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EFL Learners' Metaphorical Perceptions of Peer Feedback in ICT-mediated Collaborative Writing

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Abstract
While online, information and communication technology (ICT)-mediated collaborative writing (CW) is an adopted activity in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction, little research has examined students' perceptions of peer feedback in this environment in depth. This study explores how learners metaphorically perceive peer feedback during ICT-supported collaborative essay writing activities. A total of 36 English-major students enrolled in a writing course that integrated Google Docs, Padlet, and a Learning Management System (LMS) into collaborative activities were asked to generate metaphors to describe their perceptions of the feedback they received from peers. The findings indicate that students employed a range of conceptual structures to represent their perceptions, reflecting diverse viewpoints on peer feedback in ICT-supported CW contexts. Through their metaphorical expressions, students primarily conceptualized ICT-mediated peer feedback in terms of its perceived value, specifically, its usefulness for writing tasks, the potential emotional or academic cost to recipients, and the unique mode of its delivery. The study demonstrates that metaphor analysis offers valuable insights into students' perceptions of ICT-mediated peer feedback, particularly in understanding its transformative potential. The findings suggest the necessity of collectively integrating ICT tools into writing instruction and the urgent need to train students in giving and handling peer feedback to enhance their use of ICT in collaborative learning environments.
Keywords: Collaborative writing, English language teaching, information and communication technology-supported peer feedback, metaphor analysis

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Introduction

Information and communication technology(ICT)advancements are modifying educational settings and transforming academic teaching practices alongside learning approaches throughout multiple disciplinary fields. Language education receives substantial interest regarding ICT tool integration because this approach boosts learning effectiveness, supports group work, and provides unique feedback methods (Azmi, 2017; Hashmi, 2016; Sheerah, 2020). The diverse functionalities in ICT-supported feedback address traditional obstacles by supplying real-time peer collaboration, automated error correction, and personalized recommendation services that improve student writing abilities and learning effectiveness (Bailey & Lee, 2020; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022).

CW supported by ICT tools such as Google Docs, Grammarly, and Padlet has become a commonly used activity in writing instruction. Shared text productions from CW enable students to develop their language fluency, thinking abilities, and interpersonal capabilities while working together (Abrams, 2019), while ICT tools benefit learners in different ways, from providing richer input, fostering interactions, to receiving instant, multi-modal assistance. What is most often highlighted as an obvious advantage of ICT-supported CW is the usefulness that comes from feedback and revision tracking that leads to improved writing performance. ICT exhibits utility especially for CW by allowing students to co-edit documents through tools such as Google Docs and to obtain Grammarly feedback on grammar content and vocabulary along with document styling, and that these tools help students create better work and facilitate effective participation when receiving and giving feedback (Do et al., 2023).

Metaphors serve as conceptual reflections of abstract notions that people experience during their lifetime (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As such, metaphor evolves far more than a mere concept in linguistics, providing an important understanding of human beings' cognition and their perceptions of the world. Several studies have employed metaphor analysis to understand students' perspectives regarding online learning, teacher roles, and language learning (e.g., De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Martínez-Carrasco & Roldán-Riejos, 2020). When students described teachers as "coaches" and "guides", it suggests their perceptions of the teachers' dual functions in providing support and direction during online learning and teaching. While studies have explored students' experience of giving and receiving peer review in writing and ICT-supported writing, few have examined this experience in ICT-supported CW. Little research examining this journey using metaphor analysis has been found. This study, therefore aims to offer metaphor analysis as an alternative lens through which to explore the useful yet complex ICT-enhanced CW experience by addressing the following question:

How do learners metaphorically perceive peer feedback during collaborative essay writing activities in an ICT-supported environment?

Literature Review

The Role of Information and Communication Technology in CW

ICT implements fundamental changes to writing instruction in general and CW in particular by developing modern solutions alongside new learning opportunities and effective practices. Research on ICT platforms and tools consistently shows that they facilitate real-time collaboration regardless of participants' locations and offer effective solutions to key challenges in traditional CW. They help students address issues such as the dominance of higher-proficient learners in the writing process (Ortega, 2018). Cloud-based writing platforms create interactive shared document features to support dynamic interactions, which improve writing processes and

products (Li & Zhu, 2021), and these tools convert individual writing practices into social meaning-building activities through collaborative construction (Abrams, 2019). ICT platforms enable equal opportunity for group members to participate in CW processes as they promote uniform participation distribution and present various options for contributing to group activities (Zhou et al., 2012). Advanced tool features showing revision histories in programs like Google Docs produce individual accountability, leading to more excellent group participation rates (Zhang, 2019). Software's integrated language tools also create equal learning conditions for heterogeneous proficiency groups in CW activities (Warschauer & Liaw, 2021).

