

Feedback in Transition: Cultural and Technological Shifts in Writing Tutorials

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Abstract

Despite the growing reliance on writing tutorials as a form of academic support, the impact of cultural backgrounds and tutorial modalities on tutor-tutee interactions remains underexplored. Existing research has largely focused on either cultural differences in educational settings or the shift from offline to online learning, but few studies have examined their intersection in writing tutorials. This gap necessitates an investigation into how these factors influence interactional patterns and feedback strategies. Employing Williams' (2004) writing-revision process, this study explores interaction patterns between two experienced tutors from the Philippines and Indonesia and their Korean tutees across online and offline tutorial settings. The findings indicate that face-to-face sessions foster more interactive and collaborative engagement, whereas online tutorials are often tutor-dominated, with limited tutee participation. Moreover, cultural differences shape tutors' feedback styles and the extent of tutee involvement. This study contributes to discussions on optimizing writing tutorials for diverse educational environments, particularly in the organization of writing centers with diverse faculty and multiple tutorial modalities.

INTRODUCTION

Writing tutorials in second language (L2) contexts play a crucial role in language development, offering learners structured support to improve their writing proficiency. These tutorials not only enhance linguistic accuracy but also develop genre awareness and rhetorical competence. Effective writing instruction involves scaffolding strategies that guide students through iterative drafting and revision, making tutor feedback essential for academic writing success (Ferris & Hedgcock,

2014; Williams, 2004).

Two major shifts have shaped the landscape of writing tutorials in L2 contexts. The first shift is the transition to online tutorials, driven by technological advancements and the growing demand for remote learning. While online tutorials offer accessibility and flexibility, they often lack the immediacy and interactive depth of face-to-face sessions, which encourage more spontaneous discussions and real-time feedback (Hewett, 2015; Sabatino, 2014). The second shift is the increasing cross-cultural nature of writing tutorials. With globalization and multilingual academic environments, tutors and tutees come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, influencing their expectations, communication styles, and feedback approaches (Kaplan, 1966; Leki, 2009; Thonus, 1999).

Despite the increasing adoption of online writing tutorials and the growing presence of cross-cultural tutoring, there remains a gap in understanding how these two shifts—technological modality and cultural background—interact to shape tutor-tutee engagement. Existing research has largely examined these dimensions in isolation, focusing either on modality (online vs. offline formats) or on cultural differences in feedback styles. This study moves beyond prior work by explicitly integrating both perspectives, offering a holistic analysis of how feedback strategies and interaction patterns are co-constructed through the combined influence of tutorial modality and the tutor's cultural background. By bridging these domains, this study contributes a novel framework for understanding writing tutorial dynamics and provides actionable insights for writing center administrators in linguistically and culturally diverse settings, especially those offering hybrid tutorial formats.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Building on the discussion in the introduction, writing tutorials have undergone significant transformations influenced by two major shifts: the increasing reliance on online platforms and the growing diversity of cultural interactions in academic settings. The shift to online tutorials has altered how feedback is delivered and received, offering accessibility while also presenting challenges related to immediacy and engagement. Simultaneously, globalization has led to greater linguistic and cultural diversity in writing tutorials, shaping tutor-tutee interactions in new ways. This section examines these two shifts by reviewing research on online versus offline writing tutorials and the role of cross-cultural interactions in shaping feedback dynamics.

Online vs. Offline Writing Tutorials

In the realm of L2 writing, studies have highlighted the pivotal role of tutor feedback in scaffolding learners' development. For instance, Williams (2004) demonstrated that tutor feedback, when specific and paired with active student participation, significantly influences revisions, aligning with the sociocultural theory of learning. McKevitt (2016) and Taras (2001) further emphasized the formative role of feedback in fostering self-assessment and independent learning, underscoring its potential to bridge gaps in understanding task requirements and grading criteria. These insights underline the critical nature of feedback dynamics in both traditional and digital writing tutorials.

Writing tutorials serve as a key support mechanism for L2 learners, with tutor feedback guiding students through the writing-revision process. Face-to-face tutorials, in particular, provide immediate, dynamic feedback that fosters interactive engagement and negotiation of meaning (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Harris & Silva, 1993; Leki, 2009). The in-person setting allows tutors to tailor their feedback to individual student needs, enabling real-time clarification and fostering a more collaborative learning environment.

With the rise of digital education, online writing tutorials have become increasingly prevalent, offering greater accessibility and flexibility. Hewett (2015) distinguishes between synchronous and asynchronous online tutoring, highlighting key differences in interactional dynamics. While synchronous platforms such as Zoom and Webex attempt to replicate real-time dialogue, asynchronous tutorials rely primarily on written exchanges, which can limit spontaneity and immediate clarification. Research suggests that online tutorials, particularly in asynchronous formats, tend to be more tutor-dominated, with students engaging less actively in the feedback process compared to face-to-face settings (Sabatino, 2014). Moreover, while studies have explored broad differences between online and offline writing support, there remains a gap in understanding how tutor-tutee interactions shape the revision process in digital contexts.

Despite the advantages of online tutorials, ensuring meaningful student engagement remains a challenge. Research underscores the need for structured interventions that promote active participation and collaborative feedback exchanges in digital writing support systems. A deeper understanding of these differences is essential for optimizing writing tutorial

frameworks, both in traditional and online modalities, to enhance the effectiveness of academic writing support for L2 learners.

In sum, research on tutorial modality emphasizes the affordances and limitations of both face-to-face and online formats. While offline tutorials encourage real-time negotiation and scaffolded interaction, online tutorials offer accessibility but tend to reduce tutee participation, especially in asynchronous contexts. These findings underscore the importance of designing modality-sensitive feedback strategies that foster active engagement, particularly in digital environments.

