"Only true friends could be cruelly honest": Cognitive and social-affective dimensions of teacher feedback literacy

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Feedback is an important but challenging element of higher education pedagogy. In addition to providing effective feedback, teachers are expected to develop students' capacities of appreciating, generating and acting on feedback. This paper is a case study of how a carefully selected Chinese university English teacher enabled her students to develop necessary skills and awareness for effective feedback processes. Data from classroom observations, interviews and student reflective journals reveal various cognitive and social-affective strategies which both support the teacher's feedback enabling processes and enhance student feedback capacities. A mechanism of the 'enabling construct' of teacher feedback literacy is proposed which consists of cognitive scaffolding and social-affective support as two interdependent driving forces. The paper concludes with some theorization of teacher feedback literacy and suggestions for future research.

Introduction

The centrality of feedback to student learning is well established (Hattie and Timperley 2007). Feedback processes in higher education are, however, difficult to implement effectively (Evans 2013) and may cause frustration for both teachers and students (Carless 2006). Recent feedback research suggests two interlocking trends: one is a shift of focus from teacher delivery of feedback to student engagement (Boud and Molloy 2013; Price, Handley and Millar 2011); and the other reengineers a more dialogic orientation (Beaumont, O'Doherty and Shannon 2011; Nicol 2010).

These two trends highlight both an active student role and increased teacher responsibility in facilitating student engagement with feedback. Teachers need to provide effective feedback and also help students develop the abilities of generating and using feedback as part of enhancing learner self-regulation. Enhanced teacher competencies in feedback (i.e. teacher feedback literacy) are needed, such as designing the wider learning milieu and establishing conditions for student self-evaluation (Boud and Molloy 2013). The teacher plays a critical role in orchestrating feedback possibilities by supporting students to develop capacities to monitor, evaluate and regulate their own learning. The student plays an important related role in generating and using feedback.

For the purposes of the paper, we define teacher feedback literacy as involving awareness and skills of three interconnected aspects: the role of feedback in developing student self-regulative capacities; the potential of peer feedback to activate students as generators of feedback; and attentiveness to relational, social-affective aspects of feedback processes. Existing literature related to feedback literacy mainly focuses on the important student role (Price et al. 2012; Sutton 2012). Teacher feedback literacy is acknowledged to be in short supply (O'Donovan, Rust and Price 2015) but has not been researched and conceptualized in much detail. This study

contributes to filling this gap by using case study data to develop some theorization of teacher feedback literacy. We propose an 'enabling construct' comprising interrelated cognitive and social-affective dimensions to build connections between teacher feedback and the development of student capacities for engaging with feedback processes.

Our investigation of feedback enabling processes arises from a case study of a Chinese university English teacher's classroom interactions with her students during the processes of preparing and implementing an oral presentation assessment task. In view of the ubiquitous presence of Chinese students in international higher education, Chinese perspectives are well-worth examination. Although the research emanates from a specific Chinese setting, our theorization of teacher feedback literacy is intended to carry implications across disciplines and geographical contexts.

Framing the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy

The enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy is defined as the teacher's ability to develop students' cognitive and social-affective capacities of generating and responding to feedback processes. This concept is framed by two interrelated strands of research: dialogic feedback and principles of effective feedback practice. By reviewing relevant literature, we justify the centrality of the enabling construct to teacher feedback literacy and discuss how this enabling process can be carried out in practice.

Current conceptualizations of feedback have been developing in a more dialogic direction with increased understandings of the limitations of one-way written feedback (Nicol 2010; Sadler 2010). Being more than conversation or exchange of ideas, dialogue involves relationships through which participants think and reason together (Gravett and Petersen 2002). Successful dialogues are premised upon the assumption that students are being supported to develop evolving understandings of the nature of quality academic work (Sadler 2010). For students to enter into productive dialogues with teachers and peers, they need to be enabled with some degree of skills and awareness of feedback processes (Sutton 2012).

Enabling student understandings of feedback processes implies a number of anticipated benefits. Cognitively, teachers' enabling processes equip students with necessary knowledge and skills to understand and respond to feedback. Such knowledge and skills may mitigate challenges noted by prior studies, such as student difficulty in judging the quality of academic work and in using feedback to improve future work (Boud and Molloy 2013). These contribute to a general goal of higher education: student self-regulated learning.

