

From AI Feedback to Peer Reflection: A Dual-Phase Reflective Writing Loop

Model Using a Generative AI-Assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback

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Abstract: In AI-driven writing education, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students increasingly rely on automated feedback; however, most AI feedback systems remain limited to surface-level corrections and provide insufficient support for metacognitive regulation. To address this limitation, this study proposes a Generative AI-assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback (GenAI-CDF) model that integrates metacognitive theory with the academic writing process through two AI-supported phases: an AI-as-tutor phase for individualized reflection and an AI-as-peer phase for dialogic co-construction. Using a quasi-experimental design, the effectiveness of the GenAI-CDF model was compared with a conventional ChatGPT-assisted dialogic feedback model (GPT-DF) across three writing tasks: brainstorming, outlining, and drafting. Results from ANCOVA and one-way ANOVA indicated that students in the GenAI-CDF group significantly outperformed those in the GPT-DF group in writing performance and metacognitive behaviors, while both groups demonstrated comparable levels of critical thinking. These findings suggest that aligning AI feedback with metacognitive regulation transforms AI from a corrective tool into a collaborative learning partner that actively supports metacognitive engagement and sustained participation in the academic writing process.

Keywords: Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), metacognitive theory, English academic writing (EAW), metacognitive behavior

1. Introduction

Academic writing is a cognitively demanding process that requires students to integrate linguistic accuracy, logical reasoning, and metacognitive regulation, posing challenges for EFL learners who must actively manage their writing decisions across planning, argument development, and drafting stages (Subandowo et al., 2025). Within this process, students' ability to regulate their own thinking plays a central role in shaping writing quality and learning outcomes. In conventional writing instruction, students typically receive static, one-way feedback from teachers or peers. Although such feedback may identify surface-level issues, it often provides limited opportunities for students to engage in sustained reflection, dialogic clarification, and strategic decision-making during writing (Taguba & Plata, 2025). As a result, students frequently adopt a passive role in revising their work, weakening their sense of agency and ownership over the writing process (Mu et al., 2025). As educational technology evolves, generative AI has shown potential to provide adaptive and dialogic feedback during writing. However, most current systems, such as ChatGPT, remain primarily focused on surface-level corrections and lack the collaborative depth required to support higher-order thinking (Kim et al., 2025). This misalignment between general-purpose AI feedback and the inherently recursive nature of academic writing reveals a critical gap in supporting students' metacognitive regulation through sustained interaction and co-construction (Steiss et al., 2024). To address this gap, this study proposes the Generative AI-assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback (GenAI-CDF) model, grounded in metacognitive theory and supported by the Dialogic Feedback Framework (Carless & Boud, 2018) and the Collaborative Interaction Framework (Dillenbourg, 1999). The model reframes AI from a feedback provider into a dialogic collaborator that scaffolds students' metacognitive regulation in EFL academic writing. By embedding dialogic interaction and structured co-construction across key writing phases:

brainstorming, outlining, and drafting (Stephen, 2024) – GenAI-CDF supports students in maintaining agency, making informed writing decisions, and developing reflective academic writing practices.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Metacognitive Regulation in Academic Writing Process*

Metacognition refers to learners' capacity to monitor, evaluate, and regulate their cognitive processes (Flavell, 1981). In academic writing, metacognitive regulation enables students to plan arguments, monitor the development of ideas, and evaluate the effectiveness of revisions to ensure coherence between intentions, evidence, and written output (Teng & Ma, 2024). Engagement with feedback is therefore inherently a metacognitive process, as effective feedback uptake requires learners to interpret feedback meaning, assess its relevance to their writing goals, and transform it into purposeful revision actions (Teng & Qin, 2024). However, prior studies indicate that traditional teacher and peer feedback often remain evaluative and surface-oriented, providing limited opportunities for students to actively regulate their writing strategies (Meyer, 2025). This limitation highlights the need for feedback approaches that encourage reflective dialogue and support learners' strategic regulation of writing decisions, thereby providing a theoretical foundation for dialogic feedback in academic writing contexts (Taguba & Plata, 2025).