Cross-Cultural Interactions in Writing

The cultural backgrounds of tutors and tutees play a crucial role in shaping writing instruction, feedback reception, and engagement strategies. Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric framework introduced the notion that rhetorical styles vary across cultures, influencing students' approaches to writing. For instance, while English academic writing tends to be linear and thesis-driven, other traditions, such as Arabic or Chinese rhetoric, may prioritize circular arguments or implicit reasoning. These structural differences can pose challenges in cross-cultural writing tutorials, as students and tutors may have divergent expectations regarding clarity, argumentation, and organization.

Beyond rhetorical preferences, linguistic differences further shape students' writing practices. Leki (1992) provides numerous examples of such variations, illustrating how Japanese writers often favor indirectness, while Chinese writers may incorporate culturally familiar but unattributed proverbs—an approach that can be perceived as clichéd or unoriginal in English academic contexts. Spanish writers, on the other hand, tend to use some florid style rich in metaphors and lyrical descriptions, whereas Arabic writers often rely heavily on coordination rather than subordination, a structure influenced by Classical Arabic and the Quran but sometimes interpreted as overly emphatic or aggressive by native English-speaking (NES) readers. These differences highlight the extent to which cultural and linguistic traditions influence students' writing styles, often requiring targeted instructional approaches to bridge rhetorical expectations.

Cultural norms also shape tutor-tutee interactions, affecting the learning dynamic in writing tutorials. Research indicates that students from hierarchical educational backgrounds may be less inclined to challenge tutor feedback or actively engage in discussions, reinforcing passive learning behaviors (Wingate, 2019). Similarly, Thonus (1999) found that non-native English-speaking (NNES) tutees often exhibit greater reliance on tutors compared to their NES counterparts, underscoring the need for adaptable tutoring strategies. Leki (1992) further notes that cultural perceptions of authority influence student engagement; for example, in many Asian educational contexts, teachers are traditionally treated with a respectful distance, making it difficult for students to perceive tutors as peers rather than authoritative figures. As a result, fostering a peer-collaborative relationship in writing tutorials can be challenging, as it requires undoing deeply ingrained cultural behaviors.

To address these challenges, Lape (2020) advocates for multilingual writing centers (MWCs) as a means of fostering linguistic inclusivity in writing support. She argues that cross-cultural tutors contribute valuable perspectives, enabling a more nuanced approach to feedback that bridges students' native rhetorical traditions with English academic conventions. Moreover, Lape emphasizes the importance of training tutors in culturally responsive pedagogy to effectively navigate diverse academic expectations and discourse styles. By integrating a multilingual framework, writing centers can cultivate a more inclusive learning environment that supports linguistic diversity and enhances students' academic writing development.

Collectively, these studies illustrate how cultural and rhetorical traditions shape student expectations, feedback reception, and tutor interaction styles. They also show that writing tutorials must navigate authority, participation, and rhetorical coherence in ways that are culturally responsive. A multilingual, inclusive approach that balances directive and collaborative feedback is essential for supporting diverse L2 writers.

The Present Study

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the interactional patterns and feedback strategies of two experienced writing tutors—one Filipino and one Indonesian—with Korean tutees during online and offline writing tutorials. Both tutors, who are PhD students with over a decade of teaching experience, bring rich pedagogical knowledge to their roles. The tutees complete two assignments (an argumentative essay and a compare-and-contrast essay), receiving feedback in two sessions per essay (one online and one offline). The study seeks to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1. How do tutor-tutee interactions differ between online and face-to-face writing tutorials in L2 contexts involving Filipino and Indonesian tutors?

Research Question 2. How do cultural backgrounds of Filipino and Indonesian tutors influence their feedback strategies and tutee engagement in writing tutorials?

Research Question 3. How can writing tutorials be adapted to better support tutor-tutee engagement across online and offline modalities in culturally diverse settings?

By focusing on tutorial modalities and cross-cultural interactions, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how writing support can be optimized in different learning environments. The findings will offer insights into how cultural identities and technological settings intersect to shape feedback dynamics.

METHOD

Building on the theoretical and contextual foundations established in the introduction, this section outlines the methodology employed to explore how cultural and modality-specific factors influence tutor-tutee interactions during writing tutorials. The study's design, data collection, and analysis are structured to address the research questions and provide insights into the dynamic interplay of feedback, participation, and technology in both online and offline settings.

Research Design

This study adopts a comparative case study design to explore how interactional patterns between experienced tutors and their tutees differ across online and offline writing tutorials. The study investigates the feedback process by focusing on the key stages of interaction—detection, identification, and decision-making—and examines how these stages are influenced by the modality (online or offline) and cultural dynamics. By comparing both settings, the study aims to capture a holistic view of how feedback strategies and tutee participation shift based on context. This approach directly addresses the research gaps identified in the introduction, particularly the intersection of cultural and technological factors in writing tutorials. To better illustrate the structure of the research design, Figure 1 provides a visual summary of the participants, tutorial modalities, and data collection procedures.

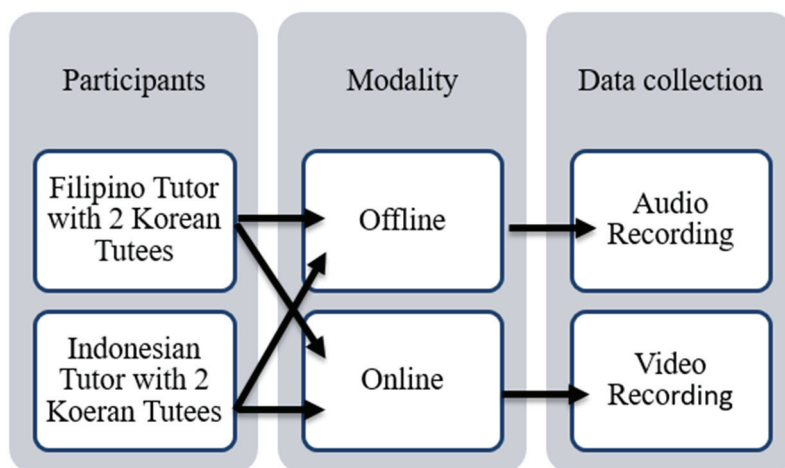


FIGURE 1

Visual Summary of Participants, Tutorial Modalities, and Data Sources

Participants

This study examines the cross-cultural dynamics of writing tutorials, focusing on interactions between Southeast Asian tutors and East Asian tutees. Participants were carefully selected to capture these cultural intersections and provide insights into how cultural and contextual factors influence tutorial interactions.