Feedback is a social practice in which the embedded relationships and arising emotions present multiple influences on students' ways of learning (Price et al. 2011). Better student understandings of feedback processes may reduce differing perceptions between staff and students which sometimes impede feedback processes (Carless 2006). Students may reject feedback if they do not perceive the feedback-provider as being trustworthy and credible (Orsmond, Merry and Reiling 2005). Managing student emotional responses to feedback is increasingly been seen as an important

consideration in feedback research (e.g. Pitt and Norton 2016).

Reviews of principles of effective feedback practice (Evans 2013; Hattie and Timperley 2007; Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006) suggest an emphasis should be on re-engineering feedback processes to facilitate student engagement and action. An important strand of this agenda is to integrate feedback with guidance and support (Hounsell et al. 2008). First-year undergraduate students often expect detailed guidance to prepare them for new assessments and support their transition from dependence on teachers to more autonomous ways of working (Beaumont et al. 2011). At the cognitive level, teachers deploy various guidance strategies to facilitate students' understanding of good quality work, such as generating or using criteria (Rust, Price and O'Donovan 2003); or analyzing exemplars (Hendry, Armstrong and Bromberger 2012). At the affective level, teachers need to develop a psychologically safe environment for better student engagement (Price et al. 2011). They may achieve this by showing care (Sutton 2012), developing trust (Carless 2009) or by encouraging positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006).

Involvement in peer feedback processes
Central to the focus of our paper is encouraging students to take an active role in generating insights through peer feedback. The benefits and challenges of developing effective peer feedback processes bridge the cognitive and affective dimensions. Peer review can help students notice the gap between their work and others, stimulating enhancement of their self-regulative capacities (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006). Timely peer feedback can also encourage students to act on the feedback that they have received (Cartney 2010). When well-organised, peer feedback is cognitively-engaging because it involves higher-order processes, such as application of criteria, diagnosing problems and suggesting solutions (Nicol, Thomson and Breslin 2014). Because of this cognitive engagement, providing peer review comments is often more beneficial than receiving comments (Cho and Cho 2011).

At the affective level, there are emotional aspects of peer learning which could be both positive e.g. solidarity or sense of belonging (Boud 2001); and negative e.g. anxiety about the process, or disappointment in lack of commitment of peers (Yucel et al. 2014). There is also evidence of specific student resistance to peer assessment or peer feedback. Peer assessment using grades often provokes negative affective reactions, particularly because of concerns about fairness or discomfort in grading peers (Patton 2012). Students sometimes perceive peer feedback as lacking in quantity or quality or resist it due to insufficient understanding of its potential benefits (Yucel et al. 2014).

Some challenges also emerge in relation to relevant studies of Chinese students. Traditional patterns of pedagogy may lead them to prefer authoritative teacher feedback rather than peer feedback (Yang, Badger, and Yu 2006). Concerns for face-saving and maintaining harmony may discourage students from offering critical comments (Hu 2005). Given the challenges in both cognitive and social-affective dimensions, more training and support are needed for students to engage in

effective peer feedback processes (Min 2016).

Summary
In sum, teachers are expected to plan and implement feedback processes to facilitate student development of necessary skills and awareness to become self-regulated learners. From the literature summarized above, we infer two main issues which this paper seeks to analyze. First, there needs to be a judicious balance between teacher orchestration of feedback processes and a more pro-active student role in which peer feedback is central. Second, teachers need to enable students to develop necessary feedback awareness and skills through effective guidance.

Method
This study addresses how Linda (a pseudonym) enabled her students to become acquainted with feedback processes and develop skills and awareness for generating peer feedback. The specific research questions are:

RQ1: How did the teacher enable her students to understand and appreciate the feedback process?

RQ2: What skills and awareness have the students developed for engaging with feedback processes?

Context and participants
Linda has taught English in a key university in Southern China for ten years. Her Faculty is responsible for teaching English to all non-English-major students. English language assessment in universities in China involves the co-existence of two competing discourses: one is dominant high-stakes standardized tests; and the other is increased emphasis on formative assessment. This form of 'double duty' (Boud 2000) implies considerable challenges for university teachers in China.

The rationale for selecting Linda was twofold: she was a high performer in a national survey of teacher assessment literacy, scoring two standard deviations higher than the average; and she is recognized for teaching excellence in her university, having won numerous awards both locally and nationally.