There is also evidence supporting the effectiveness of integrating digital platforms into CW instruction. They enable student groups to develop strategic approaches in their essay development, while collaborative digital tools enhance metacognitive awareness through the process of composition (Martínez-Carrasco & Roldán-Riejos, 2020) and allow groups to insert multiple forms of media into their papers (Hafner & Ho, 2020). Furthermore, digital mind-mapping platforms linked with peer collaboration systems provide scaffolding for challenging writing assignments (Wu & Miller, 2021) and help students improve accuracy and fluency in writing (Alwaleedi, 2022). ICT tools have dramatically changed peer feedback processes into more immediate and effective systems. They enable more detailed feedback during writing sessions (Yeh et al., 2019) while documents with tracked modifications lead to an increased number of changes that enhance writing quality (Strobl & Baten, 2023). In addition, annotation tools generate contextual feedback that correlates precisely to text sections (Huang, 2022) and so fixes the main weakness of peer review (Liu & Hansen, 2002). The recent advancement of technology with the introduction of generative AI tools has also extended CW by adding multimodal elements alongside language proficiency support for diverse group members.

Peer Feedback in Information and Communication Technology-mediated CW

Yu (2024) points out that terms such as peer assessment, peer evaluation, peer review, and *peer editing* are often used interchangeably in writing instruction research to refer to peer feedback. This is widely recognized as a "major peer activity for learning" in writing classes (Yu & Lee, 2016, p. 461) and is as effective as teacher feedback in improving EFL learners' writing accuracy (Wu et al., 2022). While some studies report that online peer feedback enhances students' grammatical and lexical accuracy (Shang, 2022), others highlight improvements in organization and content development (Albesher, 2024). Additional research shows that online peer feedback contributes to overall writing quality (Illana-Mahiques, 2021; Rezai et al., 2022) or is at least perceived positively by students (Sağlamel & Çetinkaya, 2022). In online learning environments, students can overcome cultural barriers and actively engage in giving and receiving feedback in writing classes (Pham et al., 2020; Nguyen & Pham, in press). Furthermore, when EFL students are properly trained to provide feedback, ICT-supported peer feedback is often perceived as more effective than traditional face-to-face methods (Pham, 2022).

A growing body of research supports the integration of ICT in CW activities, even in developing countries where digital literacy and resources are often considered limited (Nguyen, 2020). Peer feedback not only enhances writing performance in ICT-mediated collaborative tasks (Albesher, 2024) but also fosters a "sense of community" during the revision process (Sağlamel & Çetinkaya, 2022, p. 189). In this light, peer feedback can be conceptualized as assessment for learning (Yu, 2024) or "formative peer assessment" (Van Hoe et al., 2024, p. 2). For instance, Albesher (2024) found that in Google Docs-mediated environments, students benefited

significantly from peer comments and suggestions, resulting in greater improvements in cohesion, organization, and content development compared to those in face-to-face settings.

However, emerging research also reveals that the process of giving and receiving peer feedback in ICT-supported CW is more complex than it may appear. Ennis et al. (2021), for example, found that participants from different cultural and geographical backgrounds, engaged in an intercultural CW project, often felt "overwhelmed" and at times "forced" in their interactions. These experiences were reflected in shifting perceptions of the value and nature of peer feedback (p. 77). Similarly, Sağlamel and Çetinkaya (2022) found that students encountered significant challenges in handling peer comments, often leading to anxiety. Despite the growing interest in students' perceptions of peer feedback - typically explored through interviews and questionnaires (Lin & Yang, 2011; Pham et al., 2020), there remains limited understanding of students' perspectives on peer feedback, particularly in CW contexts.

