

An Investigation into Junior High School English Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

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Abstract

Based on social constructivist theory and the feedback literacy framework, this study explores the current situation and influencing factors of writing feedback literacy among junior high school English students. The paper first emphasizes the key role of students as feedback agents in writing instruction, pointing out that feedback literacy is an indispensable component of junior high school English writing teaching. Subsequently, adopting a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaire surveys, writing sample analysis, and semi-structured interviews, the paper delves into the overall situation of junior high school English students' writing feedback literacy and their performance across five dimensions (appreciating feedback, making judgments, managing affect, taking action, and recognizing different sources of feedback), as well as the differences among students of different English proficiency levels. The findings reveal that students' overall writing feedback literacy is at a high level, with unbalanced development across dimensions—managing affect being the weakest dimension, and significant differences exist among students of different proficiency levels, while teacher feedback is predominantly corrective direct feedback. Finally, the paper proposes practical strategies and suggestions for cultivating students' writing feedback literacy from three levels: teacher instruction, curriculum design, and school management, covering differentiated feedback, model text analysis, peer feedback training, and technology-enabled feedback. This integrated approach aims to provide guidance for junior high school English writing instruction, so as to enhance feedback effectiveness and students' autonomous writing ability.

Keywords

Writing Feedback Literacy, Junior High School English, EFL Writing

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

China's education evaluation reform and curriculum reform provide policy support for feedback literacy research. The 2020 Overall Plan for Deepening Education Evaluation Reform first proposed strengthening process-oriented assessment, whose core element—feedback—directly determines implementation quality. The 2022 English Curriculum Standards further emphasized integration of teaching, learning, and assessment, requiring students to become participants and collaborators in assessment. The 2021 “Double Reduction” Policy advocated reducing workload while improving quality. These policies converge on a core: feedback is a shared teacher-student responsibility, and students' ability to understand, process, and apply feedback—feedback literacy—is key to “promoting learning through assessment” (Dong, 2020). Yet research on students' feedback literacy in basic education, especially junior high English, remains insufficient. Feedback is crucial for teaching and learning (Xu & Fen, 2025), but Chinese classroom practice faces underexplored literacy characteristics and underrecognized value.

In L2 writing, the feedback paradigm has shifted from cognitivist to social constructivist: effectiveness depends on students' ability to understand feedback intention, judge its value, and transform it into revision actions (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Junior high students are at a transitional stage—they have basic vocabulary and grammar but immature metacognitive abilities. Current practice still treats feedback as error correction, with students passively receiving comments, neither understanding feedback direction nor having revision strategies. This hinders autonomous learning and contradicts core literacy goals. Investigating junior high students' writing feedback literacy is thus both a paradigm requirement and practical need. Students' lack of initiative stems from deficient literacy and absent efficient feedback mechanisms; teachers should value feedback literacy as a “literacy” beyond mere ability.

1.2. Research Objectives

This study investigates the current status and influencing factors of junior high English students' writing feedback literacy, with four objectives: (1) examine overall status and five-dimensional performance via Yu et al.'s (2022) scale; (2) investigate feedback practice through text analysis and semi-structured interviews; (3) compare differences across proficiency levels and identify influencing factors by integrating multiple data sources; (4) propose pedagogical suggestions for cultivating writing feedback literacy.

1.3. Research Significance

Theoretically, existing research focuses on higher education with scarce localized basic education studies; this study enriches junior high feedback literacy research and supports constructing a literacy system for this group. Practically, it helps stu-

dents reflect on feedback experiences and recognize feedback value; helps teachers understand students' real participation, recognize proficiency differences, and provide targeted feedback; and helps optimize classroom feedback models, build a feedback-rich environment, and construct efficient evaluation systems.

2. Literature Review

Feedback research has shifted from teacher-centered strategy optimization to student-centered investigation of how learners receive, understand, and apply writing feedback. This chapter defines core concepts, reviews domestic and international studies, and identifies the research gap in junior high contexts.

2.1. Definition of Core Concepts

2.1.1. Feedback and Feedback Literacy

Feedback originated in cybernetics (Wiener, 1954) and entered education as information about learners' performance that helps identify gaps between current and target levels (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In English writing, it includes teacher written comments on grammar and structure, peer oral negotiation, machine real-time correction, and learner self-reflection. Feedback literacy emerged with student-centered education: Sutton (2012) first defined it as learners' ability to read, interpret, and apply written feedback; Carless and Boud (2018) expanded it to a comprehensive ability encompassing cognitive (perceiving value, making judgments), affective (managing emotions), and behavioral (taking action) dimensions; Chong (2021) added environmental factors, and Gravett (2020) emphasized sociomaterial constraints. In L2 contexts, learners must decode feedback based on language proficiency and interpret implicit intentions cross-culturally (Dong & Gao, 2022). This study defines students' feedback literacy as the comprehensive ability to conduct feedback-related cognitive, affective, and behavioral activities.

2.1.2. Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

Students' writing feedback literacy is feedback literacy applied to writing, enabling learners to understand, evaluate, and apply diverse feedback while regulating emotions. In L2 writing, it requires decoding feedback based on proficiency and balancing form accuracy with content logic. For junior high students, it is stage-specific: they need scaffolding (revision checklists, teacher demonstrations), are emotionally sensitive to negative feedback, and write on life-oriented themes requiring communicative appropriateness—distinguishing them from senior high students focused on academic writing. Based on prior theorizations (Carless & Boud, 2018; Molloy et al., 2020; Sutton, 2012; Yu & Liu, 2021; Lee, 2017), this study conceives five dimensions: appreciating feedback, acknowledging different feedback sources, making judgments, managing affect, and taking action.

