedback

The general findings show a predominance of unfocussed, direct and metalinguistic feedback in contrast to few elicitations and scarce indirect feedback in OCF. Concerning the question of how focussed the feedback was, all the OCF began with reviewing the written end comments, making it mid-focussed. After five to eight minutes, the CF became more unfocussed or extensive, with the teacher attempting to explain all errors marked in the essay. However, several examples show the importance of mid-focussed CF in the entirety of the OCF. For example, several times during the conference with Frank, the teacher mentioned three foci, i.e. ‘concord’, ‘the apostrophe’ and ‘tense shift’. These three foci were derived from the following mid-focussed CF at the beginning of the conference:

Here you change tense! You must stick to either the present or the past. In addition, you have to focus on your concord errors and the apostrophe. This is what I wrote in my end comments.

In addition to examining whether focussed or unfocussed error treatment was used in the entirety of the OCF, we examined the distribution of the direct, indirect, metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF. Table 3 provides an overview of our findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Lowest %</th>
<th>Highest %</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The percentages include both marginal and in-text comments.

As Table 3 shows, the findings include minimal instances of indirect feedback and elicitations, while extensive instances of direct and metalinguistic feedback were provided. The metalinguistic feedback comprised several terms, such as uncountable nouns, stative verbs, subjects and continuous tenses. As an example, to explain problems concerning run-on sentences, the teacher advised Bill as follows:

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Run-on sentences must be avoided. This sentence here can stand on its own. It is a fully acceptable main sentence with a subject and a finite verb. You have to use a full stop after the sentence, and you cannot ‘run on’ like in oral speech. You cannot use a comma here. Or you opt for a conjunction, such as ‘because’.

In this excerpt from Bill’s conference, the teacher used several metalinguistic terms to explain the phenomenon, illustrating that feedback providers need to know a certain number of metalinguistic terms to paraphrase and explain other metalinguistic terms.

Furthermore, the data included only one instance of an ‘elicit completion move’, which occurred in Lucy’s OCF:

Teacher: Here, in this sentence, you write, he doesn’t really regret it because he needs it more than who (raises his voice)... he stole from?

Lucy: ‘Whom (raises her voice)... he stole from’?

Teacher: Yes. You can’t have two subjects.

The elicit completion move shows the teacher allowing Lucy to fill in the blank. Here, the teacher even has the opportunity to confirm Lucy’s post-modified output ‘whom’. Most other elicitation instances comprised reformulation requests (e.g. “rewrite” or “rephrase”) except for some elicitative questions. For example, the teacher asked Lucy, ‘What is your subject? Is it in the plural or singular?’ in the phrase ‘He and his family *lives’, to explain the concord problem.

5.3 Complementarity between oral and written corrective feedback

This subsection presents the distribution of all feedback types in the two modes. Figure 1 helps us understand how the focus-based feedback types complement each other in the WCF and OCF:

Figure 1. Possible intrinsic and extrinsic complementarities (focussed CF: 1–2 error categories; mid-focussed: 3–5 error categories; unfocussed: more than 5 error categories).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focused to mid-focussed CF</th>
<th>Unfocussed CF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WCF</td>
<td>End/marginal comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCF</td>
<td>First 5-8 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 shows that focussed/mid-focussed CF may play a complementary role both intrinsically within WCF (end/marginal vs. in-text comments) or OCF (5–8 minutes vs. 22–25 minutes) and extrinsically in the relationship between WCF and OCF. For example, the OCF in Frank’s conference shows that the mid-focussed feedback of the first 5–8 minutes may complement the unfocussed feedback, which tended to predominate the OCF. However, when we compare the OCF with the WCF, we
see a link between the focussed/mid-focussed CF provided in the written end and marginal comments and the feedback provided during the first 5–8 minutes of the oral conferences. This important extrinsic complementarity also occurred in other instances of direct, indirect, metalinguistic and elicitative CF. Table 4 provides an overview of this complementarity between the two modes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Types</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Metalinguistic</th>
<th>Elicitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WCF</td>
<td>42.5% (median)</td>
<td>44% (median)</td>
<td>12% (median)</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCF</td>
<td>53.5% (median)</td>
<td>0% (median)</td>
<td>41.5% (median)</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: □= lower frequency, □= higher frequency (WCF compared with OCF).

As table 4 illustrates, the feedback types in grey (denoting a higher frequency) might play a role in complementing the feedback types in white (denoting a lower frequency). Direct feedback was more frequent in the OCF (median 53.5%) than in the WCF (median 42.5%). However, indirect CF was almost completely absent in the OCF. Moreover, the teacher did not turn many instances of indirect feedback in the WCF into elicitationary questions in the OCF. He favoured other feedback types, such as direct and metalinguistic feedback. For example, the teacher orally corrected the error marked with indirect CF (double underlining) in Bill’s phrase ‘unmarried women who *has passed’ to ‘unmarried women who have passed’.

The frequency counts revealed that the OCF provided appreciably more metalinguistic feedback (median 41.5%) than the WCF (median 12%). For example, the teacher explained to Lucy the problem of disagreement between a plural subject and singular verb. The feedback provided to Jane shows another benefit of oral metalinguistic feedback:

In your sentence, ‘Moreover, he represents the real world, that they have not seen for many years,’ you use a comma, and thus, you indicate that the relative clause is non-defining or unnecessary. In such cases, you are not allowed to use the relative pronoun ‘that’.

Here, the teacher explained the term ‘non-defining relative clause’ by using the synonym of unnecessary relative clauses.

In closing, elicitationary had little importance in the WCF (median 2.5%), yet were more present in the OCF (median 4.5%). Compared with all other feedback types though, elicitationary were scarce. More specifically, there were more reformulation requests than elicitationary questions in both modes.

6 Discussion
The current study revealed three main findings concerning the distribution and complementarity of the feedback types in the two modes. First, unfocussed CF predominated in both modes, and the mid-focussed CF of the WCF was reused in the OCF. Second, direct and metalinguistic feedback were more frequent in the
OCF, thus complementing the WCF. Third, the OCF had slightly more elicitations, though it was generally infrequent in both modes. Each finding is discussed relative to all the feedback types in the following sections.

6.1 Focussed versus unfocussed feedback
The appropriate amount of CF focus is still a hotly debated topic. Despite the fact that compelling evidence shows the efficacy of focussed CF (Sheen 2007, Li 2010, Ferris 2014), the teacher provided such feedback only in the marginal comments of seven essays. He used considerable unfocussed CF in both the WCF in-text comments and in the main parts of the OCF. This might overshadow the focussed feedback provided. A feedback provider must consider the possible overuse of unfocussed CF when giving OCF or using WCF in-text comments. Conversely, Hartshorn et al. (2010) posited that unfocussed CF is the better option because such feedback prepares students (in our case, student teachers) for real life, in which they should be able to write whole texts that are grammatically correct.

In addition to unfocussed CF, the WCF and OCF also showed mid-focussed CF (Liu & Brown 2015). Such uses of mid-focussed or unfocussed CF are—according to Pashazadeh (2017)—equally ineffective for lasting accuracy gains. However, our findings suggest that mid-focussed CF was beneficial because of its extrinsic complementarity between WCF and OCF and its subsequent intrinsic complementarity within the OCF. In other words, the mid-focussed WCF was important because it was reused in the OCF (extrinsic complementarity), facilitating a more mid-focussed approach for the entire OCF (intrinsic complementarity). One example of this is Frank’s three foci, i.e. ‘concord’, ‘the apostrophe’ and ‘tense shift’, in the mid-focussed WCF, which were initially reused in the first few minutes of the OCF and then mentioned throughout the entire OCF.

6.2 Direct versus indirect feedback
Both the WCF and OCF had a relatively high percentage of direct CF. Much of the WCF consisted of indirect feedback (median 44%), which disappeared almost completely in the OCF (median 0%). On the one hand, the high use of indirect WCF agrees with Ferris’s (2011, 2014), Bitchener et al.’s (2005) and Lalande’s (1982) recommendations. On the other hand, the high use of direct WCF and OCF is in alignment with recommendations given by Van Beuningen et al.’s (2012, 2008) research, indicating that direct feedback is a better option because it has a significant long-term effect and is more effective for grammar items. The question, however, is when or why the teacher favoured indirect CF over direct CF. We used the feedback provided to Frank (e.g. underlined verbs in a whole paragraph) and Ned (e.g. wrong capitalisations, missing apostrophes and concord errors) to illustrate the problem in the WCF. Here, our additional feedback analysis, based on Ferris’s (2011) pedagogical distinction between treatable and untreatable errors, provided interesting explanations. The teacher seemed to cover more untreatable (median: 59.7%) than treatable errors (median: 40.3%) in the indirect CF and more treatable (median: 76.2%) than untreatable errors (median: 23.9%) in the direct CF. In this
sense, our findings\(^3\) support Lalande’s (1982) research, suggesting that indirect feedback positively affects a wide range of error types, including untreatable errors. However, we have to consider that the indirect WCF was only slightly more prevalent than direct WCF (indirect feedback: 44%; direct feedback: 42.5%). Thus, our findings might also suggest that the teacher’s overall feedback was probably more influenced by treatable than untreatable errors. According to Bitchener et al. (2005), such a focus on treatable errors may be beneficial in combined written/oral feedback options.

The teacher provided more direct feedback in the OCF (median: 53.5%) than in the WCF (median: 42.5%). One interpretation of this might be that feedback types such as direct, metalinguistic or elicitation-based CF are more suitable for OCF and complement the WCF’s indirect feedback, which seemed unnatural in the OCF. This was the case with the indirect WCF provided to James (‘There are many examples of this in the novel. One of them being when the children’s shoes are worn out’), which shifted to direct OCF (‘There are many examples of this in the novel. One example is when…’). This finding emphasises the significant complementarity between OCF and WCF.

6.3 Metalinguistic feedback

Metalinguistic feedback occurred more frequently in the OCF than in the WCF; thus, it might serve a complementary role. Examples from the feedback analysis of Bill’s and Jane’s conferences illustrate the importance of metalinguistic feedback, which a substantial body of research (e.g. Sheen 2007, Ellis et al. 2008) also emphasises. On the one hand, the teacher used several different metalinguistic terms to explain the phenomenon of ‘run-on sentences’ in Bill’s conference. On the other hand, the metalinguistic CF provided to Jane showed added value of the OCF when the teacher used the synonym ‘unnecessary’ instead of ‘non-defining relative’ clause. Thus, it is possible to assert that the OCF played a major role in improving the feedback’s positive benefits for both Bill and Jane.

These findings concur with Bitchener et al.’s (2005) and Hamlou and Fellahi’s (2017) studies, indicating that oral meta-linguistic explanations might be crucial for improving accuracy. However, it may be a challenge not to charge oral explanations with excessive additional metalanguage while avoiding vague terms, such as ‘verb form’ instead of ‘tense’ (Lee 1997:470). This might interfere with general comprehensibility. For example, the CF ‘incomplete sentence and far too heavy, so rewrite’ provided to Claire comprised metalinguistic CF combined with a reformulation request. In this case, the student might want to know why the sentence was incomplete or ‘too heavy’ and how she could rephrase it. The metalinguistic term ‘incomplete sentence’ is vague. Oral explanations and clarifications or elicitative questions, such as ‘Where is your subject?’, might help

\(^3\) Our findings stand in contrast to Ferris’s (2006) study. One reason for this might be that her study did not clearly distinguish between lexis and grammar. Due to the idiosyncratic nature of untreatable errors, teachers might find it easier to suggest a better word than correct a complex unidiomatic sentence structure.
the student understand why the sentence is incomplete. The following subsection examines such elicitations.