Metaphor Analysis in Language Education Research

The human cognitive system operates through metaphors because these conceptual tools aid mental processing to transform complex notions into concrete mental frameworks (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) while demonstrating specific practice comprehension (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). Metaphor analysis is, hence, employed as a robust analytical method to reveal inner perceptions about how people interpret their target. So it has developed into a vital methodological framework that allows researchers to study complex educational constructs and support educational reflection by educators. In a number of studies, the analysis of metaphors elicited from students has shown equivalent worth in assessing their beliefs, motivations, and perceptions toward language education (Ishak, 2019; Jin et al., 2014). These studies have contributed to demonstrating the suitability and usefulness of metaphor analysis for understanding students'perceptions and learning experience. However, despite studies on ICT-supported CW, research employing metaphor analysis to understand learners' perceptions of peer feedback remains scarce. This study explores how learners metaphorically perceive peer feedback during collaborative essay writing activities in an ICT-supported environment.

Method

Participants

This study involves thirty-six (36) full-time students enrolled in a writing course at a university in Vietnam. The participants were in their third year of an English language program, demonstrating an early CEFR-B2 level, as outlined in the program's curriculum. They had varied backgrounds in using digital collaboration tools. The majority of participants were female (85%), aged between 20 and 22.

In the writing course, the students were instructed on different genres of writing, from descriptive to argumentative essays. For these genres, CW activities were employed in an ICT-supported environment. The students experienced CW of these essay genres in the LMS platform integrated with Grammarly, Padlet, and Google Docs in an 8-week period. One week after the intervention, the students generated metaphors to represent their perceptions of peer feedback they received in ICT-supported CW activities.

Data Collection

Metaphor elicitation was adopted to understand student perceptions about ICT-supported feedback during CW activities. Since a metaphor uses language to represent a concept different from its literal meaning, suggesting an analogy between two elements (Knowles & Moon, 2006), it holds significant value in exploring conceptualizations of educational technology.

The research instrument used a two-sectioned form adapted from Okyar (2023). The first section obtained personal information about participants. The second section adopted an "X like Y" format, which researchers commonly used for metaphor investigations (Fisher, 2017; Ma & Gao, 2017). The specific task asked participants to complete at least two sentences to describe peer feedback they received through ICT tools and platform by saying "X is like Y" because "Y" with the specific prompt: "Feedback I receive from peers in CW tasks with support from ICT tools such as Google docs, Grammarly, Padlet, LMS is (like) .... because ...."

The method employs direct elicitation techniques (Schmitt, 2005) to help participants assess material from diverse angles (Wan & Low, 2015). Given that respondents can generate metaphorical expressions and propositions after receiving linguistic or visual research prompts and researchers do not have to interpret metaphorical meanings when using this explicit format, thus boosting the reliability of their analysis (Low, 2015), the "*because*" component cooperates with standard practice in metaphor studies (Wan et al., 2011; Nguyen, 2016) to coerce participants into demonstrating their rationale for selected metaphors.

Data Analysis

Huang and Feng's (2019) three-stage process of metaphorical analysis is adopted, including naming/labelling, sorting, and categorization.

The first phase included identifying metaphorical expressions from literal descriptions in the participants' responses. In the second phase - the sorting process, a detailed examination of the participants' responses revealed that several expressions did not meet the criteria for metaphorical language and consequently, they were excluded from further analysis (Li & Zou, 2021). Within this phase, expressions without metaphors, illogical metaphors, and unhelpful statements for the targeted theme were removed. Through this process, various metaphors representing students' diverse perceptions of ICT-mediated peer feedback in CW tasks were identified. In the categorization process, identified metaphors are carefully examined to be categorized into distinct groups.

Results

The findings have shown that students employed different conceptual structures to represent their perceptions, showing diverse perspectives on peer feedback delivered in ICT-supported environments in CW. Through their metaphorical expressions, students primarily conceptualized ICT-mediated peer feedback in terms of its perceived value, the potential emotional or academic cost it poses to recipients, and the mode of its delivery. Metaphor analysis has revealed that while students largely have positive conceptualization, their experiences with peer feedback are multifaceted.