2.2. Studies on Students' Feedback Literacy

International research began with Sutton's (2012) first academic definition, followed by Carless and Boud's (2018) four-element model (perceiving value, mak-

ing judgments, managing emotions, taking actions), which became the core framework due to theoretical rigor and operability. Molloy et al. (2020) expanded to seven dimensions via a survey of 4,514 Australian students, adding seeking feedback and integrating feedback into long-term learning. On cultivation, Malecka et al. (2022) proposed an “eliciting-processing-enacting” model embedded in curricula, and Wood (2021) validated online-supported dialogic peer feedback for reducing anxiety and improving emotion management. Domestic research localized: Yu et al. (2022) added “recognizing different feedback sources” and validated the L2 Writing Feedback Literacy Scale with 1,868 undergraduates; Han and Xu (2020b) found teachers’ secondary comments on peer feedback enhance low-proficiency comprehension; Li and Zhu (2022) proposed optimizing feedback language and building portfolios based on “visible learning” theory. Most studies converge on five core dimensions: appreciating feedback, acknowledging different sources, making judgments, managing affect, and taking action.

2.3. Studies on Students’ Writing Feedback Literacy

2.3.1. Development of Students’ Writing Feedback Literacy

International L2 writing research emphasizes discipline-specific dynamics. Lee (2017) highlighted learners’ need to “decode feedback language” as limited proficiency hinders understanding professional terms; Han and Xu (2020a) identified cognitive, socio-emotional, and action-preparation dimensions, finding high-proficiency learners link feedback to writing goals faster than low-proficiency peers who need explicit guidance; Chong (2018) found “making judgments” positively correlates with writing scores across six countries; Molloy et al. (2020) revealed phased development from perceiving value and managing emotions to making judgments and taking actions. Domestic research: Yu and Liu (2021) proposed a “knowledge-tendency-ability” framework for college academic English writing; Han and Xu (2020b) found low peer feedback trust due to teacher-authority culture reduces application; Zhong (2015) and Zhang (2019) verified human-machine combination feedback enhances low-proficiency action-taking. The role of feedback literacy in English writing and its interaction with individual factors remain underexplored, especially for junior high students.

2.3.2. Constituent Elements of Students’ Writing Feedback Literacy

Carless and Boud’s (2018) four-element model, developed from sociocultural theory, is the most widely adopted framework (Figure 1). It divides literacy into perceiving feedback value (foundation—recognizing feedback’s role and engaging actively), making judgments (core—evaluating pertinence and identifying personal issues), managing emotions (guarantee—regulating emotions to maintain objectivity), and taking actions (goal—translating feedback into revision strategies), with clear structure and operability. For junior high, emotion management needs prioritization via feedback emotion logs and positive reinforcement.

Yu et al. (2022) extended it to five dimensions by adding “recognizing different feedback sources,” helping learners understand that machine feedback suits gram-

mar correction while teacher feedback suits structure guidance. Empirically validated in Chinese L2 contexts, the scale has 27 items with reliability 0.916. This study adopts the 28-item version by Yu, Zhang and Liu (2022), using its five factors as the core theoretical framework to enrich junior high research and provide cultivation references.

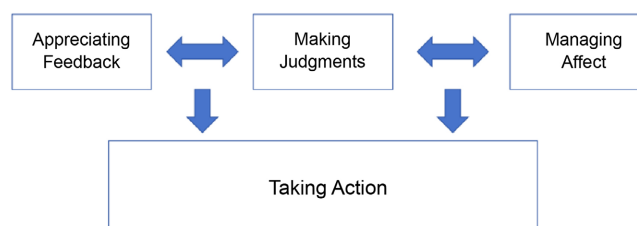


Figure 1. The Four-element Model of Students' Feedback Literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018).

2.4. Studies on Influencing Factors of Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

Development is influenced by individual, environmental, and cultural factors. Individually, English proficiency is core: Su (2014) found high-proficiency students interpret feedback significantly more accurately (78.3% vs. 45.6%) and act faster due to richer vocabulary and grammar; metacognitive ability enables proactive monitoring and timely adjustment (Pitt et al., 2019), while weak metacognitive students passively receive feedback; high writing anxiety triggers resistance to negative feedback, reducing emotion management, whereas intrinsic motivation increases proactive feedback seeking (Han & Xu, 2020a). Environmentally, interactive, error-tolerant classroom atmospheres reduce feedback anxiety (Carless & Boud, 2018), and online platforms and feedback case databases promote action-taking (Wood, 2021; Chong, 2021). Culturally, collectivist Chinese students avoid direct criticism in peer feedback and depend heavily on teacher feedback, weakening active participation (Han & Xu, 2020; Wang & Han, 2024). Research has shifted from feedback content and delivery to students' roles, but most target college or senior high students; junior high—a critical period for foundational feedback awareness—remains understudied, limiting practical applicability. This study addresses this gap.

2.5. Summary

Writing feedback research is increasingly student-centered, yet the specific capacities students need to make feedback effective remain underexamined. While connotations and dimensions are clarified, research remains predominantly theoretical and conceptual; few validated measurement tools are adapted to junior high contexts, and empirical studies targeting this foundational L2 stage are notably scarce. This study therefore investigates junior high English students' writing feedback literacy through a context-adapted questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, proposing targeted practical suggestions to help students utilize feed-

back and develop self-regulated learning abilities.

3. Research Design

This chapter presents research questions, participants, instruments, procedures, and ethical considerations, covering preparation, design, and implementation of the questionnaire, writing samples, and interviews.

