

# From Corrector to Guide: The Evolution of Teacher Feedback Practices in AI-Enhanced EFL Writing Classrooms

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**Abstract.** English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction is pivotal in cultivating students' comprehensive English competence. Traditionally, teacher feedback has predominantly functioned within a "corrector" paradigm, concentrating on rectifying surface-level linguistic errors. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) is instigating profound transformations in EFL writing pedagogy, catalyzing a pivotal evolution in teacher feedback practices from "corrector" to "guide." By delivering foundational, efficient, and personalized feedback, AI emancipates teachers from the labor-intensive burden of mechanical grading, thereby reorienting their focus towards guiding students in content deepening, logical structuring, and critical thinking enhancement. This article delineates this evolutionary trajectory, examining how AI empowers teachers through personalized guidance, interactive scaffolding, and diversified feedback modalities. It further investigates the essential capacity building and strategic recalibrations required for teachers to thrive in the "guide" role, with the ultimate aim of fostering the holistic development of students' writing capabilities.

**Keywords:** AI-enhanced, EFL writing classroom, teacher feedback practices, Guide, Personalized guidance

## 1 Introduction

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) writing instruction is a critical component in developing students' comprehensive English application skills. In traditional EFL writing classes, teacher feedback mostly focuses on correcting students' language errors in writing, neglecting the cultivation of students' writing thinking and expression skills, hindering fundamental improvement in their writing proficiency. However, with the development of artificial intelligence technology, AI

has been widely and deeply applied in the field of education, bringing new opportunities for EFL writing teaching. Currently, AI-enhanced EFL writing classes face many challenges. Teachers lack systematic theoretical guidance and practical experience to effectively integrate AI feedback with traditional teaching feedback and achieve role transformation. Therefore, it is of great significance to deeply explore the evolution of teacher feedback practices in AI-enhanced EFL writing classes [1].

This study primarily adopts a qualitative and theoretical research approach grounded in a comprehensive literature review. The research methodology is centered on literature analysis and theoretical construction. First, a systematic review and analysis of relevant domestic and international literature on EFL writing teaching, teacher feedback, and the application of AI in education is conducted. This review aims to clarify research hotspots, gaps, and controversies, thereby laying a solid theoretical foundation for this paper. Building upon this foundation, the study engages in conceptual analysis and model development to theoretically delineate the evolution of teacher roles and feedback practices. Furthermore, through inductive reasoning and logical analysis, it explores and proposes the strategic pathways and models for teachers' role transformation and ability development in the AI-enhanced context. This method ensures an in-depth and structured theoretical exploration of the research questions.

This research delves into the evolution of teacher feedback practices within AI - enhanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classrooms. It aims to elucidate the path and strategies for teachers' role transformation from correctors to guides, and offer targeted and operational guidance for teaching. Specifically, this study endeavors to address the following queries: What alterations have taken place in the focus and approaches of teacher feedback in the AI - enhanced context? How can teachers leverage AI feedback to direct students towards independent reflection and improvement? How can a feedback system be established to enhance students' writing proficiency and overall quality? It is anticipated that this research will furnish EFL writing teachers with viable strategies and methods, facilitating their role transformation, enhancing teaching quality, and promoting students' all - around development.

## **2 Meaning Analysis**

### **2.1 Corrector and Guide**

#### 1) Corrector

In order to help students improve their EFL writing skills, teachers often act as "correctors" and provide corrective feedback based on what students have written. They focus on checking students' grammatical errors, spelling errors, and flaws in sentence structure, and point out the errors and provide corrective forms through circling, annotation, etc. This method allows students to clearly understand the flaws in their writing, quickly identify the weak links in their writing, and make up for them [2]. However, corrective feedback also limits the dimension of feedback to a certain extent. Students focus more on technical issues such as avoiding language errors, and ignore in-depth thinking on many aspects such as in-depth description of the writing content and presentation of their own views.

## 2) Guide

Unlike correctors, guides focus more on stimulating students' thinking. Teachers abandon the previous practice of simply giving standard answers, and instead use clever questions to inspire students or broaden their thinking directions. This process greatly stimulates students' enthusiasm for writing, allowing students to gradually build a writing style with their own distinctive characteristics and master a set of writing strategies that suit them [3].