6.4 Elicitations
In contrast to recommendations emphasising the positive benefits of elicitations (Lyster & Ranta 1997, Swain 1998, Sheen 2004, Ferris 2014), the current study revealed few elicitations in either WCF or OCF. More interestingly, the most predominant instances of elicitations were reformulation requests, such as ‘rewrite’ or ‘rephrase’. These might qualify as less explicit or dialogical, because the teacher only asked the student teacher to rephrase or rewrite without explaining exactly what was grammatically wrong in the sentence. However, in both the WCF and OCF, elicitative questions were generally rare. They were slightly more common in the OCF, such as in Lucy’s case when the teacher indirectly explained the problem of concord by asking, ‘Is your subject in the plural or singular?’ This finding reveals an untapped potential for the complementarity between OCF and WCF. Though it might be challenging for feedback providers to ask good questions that elicit grammatical knowledge (instead of reformulation requests), doing so seems easier in OCF (e.g. Lyster & Ranta 1997). Moreover, OCF provides the additional opportunity to confirm a student’s answer to questions in which he or she is asked to fill in the blank. Such ‘elicit completion moves’ only occurred in Lucy’s OCF. Here, Lucy suggested ‘whom’ instead of ‘who’, and the teacher confirmed Lucy’s post-modified output. Indeed, Pica et al. (1989) posited that such transactional moves can lead to second language acquisition in over one-third of learner utterances. In summary, we suggest that elicitation moves and elicitative questions represent a particularly interesting strategy for turning CF into ‘feedback dialogues’ (Van der Schaaf et al. 2013:228).

7 Conclusion
This single-case study aimed to describe and analyse combinations of grammar feedback types in OCF and WCF. It discussed interesting examples of how a teacher educator might distribute and balance different feedback types in two feedback modes. Certain feedback types may prove more meaningful in OCF. For example, less direct CF and ‘reformulation requests’ and more ‘elicit completion moves’ and ‘elicitative questions’ may make the OCF more dialogical. More importantly, OCF served an important complementary function in terms of metalinguistic explanations and clarifications.

Concerning teacher education, the implications of this research are twofold: On the one hand, combining WCF and OCF may improve grammar instruction in general and grammar accuracy and feedback in particular. On the other, the present case may also function as an exemplary or best practice suggestion (Ferris 2014), showing student teachers what OCF can consist of, how useful and complementary it is to WCF and how to provide it.

Providing OCF in general and distributing feedback types between OCF and WCF in particular might prove challenging. We have not yet found the key to
unlocking the potential of the complementarity between OCF in writing conferences and WCF, which might enhance grammar teaching in teacher education. Thus, we advocate the need for further research, especially in the domains of written/oral combinations and feedback types, such as elicitations and metalinguistic feedback. Some teachers might not know about the various feedback forms available for ‘fine-tuning’ (Doughty 1994:97) their grammar feedback. Teachers might want to consider best practice suggestions (e.g. Ferris 2014), which recommend a higher use of elicitations, indirect feedback and varied feedback. Moreover, future research should also give a voice to those who provide feedback and those who wish to use it to improve their writing skills. Thus, we plan to carry out a second sub-study on the perceptions of both feedback providers and feedback recipients in EFL teacher education.

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Michel Cabot & Arne Kaldestad – ”The need to supplement written grammar...”

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Article 2

Unpacking Meaningful Grammar Feedback: An Analysis of EFL Student Teachers’ Feedback Preferences and Learning Moments

Michel Cabot (Oslo, Norway)

Abstract

Writing research has acknowledged the value of formative grammar feedback in English-as-a-foreign-language teacher writing education. Yet we know little about perceptions of the understanding and use of such meaningful feedback. To fill this research gap, two pilot interviews, ten semi-structured and four member-check interviews were carried out with twelve student teachers in Western Norway. To unpack feedback perceptions, these student teachers used two different essays as prompts (the first with written and oral feedback, the second without any feedback). The findings revealed that student teachers favoured feedback that pushed them cognitively and combined different feedback modes and types. Moreover, they commented positively on repetitive feedback with a high focus on accuracy. Student teachers’ awareness and the concreteness of the feedback given played important roles in the perception of learning moments. To discuss the findings, ecological-agentic theories were integrated with linguo-didactic theories. This study may inspire all those instructors who wish to develop their feedback practices.

Keywords: EFL feedback perceptions, EFL grammar feedback, written corrective feedback (WCF), conference feedback, EFL teacher education

1 Introduction

This article presents a qualitative study of student English teachers' perceptions of grammar feedback in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) writing as part of assessment for learning (AFL) or formative assessment (FA) activities. An essential element of AFL or FA is that student teachers actively use the provided feedback "to alter the gap between actual level and reference level" (Sadler 1989: 121). In other words, the meaningfulness or success of formative grammar feedback depends on the student teachers' understanding of and their ability to use the grammar comments provided. In this respect, weaknesses can explain why student teachers often make little use of feedback (e.g. Mackey, Gass & McDonough 2000). This makes it imperative to learn more about the reception of formative EFL grammar feedback in writing education, internationally as well as locally, in this case in Norway.
Ample research shows the positive benefits of grammar feedback, which justifies focusing more clearly on it in teacher writing education (e.g. Ellis, Sheen, Murakami & Takashima 2008). One benefit is that student teachers improve their texts in terms of accuracy at local levels or comprehensibility at global levels (Montgomery & Baker 2007). Another benefit is the general improvement of grammatical knowledge, i.e. metalinguistic (knowledge about language) and metalinguual knowledge (knowledge of metalanguage) (Berry 2005). In particular, the knowledge of basic terminology is a matter of international concern (e.g. Borg 2015).

Accordingly, the present study is informed by the following assertions:

- Meaningful grammar feedback may help student teachers not only to use the provided feedback for their own writing improvement but also for their own future teaching and development of feedback practices (procedural knowledge).
- These future teachers need to ensure they understand and know enough about grammar to improve their own and their students’ writing (declarative knowledge).

Against this background, it is important to extend our knowledge about students’ perceptions of feedback in EFL writing instruction. To this end, the present study investigates the relationship between feedback preferences and learning moments. It draws on ecological-agentic and linguo-didactic perspectives on learning as theoretical lenses. In the following sections, these concepts will be outlined before existing research is reviewed. The student teachers’ self-perceived characteristics of preferred grammar feedback and their perceptions of essential learning moments are presented after a description of the study’s design and methods. This study concludes with a discussion of meaningful EFL grammar feedback in teacher education.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Meaningful Feedback in an Ecological-Agentic Perspective of Learning

The current study takes place within a learning ecology framework. Van Lier defines learning ecology as an approach that looks

at the learning process, the actions and activities of teachers and learners, the multi-layered nature of interaction and language use, in all their complexity and as a network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting. (Van Lier 2010: 3)

In this context, written and oral feedback situations may represent different meaningful learning opportunities in a learning ecology and play a major role in writing development. More specifically, the present study uses theories on agency to analyse such meaningful learning situations (hereafter called learning moments).

Arguably, agency is a multifaceted term (e.g. Biesta & Tedder 2006). Van Lier (2010: 4) defines agency as "a movement, a change of state or direction, or even a lack of
movement where movement is expected”. This definition resembles one of the two conceptual perspectives of agency elaborated by Goller and Harteis (2017: 88): agency "as something individuals do" in contrast to agency "as a personal feature". Similarly, this research understands agency as a mainly situation-specific or contextual transaction between an actor, i.e. the feedback recipient, and a structure, i.e. the feedback situation itself. We can thus map an analysis of agency linked to grammar feedback as follows:

\[\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{AGENCY} & \text{Grammar Feedback} \\
\hline
\text{iterative} & \text{past} & \text{Feedback modes} \\
\text{practical-evaluative} & \text{present} & \text{Feedback types} \\
\text{projective} & \text{future} & \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

Figure 1: Complex Representation of Agency Based on Emirbayer & Mische (1998)

As illustrated above, the dynamic interplay between iterational elements (past habits), practical-evaluative elements (present judgment) and projective elements (future imagination) characterises the transaction between students and grammar feedback (Emirbayer & Mische 1998: 963). The present study uses this conceptualisation of agency as a reference point for in-depth interviews. It examines the above-mentioned three elements drawing on the insights from the informants’ perceptions of their first and second essays and their resulting thoughts about future writings.

2.2 Meaningful Feedback in a Linguo-Didactic Perspective

In contrast to ecological perspectives focusing more on interactions in a large setting, a linguo-didactic approach provides a more elaborate in-depth analysis of meaningful feedback at the sublevel. For example, meaningful formative feedback is not meaningful a priori but becomes meaningful to student teachers through the understanding of and the ability to use the feedback provided. It has a great deal in common with "fine-tuned feedback" (Han 2001: 584). Han describes fine-tuned feedback as a

process whereby the provider of corrective feedback (CF) tunes in to the true causal factors of an error and successfully brings the learner’s attention to the learning problem. (Han 2001: 584)

According to several researchers (e.g. Doughty 1994, Kepner 1991, Lee 2007, Lee, Mak & Burns 2015), there is still a relatively scarce amount of research on ‘fine-tuning’ feedback associated with EFL grammar as a part of a formative assessment. One reason might be that it is too ambitious to find the true causal factors of an error and
integrate them into our feedback. However, the very concept of attempting to fine-tune feedback is interesting because it makes feedback meaningful to the learners.

Furthermore, input-providing versus output-pushing feedback dichotomies (Ellis 2010: 338) are useful in our attempt to analyse feedback perceptions. For example, Lyster (2004) distinguishes between recasts (input-providing), which provide learners with corrected grammar mistakes, and elicitations (output-pushing), by which learners are asked to reformulate their utterances and correct them. The latter cases are particularly meaningful in oral conferencing.

In fact, Swain (2000) classifies three functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-formulation function, and the metalinguistic function. In the first function, English learners become aware of what they do not know or know only partially. This can occur when students suddenly discover that they cannot distinguish adverbs from adjectives, for example. In the second function, English learners have the opportunity to test out new structures or terminology related to error treatment (e.g. run-ons or concord) with the teacher. The third function refers to a reflective or cognitive process - that is, a negotiation over form and meaning. An illustrative example might be discussions between teachers and students on the change of meaning when using the infinitive or the gerund after verbs (e.g. ‘I remembered to do it’ vs ‘I remembered doing it’). Such ‘collaborative dialogues’ in oral conferencing are pushed-output situations which are beneficial for learning English.

3 Existing Research

Research related to meaningful grammar feedback looks into both content (grammar) and pedagogical (feedback) questions. Concerning content, Thapseen & Roehr’s (2015: 110) research reveals that university-level learners hold positive beliefs about the explicit teaching and learning of grammar. They consider grammar important for mastering the second language (L2), for writing in the L2, for accurate use of the L2 and for self-correction. Concerning pedagogical questions, several studies on feedback show that students believe feedback is helpful, and they use it to improve their L2 writing (e.g. Hyland & Hyland 2006, Straub 1997).

Other studies, however, reveal that learners often make little use of teacher feedback (e.g. Mackey, Gass & McDonough 2000: 296). These disparate results indicate that the problem of meaningful grammar feedback needs further exploration.

Furthermore, the present article’s definition of meaningful grammar feedback integrates studies on feedback types and modes. Regarding feedback types, students’ use of and preference for different types of feedback have been examined in several studies (e.g. Bitchener, Young & Cameron 2005, Liu 2009, Yoshida 2008). Most interestingly, Liu’s (2009) data - obtained through a questionnaire and interviews at a university in the United States - indicate that students expect error treatment to be more extensive or unfocused. In other words, they want the teacher to point out all grammar errors in their written corrective feedback (WCF). Furthermore, Yoshida (2008) used audio recordings and stimulated recall interviews in Australia to suggest that learners’ preferences involved clarifications and elicitations to work out the correct answers themselves.
Concerning feedback modes, some studies suggest that students give higher ratings on the helpfulness and success of oral corrective feedback (OCF) in conferences because written feedback sometimes appears ambiguous to learners (e.g. Bitchener, Young & Cameron 2005, Weissberg 2006, Yeh 2016). For example, Yeh (2016) collected data through questionnaires of 34 EFL college students from two English writing classes. The study indicates a generally positive experience of writing conferences, most significantly due to the frequent use of direct CF, i.e. providing the correct form. Whilst research on writing conferences remains relatively low (Cabot & Kaldestad 2019, Ferris 2014), studies focusing on student views, such as Yeh’s study, are even rarer.