3.1. Research Questions

Taking junior high English students as the object, this study aims to understand writing feedback literacy status and influencing factors, to optimize teachers' evaluation and feedback and cultivate students' literacy. Specific questions:

- (1) What is the current situation of junior high school English students' writing feedback literacy?
- (2) What is the current situation of feedback practice among junior high English students in their writing?
- (3) How do the related factors influence junior high school English students' writing feedback literacy?

3.2. Research Subjects

Subjects are Grade 8 students from a key public middle school in Shaoxing, Zhejiang, where student quality is at the city's medium level. Junior high students need to pass the Senior High School Entrance Examination, in which writing is important; writing tasks relate to unit topics, avoiding cognitive burden from unfamiliar themes. This study randomly selected 96 Grade 8 students (2 classes) for a paper questionnaire survey. After screening, 80 valid questionnaires were obtained. Students completed anonymously and filled in their latest final exam total scores and writing scores. Participants were divided into three groups: 12 high-proficiency (final ≥ 96 & writing ≥ 12), 25 intermediate (final 72 - 95 & writing 8 - 11), and 43 low-proficiency (final ≤ 72 & writing ≤ 8) students (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Criteria for stratifying students' proficiency levels.

Final Exam Score (Full Score: 120)	Writing Score (Full Score: 15)	Proficiency Level
≥ 96	≥ 12	High
95 - 72	11 - 8	Intermediate
< 72	< 8	Low

Text analysis and interview subjects followed typicality and representativeness. Based on proficiency criteria, selected subjects are all Grade 8 students from a natural class taught by the same teacher. Combining final exam scores, writing scores, and head teacher suggestions, 2 students per proficiency level were selected, totaling 6, with a 1:1 male-to-female ratio (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Basic information of interviewees.

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Grade
Student A	Male	15	Grade 8
Student B	Female	15	Grade 8
Student C	Male	14	Grade 8
Student D	Female	15	Grade 8
Student E	Female	14	Grade 8
Student F	Male	14	Grade 8

3.3. Research Instruments

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, collecting and analyzing questionnaire, writing text, and interview data to explore writing feedback literacy status and influencing factors.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

This study uses the student writing feedback literacy scale developed by Yu, Zhang and Liu (2022). A total of 96 questionnaires were distributed, completed anonymously, and returned on site. The questionnaire includes items for students to fill in English final exam total and writing scores; proficiency is stratified based on their combination, and questionnaires failing either criterion are excluded. The scale identifies five factors covering 28 measurement items: perceiving feedback (10), making judgments (5), emotional management (3), taking actions (5), and recognizing different sources (5) (Table 3). Based on Carless and Boud's (2018) four dimensions, "recognizing different sources" is added to comprehensively reflect literacy characteristics. The questionnaire adopts a Likert 5-point scale (Strongly Agree = 5 to Strongly Disagree = 1).

Table 3. Distribution of items in the writing feedback literacy questionnaire.

Dimension of Writing Feedback Literacy	Number of Items	Item Distribution
Perceiving Feedback	10	1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 22, 26, 28
Making Judgments	5	10, 13, 18, 19, 20
Emotional Management	3	17, 21, 23
Taking Actions	5	6, 14, 16, 24, 27
Recognizing Different Sources of Writing Feedback	5	3, 5, 7, 12, 25

3.3.2. Interview

Interviews include two types. One is semi-structured interviews with 6 students, questions mainly focusing on the five dimensions of perceiving feedback, making judgments, emotional management, taking actions, and recognizing different sources (Yu et al., 2022), analyzing characteristics and differences across profi-

ciency levels and exploring influencing factors. The other is retrospective interviews: 6 students were provided with three writing texts with teacher feedback and their own revision records, asked whether they understand feedback comments, whether they agree, what emotions they experienced, and what actions they took (Lee, 2017), analyzing cognitive participation, emotional attitudes, and action characteristics toward writing feedback.

3.3.3. Students' Writing Samples

Writing text analysis clearly reflects teacher feedback status and student responses. This section analyzes teacher feedback characteristics and students' action characteristics based on teacher feedback. Analyzing teacher feedback characteristics is the premise for understanding student participation (Su, 2014); different proficiency levels absorb feedback differently, representing varied literacy. From students' revisions after receiving feedback, we can know whether they absorb feedback and how they revise texts. Writing text data come from 2 writing tasks on different themes ("My school life," "My plan") completed by 6 selected students, totaling 12 texts, each requiring at least 100 words within specified time; after submission, teachers provide feedback and return texts.

First, total frequency of each teacher feedback type across three tasks was calculated to identify feedback practice characteristics. Feedback modes fall into corrective feedback (direct, indirect, and metalinguistic including error codes and metalinguistic explanations) and non-corrective feedback (ideational content, textual structure, writing conventions). Second, regarding students' uptake and behavioral patterns, teacher feedback was the analytical reference point: correct revisions coded as successful uptake, incorrect as unsuccessful uptake, no action as non-uptake. Students' revision behaviors were classified into correct revision, incorrect revision, and no revision. By examining how different proficiency levels process feedback, this study illustrates similarities and differences in feedback understanding and actions (Table 4, Figure 2, Figure 3, Table 5).