The Value of Peer Feedback in Receiving Most Conceptual Structures

Although no specific guidance on the features of peer feedback was provided to participants when they generated metaphors, the majority of the responses and thus the

metaphorical expressions were associated with the usefulness of peer feedback, which suggests that the value and use of peer review are most appreciated by the students. The most common metaphors in this category include: PEER FEEDBACK IS EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION, PEER FEEDBACK IS NAVIGATION, PEER FEEDBACK IS CONSTRUCTION, and PEER FEEDBACK IS MEDICAL SUPPORT.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As Educational Instruction

The students metaphorically characterized ICT-based peer feedback as online teachers, educators, coaches, supervisors, mentors, and advisors, as exemplified by one participant's explanation: "an online teacher with a set of highlights because it gives me instruction on which area of my writing needs improving and how I should do so" (S.20). These metaphors emphasized ICT-supported peer feedback's capacity to provide corrective feedback, clarify ideas, and guide writing improvement. The peer feedback delivered by ICT tool features is perceived as a virtual instructor capable of identifying errors and offering instructional support comparable to personalized, human-led guidance (i.e., teachers, educators, coaches). Explanations from the participants also show that peer feedback in CW activities in an ICT-enhanced environment makes the students feel their learning is personalized, as shown in the following sentences: "Feedback I receive from peers […] is a personal tutor because it helps me recognize mistakes I made and suggests ideas for me to enhance my writing" (S.12), or "[peer feedback] is like a private supervisor because it helps guide my writing development" (S.25).

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As Navigation

The students also frequently employed navigational metaphors to describe ICT-supported peer feedback, highlighting its role in guiding them through their revision and editing process and enhancing their writing abilities. The most commonly references included metaphors such as GPS, compass, and (treasure) map (S.1, S.18, S.19, S.20). These metaphors illustrated that students perceived peer feedback as tools that charted their writing learning paths, steered them away from errors, and directed them toward effective writing. For instance, a student described peer feedback as a "GPS because it helps me detect mistakes and avoid missteps and wrong ways of writing" (S.20). Similarly, participants also referred to peer feedback as a map that "offers direction" and "shows [...] the right ways of writing" (S.34), or even "a treasure map" that revealed "valuable paths to better [writing] results" (S.18).

Metaphorical expressions such as (tour) guide and pathfinder were also used (S.24, S.25, S.34), underscoring the exploratory and supportive aspects of ICT-supported peer feedback in CW activities. Students noted that the feedback they received from peers helped them uncover new perspectives in their writing and navigate toward more effective final products. This role emphasized the function of peer feedback in facilitating better orientation and improvement throughout the writing process.

Other metaphorical expressions under the metaphor PEER FEEDBACK AS NAVIGATION involve light or flashlight, and illuminated path, which captured the illuminating quality of ICT-based peer feedback, as seen in "[peer feedback] is like a flashlight because it reveals errors I didn't recognize regardless of many revision times" (S.29). Peer feedback helped them pinpoint specific, previously unnoticed areas for revision, making their learning process more targeted and efficient. In this analogy, peer feedback is seen as offering directions and guiding learning pathways.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback in Construction

The students also articulated the function of ICT-supported peer feedback through construction-related metaphors, emphasizing how this type of feedback contributed to strengthening and developing their written work. Prominent mappings were bridge, blueprint, construction, house base, building base, and building foundation metaphors, which appeared a total of 7 times in the data from 5 participants (S.1, S.2, S.5, S.19, S.26). In this view, the students regarded CW as a building process in which peer feedback helped them establish a solid foundational groundwork for their writing. The metaphors suggested that ICT-mediated peer feedback acted as connectors, enabling students to unify their thoughts and produce coherent, well-grounded writings.

Other metaphorical expressions found in the data of this category of PEER FEEDBACK AS CONSTRUCTION are brick and cement. The students likened ICT feedback to foundational elements, such as "[…] bricks to build houses" (S.4, S.14) and "[…] cement because it helps me connect ideas more strongly and improve my writing better" (S.36), indicating that in CW, peer feedback provides the structural support necessary for strong, complete writing. In this metaphor, ICT-enhanced peer feedback played a vital role in stabilizing and enhancing the quality of student work, serving as the base upon which further development could occur. Together, these building-related metaphors illustrated students' perceptions of ICT-supported feedback as essential to the structural and developmental aspects of their writing.