Most of the above-mentioned studies vary in terms of results, research design and target language. However, fewer studies focus on specific aspects of feedback preferences and the phenomena of self-perceived essential learning moments. Furthermore, no study could be found that integrated ecological perspectives with linguo-didactic theories of grammar feedback. From our point of view, these research areas—learning ecologies and linguo-didactic theories in EFL—seem to exist separately. Research might benefit from a sharper focus on possible links between these two theory strands.

4 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate EFL student teachers’ perceptions of grammar feedback. More specifically, we are concerned with what role grammar feedback plays, and how it becomes meaningful in student teachers’ self-perceived learning ecologies. This study therefore addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the feedback that students prefer?

2. How do students link these preferences to learning moments in their writing development?

5 Design and Methods

5.1 Design and Procedures

In this study, a qualitative research design is used. The main data consists of two pilot interviews, ten semi-structured in-depth interviews and four member-check interviews in which 12 students – enrolled in 2017 at a university college in Western Norway – discussed and reflected on the role of meaningful feedback and possible learner uptake. These in-depth interviews used two different literary essays of 750 to 1,100 words as prompts. The essay subjects were the short story The Daughters of the Late Colonel, the novels Things Fall Apart, Angela’s Ashes, 1984 or the play Macbeth. The Essay 1 submissions included written corrective feedback (WCF) and oral corrective feedback (OCF), whilst the Essay 2 submissions, written two months later, came without any grammar feedback.
Primarily based on the interviews, the present self-report study aims to analyse students’ reflections on their past (Essay 1), present (Essay 2) and future writing. The interviews may thus constitute qualified verbal report data with a particular focus on "introspective and retrospective self-observation" (Cohen 1998: 34). Due to the different time frames between the different data sources, the reflective interviews may also represent stimulated recall (SR) interviews with a delayed recall. Consisting of multiple data sources (i.e. essay 2 without any feedback and essay 1 with WCF) in addition to audio recordings and transcripts from OCF (on essay 1), the stimulus of the interviews can be qualified as strong (Gass & Mackey 2017: 52).

5.2 Participants

The following table provides an overview of the participant sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Teachers</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fourth-year students in teacher education – EFL was their third subject (in addition to pedagogy); approximately 11 years of EFL at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 males: Brad, Dennis, John, Roger, Tom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 females: Eva, Faith, Grace, Pauline, Ruth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Profile of the Informants in the Study

All student teachers, for whom pseudonyms are used here, had attended Norwegian schools where they had approximately 11 years of EFL education. The teacher taught grammar and literature to the same group of student teachers. To enhance ecological validity, a 15-credit course in English literature, culture and civilisation was chosen, in which students customarily write an essay every spring term. Therefore, the study approximated the real world by not intervening in the regular teaching of EFL teacher education.

5.3 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Ellis’s (2009) and Lyster & Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies on feedback types and modes served as a starting point to ask questions. Accordingly, the informants were asked about their perceptions of the following corrective feedback (CF):

- focused vs. unfocused CF (correcting fewer or more than five error categories)
- Direct CF (providing the correct form) vs. Indirect CF (no correction but only indicating the existence of an error)
- Metalinguistic CF (use of metalanguage)
- elicitation-based CF (allowing student to fill in the blank, asking a question to elicit knowledge or asking to reformulate)
The interview guide (Appendix A) contained three parts. The first included questions related to Essay 1’s WCF (i.e. marginal, in-text and end comments) and OCF. The second part dealt with the perceptions of positive and negative uptake in Essay 2. The third one aimed at mapping and describing the projective future after writing these two essays. In all parts, essential moments of learning were elicited. Guiding questions were only used in the member-check interviews to confirm the findings.

5.4 Analysis

For data analysis of the present "narrative research" (Creswell & Poth 2018: 67), a qualitative codebook using NVivo 11 was developed. This codebook on data sources facilitated a comparison across time. The coding may therefore qualify as "longitudinal coding" (Saldaña 2015: 236). More specifically, the codes fell into written vs. oral, direct vs. indirect, focused vs. unfocused, metalinguistic and elicitation-based CF. The coding used in the present study was both open and axial. For example, the answers to the question when and why students valued direct feedback came directly from the data. Thus, these findings mainly derive from open coding. However, the description of the relationship between moments of meaningful feedback, such as focused and unfocused feedback, came from the researcher’s interpretation. In this case, coding was more axial because—as illustrated in Figure 2—categories and concepts were related to each other via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking (Silverman 2014: 112).

The current study has limitations that affect the interpretation or generalisation of the results:

- Only a single course with one teacher, ten students and two essays underwent scrutiny. Thus, the study does not provide an exhaustive picture of Norwegian teacher education in general, or more specifically, all grammar feedback perceptions within these students’ learning ecologies.

- Self-reports may frequently have validity problems because the evidence comes from what the informant thinks and remembers (Mays & Pope 1995).

- There may exist possible causality issues relating to the description of learner uptake, which may be influenced by a plethora of factors, e.g. time, context, topic of the essay and preparation.

To a certain degree, the present enquiry establishes theoretical validity by relating the data to Emirbayer & Mische’s (1998) temporal-relational conceptualisation of agency and Ellis’s (2009) and Lyster & Ranta’s (1997) taxonomies on feedback. In addition, three techniques enhanced the qualitative data analysis of this study: testing rival explanations, negative cases and triangulations (Patton 1999). Rival explanations arose when the interviewees contrasted WCF (e.g. written metalinguistic end comments) to OCF (e.g. oral metalinguistic explanations). Furthermore, this study searched for negative cases by focusing not only on reasons for appreciating but also for not appreciating certain feedback types and modes.

Finally, this study employed triangulation methods, which involved the use of three different kinds of secondary data: analysis of WCF (Essay 1), OCF (Essay 1) and
learner uptake (Essay 2). In addition, the researcher discussed the ten SR interviews with peers and validated them via two pilot interviews and four member-checking interviews, thus improving the credibility and reliability of this research (Silverman 2014: 76).

6 Findings

This section presents student teachers’ reflections on the relationship between the feedback received and their writing development extending from Essay 1 (with written and oral CF) and Essay 2 (without any CF) to self-perceived future essays.

In terms of general findings, it is worth mentioning that all students considered both WCF and OCF on eight different errors (word classes, incomplete and unclear sentences, run-ons, tense shifts, apostrophes, prepositions and concord; Appendix B) meaningful, especially the combination of OCF and WCF. However, they asked for more unfocused CF in in-text comments, more metalinguistic feedback in the margin and more elicitative questions in both WCF and OCF. They commented negatively on the use of indirect CF, and positively on the focused end comments. The interviewees were satisfied with all oral metalinguistic feedback but required more metalinguistic feedback combined with elicitations.

The first part of the following sections elaborates on the characteristics of the preferred feedback (Research Question 1). The second part describes how students link these feedback preferences to essential learning moments in their writing development (Research Question 2).

6.1 Characteristics of Preferred Feedback

In general, students valued several aspects of the teacher’s feedback practices. The following table summarises the feedback characteristics that student teachers preferred (Table 2).

As shown in the table above, most student teachers – with a minimal average score of two coding references – indicated five aspects of feedback preferences. Real-world writing had the lowest ($X = 2$) and understandability the highest ($X = 4.2$) average score.

Concerning the first aspect, the cognitive pushes code was used when student teachers valued being urged to think and reflect on grammar issues. Here, elicitative CF seemed to be more successful in OCF than in WCF. Examples from three interviews are used to illustrate this issue.

The student teacher Faith thought the OCF "forced her somehow to think" when the teacher raised his voice to repeat the wrong relative pronoun "*who*" in the sentence, "He doesn't really regret it because he needs it more than *who* he stole from." Faith guessed "whom" instead of "who" and had to discuss the difference between relative
Table 2: Characteristics of Preferred Feedback
(Note: the numbers relate to coding occurrences in NVivo)

pronouns used as subjects or as objects with the teacher. The informant considered this beneficial for her learning.

The student teacher Tom appreciated the use of a question to explain the problem of the written comment "concord" when the teacher asked him "Is your subject in the plural or singular?"

Brad, on the other hand, remembered that at two different instances in Essay 1, the teacher asked him "What is the difference between 'reluctant' and 'reluctance' here and 'choice' and 'choose' there?" Such questions made Brad reflect on the use of different word classes throughout his essay in a more global approach.

The second aspect, i.e. complementarity, intertwined with understandability. For example, Grace described these phenomena when commenting on the benefit of metalinguistic oral conferencing:

Interviewer: Is there something that you did not understand in the written feedback but that became much more understandable in the conversation you had with the teacher [during the writing conference]?

Grace: Yes, for example, the feedback 'incomplete sentence' – you see that the sentence is completely wrong. And I get the opportunity to reformulate the sentences and to check my suggested corrections with the teacher. We talked
a lot about 'incomplete sentences' and 'missing verbals'. I understand now [after the writing conference] that this is very common in oral but not in written speech.

Similarly, Brad shared Grace's opinion and seemed to appreciate OCF because the teacher explained the mistakes to him using other examples, which greatly increased his understanding of different word classes.

Interestingly, some student teachers linked complementarity to the feedback types direct or indirect CF (providing corrections or only indicating that an error exists). In fact, most student teachers thought it was important to provide the right answers during oral conferencing. For example, Grace posited that oral direct feedback actually improved her text because the feedback was more concrete and accurate. She admitted that written indirect feedback alone would often not have any effect on her because she was too lazy to look up things. Many student teachers shared Grace's feelings and qualified indirect feedback as 'frustrating'. Accordingly, Eva provided an interesting example of a problematic use of indirect WCF in the case of wrong -ing forms. Here, the direct feedback during OCF compensated for the indirect feedback in the WCF. Eva describes the benefit of OCF as follows:

Interviewer: Was there anything that you did not understand in the WCF but understood first after the oral feedback?

Eva: There were these double-waved underlinings, for example, under the word "becoming" here in the sentence, "Malachy's storytelling inspired Frank to write stories himself, and to becoming an author". Indirect feedback is not a good choice here in my opinion. In this case, it was absolutely essential for me to have oral conferencing because the teacher provided the correct form and explained in more detail why it was not possible to use the -ing form in this sentence.

In contrast to Eva's perceptions, Ruth was the only student teacher who understood that the use of indirect feedback might increase learning:

Ruth: Here, the teacher underlined the verb have in my sentence "Everybody have to take choices". We have talked a lot about concord problems and the fact that we have to be even more careful in English because Norwegian does not have many verb endings. It is easy for my foreign boyfriend to learn jeg har, du har, han har... I understood at once what was wrong in this sentence. When you can easily guess the correction, indirect feedback might be a good choice. It gives you the opportunity to correct it yourself and to reflect about it.

According to Ruth, this means that the feedback provider has to gauge student teacher's understanding in advance or somehow make sure that the right answers are not too difficult to guess. Otherwise, the use of indirect feedback will become ineffective.

Regarding the third aspect, i.e. iterativity, the informants qualified the recurrent use of terms, such as concord, which the teacher had explained several times, as beneficial to their learning. Such use of repeated metalinguistic explanations was necessary according to Pauline because it led to more learning uptake (Appendix B) in other writing activities.
Concerning the fourth aspect, i.e. real-world writing, most students stressed the importance of unfocused CF (correcting more than five error categories). Grace confirmed these positive feelings:

Researcher: How challenging or difficult was it when the teacher went through each single error in the text?