3.4. Ethical Consideration

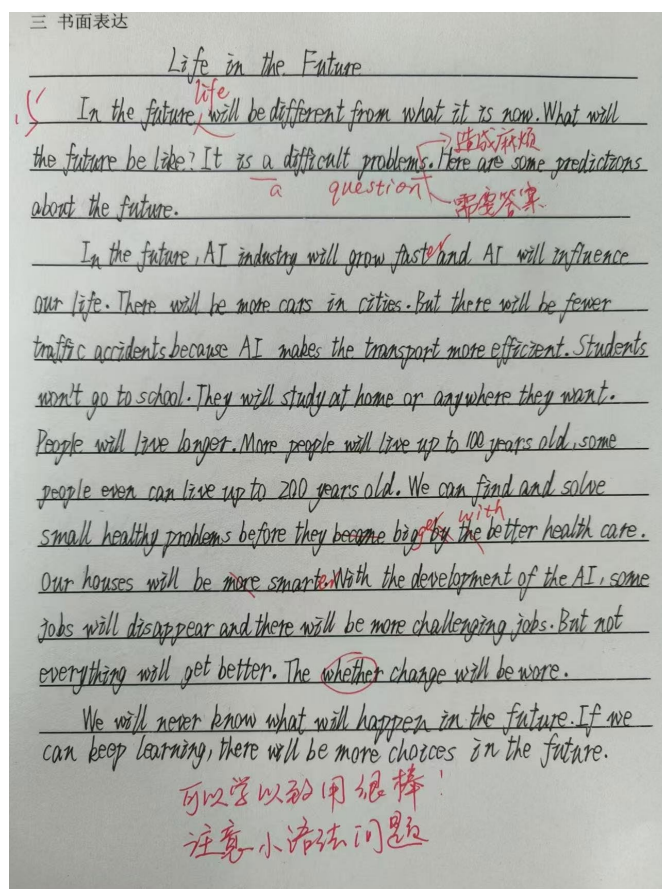
This study strictly abided by the ethical principles of educational research, which were mainly reflected in the following four aspects.

First, informed consent. Prior to the commencement of the study, the research purpose, content, data usage and potential impacts were fully explained to the school administration, classroom teachers, students and their legal guardians. The study was launched only after obtaining official approval from the school and written informed consent from parents. Students were entitled to withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences, and their academic performance as well as classroom performance would in no way be affected by their participation or non-participation.

Second, anonymity and confidentiality. All questionnaires were completed on an anonymous basis. Interview participants were identified by the codes "Student A-L" instead of their real names, and all personal identifiers were redacted from

Table 4. Teacher feedback modes and student revision behaviors.

Dimension	Dimension	Description	Description
Corrective feedback	Direct feedback	Direct feedback	Directly identifies errors and provides the correct form.
Corrective feedback	Indirect feedback	Indirect feedback	Indicates errors without providing the correct form, such as underlining or circling errors, and leaves errors for students to correct independently.
Corrective feedback	Metalinguistic feedback	Metalinguistic feedback	Error codes: Annotates errors with English codes, e.g., Tense (时态).
Corrective feedback	Metalinguistic feedback	Metalinguistic feedback	Metalinguistic explanation: Further clarifies the nature of errors or the relevant rules on the basis of pointing out errors.
Non-corrective feedback	Feedback on students' ideational content, textual structure, writing conventions and other aspects. Example: “写的没有上一篇好” (examples are drawn from this study).	Feedback on students' ideational content, textual structure, writing conventions and other aspects. Example: “写的没有上一篇好” (examples are drawn from this study).	Feedback on students' ideational content, textual structure, writing conventions and other aspects. Example: “写的没有上一篇好” (examples are drawn from this study).
Student revision behaviors	Correct revision, incorrect revision, no revision.	Correct revision, incorrect revision, no revision.	Correct revision, incorrect revision, no revision.

**Figure 2.** Teacher feedback.

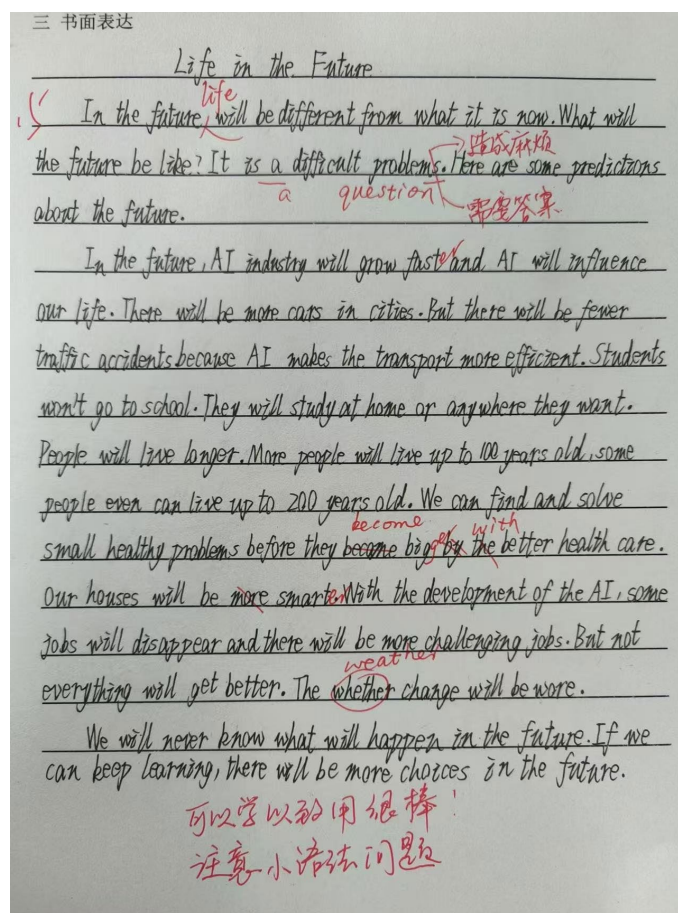


Figure 3. Student revision.

Table 5. Statistics of teacher feedback and student revision behaviors.

