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THE POWER OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK AND THE IMPACT OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS ON WRITING: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

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The power of written feedback (WF) in the context of writing instruction is significant. Feedback can come from various sources, including teachers, peers, parents, self-reflection, literature, and personal experiences (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). While oral feedback in the form of face-to-face conferences or audio recordings can provide additional opportunities for students, WF is given or received in written forms, such as comments on drafts or electronic comments in a word processing document (Lee et al., 2015). Over the years, the focus of WF has expanded beyond linguistic aspects to include other important characteristics of writing composition, such as developing ideas, rhetorical abilities, and revision skills (e.g., Caulk, 1994; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990). This led to a move from a product-dominated approach to feedback provision to a multiple-draft process approach. Pedagogical practices have also shifted towards teacher-student conferences and peer-feedback sessions (Ferris, 2003). This theoretical framework also aligns with the current landscape of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) and its impact on academic writing, emphasizing the potential for both opportunities and challenges. The accessibility of large language models like OpenAI's GPT-3 and 4 and ChatGPT has created public interest in artificial intelligence. GenAI tools use simple prompts to generate written content instantly (OpenAI, 2023). Academic integrity and plagiarism issues affect the educational sector, despite positive public discourse on GenAI. Some schools have banned AI technology, reminiscent of the math education resistance to pocket calculators (Urlaub & Dessein, 2022; Yang, 2023). This disruptive potential challenges institutions that rely on student writing for assessment. This theoretical paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the issues surrounding WF and GenAI in academic writing. It sets the stage for the conference participants to interact and ask questions that could emphasize the need for empirical exploration to inform educational practices and policies in the era of GenAI technologies and their impact on academic writing. The analysis delves into practices regarding the use of ChatGPT in the writing process (e.g., generating ideas, outlining, writing, revising, evaluation, and feedback), aiming to highlight potential differences between students and instructors and establish common expectations. The implications of this paper advocate not solely for the awareness of WF practices and the integration of GenAI tools into students' academic writing learning processes but also for the formulation of explicit guidelines and professional development opportunities for educators in the use of these practices and tools within educational contexts. Consequently, establishing evidence-based guidelines on the integration of ChatGPT in teaching and learning can serve as a foundational step to align course design objectives with GenAI tools.