2.2. *Dialogic Feedback in Collaborative Writing: From Peer to AI*

Dialogic feedback is regarded as a key mechanism in academic writing, emphasizing the negotiation of meaning, clarification of expectations, and co-construction of knowledge through interaction between feedback providers and recipients (Winstone et al., 2022). Unlike unidirectional feedback, dialogic feedback requires students to actively interpret, question, and apply feedback, thereby activating metacognitive processes of writing strategies (Carless & Boud, 2018), which are essential for effective academic writing development. However, empirical studies indicate that such feedback dialogues often lack the depth necessary to sustain metacognitive regulation, due to differences in linguistic proficiency, and the lack of reflection skills and clear instructional structures (Latifi et al., 2023). These limitations highlight the need for feedback models that can support dialogic interaction in a more consistent and structured manner, thereby pointing to the potential of generative AI-assisted dialogic feedback in academic writing (Kim et al., 2025).

Generative AI-assisted dialogic feedback (Gen-AIDF) has recently emerged as a potential approach to supporting English academic writing, owing to its capacity to provide immediate, flexible, and personalized feedback to students (Sun et al., 2024). Prior studies suggest that Gen-AIDF holds considerable potential for supporting argument development, improving textual coherence, and enhancing learners' confidence and motivation in complex academic writing tasks (Gong et al., 2025). However, empirical evidence indicates that many existing GenAI-assisted feedback models remain solution-oriented and focus primarily on surface-level revisions rather than activating metacognitive regulation (Steiss et al., 2024). As a result, student-AI interactions often become unidirectional, leading to over-reliance on AI feedback and limiting learners' ability to critically evaluate and justify their writing decisions (Banihashem et al., 2024), while issues such as hallucinated feedback further challenge the reliability of AI-supported writing (Chelli, 2024). Building on these theoretical foundations and identified limitations, this study proposes the GenAI-CDF model to examine whether structured dialogic interaction can better support students' academic writing performance while fostering critical thinking and metacognitive regulation in AI-assisted writing environments. Accordingly, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1: Do students in the experimental group using the GenAI-CDF model demonstrate higher English academic writing performance than students in the comparison group using the GPT-DF model?

RQ2: Do students in the experimental group using the GenAI-CDF model demonstrate higher critical thinking skills than students in the comparison group using the GPT-DF model?

RQ3: Do students in the experimental group using the GenAI-CDF model demonstrate higher metacognitive behaviors than students in the comparison group using the GPT-DF model?

3. The GenAI-Assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback (GenAI-CDF) Learning Model

This study proposes the GenAI-assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback (GenAI-CDF) model, which integrates generative AI with collaborative dialogic structures. Implemented using ChatGPT-4.0, the model employs structured prompts to deliver scaffolded, multi-turn interactions. Its design is informed by metacognitive theory and supported by the Dialogic Feedback Framework and the Collaborative Interaction Framework. From a technical perspective, the model integrates authentic student writing data and instructor-provided learning content to ensure that feedback is academically grounded and aligned with course objectives. Unlike automated feedback systems, GenAI-CDF is conceptualized as a process-oriented learning model that operates through a dual-phase instructional design. The AI alternates between a cognitive tutor role that prompts reflective thinking during idea development and a collaborative peer role that supports revision decisions once students articulate specific writing goals. This role-switching mechanism enables scaffolded support across the academic writing process.

Building on this foundation, GenAI-CDF implements two core operational mechanisms (see Figure 1). The Dialogic Cognitive Activation Mechanism (DCAM) focuses on activating metacognitive reflection through guided dialogue, corresponding to AI's role as a dialogic tutor. Within this mechanism, AI does not provide direct evaluations or solutions, instead, it employs critical counter-questions that prompt students to clarify writing goals, articulate argumentative choices, and self-evaluate the relevance of feedback. For example, the AI may initiate interaction with prompts such as *"Which parts of your midterm project will you prioritize for revision in the final report?"* or *"What aspects of this section still require further explanation or supporting evidence?"* Through these dialogic exchanges, students engage in monitoring and evaluation processes that help them identify weaknesses and develop revision strategies before drafting. In parallel, the Interactive Structured Collaboration Mechanism (ISCM) emphasizes feedback utilization and practical writing decision-making. AI is positioned as a writing partner that presents multiple viable revision options, links each option to specific argumentative purposes, and requires students to compare, select, and justify their decisions. For instance, instead of generating full paragraphs, the AI responds with prompts such as *"Tell me which section you want to draft first?"* or *"Once you send your own draft, I will help you to review it?"* If additional help is requested, the system provides partial scaffolds such as topic sentence models or transition cues, followed by reflective prompts that guide students to refine their writing. Through multi-turn interaction, ISCM strongly activates planning and strategic regulation processes, enabling students to transform feedback into concrete writing actions. Overall, DCAM and ISCM operate in parallel and complement each other throughout the academic writing process. While DCAM activates reflection and evaluation through dialogue, ISCM supports students in translating reflective insights into revision decisions. This integration enables GenAI-CDF to function as a metacognitively oriented learning model, in which students not only receive feedback but also learn to interpret, negotiate, and strategically apply feedback in English academic writing.