The *General English* course that Linda taught aims at enhancing students' overall English language proficiency. The class consisted of 57 first-year undergraduates who had limited experience of both oral presentations and peer feedback. Table 1 summarizes the assessment plan for the course. The main rationale for choosing group oral presentation as the site for analyzing the feedback enabling process was that this assessment task was conducted throughout the whole semester and allowed us to explore classroom processes over a period of time.

Table 1. Assessment plan

Assessment tasks	Weighting
Final exam	50%
Group oral presentation	20%
Attendance & participation	15%

Writing assignments	10%
Oral test	5%

Data collection

Three sources of data were collected. The first and primary set is classroom observations, which consist of 35 hours of video-recordings of Linda's classroom practice and the first author's field notes. A total of 23 sessions, each lasting 90 minutes, were observed and video-recorded throughout an entire academic semester. Such 'prolonged engagement' in the field (Creswell and Miller 2000) enabled us to capture possible connections between feedback on presentations and other general teaching and assessment practice.

The second source of data is seven teacher interviews, varying in duration between 30 and 60 minutes. These interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and the data stored on NVivo. The focus of the interviews was mainly about Linda's conception of pedagogy; the rationale for her feedback practices; and discussion of issues arising from the observations. Interviews were conducted mainly in English with some code-switching between Chinese and English. The final transcriptions, together with those required translations, were verified by the teacher.

The third source of data involves students' reflective journals about their experiences of the presentations and feedback processes. These were a compulsory non-assessed task required by Linda. The students' reflective journals were based on three questions posed by the teacher:

What is your evaluation of your group's presentation?

How do you feel about the peer feedback you received?

What did you learn from doing the presentations?

With the students' consent, these reflective journals were made available to the researchers for analysis.

Data analysis

NVivo 9.0 was used to facilitate the data analysis. A key initial step was data reduction of the classroom observations: among the 23 sessions observed, seven were particularly relevant for current purposes. These were the first session of the course which included important information about the course objectives and the assessment plan; and six sessions which focused on oral presentations. The video-recordings were viewed twice and the field notes were revised, updated and enriched accordingly. Through this process, the field notes were transformed into 'research texts' for further analysis guided by the research questions.

The observational, interview and student reflection data were initially coded by the first author to assign meanings to the data. We triangulated between the three data-sets as part of developing a comprehensive picture of the teacher's feedback enabling processes. The social-affective and cognitive dimensions of the feedback processes were identified as particularly salient in these data and became focal points for our analysis. The second author challenged some of the initial interpretations and

through negotiation we strived to develop balanced and trustworthy analyses of the data.

Limitations

The study carries some limitations. First, the study took place in a single setting in Southern China. Whilst we cannot generalize findings from this specific context, we hope to raise practical and theoretical issues for consideration by other researchers. Second, the research was mainly focused on the teacher: our data enable us to analyze how students generated and reacted to peer feedback but we do not know much about how they internalized it; or the extent to which they used it for ongoing improvement.

Findings

The findings are organized in relation to the two RQs. First we draw principally on classroom evidence and teacher interviews to address how Linda enabled student feedback literacy through various cognitive and social-affective strategies. Second, using classroom evidence and the student reflective journals, we unpack the student journey in developing skills and awareness for carrying out peer feedback.

Enabling the development of student feedback literacy

Table 2 summarizes how the teacher prepared students in cognitive and social-affective dimensions in three stages: introduction, preparation, and implementation. Due to space limitations, we do not go into every detail of the process but only highlight moves that emerged as most salient through our data analysis procedures.

Table 2. Linda's feedback enabling strategies

Stages	Social-affective dimension	Cognitive dimension
Introduction	Reassurance of timely support	Introducing generic learning goals; Explaining rationale & requirements
Preparation	Teacher self-deprecating humor	Showing an exemplar and facilitating discussion of strengths and weaknesses; Presenting and explaining criteria; Giving interim feedback on presentation outlines
Implementation	Putting students randomly into groups; Grading based on group performance; Creating a trusting & supportive atmosphere	Questions and answers a) Teacher modeling of questioning b) Peer questions c) Teacher rephrasing d) Presenter responses Structuring feedback sections a) Peer feedback from each group b) Teacher paraphrasing

Social-affective support

In the introduction and preparation stages, social-affective support began with some teacher reassurance. When Linda introduced group presentations and noticed that the students appeared anxious about this unfamiliar assessment task, she reassured them of her timely assistance:

> T: Don't worry. This is just the beginning, the general idea. We will talk about it in detail later. I am here to assist you fulfil the goals.