ICT-Supported Feedback As Medical Support

Participants also employed medical expressions to describe the function of ICT-supported peer feedback, emphasizing its role in diagnosing and resolving academic challenges in their writing. The most prevailing mappings involved diagnostic tools, doctors, and physicians, which highlighted ICT feedback as a diagnostic and saving tool. In this analogy, students likened ICT feedback to the work of a doctor who identifies and addresses various learning-related issues in CW activities (S.7). Through this lens, ICT tools were perceived as playing a vital role in detecting errors and offering treatment (i.e., solutions), thereby facilitating both academic development and personal growth (S.18, S.24, S.36).

Together, the medical metaphors illustrated students' perceptions of ICT-supported peer feedback as a precise, diagnostic, and developmentally supportive mechanism for enhancing their writing performance.

Secondary to its value, the potential emotional or academic cost peer feedback poses to recipients and its delivery mode received equal attention from the students engaged in ICT-mediated CW.

ICT-Based Peer Feedback in CW As Cost

Commonly found metaphors include PEER FEEDBACK AS JOURNEY, PEER FEEDBACK AS POTENTIAL RISK, and PEER FEEDBACK AS DANGER.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As A Journey

Within this metaphor, the mappings found are journey, trip, excursion, and exploration. On the semantic surface, these expressions are closely associated with the metaphor of PEER FEEDBACK AS NAVIGATION. Still, the explanatory parts of the students' accounts tended to link this perspective with perceived time cost. Accounts such as "Feedback I receive from peers

[…] is (like) a journey because in this journey my writing gradually improves" (S.31), or "[…] a trip because it takes time for me to make use of the comments to revise my writing" (S.6), or "[…] like an excursion because it requires time investment to evaluate the comments to edit my writing" (S.11). Explanations like these suggest students viewed CW and ICT-supported peer feedback as not a straightforward process, but rather a time-consuming procedure.

In this same metaphor of PEER FEEDBACK AS JOURNEY, we also found expressions such as "moves from the point of not recognizing the mistake to the point of correcting it" or "being open to" (S.11, S.21), which suggest participants' view of receiving ICT-supported feedback from their peers involves accepting new experiences, including others' critique in their writing journey.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As A Risk

The most common metaphorical expressions are gambling, betting, risk, and lottery. These mappings are associated with both emotional and academic costs perceived by the students regarding the feedback they received from their peers in writing tasks. This concern for the value of peer feedback is seen in the following sentences: "Feedback I receive from peers […] is a risk […] and I do not always know when it is correct" (S.35), and "[…] gambling because it makes me feel anxious not knowing if it is right or wrong" (S.3). The emotional risk exposed to the students as they experienced a sense of uncertainty, doubt, and anxiety while evaluating peer feedback.

Apart from emotional cost, academic risk is another concern for the students, as illustrated in the following quotes: "[Peer feedback] is a lottery because if [it] is not appropriate and accurate but you still revise your writing alongside with it, you will get a low mark" (S.22), and "[…] is 50/50 because […] if it is nonsense [and so your writing is not improved], then it's pricey" (S.9).

Despite the appreciation of the value of peer feedback as presented above, the emotional and academic costs peer feedback poses to the students are also highlighted in the metaphors they generated.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As A Danger

Poison, storm, tornado, hidden hole, rising tide, red flag, pillar buoy, and trap are expressions found in the metaphor PEER FEEDBACK IS DANGER. While one could argue that these mappings reflect a sense of risk associated with peer feedback, what sets them apart from mere awareness of potential risk is the students' confirmed view of the inherent danger. Thus, the potential harm that peer feedback can cause to their writing, which leads them to avoid using peer feedback, as seen in the following justifications: "[Peer feedback] is often a trap especially when the other [peer] is not as competent because it makes my writing even worse" (S.33), or "[Peer feedback] is always a hidden hole because if you use it without thinking, you will fall into the hole" (S.16). As such, these mappings show the students' lack of faith in the comments from their peers, especially from those perceived to have a lower level of English proficiency than themselves. Those peer comments are viewed as dangerous to these students.