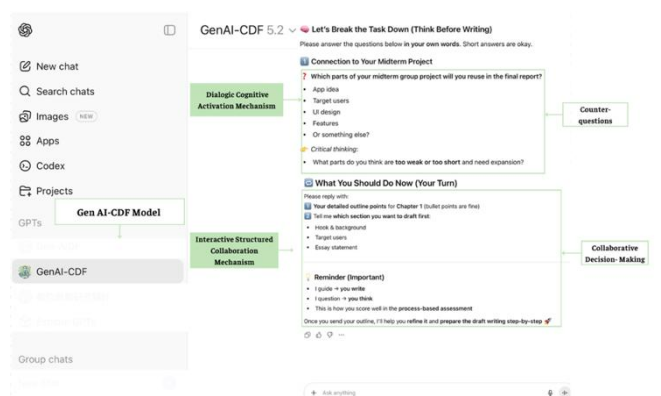


Figure 1. The GenAI-CDF Learning Model

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Participants and Experimental Design

A quasi-experimental study was conducted with 76 third-year undergraduates enrolled in the Mobile Programming and Data Management courses at a university in northern Taiwan. All students completed the same English academic writing task that required analyzing user data and designing a mobile application, under the guidance of the same instructor. All students were randomly assigned to two groups: the experimental group ($n = 38$) and the comparison group ($n = 38$). Each group was divided into smaller subgroups of five to six members to facilitate collaborative writing, with voluntary participation and institutional ethics approval ensuring fully informed consent and data confidentiality.

The six-week experiment began with an introductory session familiarizing students with academic writing and dialogic feedback. All students then completed two baseline assessments: a pre-test evaluating English academic writing through an short essay and a pre-questionnaire measuring critical thinking. Metacognitive behaviors were later examined via AI chatbot interaction logs. Before the main writing tasks, both groups received structured training on dialogic feedback strategies. The experimental group used the Generative AI-assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback model (GenAI-CDF), which employed structured prompts, staged writing tasks, and a dual-role interaction protocol. In contrast, the comparison group used ChatGPT-assisted dialogic feedback (GPT-DF), where students interacted with ChatGPT through standard dialogic prompts without the structured prompting, role-switching, or staged instructional design used in GenAI-CDF. Prior to the AI-assisted learning intervention, each group was provided with a shared Google Docs writing template that included structured writing guidelines and prompts. Within each group, each student was assigned responsibility for drafting a specific chapter or section. In each 90-minute phase, students then interacted with AI chatbots across three writing phases, namely brainstorming, outlining, and drafting with feedback, to develop their individual drafts. Afterward, all students shared their drafts with group members through the collaborative Google Docs template, revised their essays, and completed a post-questionnaire to evaluate improvement in target competencies (see Figure 2).