The assurance itself did not entirely erase student anxiety so Linda resolved to try to reduce the power distance between herself and the students. To achieve this, she often used humor in her teaching. Indeed, our field notes identify 85 occasions of 'whole class laughter'. Her humor was often self-deprecating when, for example, she made fun of her own name. She projected an approachable teacher image and her students started to greet her using her Chinese given name, which is quite rare in the setting of Chinese universities where hierarchy between professors and students is usually maintained. Students also approached her for advice after class and added her as a 'friend' on popular social media platforms. Teacher approachability and willingness to offer support is an important part of enabling first-year students' transition to university ways of working.

In the implementation stage, social-affective support was managed through efforts to tone down competition and increase mutual co-operation among students. Since the students' pre-university experiences were intense competition through high-stakes entrance exams, their mindsets for achieving excellence remained competitive ones. Considering that such an atmosphere might be a barrier to peer feedback, Linda tried to reduce competitiveness through two strategies. First, she placed students in randomly allocated groups which meant that self-selected groups of strong students were less likely to occur. Some students protested against this strategy because they preferred to work with their friends but Linda explained that she wanted to develop their abilities to work with different people. Second, she resolved to award group members the same grades based upon the overall group performance in that she wanted to emphasize group co-operation. Although this option does not address issues of potential unfairness in group assessment grading, it was part of Linda's attempts to reduce competition and develop an atmosphere of teamwork.

A further key element of support was peer feedback which she mentioned in interviews as an important supplement to teacher feedback for several reasons. First, it engages students better; Linda believes that the students are 'more observant and attentive' when required to give feedback on others' work. Second, it may appear more amenable than teacher feedback as critical comments from her might seem 'too traditional and harsh'. Third, Linda perceives that peer feedback enhances students' awareness of audience; and cultivates their sense of empathy. During interviews, she

also showed understanding of challenges in the peer feedback process:

> Sometimes it's awkward. For weak presentations, students refuse to talk actively. They don't want to hurt each other's feelings. It's the Chinese culture; people refuse to be the bad guys. I have to tell them that only true friends can be cruelly honest. It's something I often say. So help each other and people help you out. So I teach students to give each other suggestions, rather than just criticize them. I encourage them to be straightforward but not too harsh. It is difficult and it takes time.

Linda seems to be saying that face-saving concerns can impede students from providing or accepting critical feedback. She repeatedly used the phrase 'only true friends could be cruelly honest' implying both an affective element of sincerity and a cognitive dimension of providing critique. This interplay between social-affective support and cognitive scaffolding is a central theme in our findings and we turn next to aspects that we coded under the cognitive dimension.

Cognitive scaffolding

In the introduction and preparation stages, cognitive elements included Linda's efforts in closing the gap between her own and the students' conceptions of learning goals and assessment criteria. She first asked the students to brainstorm their ideas about generic learning goals of higher education, most of which were short-term ones focusing on accumulating more knowledge and skills. She then proposed goals of 'learning to know, learning to do, learning to think and learning to be', and particularly highlighted the idea of becoming 'intellectually independent to think critically'. Closing the conception gap between the goals set by the students and teacher in this way aimed to prepare the ground for the development of student self-regulation.

In addition, Linda used a video-taped presentation from a previous student cohort as an exemplar for students to develop an initial understanding of the nature of good oral presentations. When the students were discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the exemplar, Linda observed 'how students with different backgrounds understand the concept of presentations'. The discussion provided Linda with useful information on the students' current conceptions of the nature of good oral presentations which she could use to inform her ongoing guidance.

Linda followed up the exemplar discussion with an introduction to the assessment criteria which comprised content, organization, audience awareness, presentation skills, pacing, language use and teamwork. Although she might have done more to activate student views on the nature of good oral presentations, instead she explained these criteria herself. As a further step, Linda gave interim feedback on the presentation outlines with an intention of 'putting students on the right track'. This kind of timely guidance can provide further indicators of how the teacher conceives good presentations and applies the assessment criteria. Through these processes, the students had a preliminary sense of what was expected before they attempted to achieve it.

At the outset of the implementation stage, Linda was trying to teach students how to give peer feedback. The following classroom extract is an illustration:

> T: I understand that this is the first presentation so it is not easy to give comments. Please be detailed and offer something concrete. Don't offer anything too personal, try to be objective. Try to be friendly, but honest. Try not to be destructive, but offer some constructive opinions that can help them. They don't know how their presentation goes, so they want some honest opinions about it. Only true friends can be cruelly honest, so let's be honest with each other.