Two experienced writing tutors, referred to as Tutor A (Filipino) and Tutor B (Indonesian), participated in the study. Both

tutors are graduate students enrolled in the Department of English Linguistics at the same university the tutees attended in Seoul, Korea. With over 10 years of teaching experience in Korea and their home countries, the tutors bring extensive pedagogical expertise and cultural insights to their roles. Each tutor conducted both online and face-to-face writing tutorials with their assigned tutees, enabling a comparative analysis of modality-specific feedback dynamics.

The tutees consisted of four Korean undergraduate students (Student A, Student B, Student C, and Student D), all freshmen enrolled in a "Critical Writing" course designed for first-year English majors at the same university. This course required students to complete two major writing assignments—an Argumentative Essay and a Compare-and-Contrast Essay—submitted approximately one month apart. Each student participated in both online and face-to-face tutorials for these assignments, offering a unique opportunity to explore how Korean learners engage with feedback from culturally distinct tutors. This participant selection reflects the study's aim to address cross-cultural and modality-specific dynamics identified as critical in the introduction.

Tutoring Conditions

Tutorials were conducted in two modes: online via Zoom and Google Docs, and face-to-face in classroom settings using printed or digital drafts. These contrasting environments allowed the researcher to observe how technological tools and physical presence influenced feedback and interactional dynamics. This comparison directly addresses modality-related challenges emphasized in the study's aims.

Data Collection

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, multiple forms of data were collected. A total of four audio files and four video recordings, each lasting approximately 25 to 30 minutes, were made across both online and offline tutorial sessions. These recordings provide a detailed record of verbal interactions, pauses, and overlapping speech. Student drafts, including both the initial and revised versions of each essay, were collected to analyze how the tutors' feedback influences revisions. Field notes were taken during both online and offline sessions to document contextual differences, such as the use of non-verbal cues, technological disruptions, and the flow of conversation. Additionally, post-session reflection forms were completed by both tutors and tutees after each session to capture their perspectives on the session's effectiveness, challenges, and levels of engagement.

Data Analysis

All eight recorded tutorials were transcribed line by line and coded based on Williams (2004) with slight modifications. Williams originally categorized the writing-revision process into three stages: detection (noticing the problem), identification (diagnosing the problem and deciding how to fix it), and correction (revision). This analysis scheme is suitable for this study as it helps to identify where co-participation occurs by determining who initiates each stage. However, because this study aims to explore real-time tutor-tutee interactions rather than student revisions, the analysis focuses only on detection and identification, with identification further divided into two sub-stages: identification (diagnosing the problem) and decision (deciding how to fix it). For example, if a tutor says, "This sentence is grammatically incorrect because the subject and verb don't agree," this reflects identification—they are diagnosing the problem. If the tutor follows up with, "You can revise it to say 'He walks to school every day,'" that move represents the decision, where a specific fix is proposed.

In each tutorial, all feedback points where tutors provided feedback on a specific feature of student writing were marked and analyzed, with particular attention to who initiated detection, identification, and decision. A feedback point refers to any instance where the tutor or tutee discusses a specific writing issue, regardless of the length of the interactional turns. The coding process was conducted by two independent coders, and whenever discrepancies arose, they engaged in a thorough discussion until they reached a consensus.

Each feedback interaction was further classified based on the initiator of each stage, the interactional pattern (directive vs. collaborative), and the feedback mode (clarification questions, direct corrections, paraphrasing suggestions). A directive interaction was coded when the tutor led all three feedback stages (e.g., T-D → T-I → T-Dc), whereas a collaborative interaction was coded when the tutee actively participated in at least one of the stages (e.g., T-D → t-I → t-Dc).

The study also compared the frequency and types of feedback interactions across tutorial modalities, specifically face-to-face and online sessions. Qualitative observations focused on how tutors varied their directness, scaffolding, and encouragement, as well as how these strategies aligned with cultural expectations. Technological affordances in online sessions, such as shared editing tools and screen annotations, were analyzed for their role in facilitating or constraining

collaborative revision processes, while offline interactions were examined for the impact of non-verbal cues, such as gestures, eye contact, and real-time clarification.

Finally, patterns of tutee participation were analyzed to determine their level of involvement in decision-making. This included assessing whether tutees engaged in mutual negotiation or displayed reliance on tutor-led corrections. By examining these dynamics, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how cultural, technological, and contextual factors shape feedback processes and participation, addressing key themes introduced earlier.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines are strictly followed to protect the rights and privacy of participants. Informed consent is obtained from all tutors and tutees before the start of the study, ensuring that they are aware of the purpose of the research, the data collection procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity is maintained by assigning pseudonyms to all participants, and recorded data is securely stored and used solely for research purposes. Given the study's focus on culturally sensitive interactions, particular care is taken to ensure that participants feel comfortable and respected throughout the research process.

FINDINGS

This section examines the differences in interactional patterns between face-to-face and online writing tutorials, highlighting how modality influences tutor-tutee dynamics. The following subsections provide a detailed analysis of these interactional patterns, beginning with Tutor A's tutorials, followed by Tutor B's, and examining the impact of modality and task type on feedback dynamics.