	Feedback Type	Frequency
Teacher feedback	Direct feedback	4
Teacher feedback	Indirect feedback	1
Teacher feedback	Error codes	0
Teacher feedback	Metalinguistic explanation	1
Teacher feedback	Non-corrective feedback	1
Teacher feedback	Total	7
Student revision behaviors	Correct revision	2
Student revision behaviors	Incorrect revision	0
Student revision behaviors	No revision	3

the writing texts. All research data were used exclusively for academic purposes and stored on encrypted devices. Upon completion of the study, the data would be properly preserved in accordance with relevant regulations and would not be disclosed to any unauthorized party.

Third, voluntariness and non-maleficence. Students' participation in the ques-

tionnaire survey and interviews was entirely voluntary. During the interviews, the researcher strove to foster a relaxed atmosphere and refrained from asking probing questions that might trigger anxiety or negative emotions in students, so as to ensure that the research process caused no harm to students' learning progress or psychological well-being.

Fourth, conflict of interest avoidance. The researcher did not undertake English teaching in the participating classes. Students' writing scores and feedback were provided by their subject teachers in line with routine teaching standards. The researcher did not interfere with the normal teaching order in any form, thereby guaranteeing the authenticity and objectivity of the research data.

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents research results in accordance with the research questions, organized into three sections: first, descriptive statistics from 80 valid questionnaires; second, analysis of 12 writing samples focusing on teacher feedback characteristics and students' behavioral engagement; finally, based on interview data, examination of similarities and differences in writing feedback literacy across proficiency levels and influencing factors.

4.1. Current Situation of Junior High School English Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

Employing descriptive statistical analysis of questionnaire data, this section investigates writing feedback literacy status, starting with overall situation, proceeding to dimensional performance, and ending with proficiency-level disparities.

4.1.1. Overall Current Situation of Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

This section conducts descriptive statistical analysis on valid questionnaire data. The questionnaire adopts a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). According to Oxford and Burry's (1995) strategy use level classification, writing feedback literacy is high when mean ranges 3.5 - 5.0, medium when 2.5 - 3.4, and low when 1.0 - 2.4.

Table 6. The overall current situation of students' feedback literacy.

	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' Feedback Literacy	80	3.83	0.47

As shown in **Table 6**, the overall writing feedback literacy falls into the high level ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.47$), indicating junior high English students have developed a certain degree of competence in cognitive understanding, judgment and decision-making, emotional regulation, and action execution when participating in writing feedback activities. However, development is not yet fully mature and remains to be further enhanced. The standard deviation captures individual score dispersion: a larger SD signals greater variability, while a smaller one indicates

scores more concentrated around the mean. Together, findings demonstrate modest individual differences in junior high students' writing feedback literacy.

4.1.2. Current Situation of Each Dimension of Students' Writing Feedback Literacy

To further examine each dimension, this section conducts detailed analysis of the five dimensions, supplemented by interview data from 6 students.

Table 7. Five dimensions of students' feedback literacy in EFL writing.

Dimensions	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
Appreciating Feedback	80	3.94	0.52
Making Judgments	80	3.85	0.61
Managing Affect	80	3.69	0.72
Taking Action	80	3.77	0.59
Recognizing Different Sources of Writing Feedback	80	3.74	0.56

As shown in **Table 7**, Appreciating Feedback records $M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.52$, indicating relatively high feedback perception with no pronounced individual differences. In interviews, Student A remarked: “老师的反馈帮助我认识到语法错误，让我明白如何在以后的写作中避免类似的错误。” Student B also noted: “老师和同学的反馈激励我提高写作技能。” This aligns with Song's (2022) general feedback literacy study where perceived usefulness scored highest, demonstrating students fully recognize feedback's critical role in their English learning.

Making Judgments records $M = 3.85$ ($SD = 0.61$), indicating relatively high judgment ability with no pronounced individual differences. This aligns with Han and Xu (2020a), who found minimal student collaboration even when teachers encourage classroom feedback interaction. When asked about peer feedback views, some students expressed skepticism. Student C pointed out: “这要看改我作文的同学英语水平是不是比我高，如果不如我，他们可能会随便改。” This indicates students' feedback quality judgment is largely influenced by their perception of the provider's proficiency, and their independent ability to evaluate feedback relevance and accuracy remains limited.

Managing Affect records $M = 3.69$ ($SD = 0.72$), the lowest among five dimensions, indicating emotion regulation ability needs improvement. When receiving critical feedback, students tend to experience negative emotions. Student D shared: “看到作文上有很多修改时我会很难受，尤其是老师写评语说我的文章结构不好的时候。” Student B added: “我会心情不好，因为我在语言组织方面相对薄弱，老师给我反馈后，我才意识到自己写跑题了。” This reflects that students have not yet formed mature emotional regulation strategies during the feedback process, and their emotional regulation competence is not fully developed.

Taking Action records $M = 3.77$ ($SD = 0.59$), indicating medium-level action

ability. Most students reported they would revise compositions upon receiving feedback. Student A described his revision process: “老师给我反馈时，我先整体看一遍批改，然后分类——格式错误、表达不完整、拼写错误——再逐一修改。” However, some students, especially lower proficiency ones, tend to leave revised compositions unattended if teachers do not follow up. Student C acknowledged: “我没有作文积累本，我没有对反馈进行分类和积累，因为这有点耗时，我觉得错误需要先记在脑子里。”

Recognizing Different Sources of Writing Feedback records $M = 3.74$ ($SD = 0.56$), indicating students can generally recognize diverse feedback sources. However, when asked about feedback experiences, all interviewees primarily associated feedback with teachers—written comments on compositions and oral feedback during writing—with few identifying self-feedback or peer feedback as significant sources. Student A recalled: “有一次我收到老师批改的作文，我只得了低分，老师的评语是我应该留足够的时间写作文。” This suggests that while theoretically able to identify diverse sources, the feedback students actually access remains predominantly teacher-centered, with comparatively low utilization of peer and self-feedback (Zheng & Yu, 2018).