Linda hoped that the students would provide frank comments and that recipients of feedback would not take critical perspectives too personally. In the interviews, she also shared an aim of providing some generic feedback that would help the entire class, not just those that have just presented. However, generating quality feedback is cognitively demanding. Being first year students with limited prior experience of peer feedback, the students obviously did not develop these skills quickly and automatically. So when Linda invited questions from the audience after the first presentation, the students remained reticent and unsure what to contribute:

> T: Any questions? Do we understand everything about their presentations? Do you have any questions or doubts about the content? (A short pause) Sometimes, if you don't have questions, it means you are not interested. Ok, I have a question for you. What did you think your audience would benefit from your presentation? What can we learn from your presentation?

In this excerpt, Linda suggests a number of elements which could provoke questions, such as clarity of content or what can be learnt from the presentation. The lack of student response also suggests that they needed some further scaffolding to develop the confidence and competence to raise questions. In the following excerpt, Linda tried to model honest and critical feedback:

> T: These slides are not authoritative enough. You need something more convincing, more powerful. You need to do some serious research and offer people some authoritative evidence. You seemed to be offering some superficial opinions. If you want to be profound, add some depth. Do more reading and then integrate it with your own thinking to develop some deeper ideas.

From the interviews and observations, we could infer that Linda was trying to orient students to deepen the presentation content which she perceives as being the most important criterion. She also tries to phrase her comments in a sufficiently general way for the whole class to be able to benefit, including wider messages for university study, such as reading, thinking and depth.

Gradually the students picked up some of her cues and started to raise questions and make points about the presentations:

S1: I think for both of the groups, their points are not clear enough.

S2: What is your point? What can we learn from your presentation?

S3: I would like you to conclude your presentation more clearly.

Some of these student comments were rather brief and elliptic so it was difficult for other classmates to benefit much from them. As the students are English as foreign language learners with relatively limited confidence and competence, their comments are sometimes not fully audible or easily understood by others. Linda rephrased or elaborated on some of the peer feedback as exemplified below:

S: They had enough preparation.

T: They looked very prepared.

S: We like the role play. Their English is excellent.

T: So you appreciate their fluency.

S: The disadvantage is that their roles are a little too much for us to understand.

T: (to the presenters) Do you understand? You shifted your roles too fast, and it seemed confusing, right?

S: We feel that we didn't get too much from their presentation because what they conveyed are commonly known facts. It is not a mystery.

T: The topic itself is not innovative.

By rephrasing peer feedback, she hoped to enhance student comprehension and model appropriate strategies and language use. Such rephrasing bridges possible comprehension gaps between the audience and presenters. This teacher orchestration may be contextually suitable although it may minimize student autonomy and voice.

In addition to rephrasing, Linda mediated the dynamics of the feedback process by employing a 'no repetition' rule, which means that the groups could not repeat feedback which previous groups had provided. This rule made peer feedback more challenging for those groups who gave comments later, yet motivated them to listen to other groups carefully and to give original feedback.

In sum, the main cognitive scaffolding strategies were as follows: closing conception gaps of learning goals; using exemplars to illustrate quality; presenting and applying the assessment criteria; modeling how to provide peer feedback; and mediating feedback dialogues through various strategies, including rephrasing and elaboration.

Student development in peer feedback

Turning now to RQ2, evidence of skills and awareness that students have developed in generating and reflecting on feedback can be seen from two perspectives: the improvement of peer feedback generated; and student reflections on the processes of their group presentations. Table 3 provides some examples of peer feedback for each assessment criterion illustrating how the students are developing their abilities to

provide peer feedback.

Table 3. Types of peer feedback and sample excerpts

Feedback types	Excerpts of peer feedback
Content	They don't analyze the phenomenon, they should dig deeper.
	I think they repeated themselves by giving too much information.
Organization	We can learn all the details. ...The logical flow is quite vague.
	You need to structure your presentation in a logical way.
Audience awareness	They are audience-friendly. We can easily follow them.
	We were bored with too little information.
Presentation	I like that they used new forms to show traditional moral stories.
	Their entertainment overshadows their analysis.
Pacing	They played the powerpoint too fast; we can't follow.
Language Use	Nice accent. Some grammar errors.
Teamwork	You need more preparation and rehearsal.