Tutor A's Tutorials

Table 1 presents the interactional patterns observed in writing tutorials conducted across two modalities (face-to-face and online) and two task types (Argumentative and Compare-and-Contrast Essays). It categorizes the stages of feedback into detection (D), identification (I), and decision (Dc), highlighting whether these actions were initiated by the tutor (T) or the tutee (t). The data provides a comparative view of how feedback dynamics differ based on the tutorial setting and the nature of the task, illustrating trends in tutor-led versus collaborative interactions. By analyzing these patterns, the table sheds light on how face-to-face sessions foster more interactive and tutee-driven participation compared to the more directive and tutor-dominated feedback observed in online sessions.

TABLE 1

Summary of Interactional Patterns in Tutor A's Tutorials

Feedback	Student A		Student B	
	Argumentative Essay (Face-to-Face)	Compare and Contrast Essay (Online)	Compare and Contrast Essay (Face-to-Face)	Argumentative Essay (Online)
1	T-D→T-I →T-Dc →t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc	T-I→ t-Dc	T-I→ T-Dc
2	T-I→ T-Dc→ t-Dc	T-I→ T-Dc	T-Dc→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-I→ T-Dc
3	T-I→ T-Dc→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc	t-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-I→ T-Dc
4	T-D→ t-Dc	T-I→ T-Dc→ t-Dc	t-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc
5	T-Dc→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-Dc	T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
6	T-D→ t-Dc		T-I→ t-Dc	
7	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc		T-I→ t-Dc	
8	T-D→ T-I →T-Dc		T-I→ t-Dc	

The face-to-face sessions, as shown in Table 1, demonstrate a higher prevalence of collaborative interactional patterns, where tutees actively participate in the feedback process. Patterns such as T-D → t-Dc → T-Dc → t-Dc, as illustrated by Excerpt 1 below, highlight the dynamic exchanges between tutors and tutees.

(1) Excerpt 1 (Tutor A's Face-to-Face tutorial with Student A's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Detection

Tutor A: What do you think about removing this part where in fact, people are falsely accused by MBTI?

Tutee Decision

Student A: Um, I want to paraphrase

Tutor A: Um hmm, OK, when you paraphrase that, I would like you to think about your thesis statement.

Student A: So MBTI is not accurate because it is unverified. It's unreliable. It's insufficient.

Tutor A: So how would you put that in a sentence?

Argumentative A: Uhm..

Tutor Decision

Tutor A: We could say that this essay aims to explain? What do you think?

Tutee Decision

Student A: Explain why MBTI is an inaccurate tool in analyzing one's personality due to the following issues: unverified, unreliable and insufficient theory to study human personality.

Excerpt 1 showcases a collaborative interaction during Tutor A's face-to-face tutorial with Student A on an Argumentative Essay. The session begins with Tutor Detection, as the tutor identifies a problematic section in the essay, suggesting, "What do you think about removing this part where in fact, people are falsely accused by MBTI?" This question engages the tutee in reflection and invites them to take an active role in the revision process. The tutee responds with a Tutee Decision, proposing to paraphrase the section. The tutor supports this decision, encouraging the tutee to consider the thesis statement while paraphrasing, thereby fostering critical thinking about coherence and argument alignment.

The interaction further highlights a balanced feedback dynamic, with the tutor providing guidance while encouraging the tutee's input. As the tutee refines the thesis, suggesting that MBTI is "unverified, unreliable, and insufficient," the tutor prompts them to formulate this idea into a complete sentence, maintaining their active involvement. The session concludes with a Tutor Decision, offering a phrasing suggestion while seeking the tutee's agreement. The tutee finalizes the revision by crafting a polished thesis statement, demonstrating their growing agency. This exchange exemplifies the interactive and supportive nature of face-to-face tutorials, where real-time negotiation and scaffolding promote deeper engagement and learning.

On the other hand, the interactional patterns in online sessions, as shown in Table 1, predominantly reflect tutor-led dynamics, with limited tutee participation. Patterns such as T-I → T-Dc, as shown below, are common, indicating that tutors often take charge of detecting issues, diagnosing problems, and proposing solutions with minimal input from tutees.

(2) Excerpt 2 (Tutor A's Online tutorial with Student B's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Identification

Tutor A: In this sentence "While this tendency towards the revival of this nuclear plant is prevailing in all around the world," you used the phrase nuclear plant again. But maybe we could find a word or an expression synonymous to it?

Student B: Ah okay.

Tutor Decision

Tutor A: I suggest calling it as an alternative energy source. Do you agree with that? Or you want a different term?

Student B: Oh, I agree. Okay.

Excerpt 2 illustrates a predominantly tutor-led interaction during an online tutorial between Tutor A and Student B, focusing on revisions to an Argumentative Essay. The session begins with Tutor Identification, where the tutor identifies an issue with repetitive word usage in the sentence, "While this tendency towards the revival of this nuclear plant is prevailing in all around the world". The tutor suggests replacing "nuclear plant" with a synonym and frames the feedback as a collaborative opportunity by asking the tutee to consider alternative expressions. However, the tutee provides only minimal engagement, responding with "Ah okay," without further elaboration or suggestions.

The interaction transitions to a Tutor Decision, as the tutor directly suggests using the term "alternative energy source" and seeks the tutee's agreement. While the tutor attempts to involve the student by asking, "Do you agree with that? Or you

want a different term?" the tutee passively accepts the suggestion with "Oh, I agree. Okay." This exchange reflects the common pattern in online tutorials where the tutor assumes a directive role, guiding the feedback process with minimal input from the tutee. The absence of extensive negotiation or active tutee involvement may result from the online modality's inherent limitations, such as reduced immediacy and fewer opportunities for dynamic interaction. This excerpt underscores the need for strategies to encourage deeper student engagement and more collaborative exchanges in online writing tutorials.