Grace: It wasn’t challenging – not at all. We students here at a university college, we even expect teacher comments on every single error. As future teachers, we have to be able to write texts without any mistakes.

This aspect of linking the feedback to their future writing as teachers was particularly important. Student teachers want to be prepared for real-life situations, and in this sense, the use of unfocused feedback relates to product-oriented assessment. Conversely, Faith emphasised the importance of focused CF in the end comments:

Faith: I think it is smart to provide end comments because you somehow get a summary of what you struggle with, and this is concrete ... for example, the fact that here, I have to use more full stops. It is very smart to emphasise what you can improve in the next texts you write.

This example shows that some student teachers appreciated focused CF because they thought it helped them to avoid future errors. Here, assessment seems to be process-oriented. In sum, both the product-oriented approach with unfocused CF and the process-oriented approach with focused CF were meaningful to student teachers.

The last aspect, i.e. understandability, had the highest average score in the number of coding references (X = 4.2). Interestingly, most student teachers linked understandability to metalinguistic CF (using metalanguage). Students qualified such feedback as "very useful" when they were acquainted with the terms or when the teacher used self-explanatory terms (e.g. sentence too long) in both WCF and OCF.

In the following section, the research scope will be narrowed down to an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the above-mentioned characteristics of the feedback that the student teachers of this study preferred and self-perceived learning moments.

6.2 Perceptions of Learning Moments

In terms of general findings, it is worth mentioning that all student teachers reported on essential and non-essential learning moments both in relation to Essay 1 (with WCF and OCF) and Essay 2 (without WCF and OCF). Those moments in which student teachers qualified the feedback situation as beneficial to their learning, were labeled as "essential". Concerning possible factors affording such moments, the following table illustrates the NVivo frequency count identified in the interviews with student teachers:
Table 3: Factors Affording Essential Learning Moments  
(Note: the numbers relate to coding occurrences in NVivo)

As can be seen, with more than two coding references ($\bar{x} = 2.9$), the student teachers predominantly linked essential learning moments to the following three self-perceived factors: awareness, concreteness and sustainability. Grace described the first factor, awareness, in the following words:

**Interviewer:** Do you actually remember that you checked Essay 2 on incomplete sentences before submitting it?  
**Grace:** Yes, indeed. I actually took away several sentences because I finally saw the errors. The interesting fact is this awareness while writing, the fact that you pay more attention to it.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe this moment when you revised your text and actually used the feedback?  
**Grace:** I finally understood what an incomplete sentence is. It was like shouting "Eureka, finally I understand it!" My learning somehow jumped.

As expressed in the excerpt above, Grace used the term awareness herself in the interview to describe how she experienced an essential learning moment. Here, the perception of an essential learning moment showed an interesting link to a possible learner uptake between Essay 1 and Essay 2 (Appendix B). Grace had indeed managed to reduce the number of incomplete sentences from seven to three.

Faith, on the other hand, reported a lack of awareness, which possibly explains her negative learner uptake when using the apostrophe ('s-genitive) (Appendix B). During the interview, she realised that one of the reasons for her negative learner uptake could be that she had not concentrated enough during the OCF and thus had not really understood the metalinguistic CF provided in Essay 1.
However, Faith reported a second factor that led to essential learning moments:

**Faith:** I was very embarrassed when I discovered that I wrote "I" with small letters until now, at university college. I read in the margin, "capital letter". Why on earth did nobody tell me that before? Finally, I think I wrote "I" correctly in the second essay. It is very important that feedback is concrete and that we correct mistakes instead of only underlining them.

As seen above, Faith used the adjective concrete in the interview and thus concreteness was coded as a possible factor, similarly to other cases where the informants used synonyms for the adjective concrete. In fact, concreteness had the highest score of coding references ($\chi = 4.2$) in all interviews. Interestingly, student teachers often mentioned direct and metalinguistic feedback to substantiate concreteness.

The third factor related to the particular use of unfocused and focused feedback. It was labeled sustainability when students linked their perceptions of past or present learning moments to future learning needs. An example from Ruth's interview illustrates this point:

**Interviewer:** But do you see any advantage of providing grammar feedback when we teachers comment on a text?

**Ruth:** Yes, undoubtedly – especially when we went through all comments during the writing conference mistake by mistake. This was very useful. I think this was one of the reasons for having fewer mistakes in the second essay. This is what we will have to do as teachers. We will have to be able to provide good explanations on every single error, even spontaneously. He trained us very well in providing good feedback comments to future students.

As the above excerpt shows, unfocused feedback might prepare student teachers for providing meaningful feedback in the future. Here, the focus is product-oriented because the final performance of a future feedback provider is at stake.

Conversely, Roger thought focused CF provoked other interesting learning moments. He emphasised grammar checks before submitting Essay 2, in which he tried to consider all the issues pinpointed in the WCF and OCF of Essay 1:

**Interviewer:** Are there any concrete grammatical explanations provided by your teacher you did use while writing the second essay?

**Roger:** Yes, I tried to avoid these incomplete sentences. I tried to make these sentences more complete, for example, by checking whether they had a subject and a verb. I think that the focused end comments have helped me to reduce the numbers of mistakes in the second essay. And it will help me in the future. It is like a "tool kit".

Therefore, a process-oriented approach standing in contrast to the above-mentioned product-oriented approach might be equally important. In other words, the future feedback provider is a learner himself, and he has to develop his EFL grammatical accuracy. On the one hand, the question is whether student teachers first have to improve their own grammatical accuracy to become good feedback providers (i.e. a process approach). On the other hand, this process may take place contempora-
neously with product-oriented assessment in which the student teacher learns how to provide good feedback by knowing and understanding all the correct answers. The data provided by the present study do not give an answer to this highly complex question, but they convincingly reveal the fact that students considered both approaches as meaningful for any future writing improvement.

In the following sections, the findings will be discussed in relation to those characteristics of feedback preferences and to perceptions of essential and non-essential learning moments.

7 Discussion

The current study revealed three main findings concerning characteristics of feedback preferences (Research Question 1) and perceptions of learning moments (Research Question 2):

- The findings indicate a generally high appreciation of direct and metalinguistic feedback because student teachers seldom made the effort to look up grammar issues marked with indirect feedback, and metalanguage seemed to increase concreteness.

- Most student teachers greatly appreciated the use of elicitations because of cognitive pushes.

- All student teachers liked both focused and unfocused CF because they expected the feedback to help them improve their grammatical accuracy and to include all errors and mistakes, as is the case with extensive proofreading in the real world.

Concerning Research Question 2, many student teachers reported on essential learning moments associated with metalinguistic, direct and unfocused feedback. The following two sections shed light on student teachers’ perceptions through two lenses: an ecological and a linguo-didactic perspective of learning.

7.1 Ecological Issues of Meaningful or Non-Meaningful Feedback

This study examines meaningful and non-meaningful feedback in relation to feedback types and modes, and the relationship between specific aspects of feedback preferences and self-perceived learning moments. These learning moments represent perceptions of "a movement, a change of state or direction, or even a lack of movement where movement is expected" (Van Lier 2010: 4) in the student teachers’ learning ecologies. As stated above, three self-perceived factors provided learning moments. In this context, it is interesting to note that two of these factors (sustainability and concreteness) relate to the feedback, whilst one factor (awareness) relates to the student teacher. In other words, learning moments are mainly situation-specific and involve both the feedback recipient and the feedback situation (Figure 1). Such learning moments are of particular interest when they interact between different
situations and thus become meaningful in student teachers' learning ecologies. These interactions between meaningful learning moments are an essential element of Van Lier’s (2010) definition of learning ecologies. Figure 2 below provides an overview of such interrelated learning moments afforded by feedback types in the student teachers’ learning ecologies of this study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past (Essay 1)</th>
<th>Present (Essay 2)</th>
<th>Future Essays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WGF</td>
<td>OCF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Re-activated WCF/OCF</td>
<td>Re-activated WCF/OCF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfocused In-text CF</td>
<td>Unfocused CF</td>
<td>Unfocused CF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused CF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic CF</td>
<td>Metalinguistic CF</td>
<td>Metalinguistic CF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct CF</td>
<td>Direct CF</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Meaningful Learning Moments

Figure 2: Traces of Interrelated Learning Moments Afforded by Feedback Types in Learning Ecologies

This draws on the insights from the learner uptake analysis (Appendix B), the informants’ perceptions of their past and present essays and their resulting thoughts about future writings. Figure 2 thus illustrates possible interactions of learning moments afforded by some feedback types (e.g. focused vs. unfocused, direct vs. indirect or metalinguistic) in the past, present and future.

All perceptions were categorised as meaningful CF when student teachers qualified the feedback as essential to their learning (in green and violet). In contrast to meaningful contexts, the red fields indicate non-meaningful learning moments afforded by feedback that student teachers – according to the interviews – probably would not re-activate in the present and future. For example, Eva considered indirect CF as non-meaningful in WCF. She did not understand comments such as the -ing form of the verb become in the sentence Malachy’s storytelling inspired Frank to write stories himself, and to becoming an author'.

Concerning meaningful feedback, Figure 2 distinguishes between the subcategories meaningful pushed (in green) and meaningful agentic CF (in violet). Meaningful pushed CF presents interactions in only one or two temporal dimensions, whilst meaningful agentic CF regroups interactions in all three dimensions, i.e. past, present and future essays. For example in terms of meaningful pushed CF, student teachers mainly characterised metalinguistic CF (e.g. concord errors) as beneficial to their learning. Meaningful pushed CF made the feedback of Essay 1 more understandable and facilitated grammar checks before they submitted Essay 2 (Appendix B: learner uptake analysis). Moreover, student teachers commented positively on direct CF, which helped them write capital letters for nationalities, months or the personal
pronoun *i* in Essay 2. The latter perceptions align with Yeh’s (2016) study, indicating a strong preference for direct CF.

However, perceptions of learning moments afforded by unfocused and focused CF in all three temporal dimensions were qualified as meaningful agentic CF (Figure 2: violet fields). In this case, student teachers added projective elements of the future to iterative elements in the past (e.g. awareness) and practical-evaluative elements in the present (e.g. concreteness). Thus, they elaborated agency (Emirbayer & Mische 1998). Two arguments can illustrate such meaningful agentic CF.

First, most informants (except Brad and Tom) deemed unfocused CF necessary because they thought it helped them focus on accuracy in Essay 2 and would help them in future writings. The argument here was that future teachers have to be able to write texts without any mistakes in real-world writing situations (product-oriented feedback). Notably, according to the data, student teachers did not perceive unfocused feedback as something harmful, especially not in dialogic oral writing conferences subsequent to WCF. They required even more such error treatment. In this sense, the findings of the present study corroborate Liu’s (2009) research suggesting that students expected more unfocused error treatment.

Second, the student teachers considered focused CF as equally meaningful agentic because they received a summary of grammar challenges in the end comments. One example here concerns Roger’s perceptions of a possible learner uptake in terms of incomplete sentences (Appendix B). He thought he had the opportunity to use such focused end comments as a “tool kit” to solve similar problems in the future (process-oriented feedback). This analysis of student teachers’ perceptions aligns with Carless, Salter, Yang & Lam’s interesting definition of the term *sustainable feedback*:

> dialogic processes and activities which can support and inform the student on the current [emphasis added] task, whilst also developing the ability to self-regulate performance on future [emphasis added] tasks. (Carless, Salter, Yang & Lam 2011: 397)

### 7.2 Linguo-Didactic Issues of Meaningful or Non-Meaningful Feedback

In contrast to ecological perspectives focusing more clearly on interactions in a large setting, a linguo-didactic perspective analyses the findings more at the sublevel. Here, both WCF and OCF seemed to create many learning moments. With a respective average of $\bar{x} = 4.2$ and $\bar{x} = 4.9$, coding references, understandability (an aspect of preferred feedback) and concreteness (a factor affording learning moments) seemed to have the highest scores. Interestingly, the informants often mentioned metalinguistic feedback when reflecting on understandability and concreteness during the interviews. For example, Faith thought teachers should provide concrete feedback and write "capital letter" in the margin when they read *i* in a student teacher’s essay. Most student teachers preferred such metalinguistic feedback to indirect feedback, which they considered non-meaningful.

