Cloud Power: Shifting L2 Writing Feedback Paradigms via Google Docs

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Abstract

Writing is a difficult, vulnerable act, and becomes even more so when done in a second language. Giving and receiving writing feedback, for instructors and peers, in an L2 context is even more of a balancing act due to the historical focus on accuracy. Compounding the matter further still is the issue of where students should write and receive feedback. Using technology has been a common practice for at least a generation for L1 writing classrooms globally, but for international students from more traditional classroom environments bringing computers into the classroom can be a new and daunting experience. Currently, there are numerous studies detailing the uses of wikis and blogs for L2 writing for both instructor and peer feedback along with a growing amount of literature on L1 cloud writing feedback. But although cloud feedback is being used more in the L2 writing classroom, there is still a rather large gap in the L2 writing literature about said usage. Of all the technologies available, cloud feedback has the highest potential to shift the L2 educational paradigm in order to encourage the L2 writer's ideas, in lieu of highlighting their language deficiencies. If there ever was a student population that would benefit from added visual input and shifting educational paradigms, it would be L2 writers. This action research study examines how 34 international students from two sections of First-Year Writing classes at a university in the South-Western United States utilized, benefited from and reacted to using Google Docs for feedback purposes.

Keywords: L2 writing, feedback, cloud pedagogy, Google Docs, writing fluency

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1. Introduction

Writing is a relatively new communication skill for humans. As a species, we have spent a substantially longer period of time speaking before starting to write. As Linguist, John McWhorter describes it, "... according to traditional estimates, if humanity had existed for 24 hours, then writing only came along at about 11:07 p.m." (1:29). Even so, writing and reading are ubiquitous in our daily lives now, and have become an integral part of our education system. As such, language instructors must face the daunting task of teaching these skills. It is no surprise then that providing writing feedback, either by an instructor or a peer, is a difficult task made all the more complicated by classroom power dynamics, prior writing habits and varying pedagogical experiences. In an L2 writing classroom there are added layers of cultural and linguistic factors to consider as well. How do L2 writing instructors and peers best provide productive writing feedback with all of these variables?

As many L2 writing instructors do, when this researcher first started teaching writing in Vietnam in 2006, she found herself spending hours writing feedback on student's papers. Peer feedback also encompassed a number of classes for each draft. But the revised drafts often did not incorporate the suggestions from this feedback. To overcome this feedback transfer problem, the researcher tried varying error correction feedback methods such as coding sheet error correction, color coding error correction, and circling but not labeling mistakes for both instructor and peer feedback sessions. Despite the varied methods, student reaction to feedback did not change: defeat. Thus, a new feedback conundrum surfaced: what was more important, to raise their awareness of their accuracy deficiencies or to foster the ideas and thus the content in their writing?

The action research in this text addresses this desire to assist L2 writers with their writing via encouraging a writing community and challenging existing classroom power dynamics. Google Docs was the tool selected for this L2 writing feedback purpose due to its ability to meet all of these needs and for its immediate acceptance by the very students it was hoped to help. This research was done at an American university with 34 international students in the second semester of a First-Year Writing course.

Two points about the use of Google Docs in this research should be stressed before this action research study can be explained and analyzed in more detail. First, although this action research is focused on Google Docs for feedback purposes, the characteristics and benefits described herein are not limited to Google Docs. The advantages described in this action research can be achieved with many cloud-based programs. Google Docs is used as one example of technology being utilized to foster such an L2 writing support system. Second, there have been a number of changes to the format and functionality of Google Docs since this action research was conducted in Spring 2014. These changes would possibly affect some of the outcomes described here were they available. However, because these new options were not available in Spring 2014, they are outside the scope of this study.

2. Review of the Literature

There is a growing trend in scholarly research on shifting L2 writing feedback focus from accuracy to writing fluency to empower L2 writers. Dr. Dana Ferris is at the forefront of this trend. In *Preparing Instructors to Respond to Student Writing,* she shares details on how she trains instructors to be effective L2 writing instructors because "...providing feedback to students is the most time-consuming and challenging part of the job" (p. 165) She provides authentic student writing examples and their subsequent instructor's feedback. She uses these same examples in her training as well as the accompanying workshop task sheets to demonstrate the crucial difference between an instructor acting as a *copy editor* to a student's work versus a *writing coach.* As a copy editor an instructor corrects every mistake, reinforcing existing power dynamics in the L2 writing classroom and emphasizing an L2 writer's language deficit. Ferris shows that in this type of feedback instructors spend a disproportionate amount of time on accuracy, and little to no time on the ideas or content in a student's paper. Thus, students often misinterpret this error correction feedback to mean that their inaccurate use of the language also means that their ideas are equally incorrect.

In lieu of copyediting, Ferris is a strong proponent of acting more like a writing coach. She emphasizes spending the majority of feed-backing time on student's written ideas, and only highlight one or two of their most disruptive grammatical mistakes at a given time. By doing so, students can focus on the content of their writing first, and the errors that disrupt meaning the most second, but in increments, thus building their language skills as well as their confidence simultaneously. This shift in focus reinforces real world characteristics of writing, treating it as the communication vehicle it is.

Destigmatization of the drafting process can be a key element to teaching writing to second-language learners, who can easily lose focus by fixating on their language deficit. In Icy Lee's article *Revisiting Instructor Feedback in EFL Writing from Sociocultural Perspectives*, she draws upon Levy, who strongly advocates for process writing in L2 writing classrooms "...so that feedback can mediate student learning (p. 202)." In fact, she clearly argues that the focus on error correction is one of the main reasons why L2 writers have a difficult time improving their writing skills. It is easy to understand getting overwhelmed when every error is highlighted. Also, overemphasizing the importance of accuracy in L2 writing reinforces an assumption that once L2 learners reach a certain stage in their language learning, they will no longer make mistakes. This assumption is a fallacy. Writers, L2 or otherwise, make mistakes. Conversely, when process writing is the focus, L2 writers can concentrate on expressing their ideas in the first few drafts of their writing. They can correct their language mistakes after their main points are strong and expressive, slowly in each layer of their edit. With this method, communicating their ideas is the main focus of their writing activity, not making every sentence grammatically perfect. This shift from a focus on form to a focus on content facilitated by process writing can alleviate a great deal of the anxiety that L2 writers have about making mistakes and being misunderstood when writing in their second language.

It needs to be noted that this artificial divide between content and form is not, as with most aspects of writing, a simple one. If, as is sometimes the case, the error density of a sentence or a few sentences is high, then meaning cannot be conveyed. However, this is rarely the case. Most L2 writers at the university level are able to convey an idea, even with grammatical errors, therefore it is important to focus on making the ideas in each paragraph strong before fixing said grammar errors. A fellow L2 writing instructor stresses this idea of prioritizing communication over accuracy by warning his students not to, "rearrange the deck chairs on the *Titanic*." Admittedly this analogy implies that their writing is in a much more dire state than it probably is, but the advice is still applicable: focus on ideas first and polish the local errors second, just as Lee and Levy encourage L2 writers to do.

It is easy to forget in the writing classroom that writing, in its natural state, is an evolving, collaborative process where *power* is shared among all of the collaborators. Dr. Marohang Limbu expands on this potentially suffocating learning environment when he explains that "...traditional pedagogy not only limits the significance of audience analysis, peer collaboration, and cooperation, but also confines cross-cultural inter cultural, and global aspects of communications in the age of digitally networked knowledge communities (p. 4)." Classroom environments are inherently traditional in their power assignment, no matter how radical individual collaborative writing activities in class may be. Ultimately it is the instructor that must carry the burden of grading a student's thoughts and ideas in written form. It is the L2 writing instructor who must acculturate L2 students into this discourse community. Considering that L2 writers are not from the dominant culture, they are not yet aware of many of the rhetorical norms of academic English. Icy Lee believes that, "the instructor and student roles have to be recast, so that students become active agents in charge of their own learning…(p. 208)."

Some of the literatures suggest using technology to make these focus, process and power shifts. Yet, there is a rather large disparity between the technology summarized in the L2 writing literature compared to the most popular tools used by many L2 writing instructors. There is a great deal of literature on Web 2.0 tools already being utilized for this L2 writing feedback purposes. Web 1.0 commonly refers to when Internet users were mere consumers of content on the Internet. However, as the Internet expanded and available functionality changed, Web 2.0 started to be used to refer to users changing role of being creators and collaborators of content, instead of just consuming information. Now Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 programs co-exist online, and both terms are used to refer to users passive, Web 1.0, or active, Web 2.0, interaction with websites. Dr. Sarah Nakamaru reported on her use of wikis in an L2 writing classroom, "Instead of commenting over and over on individual hard copies that are only seen by one student and one instructor, I could comment publicly on essays visible to the entire class, turning student work into contextually relevant classroom material for discussion and study (p. 386)." Although Nakamaru refers to instructor feedback in this quote, the same shared readership advantages could be true for peer review as well.