## 2.2 EFL Writing Classroom

### 1) Basic Cognition in EFL Writing Classroom

EFL, the full name of which is English as a Foreign Language, represents English learning courses conducted in a learning environment where English is not the native language. For EFL learners, they are often in a life lacking an English language atmosphere, and classroom teaching becomes their main way to acquire English knowledge. As a specific place for writing teaching and training, writing classrooms occupy a relatively important position in the EFL learning system. In actual teaching in EFL writing classrooms, teachers will design various types of writing exercises. Writing classes should not only enable students to master grammatical rules and vocabulary, but also cultivate their logical thinking, organizational planning, and expression and exposition skills.

### 2) Current Status of EFL Writing Teaching

EFL writing teaching faces pressing challenges. EFL teachers believe that students' mother tongue writing has not received systematic education on critical thinking and independent thinking, and they are likely to lack critical thinking and self-expression skills in EFL writing, which hinders the improvement of teaching quality and the all-round development of students [4].

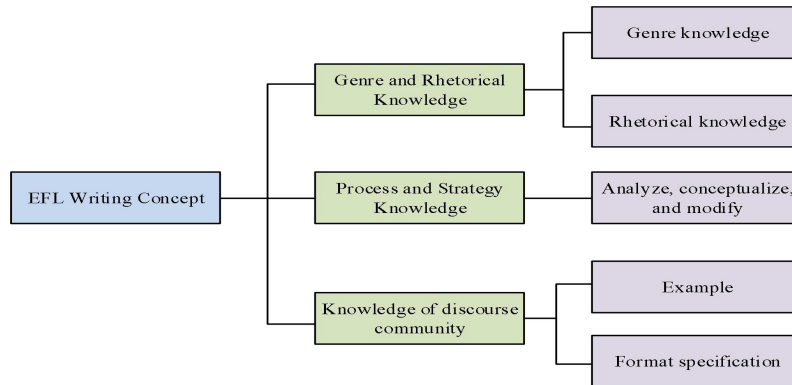
### 3) Analysis of EFL Writing Core Competencies

The effective cultivation of EFL writing skills is the ultimate goal of teacher feedback practices. Traditional corrective feedback primarily focuses on language knowledge (such as grammar and vocabulary), but the evolution toward a "guiding" approach requires feedback practices to cover a more comprehensive range of competence dimensions. As shown in Fig. 1, successful EFL writing relies on the coordinated application of three core knowledge types. This provides a theoretical framework for teachers to design multi-dimensional guiding feedback in an AI-enhanced environment. Teachers' feedback should expand its focus from single language forms to guiding and inspiring higher-order thinking skills such as content logic and organizational structure.

## 2.3 Teacher Feedback

Feedback in teaching activities refers to the guiding and corrective responses given by teachers based on their understanding of students' learning status. In essence, feedback is a two-way interactive behavior that requires mutual response to promote communication. If one party encounters a problem in the communication, that is, one party blindly outputs its own views and the other party only listens or responds silently, the coherence of the communication will be broken in this situation [5].

In EFL writing classes, teachers' implementation of guiding feedback is affected by many factors, which are summarized as shown in Table 1.



**Fig. 1.** EFL Writing Conceptualization Diagram

**Table 1:** Factors affecting the implementation of guided feedback in EFL writing classes

Classification	Specific influencing factors	Influence
Teacher level	Professional knowledge and skills	Strong professionalism and good skills lead to precise and effective feedback; weak professionalism results in vague and untargeted feedback.
	Teaching attitude and sense of responsibility	Positive attitude and strong sense of responsibility lead to conscientious and detailed feedback; negative attitude leads to perfunctory feedback.
	Proficiency in ai technology	Good mastery enables the use of ai for scientific feedback; unfamiliarity makes it difficult to leverage ai's auxiliary role.
Student level	English foundation level	A good foundation makes it easy to understand feedback and make improvements; a poor foundation makes it difficult to understand, resulting in poor feedback effectiveness.
	Learning attitude and motivation	Positive attitude and strong motivation lead to proactive acceptance of feedback; negative attitude leads to a lack of emphasis on feedback.
	Individual differences and preferences	Different thinking and styles, along with varying preferences, affect the acceptance of feedback
Technology level	Ai feedback accuracy	Accurate ai provides reliable basis for feedback; inaccurate ai can mislead teachers and students
	Technical operation convenience	Simple operation facilitates feedback implementation; complexity reduces the enthusiasm for use
Classroom environment level	Classroom atmosphere	A positive atmosphere makes students willing to accept feedback; a depressing atmosphere has the opposite effect
	Teaching time arrangement	Reasonable time allows for sufficient feedback; tight time leads to hasty feedback with poor effectiveness

Therefore, timely and appropriate feedback is crucial to maintaining students' enthusiasm for learning. Teachers should fully and skillfully use a variety of feedback methods to correctly guide students in EFL writing.