Among the metaphorical expressions in this category of danger, we found rising tide, tornado, and storm associated with the pressure experienced by participants during the process of receiving peer feedback. Some illustrations are: "Feedback I receive from peers […] is like rising tide because it's too easy for everyone to comment online and it is overwhelming and it causes too much pressure to me" (S.31), "[Peer feedback] is like a tornado because people [peers]

can comment on anything and there are too many comments at one time to handle" (S.28), and "[…] is a storm as it can blow everything away with its invisible forces." (S.23).

The accounts above demonstrate students' perceptions of peer feedback both as a danger that may negatively affect their learning outcomes and as a source of pressure they must deal with in ICT-supported CW.

ICT-Based Peer Feedback in CW: A Unique Delivery Service

The students' appreciation of ICT-mediated peer feedback is shown in the metaphors: **PEER FEEDBACK IS HOME DELIVERY, PEER FEEDBACK IS EXPRESS DELIVERY**, and **PEER FEEDBACK IS FREE QUALITY SERVICE**.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As Home Delivery

This metaphor of ICT-supported peer feedback as *home delivery* is established from metaphorical expressions containing *door to door*, *home*, *direct*, *brought to you*, and *delivery to [your] doorstep* in the data. Participants viewed ICT-based peer feedback as a service provided at their convenience. To illustrate:

"[Peer feedback] is like a review service delivered to your door because you don't have to submit and wait for feedback, the peers just read it all and provided suggestions for your writing" (S.35), or "[Peer feedback] is the support brought to you at your fingertips because the readers come to you to make comments" (S.8).

Through this lens, the students appreciated the opportunity to obtain feedback from peers without the need for further additional contact and without subsequent efforts to get review results on their writing.

Among the elicited metaphorical expressions, we also see further explanations of why ICT-supported peer feedback is regarded as a home delivery service. For instance: "[Peer feedback] is a service delivered to my doorstep because if the peer wants to give feedback, they must come to my writing themselves to read it and maybe other comments to give further feedback to me" (S.22) and "[…] because different people can look at my writing at one time, the comments they make on mistakes I made must be complementary to one another and well addressed for my writing" (S.17).

In these accounts, both the efforts made by the feedback givers and the perceived high possibility of accurately identifying the mistakes in the writing are emphasized by the students.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As Express Delivery

Courier mail, *fast-track shipping*, *priority shipping*, *same-day delivery*, and *Jet service* are the mappings found in the metaphors generated by participants. These are often described together with *immediate*, *fast*, *timely*, *at the same time*, and *instant* in the explanatory parts of the sentences. For example: "[…] because my writing often receives instant feedback from friends" (S.13), "[…]I receive feedback almost at the same time I click submit" (S.14), and "[…] feedback is given in a timely manner" (S.15).

The accounts above highlight the significance of receiving timely assistance in the learning process for students engaged in CW. Through the metaphors they generated to represent their perceptions of peer feedback in this process, the students emphasized the necessity of obtaining feedback at the right moment, which allowed them to make meaningful revisions. This timely support was seen as crucial for substantial improvements in their writing skills, illustrating how

the efficiency and promptness of ICT-supported feedback systems enabled quick responses and timely revisions.

ICT-Supported Peer Feedback As Quality Yet Free Service

For the metaphor PEER FEEDBACK AS QUALITY YET FREE SERVICE, the following words were often found in the related data: free, complimentary, wholesale, and cost[s] nothing. Some examples are: [Peer feedback] is a good but free service because it helps your writing skills develop but you don't have to pay" (S.10); "[…] because the comments are at no cost though they [comment givers] have to take time [to give comments]" (S.23), and "[Peer feedback] is like a wholesale deal because they [feedback providers] give you suggestions for the whole writing without charging you" (S.32). As such, in the students' lens, peer feedback available to them requires knowledge and investment in terms of time and effort on the part of their peers, but is made free to them in an ICT-mediated environment.

Altogether, our analysis of the metaphors generated by the students engaged in CW activities has shown that their perceptions of peer feedback are more complicated than expected and depend greatly on personal experiences. For instance, both views of seeing peer feedback as a potential cost and as valuable support are found, and both perspectives of the danger and low reliability of peer feedback and its good quality emerged in the data.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that EFL students engaged in CW within ICT-mediated contexts hold clear and strongly articulated perceptions regarding the value and support that peer feedback provides for their writing development.