Other interesting aspects affording learning moments relate to the highly frequent use of “fine-tuned feedback” (Han 2001: 584) in the OCF. Two excerpts can illustrate such feedback. First, in Grace’s OCF, the teacher explained the problem of missing verbs
in 'incomplete sentences'. In this context, the feedback mentioned some possible reasons for making this mistake by emphasising that incomplete sentences are frequently used in oral speech and that we often confuse oral English with written English.

Another good example of fine-tuning feedback was that the teacher explained Ruth that *concord* is a common problem for Norwegians because Norwegian is a low-inflectional language with respect to conjugation. In other words, Norwegian does not have many verb endings, and this makes it difficult to learn other foreign languages which have more verb endings, such as the third person -s in English. The iterativity of such feedback possibly increases student teachers’ language awareness during the writing process.

Furthermore, Ellis’s (2010) dichotomy between input-providing and output-pushing CF is of particular interest. WCF shares many aspects of input-providing feedback because the learners mainly receive corrections. Such an approach has been found to be meaningful in some studies (e.g. Hyland & Hyland 2006) in which students used feedback to improve their L2 grammar. However, OCF can be more output-pushing or elicitative when it directs students to reformulate and self-correct. Yoshiida’s (2008) study suggests a preference for such feedback. Though very rare in the present study, it occurred in the case of Faith, for example. During conferencing, she guessed *whom* instead of *who* in her sentence *He doesn’t really regret it because he needs it more than who he stole from*.

Accordingly, Swain’s (2000) output hypothesis was used to provide a more elaborate in-depth analysis of the general helpfulness and success of WCF combined with OCF. One reason for this success may lie in the fact that such subsequent writing conferences resemble metatalks with a high focus on the metacognitive function of output. In other words, subsequent oral feedback situations have an advantage because all three functions of output are present. For example, Grace pinpointed that she easily recognised the “incomplete sentences” (*noticing function*) with the marginal comments and the teacher helping her actively during the conference. Moreover, she could reformulate the sentence correctly (*testing hypothesis*) in front of her teacher, and she and her teacher talked a lot about incomplete sentences and missing verbs (*metalinguistic phase*) during the OCF.

In contrast to this, the feedback receiver in a written feedback situation only goes through a mental and individual noticing-the-gap process without any help from the teacher and does not necessarily have an opportunity to make hypotheses which oral conferencing can help to confirm.

8 Conclusion

The present study aimed to analyse grammar feedback perceptions from both ecological and linguo-didactic perspectives. It discussed illustrative examples of how student teachers perceived feedback types and modes in their writing development. Many student teachers reported on agentic moments in both WCF and OCF. For example, they finally understood how to identify an incomplete sentence. Such moments showed them how they could avoid such errors. Most importantly, all in-
formants greatly appreciated the OCF because it constituted a cognitive "metatalk" (Swain 2000).

The findings of this study offer a number of pedagogical implications which may be of relevance to EFL grammar teaching.

First, it appears pertinent to emphasise the importance of using varied feedback types and modes which can create important learning moments in student teachers' learning development.

Second, learning ecologies may include direct and unfocused feedback in higher education, in contrast to best-practice suggestions (e.g. Ferris 2014).

Third, the findings demonstrate the role of metalinguistic feedback, which often occurs as fine-tuning and is thus meaningful feedback. Such feedback is important because student teachers can bring the feedback they receive and the knowledge about grammar mistakes they develop during their teacher education into their own future teaching.

In sum, the success of formative grammar feedback depends on how student teachers use the feedback they are offered. In this sense, the focus of the present study on self-perceived aspects of feedback preferences and essential learning moments afforded by written and oral feedback may inspire student teachers and teacher educators who wish to develop their feedback practices. However, more longitudinal research is needed so as to further examine the problem of feedback use (e.g. Jonsson 2013). This is of particular importance for teacher education, which needs to focus more clearly on the link between feedback use and meaningful grammar feedback.

Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Guide

General Questions

• Preparation / time: How much time did it take to write the two essays? How difficult was it to write the essays?

• Language: Did you have any language-related challenges? Did you use a dictionary or other digital tools?

Specific Questions

Mapping CF in the Iterative Past (Essay 1):

Written Corrective Feedback
• Marginal comments
o Metalinguistic CF: What kind of metalinguistic CF was beneficial for you? Which CF was difficult/easy to understand? Did you like/dislike it? Why?

o Focused vs unfocused CF: Do you think that the teacher provided too many/not enough comments? Why or why not?

• In-text comments
  o Direct CF: Was there enough direct CF or not? Why did you like/dislike direct CF?
  o Indirect CF: Was there enough indirect CF or not? Why did you like/dislike indirect CF? How much effort did you put into finding the correct answers?
  o Focused vs unfocused CF: Should the teacher have corrected even more or not? How important is it for you that all mistakes are corrected? Was the CF focused enough or not?

• End comments
  o Evaluation of CF: What did you do with the end comments? What do you think of the end comments? How beneficial were these?
  o Focused/intensive CF: Was the CF focused enough?

**Oral Corrective Feedback**

• Warm-up questions: How useful was the preparation time before the OCF? Did you take some notes during the conferencing? What did you do with the oral (and written) comments after the conference?

• Iterational element/iterative past/selective attention: Which concrete feedback was mentioned several times, both in WCF and OCF? Which oral comments do you remember and why? Which WCF did you understand better thanks to the OCF?

• Metalinguistic CF: Which metalinguistic terms were difficult to understand? Why or why not?

• Level of CF: Which CF was difficult or easy to understand? Which things were still unclear after the OCF?

• Ecological transitions: Which concrete and essential learning moments do you remember from the OCF? Do you remember any moments that were not beneficial to your learning?

**Mapping the Practical-Evaluative Present (Essay 2)**

• Warm-up questions: Did you go through your text before submitting your essay? How much time did you use for this grammar check-up?

• Uptake: As I can see here in this essay, you have improved/not improved the following three problems pinpointed in the end comments of the first essay:
  1. ...
  2. ...
  3. .....

  Why and how did you improve? Or why did you not improve?

• Practical evaluative/problematization: What are your main grammatical challenges? Why are these issues challenging?
• Agentic moment / ecological transitions: Are there any concrete grammatical explanations (from the teaching or the provided WCF or OCF) that you considered very useful and used while writing the essay? Are there any unuseful explanations? Please elaborate on these.

Mapping the Projective Future

• Warm-up questions: Do you think that you will like or dislike English grammar or grammar feedback in the future? Why or why not?

• Projective / narrative construction and hypothetical resolution: Which mistakes will you make less in the future? How do you want to improve your grammar? What do you want to improve?

Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Code 1</th>
<th>Code 2</th>
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Learner Uptake Between Essay 1 and 2
(Notes: (-) Negative uptake; (=) No uptake; (+) Positive uptake)
References


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Article 3

Abstract

We know far too little about grammar feedback practices and motivations behind feedback decisions in English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education. This article presents a qualitative study on this issue based on 12 experienced EFL lecturers. The findings reveal that many lecturers used metalinguistic, indirect, local and unfocused feedback. Few lecturers, however, used oral and elicitative feedback extensively. Their choices of strategies were motivated by multifaceted individual and contextual factors. The individual factors were positive beliefs about metalanguage and autonomy-promoting strategies and negative beliefs about elicitations. The contextual factors included feedback-providing and feedback-receiving situations, formal and informal knowledge-sharing contexts and the use of common marking code systems. Combining theories on learning ecologies with teacher cognitions, this study contributes to the discussions about how such context-dependent and individual factors can shape and improve grammar feedback practices.
in teacher education. As such, this study highlights a clear need for best practice recommendations specific to EFL writing teacher education.

**Keywords:** grammar feedback; teacher beliefs; feedback ecologies; teacher education, EFL
1. Introduction

Grammar feedback is an essential but much discussed part of language pedagogy. Experienced English as a foreign language (EFL) lecturers have diverse views on feedback modes (e.g. oral vs. written feedback) and types (e.g. global vs. local feedback) and, intentionally or unintentionally, follow best practice recommendations to varying degrees (e.g. Ferris 2014). Freeman (2002: 1) suggested that ‘teachers’ mental lives represent the hidden side of teaching’, that is to say, teachers’ beliefs about what grammar feedback is influences their feedback practices. These individual beliefs are a ‘tacit, personally-held, practical system of mental constructs held by teachers which are dynamic—that is defined and redefined on the basis of educational and professional experiences throughout teachers’ lives’ (Borg 2015: 40). The defining and redefining of such individual constructs, however, does not occur in a vacuum. In fact, it takes place in learning ecologies, i.e. a set of contexts ‘comprised of a unique configuration of activities, material resources, relationships, and the interactions that emerge from them’ (Barron 2006: 195). In other words, since context-dependent and individual factors can influence feedback practices, research drawing on context-dependent learning ecologies and
individual teacher-cognitions can be particularly useful. Given the need for such research, it is therefore surprising that we still know little about how and why lecturers make specific grammar feedback decisions (e.g. Gurzynski-Weiss 2014). This is particularly interesting in Norwegian EFL teacher education where lecturers need to know how to adapt their feedback to students who often struggle with poor writing skills (e.g. Rødnes, Hellekjær & Vold 2014), despite the generally high level of English proficiency in Norway (Education First, 2019).

This article presents a qualitative study of EFL lecturers’ perceptions of grammar feedback in writing teacher education. More specifically, the aim of the study is to investigate the corrective feedback practices of 12 experienced lecturers at six university colleges in Norway, along with the reasoning behind their choices. After reviewing the existing research and the theoretical framework, the article then presents the study’s findings. Finally, it discusses the lecturers’ reasoning behind their feedback decisions from individual teacher-cognition and context-dependant ecological perspectives.
2. *Existing Research*

In this study, grammar feedback was limited to written and oral (lecturer–student) follow-up comments on inaccuracies at the word, sentence and text levels. Such corrective feedback (CF) is particularly important in EFL writing teacher education because it helps student teachers not only to improve their own writing, but also forms their future teaching and development of feedback practices (e.g. Freeman, Orzulak & Morrisey 2009; Lee 2010). A large body of research supports the positive impact of corrective grammar feedback (e.g. Pawlak 2013, 2020), in particular the provision of written (e.g. Guo 2015; Shintani, Ellis & Suzuki 2014) and negotiated oral feedback in response to written errors (e.g. Bitchener, Young & Cameron 2005; Nassaji 2017; Yeh 2016). To analyse written and oral feedback, Ferris (2014), Ellis (2009) and Lyster and Ranta (1997) suggested the following feedback strategies:

- global (correcting grammar above the sentence level)
- focused (correcting fewer than five error categories)
- oral (using teacher-student conferences)
- indirect (making no corrections, i.e. only indicating the existence of an error)
- metalinguistic (the frequent use of metalanguage)
- elicitative (allowing the student to fill in the blank, asking a question to elicit knowledge or asking the student to reformulate)

Few studies examine how EFL lecturers apply these six feedback strategies from contextual perspectives (e.g. Miller 2005; Thoms 2014), whereas the literature on individual perspectives such as research on teacher beliefs—in the present study framed as EFL lecturers’ beliefs—is more extensive (e.g. Basturkmen 2012; Borg 2015).