Tutor B's Tutorials

Table 2 presents the interactional patterns observed in Tutor B's tutorials across two modalities (face-to-face and online) and two task types (Argumentative and Compare-and-Contrast Essays). Just like Tutor A's tutorials, it is evident from the data that face-to-face sessions tend to involve more collaborative engagement from the tutees, while online sessions feature more tutor-dominated feedback.

TABLE 2
Summary of Interactional Patterns in Tutor B's Tutorials

Feedback	Student C		Student D	
	Argumentative Essay (Face-to-Face)	Compare and Contrast Essay (Online)	Compare and Contrast Essay (Face-to-Face)	Argumentative Essay (Online)
1	T-D→ t-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
2	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc
3	T-D→ t-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
4	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
5	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
6	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
7	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
8	T-D→ t-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
9	T-D→ t-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
10	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc		T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
11	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc		T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc
12	T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc	T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc		T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
13	T-D→ t-I→ T-Dc			T-D→ T-I→ T-Dc
14				T-D→ T-I→ t-Dc

In face-to-face sessions, particularly for the Argumentative Essay, the interactional patterns show a consistent back-and-forth between the tutor and tutee. In these sessions, feedback tends to follow a Tutor Detection (T-D), Tutee Decision (t-Dc), and Tutor Decision (T-Dc) structure, indicating that the tutees are actively engaged in the revision process, suggesting their own decisions after the tutor's identification of issues. This is particularly clear in Student C's feedback for the Argumentative Essay (Face-to-Face), where there is a high level of tutee participation.

(3) Excerpt 3 (Tutor B's Face-to-Face tutorial with Student C's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Detection

Tutor B: This is not clear, what is not complete. I'm writing here. This sentence needs the vision for some reasons, decide which part should be the independent, the main clause. And be careful when using conjunction. You see here, you use conjunction.

Student C: Yeah.

Tutor Identification

Tutor B: You use although and because in the same sentence so both clauses are dependent. A sentence should have at least one independent. Elaborating more or rewriting it in different words will make it clearer. Uh, how can you revise this? Last sentence.

Tutee Decision

Student C: Remove although.

In excerpt 3, Tutor B identifies a clarity issue in Student C's sentence, specifically pointing out the use of conjunctions. The tutor's feedback begins with a general observation that the sentence is unclear and needs revision. Instead of providing an immediate solution, the tutor encourages Student C to think critically about sentence structure, particularly in deciding which part should be the independent clause. This approach encourages the tutee to take ownership of the revision process while also addressing the specific issue with conjunctions. The tutor suggests that a sentence should contain at least one independent clause, which sets the stage for further clarification.

As the feedback progresses, Tutor B explicitly identifies the problem: the use of both "although" and "because" in the same sentence results in two dependent clauses. The tutor suggests that rewriting or elaborating the sentence would make it clearer and invites the tutee to revise the sentence themselves. Student C responds by proposing the removal of "although," which resolves the issue and results in a more structurally sound sentence. This exchange illustrates a collaborative feedback process, where the tutor offers guidance and the tutee actively participates in revising their work, demonstrating both critical thinking and engagement with the feedback.

In case of online tutorials, feedback process is more tutor-led, as seen in the T-D → T-I → T-Dc pattern. In these online tutorials, the tutor takes more responsibility for identifying and diagnosing problems, with the tutee's input coming later in the decision-making process as illustrated by the excerpt below:

(4) Excerpt 4 (Tutor B's Online tutorial with Student D's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Detection

Tutor B: Now we have one here. Is this the name also? Nvidia.

Student D: It is the name of a brand and the site.

Tutor B: The site?

Student D: The home page.

Tutor Identification

Tutor B: Home page? So, how to write a reference from home page. You need to, you need to find out. Home page has the author. Mention the author.

Student D: I try to find the name, but there wasn't any name. It was just a posting.

Tutor Decision

Tutor B: Then you need to write it. Then you need to write it on, maybe the complete name of the home page, like, www dot.

In excerpt 4, Tutor B detects a citation issue in Student's argumentative essay, specifically with the reference to "Nvidia". The tutor begins by asking if "Nvidia" refers to a brand or a website, prompting Student D to explain that it refers to both. The tutor identifies that the issue lies in citing a website without an author and discusses how to address it. The feedback predominantly follows a tutor-led pattern, with the tutor taking control of the conversation by identifying the problem and providing a solution. Student D's involvement is minimal, as the tutor guides the process without much input from the tutee.

The interaction continues with the tutor suggesting that the tutee use the full website URL as a citation, due to the absence of an author. Student D agrees with the suggestion, further highlighting the tutor-dominated dynamic of the session. Throughout the exchange, the tutor plays a central role in providing the necessary corrections and guidance, with limited collaboration from the tutee. This pattern reflects the common trend in online tutorials, where the lack of immediate feedback and non-verbal cues leads to more directive and tutor-led interactions.

Comparison of Tutor-Led and Tutee-Led Feedback across Modalities

Figure 2 summarizes the comparative distribution of tutor-led and tutee-led feedback across face-to-face and online writing tutorials. These findings were derived by categorizing feedback interactions into tutor-led (Tutor Detection, Tutor

Identification, Tutor Decision) and tutee-led (Tutee Identification, Tutee Decision) stages. The data was calculated and presented as percentages to show the relative contributions of tutors and tutees across modalities.

The analysis reveals a significant difference in feedback dynamics between the two modalities. In online tutorials, tutor-led feedback accounted for 81.82% of the interactions in argumentative essays and 78.95% in compare-and-contrast essays, indicating a more directive feedback process. In contrast, face-to-face tutorials showed a higher proportion of tutee-led feedback, with tutee contributions reaching 36.84% in compare-and-contrast essays and 31.58% in argumentative essays. The results indicate that face-to-face sessions promote more collaborative engagement, with tutees actively participating in the identification and decision-making stages of the feedback process. Conversely, online tutorials show a more tutor-dominated structure, with tutees typically providing minimal input beyond acknowledgment of the tutor's suggestions.