### 3 Opportunities for Introducing AI Technology into Teacher Feedback in EFL Writing Classrooms

#### 3.1 Advantages of AI in Writing Feedback

A variety of AI tools are available for EFL writing instruction, from basic grammar checkers and advanced writing tutors, including automated writing evaluation system, intelligent writing tutors and integrated writing platforms, etc. AI has brought many positive changes to the feedback process in EFL writing classrooms. Table 2 presents the specific advantages of AI in writing feedback:

**Table 2:** Specific Advantages of AI in Writing Feedback

Serial number	Advantage dimension	Specific manifestation
1	Feedback efficiency and comprehensiveness	Complete grading in a few seconds, identifying grammar, vocabulary, and other errors, and analyzing logic, rhetoric, etc.
2	Personalized support and adaptability	Provide customized advice based on students' writing habits and weaknesses
3	Resource richness and inspiration stimulation	Generate cases, ideas, and sentence patterns related to writing topics to help students overcome creative bottlenecks
4	Emotional support and confidence building	Use non-judgmental language and visual design to reduce cognitive load, and alleviate writing anxiety and burnout
5	Reduction of teacher workload	Automatically grade basic errors, conduct preliminary analysis of topics and other dimensions, saving teachers a great deal of time assessment time
6	Data-driven teaching optimization	Collect student writing data, generate class problem reports, and help teachers adjust teaching plans

The deep integration of AI has opened up new paths for EFL writing instruction, promoting innovative breakthroughs in both theory and practice.

### **3.2 New Changes in EFL Classroom Requirements**

EFL writing classes not only require students to master and apply basic writing skills, but also require them to improve their innovative thinking, critical thinking, and cross-cultural awareness. However, the traditional teacher feedback model has gradually exposed many limitations in responding to these new changes [6].

From a theoretical perspective, EFL writing students can be divided into four categories:

Category 1: Excellent English application and writing skills; Category 2: Proficient in writing skills but weak in English application skills; Category 3: Proficient in English application skills but need to improve writing skills; Category 4: There is much room for improvement in both English application and writing skills.

From the perspective of factors affecting EFL writing performance, language skills and writing skills are the two key variable factors. Due to the diversity of EFL writing students, some need to strengthen their language skills to express accurately, some need to improve their writing skills to optimize structural logic, and some need to take both approaches to achieve comprehensive improvement. In EFL writing teaching, teacher feedback can help students see the flaws in their writing, while AI technology data processing and intelligent analysis capabilities can provide personalized and diversified suggestions to meet the needs of different students.

### **3.3 Reducing Teacher Feedback Pressure**

From the perspective of the process-oriented EFL teaching concept, the improvement of students' EFL writing ability depends on repeated article revisions. Therefore, in the traditional EFL writing teaching scenario, especially when the class size is large, correcting students' essays is a time-consuming and laborious task. Every essay needs to be reviewed and annotated by the teacher, which greatly reduces the efficiency of feedback.

The rise of AI technology can improve the situation where marking in EFL writing classes takes up a lot of time. Its powerful language processing capabilities can undertake some basic feedback work, such as accurately detecting grammatical errors and making vocabulary correction suggestions. This frees teachers from the tedious marking and reduces their burden, allowing them to free up more time and energy to analyze the deep-seated problems in students' writing, such as logical structure, theme, etc.[7].

## **4 AI-Enhanced Guidance Feedback Practices**

### **4.1 AI-Assisted Personalized Guidance**

In EFL writing classes, AI technology can determine students' writing level and style based on their previous writing materials, and create exclusive learning suggestions and feedback. By analyzing massive amounts of writing data, it can accurately locate students' strengths and weaknesses

and recommend EFL writing learning resources and exercises that meet their needs. For example, if the vocabulary reserve is insufficient, AI provides a variety of vocabulary learning materials and memorization methods; if the logical thinking ability needs to be improved, AI recommends writing skills and case analysis.