Web 2.0 is more appealing for L2 writing feedback because it is naturally

interactive. The primary technologies referenced in the L2 writing literature are wikis and blogs (Nakamaru, 2011; Limbu, 2014; Lin & Yang, 2013; Son, 2011; Warschauer, 2010; and Kessler, 2012.) On the contrary, Google Docs, is the most popular emerging Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) tool used in the L2 writing classroom. This difference highlights the cavernous gap between L2 writing instructors *practice* with Google Docs and the *scholarly literature* available. For example, at the 2014 TESOL International Convention and Language Expo in Portland, Oregon, U.S in Spring 2014, there were approximately a dozen different presentations on using Google Docs programs in the L2 classroom, some of which focused specifically on the L2 writing classroom. Seonmin Park's *Using Google Docs for Writing Instruction* and Jena Lynch's *Google Docs for Second Language Writing* are some examples of this usage. Although presentations like this are common at TESOL related conferences, where ESL and EFL writing workshops are a staple, there are a limited number of scholarly articles on the usage of Google Docs for L2 writing purposes in general-and even less on L2 writing feedback. Even the Higher Education edition of the Internationally recognized Horizon Report only lists *cloud computing* as one of many emerging technologies, without further highlighting of its usage or potential (p. 37).

Despite its limited viability in the L2 writing literature, using CALL for L2 learners has many advantages, one of which is creating a bridge from their writing past to their writing present. Joy Reid delineates two of the largest groups of ESL learners in the U.S. with *ear* versus *eye* learners. Ear learners are the resident students who grew up in the United States but with English as their second language. These L2 writers are accustomed to hearing English spoken and are usually quite conversationally fluent. However, they may transfer informal, conversational English to academic texts via lower register vocabulary or spelling phonetically due to lack of reading input and exposure to the words' written form. Conversely, eye learners English education has been acquired via books, usually in the form of grammar books that focused on grammar charts and short writing exercises, usually with the language decontextualized (p. 4-5). Thus, a possible bridge to more authentic writing for these eye learners would be to use visual text to emphasize fuller, contextualized ideas, similar to what is available with cloud pedagogy.

A second advantage specific to L2 writers is the socio-cultural benefits of CALL, and more specifically, cloud computing. As Limbu explained in *Teaching Writing in the Cloud: Networked Writing Communities in the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms (2012):*

> …while sharing, discoursing, and creating contents in the cloud, students realize that writing is not static and mechanical, but it is situated and is always in-the-making. So, in the cloud pedagogy, students understand that there is no universal "Truth," but truths are multiple, and they are culturally and ideologically constructed. (p. 15)

As Limbu stresses here, cloud work breaks down traditional power structures, freeing students to have a more authentic writing experience. Few people stop reading a text

they find interesting due to language variation or even errors. Thus, cloud pedagogy could provide a strong platform for strengthening an L2 writer's awareness of audience by exposing them to many viewpoints and reactions to their text. Paul Kei Matsuda believes that, "some of the linguistic and cultural differences they bring to the classroom pose a unique set of challenges to writing instructors. (p. 238)" It is hoped that these extra layers of potential communication will be a venue for these linguistic or cultural challenges. Writing is a delicate process, but often times L2 writers can be pushed so hard to produce polished, grammatically correct sentences that the meaning of the whole text gets subjugated. Cloud pedagogy reinforces both the reality of writing as having many readers (instead of one reader: the instructor) and that writing is a process where meaning drives the content, and errors are often overlooked in lieu of this content.

Wen-Chuan Lin and Shu Ching Yang's article *Exploring the Roles of Google.doc and Peer e-tutors in English Writing* (2013), is a rare article covering L2 writing feedback using Google Docs. Their article is a year-long study where they tracked the usage of Google Docs with forty-four, first year English majors in an online peer review at a southern Taiwanese university. They noticed that "by sharing the same document, students, tutors and instructors are able to work together as collaborators" (p. 83). They admitted that Google Docs had more potential than they were able to fully explore in this short time. Nonetheless, Lin and Yang's research was inspiring for its socio-cultural potential of Google Docs in the L2 writing classroom. Google Docs seems to provide a platform for moving the traditional writing class 1.0 to writing class 2.0.

Given these process writing, power shifting, classroom trending examples, Google Docs was selected for this L2 writing feedback study. Subsequently, the research questions were compiled:

1. *Can Google Docs formatting help L2 students overcome language difficulties so that they can understand and incorporate feedback more easily?*
2. *Does the dialogic potential of Google Docs support increased L2 writing fluency?*
3. *Will L2 students participate and/or benefit from the shifting educational paradigm that Google Docs can foster?*

This action research is primarily focused on instructor and peer writing feedback in the L2 classroom. Included in this research are: detailed information on the ways in which Google Docs was used, Google Docs student writing examples, peer/instructor feedback examples, student anonymous survey results, student comments about Google Docs from their final essay (a reflection essay about the course) and the end of semester instructor/course evaluation feedback handwritten comments. IRB approval was received for this research and as such student examples are shared according to IRB rules and regulations.

3. Methodology

3.1 *Setting and procedure*

This action research was conducted in two First-Year Composition classes at a South-Western American university. The classes met for 16 weeks, with three 50 minutes sessions each week. The researcher was the sole instructor for both classes. Although Google Docs was selected for draft feedback, other technologies were initially considered. Given the curricular requirements of essays being the final graded and departmentally stored documentation, technologies that added more steps to this final paper like social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook, were dismissed as options. Thus, blogs, wikis, Google Docs and MS Word were considered for this study, since they were easy to format for the final paper and had varying collaborative/sharing feedback potential. After Google Docs was first introduced to writing activities in class, it was clear that students were benefiting from its sharing and anytime-anywhere potential more than these other options, thus, its' use was continued. It should also be noted that Google Docs was slowly incorporated into the course starting from the first week of the semester and usage increased as the term progressed.

Although Google Docs is the technological focus of this action research, it was only one of three technology platforms used in this L2 writing class. A university-wide course management system (CMS), Desire to Learn (D2L) and a plagiarism checker/feed backing tool, Turn It In, were also used. All three had set uses and were used consistently for the same functions throughout the semester. The CMS was used as a cloud location to provide class announcements, hold short discussions regarding the course reading, and maintain grading records, Turn It In, which was connected to the CMS, was used to provide final instructor scoring and feedback comments, due to private issues, whereas Google Docs was used for writing practice, drafting and essay feedback.
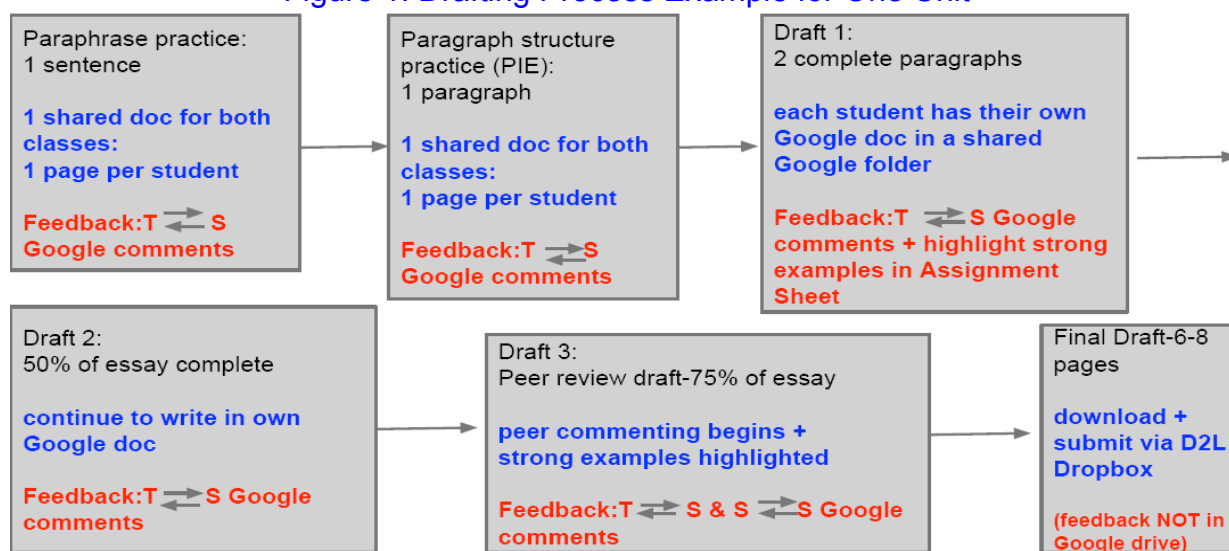
The technological infrastructure of the university made this action research possible. Google Docs was used in most of these L2 writing classes, thus, students were required to bring their own devices to class (BYOD). Tablets and laptops were welcomed in class for all activities except peer review, when there was a heavy amount of feedback commenting being done. This request was possible not only because the majority of students had their own laptops, but also because they were able to check out devices, at no cost, with their student identification card from most campus libraries, including one that was directly across from the classroom.