In fact, many studies on post-secondary L2 education have provided relevant findings on individual beliefs and practices of the aforementioned feedback modes and types. First, many teachers believe in the corrective force of oral feedback in response to writing because such feedback becomes predominantly student-centred and facilitates clarifications and scaffolding (e.g. Nassaji 2017; Weissberg 2006). Second, teachers seem to provide more feedback on local rather than global issues (e.g. Ferris 2014; Montgomery & Baker 2007). Third, teachers do not act upon their beliefs about fluency, but tend to favour accuracy and, thus, use unfocused feedback (e.g. Diab 2005b; Schulz 2001). Fourth,
positive and negative experiences in the past can emerge as contributing factors to emphasise or not emphasise metalinguistic feedback (e.g. Borg 1999; Johnston & Goettsch 2000). Fifth, the use of indirect feedback can be a result of one’s own negative experiences of being corrected as a learner (Golombek 1998). However, some teachers might use it less because it is sometimes difficult to only point out mistakes without correcting them (Diab 2005a). Last, many teachers strongly believe that elicitations efficiently promote discovery learning because such tactics require the students to find the correct forms themselves (e.g. Amrhein & Nassaji 2010; Nassaji 2017).

Despite this large body of research, many researchers (e.g. Crusan, Plakans & Gebril 2016; Lee 2010; Nassaji & Kartchava 2020) agree that we know little about how individual feedback beliefs and practices relate to contextual factors in EFL writing teacher education. To investigate this issue, the present study therefore combines the concept of context-dependant learning ecologies (e.g. Van Lier 2010) with individual teacher-cognitions (e.g. Borg 2015).
3. *Theoretical Framework*

3.1 *An ecological approach to grammar feedback*

The concept of learning ecologies can help analyse the multitude of ever-changing contextual factors that influence lecturers’ choices of CF strategies. It comprises all things within the space created for learning, i.e. people, materials and resources (Barron 2006). Van Lier (2010: 3) defines it as an approach that examines ‘the multi-layered nature of interaction and language use, in all their complexity and as a network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting’. The present study draws on Van Lier’s (2010) ecology concept from language learning because even experienced EFL lecturers are learners themselves, as it is the case in the present study. In fact, lecturers learn to provide good grammar feedback in multiple settings. When the lecturers move from one setting to another, they need to adapt the feedback to new settings, in what is called *ecological transitions*. Bronfenbrenner (1979: 26) used this term to describe crucial moments of a learner’s trajectory. In other words, changing contexts can create essential learning moments in a lecturer’s feedback career which can help us analyse and understand EFL lecturers’ feedback practices and the motivations behind feedback decisions.
3.2 A teacher cognition approach to grammar feedback

In addition to the contextual influences described, individual factors also impact on lecturers’ decisions related to providing CF. For example, prior educational and professional experiences may influence lecturers’ current feedback practices. Sanchez and Borg (2014: 45) used the term *language teacher cognition* to describe ‘the networks of beliefs, knowledge, and thoughts which L2 teachers hold about all the aspects of their profession and draw on in their work’. Despite several explanations for possible inconsistencies between individual beliefs and practices (Borg & Sanchez 2020), many researchers (e.g. Basturkmen 2012) advocate that experienced teachers, framed as EFL lecturers in the present study, choose grammar CF practices that are mainly consistent with their beliefs. That makes Phipps and Borg’s (2009) distinction between core and peripheral beliefs especially significant in this study. Core beliefs are essential convictions that are stable – at least in the case of experienced teachers (Basturkmen 2012) – and seem to be influential in shaping these educators’ instructional decisions. Indeed, beliefs can inform lecturers’ engagement with feedback (Strijbos & Müller 2014). Unlike core beliefs, peripheral beliefs are unimplemented ideals which, ‘though theoretically embraced, will not be
held with the same level of conviction’ as core beliefs (Phipps & Borg 2009: 388). Hence, lecturers who are not strongly convinced of the advantages of a certain strategy may use it less often. In sum, both peripheral and core beliefs are especially relevant to understanding the complex and multifaceted nature of grammar feedback provision. Research has given little attention to examining how individual lecturers’ beliefs combine with context-related concepts of learning ecologies in EFL teacher education. In light of this, I address this issue by asking: *What are the lecturers’ feedback practices and the reasons behind their choices?* More specifically, this study is guided by the following research questions.

1. Which feedback types and modes are used by the lecturers?
2. Which factors influence their decisions to employ these feedback practices?

4. *Design and Methods*

4.1 *Design and procedures*

A qualitative research design was used in this study. In addition to feedback samples, the majority of data came from one pilot interview, 12 semi-structured in-depth interviews and four member-check interviews
during which 12 EFL lecturers from six university colleges in Norway reflected on their use of feedback strategies and presented possible explanations for choosing these practices. Ten interviews were conducted in the interviewees’ mother tongues (nine in Norwegian and one in English) and two in English for lecturers without Norwegian first language (L1) backgrounds. The interviews lasted from 31 to 79 minutes, with the time for all interviews combined totalling 573 minutes.

4.2 Participants

Norwegian Social Science Data Services gave its permission to carry out this study (NSD 49709). Participation occurred with informed consent. All information was treated confidentially. The lecturers in the study sample were randomly selected from three university colleges in eastern and south-eastern Norway and three university colleges in western and north-western Norway, all of which offered EFL courses for pre-service and in-service teachers. Participants were recruited in person, by mail or through Skype. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants.
Lecturers: 12 experienced lecturers (4 male/8 female) with the pseudonyms Brad, Dennis, Eva, Faith, Grace, Ken, Meg, Nancy, Pauline, Ruth, Tom and Viviane

Teaching experience: Each had more than 15 years of EFL teaching experience in teacher education, especially in writing instruction related to literature, civilisation or didactics

Lecturers’ L1: Norwegian (9); English (1); Other (2)

Academic qualifications: 5 associate professors, 5 assistant professors, 1 professor and 1 research fellow

Table 1. Profile of study participants

As Table 1 illustrates, the selection of participants can be qualified as either typical sampling or criterion sampling (Dörnyei 2007: 128). On the one hand, this is a typical sampling because each participant had more than 15 years of EFL teaching experience. This made it possible to investigate teacher beliefs because in the case of experienced lecturers the alignment between feedback beliefs and practices seems to be relatively high (Basturkmen 2012). On the other, it is a criterion-based sampling because I excluded those participants who did not integrate grammar feedback into their teaching of literature, civilisation or didactics.

4.3 Semi-structured interview guide

Ellis’s (2009), Ferris’s (2014) and Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) recommendations on feedback types and modes served as a starting point when developing the semi-structured interview guide. I asked the informants about their perceptions of the following feedback dichotomies:
global vs. local; focused vs. unfocused; oral vs. written; direct vs. indirect; metalinguistic vs. non-metalinguistic; and elicitative vs. non-elicitative (see examples and explanations in Appendix A). These questions on feedback practices comprise the first section of my interview guide. The second included questions designed to elicit their reasons for choosing the feedback approaches they used. The informants received the interview guide in advance, along with examples and explanations on possible feedback strategies.

4.4 Analysis

For data analysis of the present research, I developed a qualitative codebook using NVivo12. Regarding coding procedures, I used deductive, inductive and iterative methods to analyse the data (Dörnyei 2007). The use of taxonomies (e.g. Ellis 2009; Lyster & Ranta 1997) qualified the coding as theory driven. For example, as in a previous study (Author 2019), I considered the feedback mentioned in the interviews to be non-elicitative when the lecturers reported minimal use of elicit completion moves, elicitative questions or reformulation requests. However, the codes related to RQ 2 were added inductively, as they emerged directly from the data (see Tables 3 and 4). Care was taken, as Silverman (2014) recommended,
to avoid either imposing prior categories of analysis or prematurely forming such categories. To extract real teacher beliefs, I frequently used ‘why’ questions and prompts (e.g. tables on distributions of feedback modes and types, see Author 2019). Drawing on Verschuren’s (2003) iterative-parallel strategy, I also used a progressive focusing approach within the same data analysis, whereby the analysis of RQ 1 informed the subsequent stage of the analysis of RQ 2 and vice versa.

4.5 Reliability and validity

This study collected at least two feedback samples from nine of the 12 informants, which were used to confirm the validity of the self-reported feedback practices. For example, the feedback samples confirmed the self-reported frequent use of metalinguistic and indirect feedback and the less frequent use of global and elicitive feedback. These feedback samples together with the respective in-depth interviews were triangulated with the member check interviews with four interviewees. Responses to a questionnaire were used as prompts for these member check interviews (see Appendix D). Moreover, an assistant researcher was asked to peer-check the reliability and validity of the codes in relationship to RQ 2. In addition, three raters rescored the findings related to RQ 1 (see Table 2).
The inter-rater reliability scores were as follows: Cohen’s kappa 0.700 for global, 0.875 for focused, 0.721 for oral, 0.789 for indirect, 0.824 for metalinguistic and 0.818 for elicitative feedback. To determine intra-rater reliability, I rescored all 12 interviews, obtaining the following results: Cohen’s kappa 0.840 for global, 0.871 for focused, 1.00 for oral, 0.800 for indirect, 0.824 for metalinguistic and 0.797 for elicitative feedback. Thus, satisfactory scores were obtained for both inter- and intra-rater reliability.

5. Findings

This section presents the lecturers reflections on their feedback practices and the reasons behind their feedback choices. The first part elaborates on the lecturers’ distribution of different feedback types and modes (RQ1). The second part describes possible factors influencing the lecturers’ feedback practices (RQ2).

5.1 Distribution of feedback practices

The findings pertaining to RQ 1 revealed that all lecturers predominantly used metalinguistic, indirect, local and unfocused CF in response to written errors. Few provided oral and elicitative feedback extensively. Table 2 provides an overview of the interviewees’ self-reported feedback practices.
Table 2. Participants’ self-reported frequencies of feedback types based on Ferris’s (2014) recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Type</th>
<th>High use</th>
<th>Medium use</th>
<th>Low use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused feedback</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect feedback</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic feedback</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitative feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The interviewees’ self-perceived estimates were based on dichotomies. For example, high use of global feedback indicates low use of local feedback and vice versa. Medium use indicates that the informant reported providing approximately equal amounts of both feedback types.

As Table 2 displays, most participants mentioned the frequent use of metalinguistic and indirect feedback, which was supported by my analyses of the lecturers’ feedback samples. In contrast, the findings also highlight variations in the participants’ use of all other stated feedback strategies. The following illustrative examples gleaned from five informant interviews explain these distinctions in more detail.

As can be seen in Table 2, many lecturers reported they only rarely provided feedback on global issues. Tom was the exception, reporting that he provided more global than local feedback. He described his approach as follows:

I often write in the margin, ‘Consider using more linking words like “however”, “moreover” etc.’ . . . or when I know the paper was written by a very good student, I note: ‘You need to think about coherence, cohesion’ or ‘Please, stick to one tense in your
paragraph’. It depends on the essays, but I am generally not interested in local issues. They can correct these on their own.

This use of feedback on global issues stands in clear contrast to the use of feedback on local issues described by other participants. For example, Nancy recounted choosing primarily to provide CF on local issues:

Unfortunately, when I read a text, I am so concentrated that I focus much more on details than I should, and my focus becomes more local than global. For example, I comment on all concord errors and to a lesser extent on tenses in paragraphs and cohesion.

This extract illustrates how challenging the tension between providing feedback on local and global issues can be. Informants faced a similar challenge when deciding between focused and unfocused feedback. Brad, Eva, Ken, Nancy, Ruth and Viviane provided little focused feedback. Eva described her choice this way:

I correct all the errors in the text. I underline all errors I see, indeed. I believe these students want unfocused feedback because they submit very few drafts. We do not have the resources for providing feedback on multiple drafts.
As Eva illustrates, the need for unfocused feedback becomes understandable when considering the low number of submissions.