Teachers can also use AI technology to inject new vitality into teaching. On the one hand, teachers use AI's data analysis function to preliminarily scan and analyze students' essays, classify and annotate EFL essays from multiple dimensions of language accuracy, and comprehensively analyze students' performance, status, and potential abilities in English classes. They then conduct subsequent analysis and provide more constructive feedback suggestions, building personalized learning guidance paths for students so that they can simultaneously improve their English writing knowledge, core literacy, and comprehensive learning abilities [8].

Furthermore, teachers leverage online platforms to interact with students. On these collaborative platforms, students upload their essays and receive feedback from teachers and other students. Intelligent teaching platforms enable automated grading and real-time commentary, encouraging students to participate in writing improvement and feedback. They clearly identify student problems and explain their root causes, helping students understand their own writing progress. When collecting information, students can use AI technology to collect rich relevant historical background information and broaden the boundaries of their thinking; teachers can provide students with targeted EFL writing guidance by closely monitoring students' information collection progress, thereby enhancing their learning involvement, enthusiasm and outcomes.

The integration of AI technology can make teacher feedback more scientific and efficient. At the same time, AI can also take on the role of feedback recorder and organizer, automatically collecting teacher feedback content and generating detailed feedback reports. This report allows students to intuitively understand the performance of their essays in different aspects and grasp the process and direction of their own writing improvement.

#### **4.2 Interactive Guided Feedback Model**

When AI technology is deeply integrated with online teaching platforms, an interactive guidance feedback model can be applied. When students submit their essays, AI will provide quick feedback and real-time interaction. Students can ask questions about the feedback, and AI will further explain and guide them. Teachers can also use the platform to provide additional answers, forming a multi-directional interaction and providing multiple and accurate feedback perspectives.

It is worth noting that when planning interactive teaching sessions, teachers need to take into account students' actual learning abilities while enhancing the fun and exploratory nature of the interaction. Teachers can use AI to evaluate students' performance in interactive learning and make improvements based on their shortcomings.

#### **4.3 Diversified Forms of Guided Feedback**

In past writing instructional settings, teachers were often the sole source of feedback, and student improvement in writing skills relied heavily on their guidance. However, limited by personal experience and cognitive perspectives, feedback suffers from incompleteness. Furthermore, a single

feedback model can easily lead students to overly rely on teacher evaluation and neglect feedback and support from other channels.

The application of AI technology makes the forms of guidance and feedback more diverse. When students submit their writing, relying on the natural language processing capabilities of AI technology, they can quickly scan the text and accurately locate basic language errors such as spelling, grammar, and vocabulary usage. They can also provide preliminary analysis of relatively complex issues such as structure and logic. During the correction process, AI will present a detailed error analysis, such as marking the specific location of spelling errors and the type of grammatical errors, so that students can correct the errors in a timely manner to avoid the accumulation and solidification of errors [9].

AI technology will also tailor learning suggestions and expansion exercises based on students' errors to improve their writing skills. AI can also provide guidance to students through voice and video feedback. Voice feedback allows students to feel the teacher's attention and encouragement; video feedback integrates multiple elements to intuitively demonstrate EFL writing techniques and problem-solving methods.

## **5 Teacher Role Transformation and Ability Reshaping**

### **5.1 Teacher Transformation from Execution to Planning**

In the traditional sense, teachers, as executors, mainly carry out teaching activities according to the preset teaching plan. They sort out the knowledge points in the textbooks clearly and let students acquire the knowledge points about EFL writing through classroom lectures, practice consolidation, etc., but this method can easily make teaching mechanical and stereotyped. For example, in the practice consolidation link of EFL writing classes, teachers' feedback is divided into six types: simple recognition, expansion, repetition, prompting, eliciting answers, and explicit corrections. Simple recognition and repetition are the most frequently used. In actual classroom feedback, some teachers are accustomed to repeating students' answers first, and then giving simple affirmative feedback such as "ok", "good", and "yes". This feedback model will weaken students' enthusiasm for participation, affect the quality of communication between teachers and students, and make it difficult to promote meaningful interaction [10].

Given the limitations of a single feedback form, it is recommended that teachers change from executors to planners, from corrector to guide. Through communication with students and conducting learning needs surveys, understand their knowledge level, learning styles, and development expectations. For example, students' performance can be graded after each EFL writing class using the scoring method shown in Table 3.