An additional advantage was that student's university email addresses were routed through Google/Gmail, thus expediting student accessibility to Google Docs. Due to this Google Docs compatibility, there were no additional set-up procedures necessary for these tasks since students had Google Docs functionality built into their university email account. If this were not the case it would have been necessary to require each student to start and maintain a Gmail account for this Google Docs drafting process. Considering most students were already using a private web-based email account and

their university email account already, this may have offset the advantages of using said technology.

A strong process writing approach was stressed for all four essays in this composition course. Students were asked to write two to three drafts before the final, weighted draft. In fact, as can be seen in Figure 1, there was a strong writing component to the course even before the essay drafting began. Because of this intensive writing focus, heavy scaffolding of writing tasks was used to assist these L2 writers. L2 writers often need more input and feedback than L1 writers (Pecorari, 2003). Frequent, short writing tasks can help these learners become more proficient at expressing themselves in writing, all the while helping each other by providing additional input examples simultaneously.

Figure 1: Drafting Process Example for One Unit

Paraphrase practice:
1 sentence

**1 shared doc for both classes:
1 page per student**

**Feedback:T ⇄ S
Google comments**

→

Paragraph structure practice (PIE):
1 paragraph

**1 shared doc for both classes:
1 page per student**

**Feedback:T ⇄ S
Google comments**

→

Draft 1:
2 complete paragraphs

each student has their own Google doc in a shared Google folder

Feedback:T ⇄ S Google comments + highlight strong examples in Assignment Sheet

→

Draft 2:
50% of essay complete

continue to write in own Google doc

Feedback:T ⇄ S Google comments

→

Draft 3:
Peer review draft-75% of essay

peer commenting begins + strong examples highlighted

Feedback:T ⇄ S & S ⇄ S Google comments

→

Final Draft-6-8 pages

download + submit via D2L Dropbox

(feedback NOT in Google drive)

Initially, the growing popularity and functionality of Google Docs, a free Google cloud program, were reasons for using this platform for this L2 writing community. In Google Docs, feedback comments are located directly next to the text that they are referencing, as Figure 2 displays. This positioning has many advantages: it is located in a familiar location on a student's draft, precisely where traditional feedback would have been located. The other formatting advantages distinguish Google Doc's comment bubbles from traditional feedback in that they can be visually clearer and contain more text in a small space. Because the comment is typed, it is, orthographically, easier to read, especially for L2 writers who are still acclimating to variations in handwritten English. The feed-backer does not have to worry about comments fitting in the traditionally small margin space because Google's comment bubble self-adjusts to make room for any size comment. In their end of term course evaluation comments, one student mentioned this very feature: "Also, instructor can give you feedback right next to your paper and it looks much easier and neater than the other system I used before."

Figure 2: Google Docs Student Writing Exercise Example: Paraphrase Practice
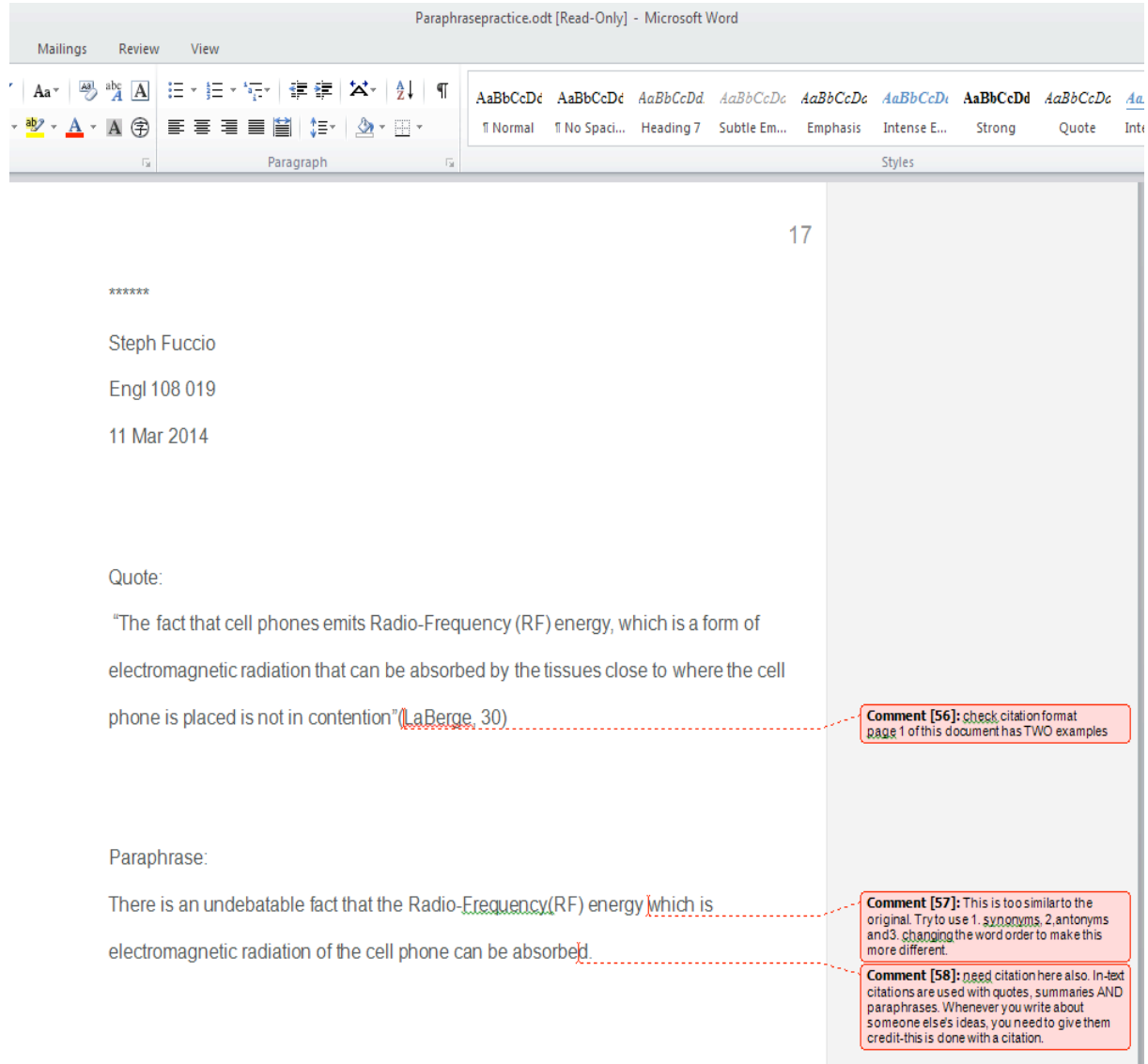
At the beginning of each of the four units that semester, the instructor opened one Google Docs folder and started 34 student-titled Google Docs for each unit's essay drafting. Both classes shared this one folder in order to increase the feedback and input potential. If the two classes had separate Google Doc folders it was possible that students would have only looked at essays from their immediate classmates, instead of students from both classes, thus limiting their input. The sharing settings had two layers: one for access to view the document and one for making changes to the document. The options also needed to be set by the owner of the one Google Folder, the instructor. To increase cloud communication, the settings on all 34 Google drafts were open for comment, which meant that they could leave feedback comments on any of the other 33 students drafts anytime during the drafting process. The available share options are shown in Figure 3. Additionally, within their own document they, of course, had control of the editing privileges so that they could write within the text of their own draft.