The following excerpt, from one of the later classes, evidences some student improvement in providing feedback:

S: We appreciate that you tried your best to impress us. You used some familiar examples to appeal to us.

T: Yeah, we feel related somehow.

S: The logical flow is quite vague. We don't learn the details. They had too many keywords…. Another thing is that I don't think they had persuasive materials. For example, they showed us the phenomenon but didn't show clear conclusions.

T: Sharp observation. Very good.

The student first gave positive feedback, and then some more critical suggestions about the logic and supporting evidence. He seems to have picked up on Linda's position that it is the content which is the most important element of the presentations. In comparison with the silence which met Linda's first attempt at eliciting peer feedback, students are now starting to provide some comments for the consideration of presenters.

Student reflections on peer feedback

The student writing in their reflective journals also suggests their development as providers and receivers of peer feedback. The first reflection question guided students to self-evaluate their own performance. Two representative examples of their reflections are presented below:

We were well-prepared and went through it fluently. I am pleased with our clear logical flow and we showed some authoritative statistics. But we also have some weaknesses such as superficial themes, inappropriate linguistic usage and wordy power-point slides.

> Our topic is too extensive so we couldn't capture the important points and we made listeners confused. Our power-point was unattractive and our presentation style was uninspiring. But at least no one forgot what to say, and we spoke clearly and fluently.

As suggested by these examples, Linda's students were able to write about both strengths and weaknesses of their performance. A positive view of such data was that it shows evidence of emerging capabilities in self-evaluating their work. A more critical perspective might query whether students are providing the teacher what they think she wants to hear.

The second reflection question invited students to consider the peer feedback that they received. Some sample responses below indicate that the students seemed to recognize its value:

> Although our group felt bad when listening to others' critical feedback, I still appreciated that we were able to receive many useful suggestions. They told me how I can do better in my next presentation.

> Their evaluation was reasonable in that our theme is not clear and we didn't produce much insight. I have to say that the audience's ideas are good

> They were attentive when we delivered our presentation. Their comments are accurate and valuable. I appreciate their suggestions and critique which broadens our horizons.

From our analysis of the student reflective journals, we infer that the students seemed to consider peer feedback as beneficial in terms of pinpointing problems and suggesting improvements. Some acknowledged the affective challenges of facing critical comments, yet they expressed appreciation of the value of receiving constructive suggestions.

In response to the third question of learning from the presentations students identified various aspects and two examples are presented below:

> Undoubtedly I learnt a lot from the presentations. There are two classic questions. One is 'what is your point?' The other is 'what can we learn from your presentation?' We can prepare based on these two questions and we will convey our topic much better.

> It's a tough but meaningful project. It seems that the topic is the soul of a presentation. After reading lots of materials, we finally chose the topic. Now I know how to bring a big topic into a narrower statement.

The evidence on this question suggested some student cognitive development concerning the nature of a good presentation and a number of other perceived learning benefits which might be helpful in their university study.

Overall, we infer that there was evidence that Linda was making progress in enabling student abilities to generate and engage with feedback. An important issue that our data could not address was the extent to which students might build on these comments and enhance future oral presentations. A major challenge for feedback research and practice is how students develop a cumulative sense of the feedback they have received; and how they internalize it and act on it in future assessments.

Discussion
The findings suggest that Linda enabled students' feedback literacy by teaching them how to generate and appreciate peer feedback through various cognitive and social-affective strategies. These kinds of cognitive scaffolding and social-affective support are two main driving forces for the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy. We infer that this enabling process serves as the bridge between teacher and student feedback literacy.

Our findings suggest some themes similar to existing literature and some differences. The data corroborate previous research (e.g. Sadler 2010) which indicates that cognitive scaffolding is necessary to support students in developing understandings of quality which approximate to those of the teacher. Linda developed a shared understanding of criteria through using exemplars and trying to illustrate how criteria were operationalized (cf. Hendry et al. 2012). Strategies used in Linda's enabling process are also identified as similar to features of dialogic feedback models (Boud and Molloy 2013), such as orienting learners to aims of feedback and providing learners with opportunities to practice giving as well as receiving feedback.