The multidimensional scoring system presented in Table 3 is far more significant than simply providing a final score. In AI-enhanced classrooms, the more important function of such tools is to provide data support for the teacher's "guide" role. Teachers can analyze scoring results with students, transforming quantitative scores into qualitative guided conversations. For example, for a loss in "organizational structure," teachers no longer simply deduct points. Instead, they guide students to review the structural analysis suggestions provided by the AI and jointly discuss solutions

**Table 3:** EFL Writing Scoring

Evaluation content	Specific requirements	Full score
content	Relevant to the topic, with a prominent main body, no irrelevant details, and substantial content	20
Organizational structure	The full text is well-organized, coherent, and harmonious. Each paragraph is structured rigorously, with smooth transitions. Skilled use of linking words enhances the article's logic	20
Language expression	Language is fluent and meets the requirements of style, register, and context	20
Grammar	Grammar is correct, with no errors in tense, voice, or sentence structure	20
Layout and appearance	Font is neat and clear, with proper use of capitalization and punctuation, and no spelling mistakes	10
Overall score	Provide a comprehensive score based on the overall impression, rather than deducting points based on the number of language errors	10

to optimize the essay's logic. This transforms the scoring form from a judging tool into a starting point for guided feedback, driving students from passive acceptance of scores to active reflection and improvement.

## 5.2 Enhancing AI literacy

In AI-enhanced EFL writing classrooms, a four-dimensional framework that translates abstract literacy into concrete competencies, supported by specific training modules and quantitative self-assessment metrics is proposed.

1) Operational Proficiency: Teachers should achieve mastery, not just familiarity, with tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT. Hands-on workshops and micro-credentialing via submitted AI-annotated essays can validate practical skills.

2) Data Interpretation: Training must enable teachers to treat AI analytics (e.g., error reports) as diagnostic data. Case-based sessions where educators design targeted lessons from AI data translate analysis into pedagogical action.

3) Human-AI Integration: The "guide" role requires seamless blending of AI and teacher feedback. Adopting a structured workflow—"AI Screening → Teacher Focusing → Student Revision"—and using peer review of integrated lesson plans can institutionalize this synergy.

4) Ethical Engagement: Seminars on AI ethics (bias, privacy) are vital. Developing a shared "prompt library" equips teachers to guide students in critical and responsible AI use.

### **5.3 Improvement of Skills Required by Facilitators**

To effectively guide student reflection and discussion, teachers must actively engage in professional development focused on guided feedback techniques. Considering that diverse learners possess varying language proficiency levels, which directly impact their receptiveness to teacher feedback. When offering feedback, teachers ought to take into account the disparities in learners' language proficiency and adapt feedback strategies flexibly in accordance with these differences. Especially for learners with lower language levels, they may have negative emotions when facing teacher feedback [11]. Consequently, when providing feedback to such learners, teachers ought to attach particular importance to expression techniques, enabling these learners to be more amenable to acknowledging their deficiencies and assisting them in enhancing their writing proficiency.

Teachers ought to maintain rigor in the language employed for guiding feedback. Feedback characterized by clear structure and well - defined content facilitates learners' rapid comprehension of key elements and self-recognition of existing issues. Teachers can direct students to engage in self-reflection regarding their writing by referring to common errors. During classroom sessions, teachers are advised to select representative English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing samples to stimulate students' reflective thinking and communication.

### **5.4 Reconstruction of Teacher-Student Cooperative Relationship**

Guiding feedback is a deliberately designed, learner-centered process that emphasizes structured interaction between teachers and students to foster deep thinking. When providing guiding feedback, teachers should delve into why students chose the approach they intended, even though they failed to achieve their goals. Based on students' descriptions, teachers should guide their thinking logic regarding writing and specifically address any deficiencies in their EFL writing skills. As "experts" in the field of teaching, teachers should monitor students' EFL writing output in an appropriate manner and provide timely feedback. If a student's scaffolding is found to be ineffective, teachers must intervene promptly and correct it to prevent students from falling into writing errors.

In EFL writing classroom instruction, it is important to foster an equal teacher-student relationship. Given that learners often prefer to seek advice from their classmates, teachers should create opportunities for students to communicate and interact whenever possible during instruction. When grading essays, actively promote peer review. Furthermore, given that learners can use tools such as dictionaries to learn, teachers should encourage learners to utilize both offline and online resources to improve their writing skills, both in and out of class.