Concerning the findings on oral feedback, few lecturers provided more oral than written feedback (see Table 2). Pauline and Meg were the only two who provided extensive oral feedback. Pauline puts this as follows:

> We discuss student teachers’ development in our individual conferences. The advantage is that we can immediately determine by their facial expressions or voice whether they understand terms such as ‘concord errors’. If they do not understand, oral feedback provides the opportunity to use other terms they do understand.

Thus, Pauline provided oral feedback to facilitate clarifications and explanations. She was also one of only two lecturers to report using elicitations extensively. In fact, the key finding from this research is that most lecturers provided little elicitative feedback, except Pauline and Meg. For example, Meg mentioned that:

> An essential part of my approach consists of initiating dialogic processes. I often use questions in the margin to elicit knowledge. I talk to my students through my feedback. I often ask my students
to imagine conversing with me while reading my feedback in the margins. It is an attempt to have a written dialogue with the students.

In contrast to Meg, most interviewees described using questions generally less frequently than reformulation requests. For example, they recounted using comments like ‘rephrase’ more often than asking questions. The following section presents the lecturers’ reasoning behind their decisions.

5.2 Possible factors influencing selections of feedback practices

The main findings indicated that the lecturers’ feedback practices were motivated by multifaceted individual and contextual factors.

First, many participants gave a number of individual reasons for using metalinguistic and indirect CF extensively: Dennis, Grace, Meg and Tom believed they did so because the metalanguage used in the feedback facilitated self-help and increases language awareness. Grace explained that the students ‘see the concepts, terminology and structures they learn about in application in their own text so that they can then, down the road, do the same things with their pupils’. In other words, the students need the metalanguage the lecturers write in the margin because it conveys grammatical knowledge they will need when they have to mark essays in
the future. However, most lecturers found indirect CF equally important, believing students learn more by discovering the correct answers on their own. For example, when it would be too complicated for Viviane to rewrite a whole sentence, she would combine indirect feedback with the metalinguistic comments such as “clumsy sentence”. In contrast, few lecturers used elicitative CF. Ken attributed his minimal use of this strategy to the questions sometimes seeming unnatural and being linked to ‘testing’. Table 3 provides a summary of the main reasons motivating the lecturers’ feedback choices:
Table 3. Individual reasons for and against six CF strategies

Table 3 shows that the lecturers’ views on feedback strategies included both positive and negative reasons that informed their feedback choices. These reasons qualified as individual factors.

Regarding contextual factors, however, a variety of other factors were reported as influencing the lecturers’ feedback practices. Table 4 provides an overview of these influences.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Number of lecturers ((n=12))</th>
<th>Coding occurrences in NVivo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influences from feedback-providing contexts</td>
<td>Past and present assignments and exam assessments</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervision of students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences from formal and informal forums</td>
<td>Formal: courses on assessment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informal: conversations with colleagues and students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences from feedback-receiving contexts</td>
<td>Peer reviews of scientific articles and doctoral theses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment of essays at school or university in the distant past</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences from the use of tools</td>
<td>Common use of marking code systems</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.* Contextual factors influencing lecturers’ feedback decisions (in categories, number of lecturers and coding occurrences)

As displayed in Table 4, the interviews revolved several times around feedback provision on assignments and exams as well as supervisions of students. The informants characterised this first factor as mainly beneficial for their own feedback development. In fact, past feedback-providing contexts can be especially important in understanding present feedback practices because the lecturers often believed it necessary to adapt feedback to specific contexts. For example, Nancy went from taking a more focused approach as an upper secondary school teacher to taking a
more unfocused approach with her university students. She believed they were more proficient and, thus, better able to engage with unfocused feedback. In comparison, Dennis, Faith, Grace, Meg and Tom reported that their feedback development shifted from more local error treatment in the past to more global focus (see Appendix C). These lecturers explained that this change was likely due to gaining new insights into student needs: for example, they believed students now struggled more with syntax and coherence than accuracy because spelling and grammar checks on word-processing programs detect these errors to a lesser extent.

Regarding the second factor, i.e. influences from formal forums, Table 4 displays the importance the participants assigned to assessment courses. Grace described how such courses have influenced her feedback practices:

These courses influence you indirectly because you use, perhaps, more metalanguage. You have to think of grades and reasons for giving one grade and not another one. (...) I didn’t think of it before, but somehow, I am now much better at categorising. I use the metalanguage much better now.
This excerpt suggests that courses may help learn to categorise errors and more effectively employ metalanguage. In addition to these more formal contexts, discussions with colleagues may also be influential. For example, Brad mentioned a discussion he had had with Tom about Truscott’s (1996) article ‘The Case against Grammar Correction’. Such discussions can also occur between students and teachers. Pauline, for example, used chat rooms to converse in writing with her students. She used more elicitative questions in these chat rooms than in the feedback she generally provided on the students’ essays. She described this phenomenon:

I use questions more frequently in the chat rooms on Canvas (…), but not really in written feedback. I think that many students are afraid of grammar. Chat rooms are, in this context, a wonderful tool (…). They make it somehow easier to talk about grammar. Considering this, the use of elicitations might be more frequent in such informal forums because it more closely resembles oral feedback, even though the feedback is written. In fact, chat rooms are governed by a conversational logic that facilitates elicitations. In all other contexts, especially in written situations, the informants said that they were struggling with providing elicitive feedback.
Table 4’s third contextual factor affecting the participants’ selection of feedback strategies was feedback-receiving contexts. Clearly, the informants thought that the feedback they have received on peer-reviewed articles (e.g. Tom and the re-use of global feedback) in the recent past or on essays in the distant past may have impacted their own practices. Viviane provided an interesting example:

The feedback I received at university was very direct, with very few metalinguistic comments. This may be one of the reasons I now use more metalinguistic and indirect feedback. I compensate, somehow.

Viviane’s experiences aligned with those of other informants, such as Faith and Ken. They can be identified as ‘counter-reactions’ that help explain present feedback practices.

The last factor mentioned in Table 4 included the use of common marking codes. For example, Eva thought it was unfortunate that her English department had not created a common system of marking codes:

The reason for using less metalinguistic feedback at our university is that we do not have this system with symbols. I mean this system we developed and used together at upper secondary school. I was
very happy with it. Every time there was a concord error, I used a symbol. Many teachers used the same codes. (…). It was easier to see in the margin which serious errors occurred several times. This made it easier to summarise all errors and use convenient metalanguage in the end comments.

Here, Eva links the use of marking codes to the provision of metalinguistic in-text and end comments, which have, according to her, declined due to the lack of a common marking code system. The next section discusses these findings in the light of theories on teacher cognitions and learning ecologies.

6. Discussion

6.1 Teacher cognitions

The main findings for RQ 1 were two-fold: On the one hand, all lecturers reported providing predominantly metalinguistic and indirect feedback. On the other, many lecturers also recounted providing extensive local and unfocused error treatment and rarely used elicitative feedback. RQ 2, however, uncovered individual (e.g. positive beliefs about metalanguage) and contextual (e.g. feedback-providing and feedback-receiving) factors that can explain these selections of feedback strategies.
As such, these findings describe teacher cognitions, that is to say perceptions of what lecturers ‘think, know and believe’ (Borg 2015: 1) about corrective grammar feedback. For example, the lecturers reported positive beliefs about metalanguage use explaining their predominance of metalinguistic feedback. At the same time, they expressed negative beliefs about elicitative feedback, which may explain why they used this feedback strategy less (see Table 3).

More specifically, Phipps and Borg’s (2009) distinction between core and peripheral beliefs helped analyse and understand the lecturers’ cognitions in relation to the six feedback types under scrutiny in this study. The first feedback type relates to metalinguistic feedback. Here, the predominant choice of metalinguistic feedback can be explained by the lecturers’ strong belief in the effectiveness of this strategy, which may enhance students’ learner autonomy. Given the connection between metalinguistic feedback and the role of grammar in writing teacher education (Borg 2015: 153), it was not surprising that the informants firmly endorsed using metalinguistic feedback. Indeed, such feedback helps students not only with their own language development. It also prepares them for their future careers as writing and grammar teachers. For example,
Grace believed this feedback strategy facilitates self-help and increases language awareness. This aligned with Johnston and Goettsch’s (2000) study, which emphasised the importance of understandable terminology and providing examples to make grammar useful to students.

The strong belief in the second feedback type among participants, i.e. indirect feedback, was equally unsurprising. The lecturers believed students should discover the correct answers by themselves. For example, Ruth valued indirect feedback because it stimulates students to use their grammar books and dictionaries. Such a discovery approach to grammar stood in contrast to some informants’ use of direct feedback. Indeed, Diab’s (2005a: 33) study confirmed that it is sometimes difficult to highlight errors (e.g. comma splices) without correcting them.

Conversely, the remaining four feedback types related to negative cognitions. In other words, one reason lecturers may use some strategies less frequently can be that they are not fully convinced of their advantages. Phipps and Borg (2009) labelled these ‘peripheral beliefs’. In fact, some lecturers asserted that global, focused, oral (one-to-one writing conferences in this study) and elicitative feedback had many disadvantages, which may explain certain feedback practice choices.
First, the present study confirmed Montgomery and Baker’s (2007) findings on global feedback because many participants believed little in this feedback strategy. Indeed, they believed that student teachers expected local error treatment (e.g. concord, prepositions). Only Tom reported providing more global than local feedback (e.g. cohesion, coherence).

Second, in line with Schulz’s (2001) study, the common tendency to provide unfocused feedback seemed related to the lecturers’ (i.e. Brad, Eva, Ken, Nancy, Ruth and Viviane) concern that students would feel ‘cheated’ with focused in-text comments when they had few opportunities to submit drafts for feedback. Overall, the lecturers believed in the importance of linguistic accuracy in teacher education, especially surface-level corrections, which are, according to Diab (2005b) and Amrhein and Nassaji (2010), precisely the kind of feedback students expect from their teachers.

Regarding the third feedback strategy, namely oral feedback, this study’s findings contrasted with those from Ferris (2014), which indicated that many respondents expressed great enthusiasm for one-to-one writing conferences. Indeed, according to the interviews, most lecturers disliked and avoided writing conferences, which they felt increased student anxiety
Concerning the last feedback type, most lecturers did not believe in the effectiveness of elicitive feedback because, unlike what Sanchez and Borg (2014) found, they perceived this strategy as unnatural, especially in written feedback. For example, Ken believed questions seem contrived and can be linked to ‘testing the students’. Meg, however, expressed the opposite view in describing what constitutes helpful feedback, which was confirmed by her feedback samples and member check interview. She used terms such as ‘initiating dialogic processes’ and ‘attempts to have a written dialogue with the students’ to legitimise her frequent use of elicitative questions.

In sum, these findings on the various feedback strategies raise questions about the specific reasons behind the lecturers’ decisions. Clearly, the distinction between peripheral and core belief systems can help explain teachers’ reasoning behind their individual feedback decisions, which is useful for developing feedback suggestions for EFL teacher education. In addition to these individual factors, contextual factors may also influence lecturers’ feedback decisions, which I discuss next.
6.2 Learning ecologies

Lecturers learn to adapt feedback to ever-changing contexts. This learning takes place in learning ecologies, that means a multi-layered ‘network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting’ (Van Lier 2010: 3). The description of such learning ecologies can explain possible reasons for lecturers’ current feedback practices. This is particularly interesting because little is known about how lecturers learn to provide feedback in L2 writing (Crusan, Plakans & Gebril 2016; Lee 2010). In this context, Table 4 provides useful data on multifaceted context-dependent factors.