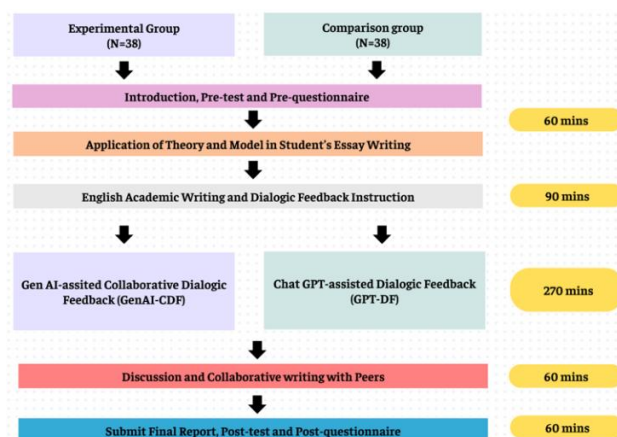


Figure 2. Experimental Design Process

4.2. Instruments and Data Analysis

To comprehensively evaluate learning outcomes, three dimensions were assessed: English academic writing, critical thinking, and metacognitive behaviors. Writing performance was measured using the rubric by Rezaei and Lovorn (2010), which included content, organization, complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Each criterion was rated on a five-point scale from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent). Two experienced instructors scored all essays independently, and the mean of both ratings was used as the final score. Inter-rater reliability, assessed using the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC), indicated high agreement between raters ($ICC = .90$). Critical thinking was assessed with a seven-item scale adapted from Lin, Hwang, and Hsu (2019), showing high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$). Metacognitive behaviors were analyzed during collaborative writing activities using a coding scheme adapted from Lajoie and Lu (2012) and Meijer et al. (2006). These

behaviors were regrouped into three primary categories to represent students' metacognitive engagement with the GenAI-CDF model: Content Contribution, Commenting Behavior, and High-level Metacognitive Contribution. Each category was rated on a three-point scale from 1 (Low) to 3 (High) performance. Scores were accumulated across coded interaction segments to derive a composite metacognitive score for each student. ANCOVA and one-way ANOVA were used to compare outcomes between the two dialogic feedback models. To ensure coding reliability, a subset of metacognitive behavior scores was independently coded by two raters. Inter-rater reliability was assessed using the intraclass correlation coefficient, indicating excellent agreement between raters ($ICC = .87$).

5. Results

5.1. English Academic Writing Performance

An Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to examine the effect of Gen AI-assisted dialogic feedback models on students' English academic writing performance between the Experimental group (GenAI-CDF) and Comparison group (GPT-DF) (see Table 1). The assumptions for ANCOVA were met, as Levene's test indicated no significant difference in group variances, $F(1,74) = 2.53$, $p = .116$, and the test for homogeneity of regression slopes showed no significant interaction, $F(1,72) = 0.06$, $p = .809$. After controlling for pre-test scores, the adjusted means were 20.43 ($SE = 0.31$) for the GenAI-CDF group and 15.85 ($SE = 0.31$) for the GPT-DF group. ANCOVA results revealed a significant difference in writing performance, $F(1,72) = 110.51$, $p < .001$. Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons confirmed that the GenAI-CDF group significantly outperformed the GPT-DF group ($p < .001$). These results suggest that the GenAI-CDF model was associated with higher overall academic writing performance compared with GPT-DF in this study. Additional exploratory analyses of the writing dimensions indicated significant differences in Complexity, Content, and Mechanics (all $ps < .001$), whereas Accuracy and Fluency showed no statistically significant differences.

Table 1. The result of English academic writing performance shown by ANCOVA analysis

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SE	Adjusted Mean	F	η^2
Post test	Experimental Group	38	20.34	0.31	20.43	110.51***	0.605
	Comparison Group	38	15.97	0.31	15.85		

*** $p < .001$

5.2. Critical Thinking Skills

To evaluate the impact of dialogic feedback on students' critical thinking skills, pre- and post-intervention questionnaire data were analyzed using ANCOVA (see Table 2). The assumptions were met, as Levene's test indicated no significant difference in error variances, $F(1,74) = 2.97$, $p = .089$, and the test of homogeneity of regression slopes was non-significant, $F(1,72) = 0.73$, $p = .39$. After adjusting for pre-test scores, adjusted post-test means were 4.14 ($SE = 0.08$) for the GenAI-CDF group and 4.07 ($SE = 0.08$) for the GPT-DF group. The ANCOVA revealed no significant difference in critical thinking skill, $F(1,72) = 0.46$, $p = .499$. These results indicate that students in both conditions demonstrated comparable levels of critical thinking after the intervention.

Table 2. The result of critical thinking skill shown by ANCOVA analysis

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SE	Adjusted Mean	F	η^2
Post test	Experimental Group	38	4.14	0.08	4.14	0.46	0.006
	Comparison Group	38	4.07	0.08	4.07		

5.3. Metacognitive Behaviors

As metacognitive behaviors in this study are treated as an interaction-based process rather than a static trait, they provide a more dynamic reflection of how students regulate their learning in real-time, a one-way ANOVA was conducted

to compare students' metacognitive behaviors between the Experimental Group and the Comparison Group. Levene's test confirmed the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1,74) = 0.218$, $p = .642$. Results showed a significant group difference, $F(1,74) = 152.814$, $p < .001$ (see Table 3). The GenAI-CDF group achieved a higher mean score ($M = 73.97$, $SD = 8.46$) than GPT-DF Group ($M = 49.79$, $SD = 8.59$). Post hoc analysis also indicated that the Experimental Group significantly outperformed the Comparison Group ($p < .001$). These results indicate that students in the GenAI-CDF condition demonstrated higher levels of metacognitive behaviors during the writing activities compared with those in the GPT-DF condition. This pattern may reflect the role of the Interactive Structured Collaboration Mechanism in encouraging students to engage more actively in evaluating and applying feedback during the writing process.