Figure 3: Google Docs Sharing Options

Although this set up sounds time consuming, it was very quick. The set up for the shared Google Doc folder and all thirty-four individual Google Docs took about ten minutes at the beginning of each unit. This time was more than regained later in each draft since the students' Google Doc was the ONE location for their first, second and final drafts. Since students were writing in the cloud, their Google Doc draft would evolve as they worked on their essays. For departmental tracking, Turn It In was where the official drafts were kept after a student would save, download and upload their draft when the draft deadline was due. Turn It In acted as a back up tool, grade keeping tool and a plagiarism detector, all of which were tasks that Google Docs was either not sufficient for or desired for to complete said tasks. As noted earlier, it is possible that the newer functionality of Google Docs may make it more conducive to these other purposes, however, that is beyond the scope of this study since these services were not available in Spring 2014.

3.2 *Participants*

The participants of this study were international students in two separate L2 writing classes at an American university. These classes were part of the international student track of the First-Year Writing (FYW) program within the English Department. The departmental curriculum, course books and course goals were identical for both this international student track and the regular track. The departmental focus of this second

semester writing course was rhetorical analysis and research. However, an underlying goal for the entire FYW series was an induction into academias' discourse community. Having said that, there was a small class size difference in the international student sections of these courses. The international sections were limited to 22 students instead of the usual 25 students. The reduced class size in the international student FYW track at said university was meant to provide additional time so that the instructor could provide additional language support when needed. Specifically, the population of these two L2 writing classes for Spring 2014 were 14 students in one class and 20 in the other.

Of these 34 students, 30 were from China with one student each were from Kazakhstan, Nigeria, South Korea, and Kuwait. It should be noted that Reid identified Asian students as being primarily eye learners (p. 7), thus the vat majority of these two classes were composed of this type of L2 writer. The language requirements for international students at said university, in general, was a score of 70 on TOEFL iBT or a Band 6 score on the IELTS test. It is important to note that although this is typically a first year course, because of the language difficulties most international students encounter in their first year at an English medium university, there were a significant number of students who were *not* in their first year of study. Their year of study breakdown is show in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Students' Year of Study
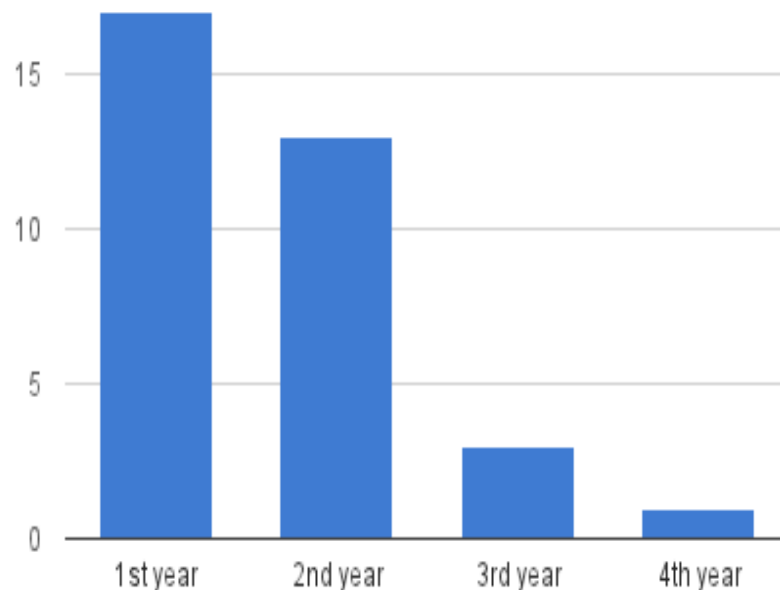
3.3 Feedback Methods

Global and local errors

Global errors are errors in *content* whereas local errors are errors in *form*. Global errors in writing are that of lack of cohesion and comprehension. If there are global errors in a text, the reader either cannot understand the ideas expressed within it or the ideas are not cohesive. Local errors can sometimes cause these same problems for the reader, but more often they are only minor distractions for the reader. In this L2 writing class, peer-to-peer feedback provided the most global feedback, especially in the first and second drafts of an essay. Conversely, providing feedback on local errors was always the sole responsibility of the instructor.

Peer feedback

It is important to note that peer review writing activities were used to shift the accuracy-fluency balance towards fluency. As such, students were required to post <u>only</u> very specific types of feedback on their peer review partners drafts. The types of feedback permitted were: clarity questions, meaning questions that probed deeper into what a writer wrote, and compliments detailing why a sentence, paragraph, etc was especially strong or interesting. Students were strongly discouraged from leaving accuracy feedback. In fact, peer feedback was monitored for accuracy comments, and when they were found, which was rare, they were immediately removed from the draft and the feed-backer who wrote them was reminded of the feedback options allowed. The reasoning for this type of feedback was discussed in class on numerous occasions to make sure that students understood why these accuracy comments from peers, especially in the first draft, were productive.

Instructor feedback

As mentioned previously, feed-backing on local errors was the sole responsibility of the instructor in order to focus the L2 students on the content of the writing they were feed-backing on. Additionally, this removal of peer local feedback was thought to relieve the L2 students from linguistically policing each others' grammar, thus shifting the peer-to-peer power dynamics from the most accurate student to the students with strong ideas and examples in their writing.

In general, in the first draft, the instructor focused on providing global feedback in the students Google Docs. In the second and third drafts, the instructor left a balance of both global and local feedback, focusing on only 1-2 systemic errors; errors that were made repeatedly such as incorrect verb tense or missing second person plurals. However, it should be noted that because of the scoring component of the final draft, the global and local error instructor feedback was NOT provided via Google Docs for privacy reasons. Accordingly, this action research covers drafting feedback only, thus, instructor feedback for the final draft is beyond the scope of this paper.

3.4 *Data Collection and Analysis*

Data collection for this action research was retrieved from the following places:

- student Google Doc essay drafts, including peer review feedback
- anonymous surveys
- the researcher's teaching journal
- assignment sheets and the Google interactions on them
- the student's final essay, their reflection of the semester's writing
- the end of term Teacher-Course Evaluation written comments

IRB approval was received for this action research, and as such, student data is used according to IRB rules and regulations.

A special note needs to be made about the data collection from the assignment sheets mentioned above. In addition to obvious places for feedback such as writing activities and essay drafts, assignment sheets were also used as a platform for instructor and peer feedback in this study. This was done so because students were very receptive to using Google Docs for the other, more obvious, writing activities. Therefore, although using the Assignment Sheet for feedback purposes was not initially planned, the ease of use of Google Docs made this a new venue for feedback. Most certainly, if students do not *understand* a task, they can not *do* the task. This is true for all students, but especially so for L2 writers where language difficulties can be an obstacle for them before writing even begins. L2 writers have not had the years of academic acculturation that L2 writers have, thus decoding assignment sheets in English is something that they are still learning in their university classes. Thus, Google Docs was utilized from the first Assignment Sheet of the semester to the last. The document was opened on Google Docs with comment functionality available to all 34 students, with the standard required sign-in.

## 4. Findings

4.1 Preliminary Findings

● Technology Experience

During the second week of the semester, students were asked to complete a *Technology Survey* (Appendix A). The survey was used to determine which technologies would help them best incorporate instructor and peer feedback into their drafts. Thus, the majority of the survey questions tried to elicit their impressions and experience of technologies that were potentially going to be used in this action research study. There were two parts of the survey that were specifically about Google Docs. One of which was the students' past experience with Google Docs. As Figure 5 shows, the vast majority of students, nearly 73%, had not had any experience with Google Docs prior to this course. In week 9, during the Google Docs Survey, 71% of students reported that they were not even aware of Google Docs existence prior to this course.

From this data it is clear that students had little to no prior bias towards working with this technology.

Figure 5: Week 2 Technology Survey

Q 3: Have you ever used Google Docs before?
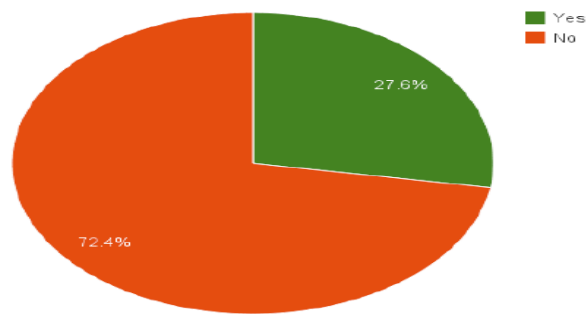
- Technology limitations

The Technology Survey also determined students' physical limitations with technology. For example, *Question 8 asked: Are there any technological limitations that I should know about before designing class activities?* Although there were only three written responses, they revealed distinct interpretations of this survey question and the respective students' impressions of technology usage in an L2 writing classroom context.