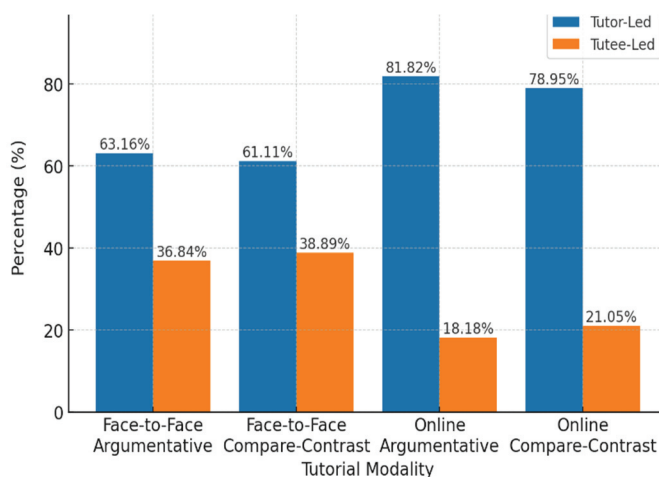


FIGURE 2

Tutor-Led vs. Tutee-Led Feedback across Modalities

DISCUSSION

This section interprets the findings by examining the influence of modality and cultural factors on tutor-tutee interactions in writing tutorials. The following subsections explore these key themes in depth, addressing the impact of modality on learner engagement, the role of technology in shaping tutor feedback, and the influence of cultural norms on writing instruction.

Online vs. Face-to-Face Modality

The findings from this study indicate clear differences in interactional patterns between online and face-to-face tutorials, with tutor-led feedback being more prevalent in online sessions and collaborative engagement being more evident in face-to-face settings. The following subsections examine these key factors in greater detail.

Potential Factors Contributing to Lower Learner Participation in Online Tutorials

One of the key findings of this study is that tutees participated less actively in online tutorials compared to face-to-face sessions. While the absence of non-verbal elements (such as gestures, facial expressions, and immediate clarifications) contributed to this lower engagement, additional factors also played a role. Delays and reduced spontaneity in online sessions often led tutees to passively accept tutor feedback rather than engage in negotiation or co-construction of meaning.

Additionally, technical constraints in online platforms, particularly audio lag, internet instability, and screen-sharing delays, often disrupted the natural rhythm of conversation. Even brief interruptions disrupted the flow of discussion and discouraged tutees from asking follow-up questions or challenging tutor feedback. As a result, tutor-led directives were more common in online tutorials, with fewer opportunities for tutee-initiated feedback negotiations.

Beyond technical limitations, the feedback method used by tutors also influenced participation patterns. In online settings, tutors often relied on Google Docs' collaborative editing features, allowing them to highlight, annotate, and edit texts in real-time. While this feature facilitated immediate textual feedback, it also encouraged a shift toward written rather than verbal interaction, which discouraged spontaneous discussion. Tutees often processed feedback silently, making fewer verbal contributions than they would in face-to-face settings, where tutors could prompt immediate responses through direct eye contact or body language.

The Role of Online Platforms in Shaping Tutor-Tutee Interactions

The technological affordances and constraints of online platforms played a significant role in shaping tutor-tutee interactions. While Zoom enables real-time conversation, delays, missing visual cues, and connectivity issues often disrupt the natural flow of interaction, making online tutorials more structured and tutor-centered than their face-to-face counterparts.

In addition to Zoom, Google Docs played a crucial role in shaping feedback strategies. The platform's real-time annotation and editing tools allowed tutors to provide immediate written feedback while tutees followed along. However, the text-based nature of feedback exchanges reduced the frequency of verbal discussion, with tutees often reading tutor comments silently rather than engaging in back-and-forth dialogue. This dynamic shifted the interactional balance toward more directive feedback, where tutors took the lead in identifying and correcting issues, while tutees primarily observed and implemented revisions without extensive verbal negotiation.

Conversely, face-to-face tutorials fostered higher tutee engagement due to the ability to use multiple communication modalities simultaneously. Tutors could provide spoken feedback while pointing to specific sections of the text, making clarifications more intuitive. The ability to read tutees' non-verbal reactions (e.g., hesitation, confusion, or agreement) also allowed tutors to adjust their feedback strategies dynamically, resulting in a more interactive and co-constructive learning experience.

Cross-Cultural Influences on Tutor-Tutee Interactions

Cultural backgrounds significantly shape tutor feedback strategies and tutee engagement, influencing whether tutors rely more on direct correction, clarification questions, or open-ended prompts. These feedback patterns reflect broader cultural expectations regarding learning, authority, and academic discourse. In particular, tutors adapted their feedback strategies based on tutees' familiarity with hierarchical vs. collaborative learning styles, influencing whether revisions were tutor-driven or co-constructed through interaction. Additionally, cultural differences in argumentation styles affected how tutors approached feedback on logical structure and reasoning, with some tutees demonstrating a preference for direct corrections, while others engaged more readily in scaffolded discussions through clarification questions.

The modality of the tutorial (online vs. face-to-face) also influenced how these culturally shaped feedback preferences played out in tutor-tutee interactions. Online tutorials, constrained by technological limitations and reduced non-verbal engagement, often led to more directive feedback patterns, whereas face-to-face tutorials allowed for more fluid, collaborative exchanges, particularly through clarification-based feedback. These findings highlight the need for culturally responsive feedback strategies, ensuring that writing tutorials effectively support diverse learners while fostering engagement and self-revision skills. The following subsections examine these cultural influences on feedback frequency and patterns in greater detail.

These findings align with Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric, which highlights how culturally embedded rhetorical structures shape writing. However, the study extends this framework by showing how tutors negotiate those structures in real-time interaction, rather than merely correcting or replacing them. Rather than treating students' rhetorical habits as deficits, tutors engaged in culturally responsive strategies that validate and build upon those traditions.