Taken together, all five dimensions stand at medium level or above. Perceiving Feedback scores highest, whereas Managing Affect ranks lowest. Development across dimensions is unbalanced: students can recognize feedback value, yet lack adequate emotional regulation strategies, and rely excessively on teachers as the feedback source while neglecting peer feedback and self-feedback.

4.2. Current Situation of Feedback Practice among Junior High School English Students

4.2.1. Characteristics of Teachers' Writing Feedback

Writing samples analysis mainly focuses on examining the characteristics of teachers' written feedback and students' behavioral responses to such feedback.

First, the frequency of each type of teachers' written feedback is counted, and the proportion of each feedback type relative to the total number of feedback instances is calculated. By comparing these proportions, an in-depth analysis can be conducted on the patterns and preferences embedded in teachers' written feedback.

Second, to analyze students' behavioral performance in response to written feedback, this study takes teacher-provided feedback as the starting point. It first tallies the number of correct revisions students make in response to the written feedback, and compares the ratio of correct revisions by students of different proficiency levels to the total number of teacher feedback instances, so as to explore the features of students' adoption of teachers' written feedback and their corresponding actions.

This study collected a total of 12 writing scripts, and the teacher provided 94 instances of written feedback in total, with an average of 8 instances per script. Among them, corrective feedback was the most frequent at 88 instances, while non-corrective feedback was the least common with only 6 instances, indicating

that teachers' feedback is predominantly corrective. Within corrective feedback, direct feedback occurred 56 times (accounting for 61%), indirect feedback made up 32%, and metalinguistic feedback accounted for merely 1% (**Table 8**).

Table 8. Statistics of teacher writing feedback ways.

Feedback Type		Frequency	Percentage
Corrective Feedback	Direct feedback	56	61%
	Indirect feedback	31	32%
	Metalinguistic feedback	1	1%
Non-corrective feedback		6	6%
Total		94	100%

This tendency was confirmed in the interviews. Student D, an intermediate-proficiency student, stated that the teacher only drew wavy lines with question marks without offering explanations, which left them “有点疑惑，看不懂”，and hindered students from decoding and analyzing the written feedback.

Classroom observations and interviews show that in addition to written feedback, teachers also adopt model text explanation and after-class oral feedback, combining written and oral forms as well as in-class and after-class delivery (Li & Han, 2021). Model text explanation helps students intuitively grasp writing skills, while after-class oral feedback allows for timely error correction. Both approaches are recognized by students, especially those at the low proficiency level. Student E, a low-proficiency student, remarked: “黑板上老师有给范文，比如说性格外貌学习，老师叫我们加进作文里，然后自己判断后就自己加在这里。”

However, the student also expressed dissatisfaction with the excessive brevity of the teacher's after-class oral feedback: “这个是老师说我的作文中间写太乱了，顺序打乱了让我重新写……我觉得老师有点敷衍我，这样说太简略了，她没有说有没有错或者可以加一些好词好句。”

Although one-on-one after-class feedback can meet individualized needs, the large class size makes it not always feasible. Moreover, oral feedback alone lacks corresponding written records, making it difficult to fully satisfy students' needs. Teachers should integrate written feedback, model text explanation and after-class oral feedback to maximize the effectiveness of feedback.

In summary, teachers' written feedback shows a clear orientation: it is dominated by corrective feedback, with direct feedback as the core form, indirect feedback as a supplement, and metalinguistic feedback being relatively rare. Apart from written feedback, teachers also use model text explanation and after-class oral feedback as supplementary approaches.

4.2.2. Current Situation of Students' Practice Based on Teachers' Writing Feedback

By counting the number of correct revisions students made in response to teachers' feedback, this study analyzes the degree of comprehension and absorption of

written feedback and the behavioral characteristics of students at different proficiency levels. High-proficiency students achieved the highest revision accuracy rate (68%), while low-proficiency students recorded the lowest (26%), following a clear trend of high-proficiency > intermediate-proficiency > low-proficiency. This indicates that as English proficiency improves, students' ability to comprehend and absorb feedback and their motivation to take action also increase gradually.

As a form of task/performance feedback, corrective feedback can serve as a trigger to enhance students' self-regulated learning. Yet its effectiveness is contingent upon students' level of feedback literacy. Specifically, high-proficiency students hold an accurate understanding of the value and purpose of feedback. They comprehend and absorb feedback, make sound judgments, and take responsive actions, demonstrating a high level of behavioral engagement—hence their higher revision accuracy. In contrast, low-proficiency students struggle to interpret indirect feedback. For example, when teachers only draw underlines without explaining the reasons behind errors, students show little willingness to revise and may even abandon revision entirely. Student F, a low-proficiency student, remarked: “The teacher just draws a line without saying what’s wrong. I don’t know how to fix it, so I don’t feel like revising.”

This indicates that when teachers only mark errors without providing direct correction or metalinguistic explanations, students find it difficult to absorb, comprehend and evaluate feedback information, which dampens their willingness to engage in revision. The passive and negative revision willingness among low-proficiency students also stems from internal factors: they lack initiative, and instead of seeking help promptly when they fail to understand feedback, they complain about its ambiguity and choose avoidance. This confirms that students need to be cognitively and socio-emotionally prepared to engage effectively with teacher feedback, and for low-proficiency students, affective engagement is more pervasive than behavioral and cognitive engagement. Furthermore, some low-proficiency students forgo revision because they believe that direct corrective feedback from teachers makes re-revision unnecessary. As Student E, another low-proficiency student, stated: “The teacher has already corrected it directly for you, so there’s no need to revise again.”