Students' metaphorical conceptualizations of ICT-supported peer feedback as forms of educational instruction support existing research on the role of ICT in enhancing educational interactions and learner support. Hashmi (2016) and Azmi (2017) affirm that peer feedback facilitated through ICT tools strengthens instructional guidance and increases student engagement. Similarly, feedback mediated by ICT helps learners structure their writing more effectively (Do et al., 2023). These metaphors reflect students' recognition of ICT-mediated peer feedback as an important educational tool and underscore the importance of accessible, high-quality language learning resources (Fitzpatrick, 2004; Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011).

Metaphors categorized under navigation illustrate students viewing ICT-supported peer feedback as directional guidance. The finding aligns with Yeh et al. (2021), where ICT-based peer feedback is reported to provide forward-looking evaluations, helping students anticipate future challenges and refine their work. Construction-related metaphors position peer feedback as foundational to students' writing development, while medical metaphors emphasize its diagnostic and corrective functions, portraying peer feedback as a mechanism for academic support and improvement.

In contrast, students also highlighted the emotional and academic costs associated with peer feedback, as captured in the metaphors PEER FEEDBACK AS JOURNEY, RISK, and DANGER. Unlike the journey metaphor typically associated with growth and discovery in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual framework, the students in this study framed it in terms of time consumption, underscoring the effort and cognitive load required to interpret and apply feedback. Metaphors under PEER FEEDBACK AS DANGER suggest deep concerns about the reliability of peer feedback, particularly when it originates from peers perceived as less proficient

in English. These findings echo those of Ennis et al. (2021) and Sağlamel and Çetinkaya (2022), who highlight the pressures EFL learners face when navigating peer feedback.

Lastly, students' metaphorical depictions of ICT-mediated peer feedback as delivery services reflect their appreciation for the efficiency, accessibility, and immediacy of feedback in digital environments. Students valued the convenience and responsiveness of ICT-supported feedback, likening it to services that arrive promptly and without additional effort. Importantly, this mode of feedback delivery, distinctive for its immediacy and collective accessibility, has not been adequately captured in prior research relying solely on questionnaires and interviews.

Based on the findings, we recommend that EFL teachers collaboratively integrate ICT tools and digital platforms into their writing instruction. It is essential to provide targeted training and support for students on how to give constructive peer feedback, how to interpret and evaluate feedback received, and how to incorporate it effectively into their revisions. Clear and accessible guidance should also be offered to ensure that EFL learners understand and can apply these practices.

From a methodological perspective, metaphor analysis should be further employed, given its value in uncovering how language learners conceptualize various learning activities, including those involving specific instructional techniques and technological tools. Although the present study confirms the usefulness of metaphor analysis in understanding EFL students' perceptions of peer feedback they received through ICT-mediated CW, it is not without limitations. First, the study does not explore how students perceive the impact of peer feedback and comments delivered through different ICT tools, at different stages of the writing process. Second, it does not assess the specific effects of these comments, and so of these tools on students' overall writing performance.

Conclusion

This study addresses a notable gap in the literature by exploring how students metaphorically conceptualize ICT-supported peer feedback during CW activities. Its central aim is to uncover students' perspectives on evaluative input provided by peers through technological platforms, thereby shedding light on how learners engage with both feedback and the digital tools that facilitate it. The metaphors elicited from participants reflect a diverse range of conceptualizations, portraying ICT-based peer feedback as instructional or medical support, a potential emotional and academic burden, and a distinctive form of service delivery enabled by collaborative technologies. The findings underscore the need to develop students' evaluative and reflective skills in navigating peer feedback, shifting attention from technological limitations to pedagogical challenges in ICT-supported environments.

Given the limitations of the study, future research should expand the scope of investigation to include a more diverse sample of learners, a broader range of ICT tools, and a wider variety of educational contexts to deepen understanding of ICT-mediated peer feedback in CW. It should also examine the tangible effects of peer feedback delivered through different ICT tools on students' writing performance and at different stages of CW. In contexts where students receive explicit instruction on how to provide feedback on their peers' writing in an ICT-mediated collaborative writing environment and on how to make informed decisions about the value of such feedback for revising their own work, research into their perceptions of the effects of this training would also be valuable.

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