Negotiating Meaning across Cultural Barriers

Effective feedback in cross-cultural writing tutorials requires tutors and tutees to navigate linguistic and cultural differences collaboratively. Excerpt 5 illustrates how Tutor A, in a face-to-face tutorial with a Korean tutee, creates a collaborative learning environment by acknowledging their own unfamiliarity with the term "MBTI" and prompting the tutee to explain it. By openly admitting knowledge gaps, the tutor positions the tutee as an active knowledge contributor, fostering an equalized feedback dynamic rather than a hierarchical one.

Incorporating cultural context into feedback allows for a richer and more meaningful engagement with writing revisions.

Instead of providing direct corrections, Tutor A facilitates reciprocal learning, ensuring that the tutee's cultural perspective is not only acknowledged but also integrated into the revision process. This dynamic reflects an interactive feedback model, where both tutor and tutee contribute to the co-construction of knowledge.

The ability to negotiate meaning across cultural barriers is essential in writing tutorials, particularly when tutors work with students from linguistic and rhetorical traditions different from their own. By balancing directive feedback with cultural awareness, tutors can create a learning space that validates students' cultural knowledge while guiding them toward revisions that align with academic writing conventions.

(5) Excerpt 5 (Tutor A's Face-to-Face Tutorial with Student A's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Detection

Tutor A: Oh, okay. I need you to rephrase these sentences. It's difficult for me to fully understand what you're trying to say. Can you explain what you mean?

Tutee Decision

Student A: I was trying to make a "hook," but I think it didn't work.

Tutor Identification

Tutor A: I see. Actually, you have a sentence here: "Recently, more and more companies are demanding the MBTI of applicants, saying that it is to know if they are suitable for the job of companies." I think this could work as a good introductory sentence. But I'm not familiar with MBTI—what is it?

Student A: Oh, MBTI stands for the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. It's a personality test that's really popular in Korea right now. Many companies use it to evaluate if applicants are a good fit for their organization.

Tutor Identification

Tutor A: I see! Thanks for explaining. So MBTI is a personality test. Maybe we could revise this sentence to say something like "personality test results" instead of MBTI? That way, it's clearer to people who might not know what MBTI is.

Student A: That makes sense, but MBTI is very specific. It's not just any personality test—it's a trend here.

Tutor A: Oh, that's interesting. So, it's a big trend in Korea. Maybe we can briefly explain that in your essay to make it more accessible to readers unfamiliar with it.

In this sense, the findings also resonate with recent scholarship on translanguaging in writing pedagogy, which emphasizes the strategic use of multilingual resources to support meaning-making (Canagarajah, 2013; García & Li Wei, 2014). The tutors' approaches—particularly when eliciting tutees' explanations in culturally grounded terms—demonstrate translanguaging practices that legitimize L2 learners' full linguistic repertoires. These interactions illustrate how writing tutorials can become translanguaging spaces where linguistic diversity is seen as a resource for rhetorical development, not a barrier.

Addressing Circular Reasoning in Cross-Cultural Argumentation

Cultural differences in argumentation styles can present challenges in academic writing, particularly when transitioning from circular reasoning to linear argumentation, a common expectation in English academic discourse. Excerpt 6 captures an online tutorial in which Tutor A assists a tutee in identifying and restructuring a circular argument, demonstrating cultural sensitivity by acknowledging that circular reasoning is a rhetorical feature common in both Filipino and Korean writing traditions.

Rather than imposing a direct correction, Tutor A guides the tutee in recognizing the issue independently, prompting them to consider alternative ways of structuring their ideas. This gradual shift allows the tutee to retain their cultural voice while making their argument more coherent and linear in accordance with academic expectations.

This process highlights the importance of balancing directive feedback with cultural awareness. Rather than correcting directly, Tutor A fosters a collaborative exchange that encourages the tutee to think critically and self-revise. This negotiation-based approach helps students transition from culturally embedded reasoning to academic conventions without losing their rhetorical voice.

(6) Excerpt 6 (Tutor A's Online Tutorial with Student B's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Detection

Tutor A: So here, your sentence is: "Nuclear power generations could be a solution to this situation." What do you

think should be the next sentence? You're talking about a solution, but in the next part, you seem to go back to discussing the problem again. How could we connect these ideas to maintain the flow?

Student A: Uhm...

Tutor A: It looks like you've introduced a solution, but instead of building on that, the next sentence shifts back to the problem. This creates a circular argument. Filipino students also sometimes do this in their writing, so I get why it happens—it's a natural way of thinking. But let's see how we can make it more linear and forward-moving.

Tutor Identification

Tutor A: The next part talks about people supporting nuclear phase-out. What do you think would be a good conjunction or connector to introduce that idea without breaking the flow?

Tutee Decision

Student A: Hmm... how about "because"?

Tutor Decision

Tutor A: That's a good try, but "because" doesn't show contrast. We need a connector that introduces a negation or a shift, like "however" or "on the other hand," to signal that you're moving to a counterpoint.

Tutee Decision

Student A: How about saying, "However, according to Ui-jin Jeong, there are some interrupted plants that would have played an important role in producing electricity, and dependence on power generation with LNG, whose price has recently soared, has increased due to NPP"?

Tutor A: That's much better! It connects the ideas more clearly and maintains a logical progression. By using "however," you signal the shift from solution to counterpoint, which helps keep your argument moving forward.

Engaging in Difficult Topics

Providing feedback on challenging or abstract topics requires tutors to create an environment where tutees feel comfortable exploring their ideas. Excerpt 7 showcases a face-to-face tutorial in which Tutor B and Student C engage in a discussion about human rights and cloned identities, a complex and potentially sensitive topic.