Table 3. The result of Metacognitive behaviors shown by one-way ANOVA analysis

Group	N	Mean	SD	<i>F</i>	η^2
Experimental Group	38	73.97	8.46	152.814***	0.674
Comparison Group	38	49.79	8.59		
Total number of students	76	61.88	14.72		

*** $p < .001$

6. Discussion and Implications for Future Research

This study proposed the Generative AI-assisted Collaborative Dialogic Feedback (GenAI-CDF) model to address the limitations of traditional feedback in English academic writing by integrating metacognitive theory with dialogic feedback and the collaborative interaction framework. The model places a central emphasis on co-constructive knowledge-building processes that actively engage metacognitive regulation between students and AI throughout the writing process. Specifically, GenAI-CDF operationalizes a dual-phase AI-supported feedback mechanism, combining an AI-as-Tutor phase that supports individual reflection with an AI-as-Peer phase that promotes collaborative dialogue. Together, these phases create iterative learning cycles that deepen reflective engagement and sustain high-level academic participation. Regarding to RQ1, the results indicate that the Experimental group significantly outperformed the Comparison group in overall academic writing performance. This finding suggests that GenAI-CDF provided more comprehensive support by integrating automated AI guidance with structured collaboration (Barrot, 2023). During the initial AI-as-Tutor phase, students received immediate and scaffolded feedback that supported improvements in syntactic complexity and content organization (Su et al., 2023). In terms of Content, the specialized dialogic feedback embedded in GenAI-CDF fostered critical thinking, resulting in essays with greater depth and coherence (Li et al., 2025). Regarding Mechanics, the structured feedback encouraged greater attention to formatting and consistency in writing (Boudouaia et al., 2024). However, no significant differences were observed between the two groups in Accuracy and Fluency, suggesting comparable support for surface-level language features. Because both conditions relied on the same underlying large language model, these dimensions may be less sensitive to instructional differences, particularly in short-term interventions (Wang et al., 2025). Regarding RQ2 and RQ3, the findings reveal a developmental distinction between the activation of critical thinking and the regulation of metacognitive processes in AI-supported academic writing. Although both AI-based dialogic feedback models led to comparable improvements in students' critical thinking, indicating that AI-supported dialogic feedback is sufficient to activate foundational to intermediate critical thinking processes (Banihashem et al., 2024), only the GenAI-CDF model resulted in significantly higher levels of metacognitive behaviors. According to metacognitive theory, critical thinking is enacted when students monitor argumentation, evaluate persuasiveness, and revise writing strategies (Zhang & Zhang, 2024); however, these processes do not automatically develop into sustained metacognitive regulation without structured reflective scaffolding (Wei, 2024). The advantage of GenAI-CDF can therefore be attributed to its Interactive Structured Collaboration mechanism, which guides students to actively construct content, engage in reflection, and regulate writing decisions throughout the feedback cycle, rather than passively receiving AI-generated feedback (Lu et al., 2025). In contrast, the absence of dialogic scaffolds and

collaborative structures in GPT-DF may explain its limited effectiveness in promoting higher-level metacognitive development within a short-term intervention (Usher, 2025).

Overall, these findings reaffirm the pedagogical value of the dual-phase dialogic feedback approach embodied in the GenAI-CDF model, where AI assumes a dual role as both instructional guide and collaborative learning partner to foster reflection and activate metacognitive regulation. GenAI-CDF offers a promising framework for designing AI-mediated academic writing environments in higher education. Nevertheless, limitations related to sample size and intervention duration constrain the generalizability of the findings. Future research should develop adaptive AI feedback systems that incorporate personalized learning recommendations and adopt longitudinal research designs to examine the sustained effects of GenAI-CDF across broader academic contexts.

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