1. *"I have laptop and iPad to work."*

2. *"I enjoy working with laptops in class. And working with tablets and cell phones even better."*

3. *"Use laptop in class is cool. But it is strange for most of us."*

Whereas reply 1 is providing materials information, reply 2 and 3 are indicating their willingness   and feelings about working with technology to complete writing tasks for this course. This question was primarily written in an attempt to understand physical limitations, but some of the student replies foreshadowed emotional reactions that they had about working with computers in an L2 writing class. Many students came from academic settings where traditional classroom power structures were firmly in place: the instructor lectured and students passively listened and possibly took notes. Reply 2 seemed to indicate that this student was willing to be an active participant in shifting this traditional power structure, however, reply 3 seemed to indicate that the student might be open to this shift, but it would be uncomfortable. Or, it is possible that the student was saying that it would be uncomfortable for some of their classmates? Either way, reply 3 is a clear resistance to the subtext of the survey question. Requiring students to

be active participants in a classroom when they may be quite used to doing the opposite can often times cause this type of resistance. It was hoped that asking this survey question would get students ready to address their unease with regard to this shift in power dynamics.

● Writing Discomfort

The brief responses in question 8 mentioned previously revealed two limitations discovered in anonymous surveys: students who are uncomfortable writing in their L2 are unlikely to provide rich written data to survey questions. This realization will be revisited in more detail later in this text, but it is important to note that this limitation was noted at the beginning of the semester. Having said that, collecting their reaction to said technology usage was more important than their potential brevity. In other words, the opportunity to participate in this conversation about writing activities and the technological resources used for them was important. For, even when they expressed their dislike for active participation in said activities, they were doing so *in* a participatory manner.
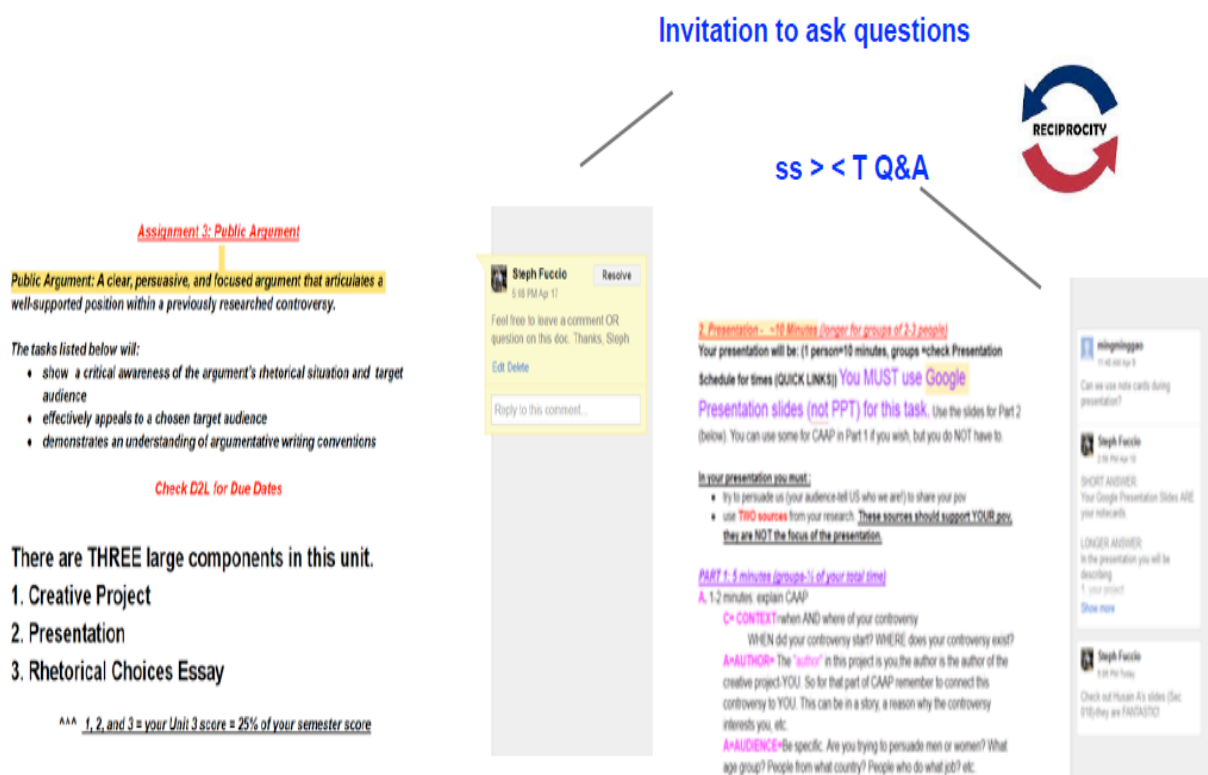
4.2 Advantages of Google Docs

Shifting Educational Paradigm

Even though using the Google Doc Assignment Sheet as a feedback platform was an accidental choice, it served as a strong educational paradigm shifting device. Students that had questions about the task could highlight the confusing area and post their question in a comment bubble. By doing so, the Assignment Sheet had the potential to transcend its traditional role as assignment dictator to a more communicative, living, breathing creation by inviting students to interact with the information (along with its' creator and other collaborators). In order to foster a quick reply time, similar to a conversation, the instructor selected the option of receiving an email when comments were left in a Google Doc. This is only one of the notification options available in Google Docs. This cloud communication allowed for task *interaction* to occur outside of class hours in a public space. Often assignment sheets are not flexible documents and even more often students do not have input on the information changed in it. Thus, using Google Docs for this assignment sheet resulted in a strong educational paradigm shift; one that students were receptive to.

As predicted, the questions in this Google Doc Assignment Sheet mimicked the brief and specific questions that students usually ask about such a text. Thus, it appeared true that Google Docs did, in fact, foster a conversation type of interaction in written form in the cloud. Figure 6 shows such a type of "conversation." This added method of communication not only did not increase the teaching workload but instead reduced the number of similar questions that are usually asked close to essay deadlines such as the night before a draft is due. To ensure that all of the students could benefit from these inquiries, the questions would either remain on the Google Doc with their accompanying reply or the information would be incorporated into the text itself. When

students directly contributed to co-writing the Assignment Sheet like this the changes were highlighted in color within the original text, to denote that it was a change prompted by student inquiry. Not only was it important to share the power of making the Assignment Sheet, but it was equally as important for students to explicitly see the results of this shared task.

Figure 6 : Assignment Sheet Educational Paradigm Shift

Increased Reading Input and Feedback

An added advantage of Google Docs anytime-anywhere accessibility was the increased reading input potential. Students had viewing access to **all 33** essay drafts for each unit's feedback process within the class' Google Doc draft folder.

It was hoped that students who wanted more input would gravitate towards viewing more of their peers' writing as increased sources of reading input. From their comments at the end of the semester, it appears that they did, in fact, take advantage of this option. For example, in her final, reflection essay, one student wrote:

"When I writing essay on google drive, I can look at essays of my classmates. In this way, I can better understand the assignment and learn some good points from my peers. Thus, writing on google Docs helps you revise your mistakes and improves your

writing skills."

Students reported not only learning from each other implicitly, but explicitly. Two students specifically commented on this kind of peer feedback in their final reflective essay.

Student A Google Doc Draft : visible to ALL 34 students

a good resource to get to know him. He has a novelty profit to identify him's belief and with his tweets expressed that his thought and the goal of selflessness.

A man deserves to be the world attention- Kobe Bryant- an unprecedented NBA basketball player who has four million followers just in the twitter. His profit is one Nike shoes, which is his endorsement of shoes named Kobe9 Elite. It is reveal that he likes sports, and like this pair of shoes just as his advertisement. The background of his twitter is color black. Kobe's homepage is very preciseness and he always types words, not much picture post, looks essentials and concise. Kobe's tweets are open for every twitter numbers and his followers are from all over the world. Especially for his fans, and

Student B peer review questions and compliments (also visible to ALL 34 students)

How this can reveal he likes sport? Shouldn't he just use this photo because that product is borrowing his name? So isn't it possible he uses that photo as advertisement?