Rather than immediately critiquing the structure or clarity of the tutee's argument, Tutor B first shares their personal experience, expressing difficulty in engaging with the topic. This moment of cultural humility serves an important function: it reduces power imbalances, builds rapport, and encourages the tutee to take a more active role in the discussion. The tutor's willingness to admit their own limitations fosters mutual respect, making the tutee feel that their perspective is valued rather than being judged solely on the clarity or organization of their writing.

This reciprocal learning dynamic is particularly valuable in cross-cultural tutorials, as it allows both tutors and tutees to navigate difficult discussions collaboratively rather than through a rigid teacher-student hierarchy. By recognizing the tutee's interests and expertise, tutors help build an inclusive learning space that fosters deeper reflection and critical engagement in the writing process.

(7) Excerpt 7 (Tutor B's Face-to-Face Tutorial with Student C's Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Identification

Tutor B: Okay. In this part, you think real human right is taken away or replaced.

Student C: With

Tutor B: By clone human right. Uh um. This is a hard, hard topic.

Student C: Yeah. Hard topic.

Tutor B: Yeah. Hard topic for, for me, I don't know about young generation, but for me, this is hard.

Student C: Ah.

Tutor B: I saw the movie and, uh, I don't think it's very, very interesting. I just see that, uh, it's a movie, not at the point that I am very interested in it because maybe, I don't know, the age or my taste of movie. I don't really like science fiction.

Student C: Ah, yeah. I like this kind of movie.

Tutor B: Oh yeah. I know. Yes, yes. I guess you do, because you write this, you write this essay. It must be something about you like.

Student C: Yeah.

Navigating Grammar and Content

Excerpt 8 illustrates how Tutor B adopts a cross-cultural approach to feedback by prioritizing content clarity over grammatical accuracy. Early in the exchange, Tutor B explicitly states, “This time I don’t give comment on grammar,” shifting the focus to the message and argumentation rather than surface-level linguistic accuracy.

This decision reflects an awareness of differing educational norms in non-Western contexts, where the emphasis is often on overall coherence and meaning rather than strict grammatical correctness. By delaying grammar-focused corrections, Tutor B encourages the tutee to engage more deeply with their argument, refining their ideas before focusing on form and mechanics.

The interactional structure of this tutorial also demonstrates the importance of clarification and negotiation in cross-cultural feedback. Tutor B repeatedly asks for explanations of ambiguous phrases, prompting the tutee to self-revise and clarify their meaning. Instead of simply correcting unclear wording, the tutor guides the student toward self-discovery, allowing them to develop autonomous editing skills.

This approach aligns with process-oriented writing instruction, where tutors prioritize idea development before grammatical accuracy. By delaying surface-level corrections and focusing on logical coherence, tutors can help tutees refine both linguistic precision and argumentation skills, ensuring that their writing remains both culturally authentic and academically effective.

(8) Excerpt 8 (Tutor B’s Face-to-Face Tutorial with Student C’s Argumentative Essay)

Tutor Decision

Tutor B: So I think you need to, to revise this. Now, let's see. This time I don't give comment on grammar.

Student C: Ah yeah.

Tutor Identification

Tutor B: So I really focus on the, what is it, the message that you want to say. Now let's see. It's good opening. It's interesting opening. You quote, um, from the film. You mention the film and then you start with the question. It's kind of, um, interesting way to, to make a hook.

Student C: Yeah.

Tutor B: A hook, um, to attract the reader's interest. This one is okay. The first sentence, the second, the third. But what about this one?

Student C: Um.

Tutor B: What do you mean? What world is it? You said here that they should stay inside world for health. What do you mean?

Tutee Identification

Student C: Uh, they deceived by people who made them.

Tutor B: Okay. But this one, I'm asking this one, stay inside world for health. What do you mean? They need to, they have to stay inside. Um, I don't, I don't understand the world here.

Student C: Ah

CONCLUSION

This study explored how modality (online vs. face-to-face) and tutor cultural background shape feedback dynamics in L2 writing tutorials. In response to the first research question, the findings revealed that face-to-face tutorials promoted more collaborative and interactive feedback, with tutees actively participating in detection and decision-making stages. In contrast, online tutorials were more tutor-dominated, often limiting spontaneous engagement due to technological constraints and the absence of non-verbal cues.

Regarding the second research question, the tutors’ cultural backgrounds significantly influenced how feedback was delivered and negotiated. Culturally responsive strategies—such as balancing directive feedback with open-ended prompts, validating rhetorical differences, and delaying grammar correction in favor of meaning—enabled tutors to navigate students’ diverse educational expectations. These approaches fostered reciprocal learning and highlighted the potential of writing tutorials as spaces for cross-cultural and translanguaging practices.

In addressing the third research question, the study emphasizes the need to adapt writing tutorial structures to maximize learner engagement in both online and offline settings. Effective adaptation involves more than format choice—it requires

responsive pedagogy that considers students' sociocultural and cognitive engagement. Writing centers should train tutors to flexibly shift between directive and collaborative modes, depending on tutees' familiarity with academic conventions. Online tutorials can be enhanced with interactive features such as digital whiteboards, live annotation tools, and breakout rooms, while pre-tutorial prompts and guided reflection tasks can help scaffold participation. Additionally, offering hybrid tutorial models and multilingual peer feedback mechanisms can promote accessibility and agency, especially for students negotiating linguistic and institutional barriers.

By integrating both technological and cultural dimensions, this study contributes a holistic understanding of tutor-tutee interactions in L2 writing support. As writing centers evolve in response to growing linguistic diversity and digital learning, they must prioritize inclusivity, flexibility, and cultural responsiveness. The rise of AI-assisted feedback tools further demands critical engagement to ensure that such technologies enhance—rather than replace—the pedagogical and dialogic role of tutors. Future research could examine the long-term effects of culturally grounded feedback, the efficacy of peer tutoring, and the implications of AI integration on writing development.

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