Notably, low-proficiency students also exhibited the behavior of making no revisions at all: 2 out of 4 writing pieces were left completely unrevised, reflecting their disregard for feedback information, inability to process it, or outright avoidance. Student F commented: “Once I get my composition back, I basically never look at it again. I’ve already finished writing it, and I know it’s not very good anyway.” This suggests that low-proficiency students view writing as a one-off task, have low self-efficacy, and hold a negative attitude towards written feedback.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Major Findings

This study took junior high school English students as the research subjects and

collected data from questionnaires, students' writing samples, and interviews, comprehensively exploring the overall situation of junior high school English students' writing feedback literacy and comparatively analyzing the similarities and differences across dimensions and the influencing factors among students of different proficiency levels. The following summarizes the major findings and answers the research questions one by one.

First, the overall writing feedback literacy of junior high school English students is at a high level with little individual variation, indicating considerable room for improvement. Correlation analysis of the dimensions revealed that the Making Judgments dimension had the highest correlation with overall literacy, while the Recognizing Different Sources dimension had the lowest. Significant differences existed in writing feedback literacy among students of different English proficiency levels: students with higher English proficiency tended to demonstrate higher levels of writing feedback literacy, and all five dimensions showed significant differences across proficiency levels.

Second, teachers' writing feedback exhibited certain tendencies, predominantly corrective feedback, within which direct feedback was primary, indirect feedback secondary, and metalinguistic feedback relatively rare. In addition to written feedback, teachers also supplemented writing feedback through model text explanation and after-class oral feedback. The quality of students' writing revisions followed the order of high-proficiency > intermediate-proficiency > low-proficiency students, indicating that as English proficiency improved, students' degree of understanding, absorption, and behavioral engagement with writing feedback increased.

Third, the specific similarities and differences in writing feedback literacy among high-, intermediate-, and low-proficiency junior high English students are as follows:

In summary, the writing feedback literacy of junior high English students at different proficiency levels deserves the attention of teachers and scholars. The findings of this study, to a certain extent, enrich research on students' writing feedback literacy in China, provide useful references for constructing a research system of junior high English students' writing feedback literacy, promote teachers' attention to the cultivation of students' writing feedback literacy, and offer implications for teacher-student interaction and peer feedback interaction in school English writing instruction.

5.2. Pedagogical Implications

This study explored the overall situation, similarities and differences, and influencing factors of writing feedback literacy among junior high English students of high, intermediate, and low proficiency levels. Based on the major findings, the following presents suggestions and implications from three aspects: teacher instruction, curriculum design, and school management, with a view to providing references for improving writing feedback literacy among students of different

proficiency levels and enhancing the effectiveness of teachers' writing feedback in practical teaching.

5.2.1. Suggestions for Teacher Instruction

1. Providing Differentiated Feedback for Students of Different Proficiency Levels

Affected by factors such as teachers' heavy workload, individualized assessment of students has not been effectively implemented. Undifferentiated feedback methods require low-proficiency students to spend considerable time understanding feedback comments, while high-proficiency students lack feedback that promotes further improvement, reducing the utilization rate of feedback. Therefore, differentiated feedback is an effective way to increase student participation and feedback effectiveness. For high-proficiency students, teachers should provide developmental feedback, such as more advanced vocabulary and sentence patterns; for intermediate-proficiency students, encourage them to use technology and actively seek and store feedback from teachers; for low-proficiency students, teachers should pay special attention, provide clear and explicit feedback, and cultivate their feedback self-efficacy through training and scaffolding, reducing evaluation anxiety and avoidance of peer feedback. This not only promotes low-proficiency students' effective participation in peer feedback and narrows the gap with high-proficiency students, but also helps improve the overall level of writing feedback literacy.

2. Joint Development with Teachers' Writing Feedback Literacy

When students shared their perceptions and applications of writing feedback, several issues regarding teachers' feedback literacy were revealed, such as teachers' stern attitudes and lack of consideration for students' affective dimensions, which prompts teachers to reflect on their own feedback literacy. Teachers' writing feedback literacy is an important component of teacher professional literacy. [Lee \(2021\)](#) proposed that teachers' writing feedback literacy includes the skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, and goals necessary for feedback, and elaborated its constituent elements from three aspects: feedback in process (before, during, and after feedback), feedback in context, and feedback as teacher literacy: before feedback, designing appropriate writing tasks and evaluation criteria; during feedback, prioritizing communication with students about higher-level goals rather than correcting every error, appropriately using feedback techniques, enhancing student agency, attending to affective factors, and encouraging multiple revisions; after feedback, using feedback as a springboard for instructional improvement. Feedback in context emphasizes dialogic interaction between teachers and students or among peers, and written and oral feedback can be regarded as scaffolding within students' zone of proximal development. [Carless and Winstone \(2020\)](#) proposed a mechanism for the joint development of teacher and student feedback literacy, including the design dimension (designing feedback processes to promote students' absorption and evaluative judgment), the relational dimension (sensing students' emotions), and the management practice dimension (resolving conflicts between disciplinary and feedback practices). Teachers and students, as collabora-

tive partners, share feedback responsibility; through coordinated development, feedback effectiveness is maximized and students' lifelong learning is promoted.