As one of the first studies to use sustained classroom observations to analyze the interplay between teacher and student feedback literacy in a Chinese context, our findings illustrate some contextually suitable means of how the feedback process can be enabled. Closing conception gaps clarified expectations and oriented students from feedback receivers to a more active role in generating peer feedback. Teacher rephrasing eased communication; facilitated shared interpretations; and supported negotiating of meaning. The classroom observations uncovered the strategy of teacher modeling which has not been discussed much in prior literature on feedback. Linda modelled the prioritization of the criterion of content and this message was gradually taken up by the students in developing their peer feedback. The form of feedback was also modeled in various ways: encouragement; critical feedback; specific and generic feedback. These strategies when adapted to suit contextual conditions can be considered as part of student induction into assessment processes as they transition from school to university (Beaumont et al. 2011).

Our findings also provide further evidence of the important social-affective aspects of feedback. The enabling goal is unlikely to be achieved unless there is some recognition of the interplay between social-affective support and cognitive scaffolding. Our analysis of the social-affective dimension of feedback resonates with points made by Price et al. (2011) with respect to the centrality of relational aspects of feedback, including reciprocity and staff showing genuine concern for students' progress. The teacher's social-affective strategies also add specific classroom

examples to prior discussion in the literature. For example, trust was developed through reducing the impact of power relations; toning down competition; and scaling up mutual support. We infer that such social-affective support also needs to be contextually appropriate, taking into account student needs and cultural nuances. Our case dealt with a cohort of homogenous Chinese students and more complex cultural awareness might be needed in multicultural classrooms.

Our findings also show that peer feedback, if well-implemented, can be utilized as an enabling strategy by developing cognitive and social-affective capacities to generate and respond to feedback. This argument expands Cartney's (2010) view of timely peer input to facilitate feedback use by illustrating how peer feedback can be made accessible through closing conception gaps, modeling, rephrasing and mediation. Some of the negative student responses to peer review indicated by prior studies (e.g. Yucel et al. 2014) were not evident in our data due to Linda's step-by-step social-affective support and the collaborative classroom atmosphere. The students seemed to find peer feedback a safe and supportive space for learning, as they came to terms with the teacher's idea that 'only true friends could be cruelly honest'.

To sum up, the central finding of our study was the interplay between cognitive and social-affective strategies for facilitating feedback. We thus propose in Figure 1 a mechanism of the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy. As the cogs illustrate, cognitive scaffolding goes hand in hand with social-affective support as two driving forces for the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy. These two dimensions are interdependent, and jointly work to equip students with corresponding skills and awareness for developing their own feedback literacy. Within each dimension there might be a wide range of strategies at teachers' disposal, depending on their assessment literacy, socio-cultural awareness of student background, and affective dispositions such as care and trust of students.
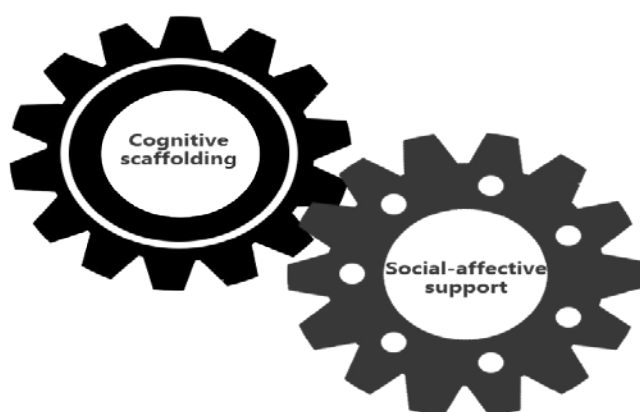

Figure 1: A mechanism of the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy

Conclusion

In sum, this study proposes a theorization of teacher feedback literacy by using classroom evidence to propose an enabling construct as an integral part of teacher

feedback literacy and as a bridge to student feedback literacy. It contributes to feedback research in three ways. First, the mechanism of the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy conceptualizes the interaction and mutual dependence between the cognitive and social-affective dimensions of feedback processes. Second, it reinforces and exemplifies through classroom data the concept of teacher feedback literacy as involving both providing quality feedback; and supporting students to generate and appreciate peer feedback. Third, the enabling construct contributes to models of dialogic feedback by suggesting some of the strategies for mediation between teacher and student perceptions.

The mechanism of the enabling construct of teacher feedback literacy can also be used as a framework stimulating further research. Both the cognitive and social-affective dimensions of feedback pose an array of challenges for teachers and students. Research in different contexts which examine them both in detail and in particular the interplay between the two might add to the discussion in this paper by identifying generic and context-specific components of the enabling construct. Future research might also investigate the complex connections between teacher and student feedback literacy, as well as how their interplay contributes to developing effective feedback processes.

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