Good illustration about his twitter account

Student 1: *"One of my personal experience, when I was type my own homework in the Google Doc, one of my classmate, went in to my page, stop me and typed the word 'in this place you do not need to do the definition' for me, he was try to let me know the homework requirement."*

Student 2: *"For this system, you can definitely improve your communication skills by interacting with others and learn how to do the assignment from your classmates since this system would make your writing process much interesting than before."*

Both of these students shared stories of a cloud writing community superseded reading input alone. Not only did students help each other in this virtual writing area but Student 2 even reported that in this writing process being more interactive was one thing that made writing "much interesting than before." It is important to note that although students had a few peer review activities in the 2nd drafts of their essay, they were not explicitly required to view or help each other prior to these tasks. Instead, the cloud writing environment was created and talked about in class, and it was made known that

communicating in this space was an option. An option, consequently, that a number of students not only took advantage of, but wrote about in their own comments about the course later in the semester. Thus, making a virtual space available to these L2 writers via Google Docs helped support both added reading input and a real-time environment where they could assist each other with their writing tasks.

In addition to student drafts serving as increased reading and feedback input, it was noted in the instructor's teaching journal that students also readily consumed instructor's feedback from many of their peers drafts in order to strengthen their own draft. Figure 8 shows an example of instructor-student feedback conversation via Google Docs comment bubbles. In the teaching journal it was noted that in class and during office hours, students talked about making changes to their draft more readily when they saw the instructor's feedback on a particular issue such as topic sentences or missing supporting details. on a peer's draft.

Figure 8: Instructor - Student Interaction via Google Docs

In fact, after the instructor noted this phenomenon, a new page was added to the assignment sheet, a page that included strong examples of some of the writing components practiced in class such as topic sentences, details, etc. Even though many students reported reading their peer's instructor feedback, this page was meant to encourage the students that had not adopted this additional feedback method to do so. Furthermore, it was created to encourage students not only to view this one strong writing component, but then to read more of the example student's essay for added input. With this page the line between reading input and feedback input was beautifully blurred, as it is in real life writing scenarios, thus encouraging yet another educational paradigm shift in this L2 writing environment. In the final Teacher-Course Evaluation (TCE), students commented on this additional input being useful by listing the following

items as reasons for the course being helpful: "student examples, continuous contact with student via online, and managing timeline with late submissions."

Lastly, this Assignment Sheet also acted as an additional drafting process example. Unlike traditional assignment sheets where the assignment sheet is the final instructions or explanation of a given task, it was hoped that this Assignment Sheet would go through an editing process making the task clearer with each revision. Although this example of Google Docs for feedback purposes still had a strong instructor > student > instructor dynamic, the dialogue occurring on the Google Doc was, as all docs in this study, visible to everyone in both composition classes and open for additional peer comments.

Streamlining the Feedback Process

The process of sharing a draft can be time consuming, but this is less so the case with Google Docs. If a student shared their draft in MS Word, for feedback to be given via its Track Changes function, the process would involve about 10 steps. These steps include but are not limited to opening and closing files, turning the Track Changes function on, and emailing or sharing the file in another method. With each step there is the added potential for technical difficulties to occur, thereby preventing feedback to reach its intended audience and thus being utilized. Google Docs drafts cloud characteristics naturally remove many of these steps, which lowers the possibility for technical problems to interfere with writing feedback. The Google Doc draft is always in the same location within Google Docs, where it can be accessed, edited, and commented on by whoever has these respective privileges. Students and instructors can access the most current version of the file at any time and even simultaneously. As Figure 9 shows, many students commented on these advantages during an anonymous survey:

Figure 9: Week 14, Google Survey results:

"The best thing about Google Docs is…

"...easy to get feedback and fix my essay in time."

"...you don't need to print drafts wasting papers."

"...easy to use from everywhere."

"...it automatically saves file."

Admittedly, there were a few times when the instructor was feed backing on a first or second draft and Google Docs showed that the student also had the page open. The instructor could see what the student was currently typing on the document. In these cases, the instructor simply closed the document (which only closed it on her end, not on the student's end), went to another student's draft, returning to that first draft later. Although privacy was respected by doing this action, students sometimes welcomed a

feedbacker. In one specific example, a student saw the instructors icon at the top of the page, opened a chat box and asked if she could give her input on a topic sentence she had just wrote, thereby making feed backing available instantaneously.

This streamlining was increased exponentially during peer review sessions. During peer review, 2-3 students were working in a group. They focused on the global peer review feed backing on one student at a time. Due to Google Docs capacity to allow many viewers on a document simultaneously, they could read and Google comment on the one Google Doc simultaneously. This was true for the peers giving feedback as well as the writer making notes during the verbal discussion. Students left class on peer review days with all of their peer and self feedback centralized in the one Google Doc, thus saving them time scanning many digital or paper copies of their drafts later. In either case, students did not have to wait long for feedback to be returned. As soon as feedback comments were added to their draft, they were available.

Ease of Use and Accessibility

Perhaps the most appealing benefit of Google Docs in an L2 writing class is its' ease of use and accessibility. This was important because technology should not overshadow L2 writers tasks. Instead, it should support an environment that makes it easier and more helpful to do said task. Minimizing technology training is a goal in any class that uses CALL, however, it is even more important in an L2 environment. As previously mentioned, just as the language or handwriting style in written feedback can cause confusion, so can not knowing how to use the technology required for the class. Therefore, the easier the technology is to use, the easier the instructions can be, and the quicker this writing tool becomes a tool, not another linguistic obstacle. From the first usage of Google Docs, it was clear that there was functionality transfer from more traditional word processing programs such as MS Word Or Apple Pages to Google Docs, especially with basic processes and menu choices. This similarity was important because many of these L2 writers were intimately familiar with these traditional word processing programs, thus making the transition over to Google Docs a smooth one, language-wise. It is true that some students, as their did with version of MS Word, kept their menu options in their L1. However, all instructions and assistance with using Google Docs was done in English in and outside of class, thereby providing further reading input in their L2.

In addition to their familiarity with the menu options, a large number of students reported that this anytime-anywhere feature of Google Docs was one the reasons they liked using this program in week 14's Google Survey. One student reported: *"In ENG 108, I used google doc to get feedback. The advantage of google doc is you can easily know where you should edit and get feedback without off-line meeting."*

This easy adaptation of Google Docs can be seen by comparing the Technology Survey data from Week 2 (Figure 5) to the Feedback Survey in week 9 (Figure 10). A dramatic difference in their Google Docs confidence can be seen within this seven week period. For example, Figure 5 shows that approximately 73% of the students had no previous

experience using Google Docs. When asked which technology they thought was the most helpful for their drafts just seven weeks later, over half of the students selected Google Docs (Figure 10). Clearly they felt confident that the technology was providing a platform for feedback, and subsequently, their writing.

Figure 10 : Week 9 Feedback Survey

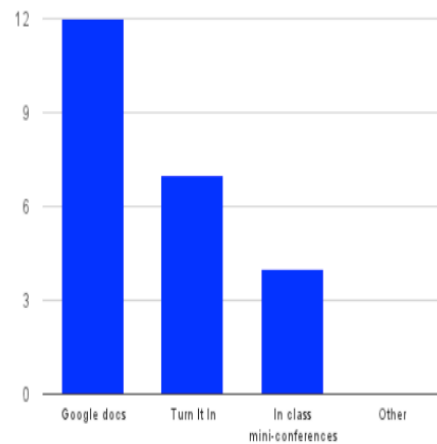Q1: Which feedback did you find helpful to write a stronger essy during Unit 1?

- Google docs
- Turn It In
- In class mini-conference
- Other

53.1%
25%
18.8%
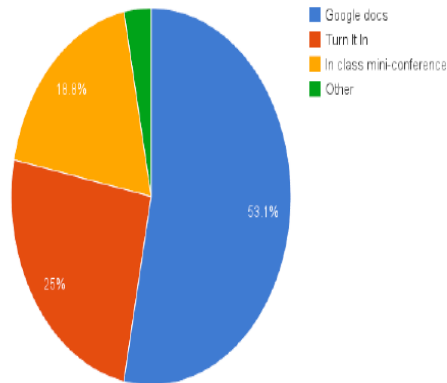
Q2: Which of the feedback in #1 was the easiest to use? (pick only ONE)

Results

4.3 Disadvantages of Google Docs

Writing Habits

This cloud process writing feedback method is less suitable for students who already have a set writing process. It is most suited, as most draft/peer review oriented composition classes are, for students who are willing to write their essays step-by-step and do heavy editing with each step in a collaborative manner. For example, a Liberal Arts student from China in one of these classes expressed a preference for writing late at night, just before a deadline. The instructor noted in the teaching journal that this student orally commented that she was creative and productive only when a deadline was close. Although the student reported that this process worked for her content classes, this worked against her the entire semester in this L2 heavy process writing class. Unfortunately, for some peer review sessions she missed the draft deadline and chose not to attend the peer review class sessions, or subsequent alternate peer review make-up sessions. Although she passed the class, it was abundantly clear when comparing her final drafts to her peers, that other students addressed via Google Docs edits during peer review.