5.2.2. Suggestions for Curriculum Design

1. Creating and Maintaining a Mutually Respectful, Caring Classroom Atmosphere and Establishing Equal Interpersonal Relationships

This study found that students' feedback process is influenced by teacher-student and peer interpersonal relationships. Therefore, teachers should actively create authentic environments rich in feedback information, foster a mutually respectful and caring classroom atmosphere, and establish equal and friendly teacher-student relationships. When providing feedback, teachers should consider students' affective factors, care about and help students solve difficulties in the feedback process, and enable students to perceive teachers' concern and friendliness, reducing defensiveness and actively seeking feedback with an open mind. Meanwhile, when designing peer feedback activities, teachers should fully consider students' concerns, reduce the resistance of intermediate- and high-proficiency students, and improve low-proficiency students' peer feedback self-efficacy.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix

Questionnaire on the Current Status of Writing Feedback Literacy among Junior High School English Students

Dear Students,

Hello. This questionnaire is designed to investigate the current status of students' writing feedback literacy. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read each question carefully and complete the questionnaire truthfully based on your actual situation. Your answers will help us improve English teaching practices. This survey is conducted anonymously. Thank you very much for your cooperation! Wish you progress in your studies!

Part I: Personal Information

Gender: _____ Grade: _____

Your total score in the final English exam: _____ points

Your English writing score: _____ points

Part II: Questionnaire Items

Please compare your actual situation with the following statements, and mark “√” next to the option that fits your situation. Please do not skip any question.

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
1	I believe it is highly important to analyze the English writing feedback provided by others.					
2	I believe analyzing model essays can improve my understanding of English writing standards.					
3	I believe teachers, students and school administrators hold different positions and attitudes towards English writing feedback.					
4	I believe I need to continuously improve my ability to evaluate English texts.					
5	I believe technology facilitates the acquisition, storage and application of English writing feedback.					
6	I can adjust my learning goals and plans to reasonably apply others' feedback to my follow-up English writing studies.					
7	I believe English writing feedback from teachers, classmates and digital tools produces different promotional effects on my learning.					
8	I welcome others to provide feedback on my English writing.					
9	I believe communication with feedback providers can deepen my understanding of English writing standards.					
10	I believe evaluating others' English compositions requires an objective scoring standard.					
11	I believe feedback exerts a long-term influence on my English writing learning.					
12	I see myself as both an information receiver and an information provider in the feedback process.					
13	I believe efficient learners should focus on their own weaknesses in English writing.					
14	I will adjust my English writing learning goals based on feedback.					

Continued

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- 15 I believe providing English writing feedback can improve my own ability to receive feedback.
- 16 I can draw on past feedback experiences to guide my English writing practice.
- 17 I can discuss my English compositions openly and frankly with others.
- 18 I believe writing feedback can improve my overall critical analysis ability.
- 19 I am willing to discuss my learning needs in English writing with others.
- 20 I believe evaluating my own English compositions requires an objective scoring standard.
- 21 I can regulate my emotions to cope with others' criticism of my English writing.
- 22 I believe receiving English writing feedback can improve my own ability to provide feedback.
- 23 I can remain emotionally stable when receiving negative feedback.
- 24 I can leverage feedback to facilitate my English writing learning.
- 25 I believe English writing feedback from teachers, classmates and digital tools focuses on different aspects.
- 26 I believe feedback can improve my English writing competence.
- 27 I can respond skillfully to writing feedback suggestions from others.
- 28 I believe it is highly important to organize and store the English writing feedback provided by others.
-

Retrospective Student Interview

1. Can you understand the feedback provided by your teacher?
2. Do you agree with the feedback given by your teacher?
3. How do you feel when you receive feedback on your English composition from your teacher?
4. What do you do with the teacher's feedback after receiving it?
5. How do you usually use feedback to improve your compositions?
6. When revising your English composition, do you think in advance about which aspects to conduct feedback on?

Student Interview

Dimensions	Questions
Warm-up	1. How do you view English writing? 2. Could you share your experience of learning English writing? Was there anything that had a significant impact on you throughout the process? 3. How are your English compositions usually evaluated? Do you like this form of evaluation? Why or why not?

Continued

Perceiving Feedback	1. What do you understand English writing feedback to be? 2. Do you think writing feedback helps improve your English writing? Why or why not? 3. Do you think it is necessary to provide writing feedback in English writing classes? What are your reasons? 4. What usually goes through your mind when you receive feedback on your English compositions?
Recognizing Different Sources of Writing Feedback	1. What sources do you think English writing feedback can come from? (e.g., teachers, peers, oneself) 2. What are your respective views on teacher feedback, peer feedback and self-feedback? Could you talk about their characteristics? 3. Do you use learning software or other tools to obtain / save writing feedback? If yes, how exactly do you do it? 4. Can you understand the writing feedback from teachers and peers? Could you give an example to illustrate?
Making Judgments	1. Do you conduct self-evaluation and self-feedback on your own English compositions? If yes, how exactly do you do it? If no, why not? 2. Do you take part in peer writing feedback activities? If yes, how do you give feedback to your peers? 3. Do you think all the writing feedback you receive is appropriate? How do you judge whether feedback is reasonable? 4. Can you identify your own writing problems through feedback? For example, when feedback notes “tense errors”, can you relate them to your own writing issues?
Emotional Management	1. What emotions do you experience when receiving writing feedback, especially feedback that points out problems? 2. What causes these emotions? Is it the content of the feedback or the way it is delivered? 3. Do these emotions affect how you process the feedback? If yes, how? 4. How do you regulate negative emotions that arise from feedback?
Taking action	1. What do you usually do after receiving writing feedback? 2. Do you actively process feedback information? For example, sorting out errors or revising compositions? If yes, how exactly do you handle it? 3. Do you write down the problems mentioned in feedback and avoid them in later writing? Could you give an example? 4. What strategies do you use to improve your compositions based on feedback?
Suggestions	1. What impact do you think writing feedback literacy has on improving your English writing? 2. In what aspects do you think you can improve your own writing feedback literacy? 3. Do you have any suggestions for English teachers’ writing feedback? For example, how do you expect your compositions to be graded and commented on?