Table 4 listed first feedback-providing situations, which can change and create new contexts that can prove challenging for lecturers. Moving from one situation to another, ecological transitions may occur in the lecturers’ feedback careers, which can shape the CF practices they currently employ. In other words, their position in their ecological environment can shift as the result of a change in their ‘role, setting, or both’ (Bronfenbrenner 1979: 26). Two interesting examples from the data (see Appendix C) illustrate this. First, Nancy considered the transition from teaching at an upper secondary school to teaching at a university a crucial moment in her own learning trajectory because she had to adjust to a more
unfocused error treatment approach. Second, many years of experience have convinced Dennis, Faith, Grace and Meg of the effectiveness of global in addition to local feedback (see Appendix B and C). More specifically, they moved from providing predominantly local feedback in the past to combinations of global (e.g. tense shift in a paragraph) and local (e.g. third person ‘s’) comments. A valuable reason for this feedback change is, according to Dennis, that lecturers need to adapt their feedback to new learning contexts and student needs. In fact, he reported that the students now struggle more with coherence in their texts than with local errors, which the spelling and grammar checkers on word-processing programs detect more easily. In sum, these feedback changes represent essential learning moments in the lecturers’ learning ecologies. They occurred in situations in which the lecturers were actively engaged in the process of providing written feedback. With regard to oral feedback, Pauline noted that a higher use of metalinguistic and elicitative feedback was sometimes triggered by the students’ facial expressions or voices indicating they did not understand a term or concept. This is in line with Weissberg’s (2006) findings that described different dialogic mechanisms
(e.g. linkage through questions or repetitions), which resulted in more scaffolding.

The second category in Table 4, i.e. influences from formal and informal knowledge-sharing forums, seemed equally important. As an example of formal contexts, Grace described assessment courses as an important element of her learning ecology, noting these courses helped her grade essays, categorise errors and use metalanguage more conveniently. Informal forums, however, involved conversations with colleagues and/or students, like Tom and Brad’s discussion about Truscott’s (1996) article ‘The Case against Grammar Correction’, or Pauline’s positive experiences with discussing grammar through chat rooms. Chat rooms facilitated the use of elicitative questions because Pauline was in a circumstance governed by a conversational logic, which represented a learning opportunity (Van Lier 2004: 90).

The third category in Table 4 consisted of influences from feedback-receiving contexts. Tom’s positive learning experiences with peer reviews of articles he had authored illustrate this type of influence. He reported on reproducing the same clear focus on global issues to his students now. Conversely, Viviane believed that her preferences for
metalinguistic and indirect feedback were a counter-reaction: she wanted to compensate for the feedback she did not get as a student at university, as the feedback she did receive was ‘very direct, with very few metalinguistic comments’. Such interesting counter-reactions align with findings in Borg (1999) and Golombek (1998).

The final category in Table 4 illustrated how the use of marking codes – created and used at institutional level – can facilitate the use of focused and metalinguistic feedback and thus create a more feedback-provider-friendly context for lecturers. Nancy and Eva’s positive experiences resembled one of the teachers’ experiences in Johnston and Goetsch’s (2000: 447) study. In their study, one informant recalled how she had enjoyed language lessons and language analysis as a student in grade school and noted that she still used the same common techniques or symbols, such as ‘parentheses around prepositional phrases, single underline subject, double underline verbs’. According to Nancy and Eva in the present study, the use of such marking code systems might trigger more focused end comments and make it easier for instructors to distinguish accidental mistakes from systemic errors that reflect a lack of knowledge.
In sum, the findings of this study elucidate the importance of contextual influences in the lecturers’ learning ecologies that can trigger specific feedback strategies (Miller 2005; Thoms 2014). A discussion of the need to implement feedback recommendations such as Ferris’s (2014) best practice suggestions in EFL teacher education will have to consider these contextual factors, in addition to the aforementioned individual factors.

7. Limitations and Strengths

This study had limitations that both affected the interpretation and impact upon the generalisability of the findings. First, self-reported data, such as information supplied in interviews, have validity issues because the data may reflect reported rather than actual practices. Second, given the limited number of participants, the study does not provide an exhaustive picture of EFL lecturers’ perceptions in general, nor in the Norwegian teacher education context. However, the results of this qualitative study are, in principle, generalisable to theoretical propositions, i.e. ‘the development of a theory of the processes operating in the case studied’ (Maxwell 2013: 138). In addition, the findings of this study resonate with other studies
about grammar feedback strategies. For example, many studies agree on the positive benefits of indirect (e.g. Ferris 2014), metalinguistic CF (e.g. Sheen 2007), global (e.g. Montgomery & Baker 2007), oral (e.g. Yeh 2016) and elicitative feedback (e.g. Nassaj 2007). Also supporting the transferability of these findings is the fact that they agree with research on other languages, such as French (e.g. Lyster 2004; Swain 2000) and Japanese (e.g. Yoshida 2008) as a foreign language.

8. Conclusion

In the present study, my analysis produced both an overview of current perceptions of feedback practices, as well as—and this might be a particularly valuable outcome—a list of possible individual and contextual factors that can shape teachers’ feedback beliefs, which are, in principal, difficult to change (Borg 2015). Furthermore, the study provides an example of research that combines perspectives on teacher cognitions with learning ecologies to explain lecturers’ CF strategies decisions.

With regard to implications, this study’s results can be useful in EFL writing teacher education and development contexts. First, they can stimulate lecturers to reflect on their own beliefs in relation to corrective grammar feedback (teacher self-awareness). Second, by focusing more
clearly on context-dependent factors, this study broadens the discussion on how to improve the quality of feedback in teacher education. Examples are the use of unfocused and elicitive feedback. On the one hand, the use of unfocused in-text comments (in addition to focused end comments) may be acceptable when few feedback opportunities exist. On the other, the use of informal forums (e.g. chat rooms) and combined written/oral feedback situations can lead to a more extensive use of elicitations. In any case, we need more research on how context-dependent and individual factors shape grammar feedback practices. This may help us develop specific feedback suggestions for EFL teacher education that may differ from general best practice recommendations (e.g. Ferris 2014).
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Feedback Strategies Used in the Study (adapted from Ferris [2011, 2014], Ellis [2009b] and Lyster & Ranta [1997])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>The lecturer provides oral feedback during writing conferences, i.e. individual teacher-student conferences</td>
<td>What is your subject? Is it in the plural or singular?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written</td>
<td>The lecturer provides either computer-typed or hand-written corrective feedback in end and/or marginal and/or in-text comments.</td>
<td>This is a very good essay. As to the language, I have a few comments: - Avoid incomplete sentences - Avoid heavy/unclear sentences - Be aware of concord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Correcting grammar above the sentence level</td>
<td>You change tense! You must stick to either the present or the past tense.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Local             | Correcting grammar under the sentence level                                 | • Missing apostrophes (e.g., *“the sister behaviour” instead of “the sister’s behaviour”)
• Concord errors (e.g., *“Constantia develop” instead of “Constantia develops”) |
| Focused          | Correcting one to two error categories, mostly in end and marginal comments. | ‘concord’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘run-on sentence’

| Mid-focused     | Correcting three to five error categories, mostly in end and marginal comments. | ‘concord’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘run-on sentence’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘tense shift’

| Unfocused       | Correcting more than five error categories, mostly in marginal and in-text comments. | ‘concord’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘run-on sentence’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘tense shift’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘incomplete sentence’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘word classes’
|                 |                                                                           | ‘apostrophes’

| Direct          | The lecturer provides the student with the correct form.                   | You have to write “mice”, not “mouses”.

| Indirect        | The lecturer provides no correction but points at or indicates (e.g. typographically) the error. | We do not say “mouses” in English.

| Metalinguistic  | Contains metalanguage regarding errors                                    | “Influence” is a noun. “Influential” is an adjective.

| Elicitative     | Reformulation requests                                                     | Asking the student to reformulate to improve comprehensibility | Can you say this another way?
|                 |                                                                           |                                                                 |
| Elicitative     | Elicitative questions                                                      | Asking a question to elicit knowledge                          | How do we form the present continuous in English?
|                 |                                                                           |                                                                 |
| Elicit          | Elicit completion moves                                                    | Strategic pausing to allow students to “fill in the blank”     | No, not that. It’s a…?
|                 |                                                                           |                                                                 |
## APPENDIX B

**Distribution of Feedback Practices Based on Feedback Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Global</th>
<th>Focused</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Metalinguistic</th>
<th>Elicitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Eva</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viviane</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total Score</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>111111</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>11111111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 3 = high use; 2 = medium use; 1 = low use. The interviewees’ self-perceived estimates are based on dichotomies (global vs. local; focused vs. unfocused; oral vs. written; indirect vs. direct, metalinguistic vs. non-metalinguistic; elicitative vs. non-elicitative).*
**APPENDIX C**

*Tendencies in changes of feedback practices in the study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informants (pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Past Feedback Approach</th>
<th>Present Feedback Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>metalinguistic</td>
<td>non-metalinguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>direct</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>focused</td>
<td>unfocused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>non-metalinguistic</td>
<td>metalinguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meg</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>written</td>
<td>oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>unfocused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline</td>
<td>non-metalinguistic</td>
<td>metalinguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
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<td>local</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viviane</td>
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<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>non-metalinguistic</td>
<td>metalinguistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX D

## Interview Guide for Member Check Interviews

1. Which feedback types and modes do you use when you provide grammar feedback?
2. What are the reasons for your feedback choices and practices? What influences or affords your feedback (e.g. courses, personal experiences from studying, influences from colleagues)?

To answer question 1 more precisely, try to assess what kind of feedback you generally provide most (3), least (1) or to an approximately equal amount (2).

The six feedback strategies are explained below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback types and modes</th>
<th>Feedback on global issues (vs. local)</th>
<th>Focused feedback (vs. unfocused)</th>
<th>Oral feedback (vs. written)</th>
<th>Indirect feedback (vs. direct)</th>
<th>Metalinguistic feedback (vs. non-metalinguistic)</th>
<th>Elicitative feedback (vs. non-elicitative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: 3 = high use; 2 = medium use; 1 = low use. Your estimates are based on dichotomies. For example, a high use of global feedback means less use of local feedback and vice versa. Medium use means that you provide an approximately equal amount of both feedback types.

### Explanations on feedback modes and types:
- oral vs. written (e.g. writing conferences)
- global vs. local (correcting grammar above or under the sentence level)
- focused vs. unfocused (correcting fewer or more than five error categories)
- direct vs. indirect (providing the correct form or no correction, i.e. only indicating the existence of an error)
- metalinguistic (use of metalanguage or no metalanguage)
- elicitation-based feedback (1. allowing the student to fill in the blank, 2. asking a question to elicit knowledge or 3. asking to reformulate vs. none of these three cases).
### Errata List

**PhD Candidate**: Michel Alexandre Cabot  
**Title**: Meaningful Grammar Feedback in English Writing Teacher Education: Researching Perspectives on Feedback-as-an-artefact, Feedback Reception, and Feedback Provision

**Abbreviations:**  
Cor – correction of references, quotations, language, page numbers etc.  
Cpltf – change of page layout or text format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page/Line/Footnote</th>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>(Type of Correction) Corrected Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Page 33  
Lines 25-26, namely  
Table 5 (lines 6-7)  | “… between focussed, mid-focussed and unfocussed CF…” | (Cor) “… between focused, mid-focused and unfocused CF…” |
| Page 34  
Line 1 | “… categories focussed CF (1–2 error categories), mid-focussed CF (3–5 error categories), and…” | (Cor) “… focused CF (1–2 error categories), mid-focused CF (3–5 error categories), and…” |
| Page 40  
Line 14 | “… • Unfocussed CF predominated in both modes.” | (Cor) “… • Unfocused CF predominated in both modes.” |
| Page 73  
Line 11 | “… Griffiths & Z. Tajeddin (Eds.), *Lessons from good language teachers* (pp. 219–231)…” | (Cor) “… Griffiths & Z. Tajeddin (Eds.), *Lessons from good language teachers* (pp. 151–163)…” |