Writing habits are multi-faceted, including much more than just the writing process itself, but program familiarity and loyalty. From the first essay draft, students were encouraged to write in the cloud, not just upload their draft to their Google Doc on the dates that they were due. And although a fair number of them did this (it was

possible to monitor this due to the open access of Google Doc), a few students worked off-line in an MS Word or Apple Pages document and only transferred their draft to the cloud on these due dates. Even still, students who participated in this less transparent drafting method benefited from peer and instructor feedback and the other advantages previously stated. However, it was noted in the teaching journal that it would most likely be more effective for students to be able to *watch* each other develop their drafts throughout the entire process, not only when they were done with a draft. In very few cases, a student wrote in a MS Word document off-line and then forgot their file or computer at home for peer review classes, thus negating the cloud advantage entirely. But with three drafts for each of the four essays, the number of times this occurrence was negligible.

Over-personalization

While feed backing on students' first and second drafts, the instructor noted that a fair number of students stopped writing while they waited for feedback. This action made sense with more traditional feedback platform such as MS Word, where a digital document would be transferred from the student to the instructor before the draft deadline, and back to the student when the instructor feedback was complete. But with Google Docs, both the students and instructor have access to the draft during the *entire* feed backing process. Thus, there was no need for this downtime to exist. To address this issue, the instructor created a *common errors* page and added it to the Assignment Sheet. It was there that a list of the most common content weaknesses were shared, but without student examples. These trends were also reviewed in class and writing activities to address these issues were also practiced during this time. Nevertheless, even with highlighting these issues, the instructor noted that many students simply stopped working on their draft until they received instructor feedback. Were drafts downgraded to an unimportant homework instead of the beginning of a heavily weighted grading item because of the increased feedback available? Was it possible that this feedback method was so personalized that it made students think class activities were perfunctory and only individual feedback was important?

Privacy

A negative aspect of this increased reading and feedback input was the decreased privacy. Students used their university email accounts to sign in to Google Docs. Therefore, their email user name would appear next to any comment they left, losing anonymity. This did not deter students from utilizing these resources, but the instructor wondered if there was a more private way that the initial setup could be altered to allow for more anonymity. Two potential downsides of this increased security, however, would be an inability for the instructor to track progress via a quantitative system (complete task versus incomplete task) for grades and the potential for students to participate in cyber bullying. The level of privacy in a classroom environment is a delicate balance and the instructor noted that the balance in these classes was not disruptive but not yet fully conducive to encourage maximum participatory levels.

Additionally, students were quite supportive of Google Docs visibility aspect on the anonymous surveys, but there were aspects of the program's accessibility that may have caused more writing vulnerability than traditional feedback methods. The instructor noted on a few occasions that students seemed a little uncomfortable in class peer review sessions. Were Google comment bubbles the new version of the dreaded red pen? Since peer feedback was reader oriented, this was highly unlikely, but as mentioned previously, writing stigmas are difficult to alter. It is important to note that although this discomfort was present, it did not seem to be more than the regular vulnerability that comes with sharing ones written thoughts and ideas. A possible downside to Google Docs or any similar cloud program is the anytime-anywhere aspect with regards to the length of time a students work is visible. The convenience of the documents being updated synchronously and available from anywhere may have made this vulnerability exist for a longer stretch of time than in a regular one-class peer review session. Students were essentially writing in the cloud, which meant that any student, or myself, could watch drafts as they evolved. Despite this privacy risk, students verbalized that they found it extremely helpful to see numerous examples of the same task, thereby admitting that if Google Docs increased writing vulnerability, it was worth the risk.

Technical problems

Google Docs functionality is dependable-most of the time. There were a few times when students were typing and computer code appeared on the screen instead of letters. Usually, restarting the program fixed this problem, but students expressed a high level of frustration when it happened. Formatting was another technical shortcoming of Google Docs. MLA formatting was used in this class and often times margin adjustments or indenting changes were either not possible at all or did not remain in the document when it was downloaded for final submission to the CMS. This was a problem because all final essays were submitted, via a Word Document, to the CMS, which was not linked to Google Docs. In these circumstances students had to wait until they downloaded their draft and remember to change the formatting at that time. Google Docs automatically saves every few seconds so there was rarely any lost data due to technical difficulties.

5. Discussion

This action research study of two L2 writing classes revealed how powerful cloud pedagogy can be and how open students are to working within it. Revisiting the original research questions, it is clear to see that there is a great deal of potential in using a cloud program such as Google Docs for L2 writing feedback.

5.1: Research Question 1:

Can Google Docs formatting help L2 students overcome language difficulties so that they can understand and incorporate feedback more easily?

Reviewing the collected student data, the answer is a resounding YES. Of all previous technologies used in L2 writing environments, using Google Docs fostered the most collaborative, power sharing, idea focused L2 writing environment to date. A large factor of these advantages, according to the students using the technology, was the Google Docs design itself. Google Docs looks like MS Word, which greatly reduces the learner training time on this cloud technology. Yet, the functionality of Google Docs far surpasses that of traditional, web 1.0 word processing programs to include collaborative and conversational functionality. Increased readership equates to increased assistance and increased feedback, as shown in this study via the assignment sheets themselves and the student drafts. L2 writers naturally have more language difficulties than L1 writers, thus this larger writing community greatly decreased their language difficulties by providing added opportunities to clarify any linguistic confusion.

In addition to this advantage, Google Docs can help encourage frequent *touches* of a draft, thus helping to teach a process writing drafting process, which is shown to help L2 writers overcome some of their embarrassment with their language deficiencies. To download and submit a clean copy of their draft students must, at minimum, *touch* their Google feedback comments at least once, to delete them. Additionally, since students were, for the most part, writing in the cloud, they were working in the digital version of the draft that the feedback was being written in. This eliminated the potential for losing a hard copy draft or not being able to open a digital file, or digital file corruption. The simplicity of Google Docs freed the students up to focus on the writing task itself, not on technical problems that can and often do arise when using a word processing program.

5.2: Research Question 2:

Does the dialogic potential of Google Docs support increased L2 writing fluency?

At the beginning of the semester, the full extent that Google Docs could help L2 students shift their focus on language accuracy to language fluency was unknown at the beginning of the semester. Ultimately, this technology fostered a more real life collaborative environment, which helped these L2 writers by adding community to their writing tasks, a component that is easily forgotten within the classroom walls. This added audience meant that these L2 writers had more people that could help them analyze the ideas within their writing with feedback comments that were visually written in a more conversational language register.

5.3: Research Question 3:

Will L2 students participate and/or benefit from the shifting educational paradigm that Google Docs can foster?

A student's impressions of Google Docs from the week 14 Google Survey answers this question best:

"I like Google doc because…it's cool, and there is ghost live inside leave comment

(just kidding)."

Is it possible that this student felt so liberated by the shifting power dynamics supported by Google Docs that he was able to interject humor into such a question? By mentioning a ghost in the machine he is possibly revealing that the feedback process was a more playful one, possibly even a bit mysterious for its newness in an educational context. It is alternatively possible that this student is expressing a sense of hopelessness when he says that a ghost "leave comment." But since he added "just kidding" it is most likely safe to assume that his impression of Google Docs is a positive one, not an oppressive one.

Although it takes time for students to embrace a more interactive, non-traditional writing classroom dynamic, there were dramatic improvements in their willingness to do so within just one semester . This shift is a necessary step towards L2 writers becoming comfortable with the naturally collaborative, changing organic process of writing outside of the classroom as well as their own L2 writing competencies.

6. Future Google Docs Feedback Usage

Suggestions for future uses of Google Docs for feedback purposes in an L2 writing context include:

Verbal surveys

The lack of written responses to the three surveys this semester proved that students who are not confident with their L2 will not generally write copiously voluntarily. With this in mind, adding more verbal checkpoints to the next survey series regarding Google Docs might elicit more informal yet helpful reactions. These verbal checkpoints can be group in-class discussions, brief inquiries during office hours or the instructor making notes of students' comments regarding the technology informally at any point. If student input is extended to include these more spontaneous situations then there will be a much larger collection of data to show their reaction to using this technology.