Teachers can also understand students' acceptance of classroom teaching knowledge through various channels. On the one hand, teachers can regularly check homework to determine whether students have applied the results of reflection to writing practice. On the other hand, teachers can also use classroom quizzes or stage tests to assign writing tasks. Based on the writing modules in the textbook, teachers can design writing topics of moderate difficulty, require students to complete the writing within a specified time, and conduct comprehensive and multi-faceted evaluations of

students' writing results. They can also provide focused guidance on complex writing problems, prompting students to reflect on what they have learned and apply it to other situations.

## 6 Discussion

This study has theorized an evolutionary path for teacher feedback practices in the AI-enhanced EFL writing classroom, primarily through theoretical analysis and synthesis of extant literature. Our constructed model posits that AI's intervention catalyzes a critical shift in the teacher's role from a "Corrector" to a "Guide." This transition is operationalized by leveraging AI to handle foundational feedback, thereby freeing teachers to focus on higher-order concerns such as content and logic [6].

The findings of this study align with and extend the existing body of research. For instance, Link et al. (2022) provide empirical support for our model, demonstrating that Automated Writing Evaluation systems effectively reduce teachers' workload in correcting basic errors, which in turn permits a reallocation of their efforts toward guiding structural and logical thinking [6]. However, the efficacy of this human-AI collaboration is contingent upon teachers' ability to effectively curate AI-generated feedback. While AI excels at identifying surface-level errors, its limitations in evaluating nuanced aspects like logical coherence and cultural appropriateness [8] necessitate a more sophisticated teacher intervention than mere reallocation of effort.

Our model therefore deepens this discourse by specifying that the teacher's role evolves into that of a "feedback curator." This role entails a critical mediatory process — diagnosing the root causes of AI inaccuracies, providing metacognitive scaffolding to help students evaluate AI suggestions, and making explicit decisions to contextualize or override automated feedback. This active curation transforms AI's limitations into teachable moments, ensuring that technology serves the broader pedagogical goal of fostering critical thinking alongside writing proficiency.

This perspective is crucial when considering student responses to AI. The survey findings by Wu (2024) reveal a crucial dichotomy: while students generally appreciate AI's utility in enhancing linguistic accuracy, a significant cohort continues to value and rely on the personalized, motivational guidance offered by their teachers to spark creativity and sustain engagement [9]. This evidence strongly suggests that the teacher's curated, human-centric intervention is not substitutable but is, in fact, what makes the AI feedback process educationally coherent and trustworthy for learners. It reinforces the argument that the teacher's transformed role as a curator and guide — attending to motivation, creativity, and individual expression — is paramount in the AI-enhanced classroom.

Future research should build upon this theoretical foundation by pursuing empirical validation of these curation strategies. A promising direction involves exploring how teachers' curation practices differentially affect diverse learner profiles. Furthermore, our theoretical model calls for the development and testing of more dynamic AI systems that can better support the teacher's role as a curator, for instance, by flagging areas of high uncertainty or providing more transparent rationales for their feedback.

## **7 Conclusion**

Teacher feedback is a critical component of the teaching process. It not only affects the quality of classroom instruction but also plays a role in shaping teachers' professional growth and students' long-term writing development. In the broader context of educational digitalization, the rapid integration of artificial intelligence into language learning has created both opportunities and uncertainties for EFL writing instruction. Compared with traditional classrooms, AI-enhanced environments provide faster access to linguistic correction, model texts, and individualized suggestions, which has gradually changed expectations of both teaching and learning. Against this background, AI-enhanced EFL writing classrooms are now at a crucial stage of transformation and development. The evolution of teacher feedback practices from a correction-centered model to a guidance-oriented model is therefore not only a pedagogical adjustment, but also a necessary response to contemporary educational demands. Although this transition is accompanied by challenges such as technology literacy, feedback coordination, and the preservation of humanistic care, it also opens up valuable space for innovation. Continued exploration of effective role transformation and a scientific feedback integration mechanism can promote advances in EFL writing instruction, strengthen students' English proficiency, critical thinking, and autonomy, and support the cultivation of globally competent talents. In the future, teachers, researchers, and institutions should work together to ensure the sustainable and meaningful development of this field.

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## **Declaration on Generative AI**

The authors have not employed any Generative AI tools.

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