Privacy Consideration

For this study, the instructor created and controlled all *share* functionality for the cloud documents. This was done for two reasons. First, since there was an inevitable learning curve with this new technology, this step was completed by the instructor to minimize the time frame where the technology was the focus and proceed quickly to the point where the writing was. Having said that, there may have been some students who would have preferred to have control over these settings themselves. It is possible that they would have liked to have a choice in exactly who saw their work during varying stages of the drafting process, instead of including all 33 students as their reading audience. Thus, in future usages of Google Docs for L2 writing, it might be useful to

spend more time at the beginning of the semester providing some technical training on this aspect so that students can have control over these sharing options. This sense of agency may add to the comfort level of students who might be hesitant to share their work with the entire class during the drafting process.

Student – Instructor Feedback Spaces

In previous L2 writing classes the researcher usually separated instructor and peer feedback. However, for this action research, it seemed counterproductive to have two separate Google Docs for each student's essay. As mentioned earlier, students used each other's work as additional input for the task at hand much more than anticipated. Thus, it was illogical for each student to have two documents for feedback. A more advantageous solution might be if students made the choice themselves IF they wanted their instructor and peer feedback in the same space. And if students did choose to have their feedback in separate spaces, the most streamlined way to do that would be to have peer review in Google Docs and the instructor feedback in a different, private location of the student's choosing. Adding this element of agency, in addition to the sharing controls mentioned above would empower students more to take ownership of their writing, as well as the editing process, while increasing learner autonomy.

7. Conclusion

Utilizing Google Docs in an L2 writing environment for feedback purposes revealed some surprising findings. First, students reported high comfort levels for both the technology usage as well as the community fostering characteristics of Google Docs. These thirty-four L2 writers even took advantage of this virtual writing community in ways unforeseen before the study began, thus reinforcing the power shifts that are possible in such cloud-like educational tools. Second, since Google Docs is a more authentic, collaborative writing platform than traditional word processing programs, it helped to promote a shift in both feedback focus (local to global) and in classroom power dynamics (both instructor to student and peer-to-peer). This shift provided more time and space to focus on the ideas in the L2 writers' texts and increase reading input via peer examples simultaneously. Finally, by reviewing the data collected during Spring 2014 in these two L2 writing classes, it is clear that using Google Docs for feedback purposes helped these L2 writing students focus on the ideas in their writing, instead of overemphasizing their language deficiencies.

There is still a great deal of research to be done on using cloud pedagogies in the L2 writing classroom, but it is hoped that this action research study has started a much needed conversation about using these virtual programs to address the specific needs of L2 writers in an authentic, empowering manner.

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Appendix A:

Technology Survey: *Week 2*

Do NOT include your name on this document, I want the information to be anonymous so that you write as honestly as possible about the below questions. We will be using many of the below technologies this semester to help with your writing and research projects. This survey will give me an idea of your wants and needs so that I can tailor the class to YOU!

Thank you, Stephanie

Instructions: Download this form, complete AND print it out.

Hand this in on *Friday, Jan 24th.*

1. When you have a question about **homework** or any class details, how do you feel most comfortable contacting your instructor (in this case, Stephanie Fuccio)? Order the below with *1=most comfortable* using and *4=least comfortable using (use the numbers 1, 2,3 or 4)*. It's okay to use the same number twice if they are equally comfortable for you.

___   email   ___   text message (sms)

___   in person (office hours)   ___   before/after class   ___other   (please explain)

___   Todaysmeet (check it out here: https://todaysmeet.com/testengl108)

2. My goal is to create frequent **writing opportunities** for you throughout the semester. Which of the following writing platforms are you the most comfortable writing in. Order the below with 1=most comfortable using and 4=least comfortable using. It's okay to use the same number twice if they are equally comfortable for you.

___   email   ___   text message (sms)   ___ Google docs

___   class whiteboard   ___   Twitter   ___ paper

___   discussion board   ___   other (please explain)

___   Todaysmeet (check it out here: https://todaysmeet.com/testengl108)

3. We will be using Google docs to work on **practice writings** (group projects AND individual ones). These documents are open to the whole class so that we can learn from each other. We will be selecting some good examples and some examples that we need to edit together to make them stronger from this cloud writing. Have you done this kind of *shared* online writing before? (circle one)   YES   NO

4. For **instructor feedback** on your practice writings (homework AND essay drafts, but NOT the final/graded essay), what method do you prefer? 1=most preferred, 4 is least (use 1,2,3 or 4)

___   online (D2l>>TurnItIn)___   online (Google docs) ___ in person

___   discussion board   ___   other (please explain)

5. Please explain in a few sentences how much **peer review** you have done before AND what you like <u>and</u> don't like about it.

_____

_____

_____

6. In my graduate work I am researching using technologies such as **text messaging (sms**) to help students with their writing. Would you be interested in short, text message "conversations" to help you brainstorm your research topics (in Unit 2) <u>and/or</u> for your essay skeleton (thesis and topic sentences).

      YES-brainstorming   NO-brainstorming   YES-essay skeleton NO-essay Skeleton

7. If you said YES to #6, do you have an *UNLIMITED text messaging package* with **your mobile phone service** (I do NOT want you to get charged a lot of money IF we do writing practice via this method). If you are unsure, please check with your provider before answering.

      (circle ONE)   YES   NO

8. Are there any **technology limitations** that I should know about before designing class activities using the above technology (ALL of the tech from #1-7)? Please be honest and as specific as you can. Keep in mind that laptops and tablets can be checked out of ALL UA libraries for free.

_____

<u>Appendix B:</u>

Feedback Survey: *Week 9*

Do NOT include your name on this document, I want the information to be anonymous so that you write as honestly as possible about the below questions.

Thank you, Stephanie

<u>Instructions:</u> Download this form, complete AND print it out.

Hand this in between Fri, Feb 28th and Wed, March 5th.

1. Which feedback did you find helpful to write a stronger essay during Unit 1? (check 1 OR more than 1)

- Google docs   - Turn It In   - in class mini-conference - other

_____

2. Which of the above feedback was the easiest (only 1) to use?
_____

3. How easy was it to understand the written feedback in Turn It In ? (circle one number)

 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

hard   okay   easy

IF you picked 0-4, describe what you did to better understand the comments. Ex: come to office hours, email me, ask during class, etc

_____

_____

4. How easy was it to understand the bubble comment feedback in Google docs? (circle one number)

 10   9   8   7   6   5   4   3   2   1   0

difficult   okay   easy

IF you picked 6-10, describe what you did to better understand the comments. Ex: come to office hours, email me, ask during class, etc

_____

_____

5. Do you prefer more feedback on your drafts OR on your final essay ?

              (pick one)   drafts   final essay

6.How comfortable were you writing in the cloud (via Google docs)?

Pick ONE: Very uncomfortable   Okay   Very comfortable

7. In future essays would you prefer: (pick ONE)

       A. Continue to work in Google docs while drafting the essay, where everyone can see each other's papers.

B. Continue to work in Google docs while drafting the essay, where only the instructor can see the students' individual papers.

10o you feel like writing in Google docs AND having access to other students' essays as examples has helped your own essay? (pick one)

No   Maybe   I think so   100 % yes, this was really helpful!

11. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about your experience with Google docs in Unit 1 OR the final essay feedback? Remember, this survey is anonymous, so be as honest as you wish. Having said that, please be kind also:)

Thank you for your feedback on my feedback. When I have read all of the surveys I will let you know how we will do drafting in Unit 2. Your opinions matter A LOT in this matter!

Stephanie Fuccio

Appendix C:

Google Docs Survey : *Week 14*

Part 1: Anonymous (NO name)

1. Before our English 108 class, what was your experience with Google Docs? (circle one)

___Nothing   ____I heard about it   ___ I used it once ____ I use it often but never used it

2. On a scale of 1 to 4, how comfortable are you writing in Google Docs now?

        (1=very comfortable, 4= very uncomfortable) _____

3. Have you started to use Google Docs for any other classes? If yes, which ones?

        (circle) Yes _____ No

4. Finish any TWO of these sentences…

        I like Google Docs because _____

         I hate Google Docs because _____

        Google Docs surprised me because _____

        The best thing about Google Docs is _____

Part 2: Name _____

For your Unit 3 essay draft, how would you like your **instructor feedback** ? Pick ONE.

        A. Turn It In only

        B. Google Docs- bubble comments only

        C. Google Docs- audio comments only (NEW option)

        D. Google Docs- audio AND bubble comments only (NEW option)

        E. On paper (you would need to print it and give it to me for this option)