

## **Supervisory practices in English-medium undergraduate and postgraduate applied linguistics thesis writing: Insights from Japan-based tutors**

John L. Adamson

*University of Niigata Prefecture, Niigata, Japan*

David Coulson

*Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan*

Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson

*Niigata University of International and Information Studies, Niigata, Japan*

This paper reports on a study of how three Japan-based tutors (the authors) guided thesis writing, potentially towards publication, and provided their students with the agency to negotiate disciplinary norms. In this paper, we attempt to supplement the body of literature on academic writing supervision and consider particularly the later stages of the supervisory process for undergraduate/postgraduate thesis writing in English which were achieved by scaffolding students' writing, bilingual discussions, direct corrective and metalinguistic feedback, and mind-mapping. We argue these emphases on language and content helped both non-anglophone and anglophone novice researchers to conceptualize, and attain, a level of completion beyond their current capability. The study was informed by the literature on content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and English-medium instruction (EMI). This paper shows that our supervisory practices have been influenced by data from bilingual language correspondence with students over multiple drafts, and long-term collaborative autoethnography. Our examples reflect a balance between explicit, prescriptive feedback, often in the scaffolding of pre-writing supervisory advice and language use. We have aimed consistently to promote students' agency in their own writing.

**Keywords:** thesis; supervision; English-medium instruction; Japan

### **Introduction**

This pedagogy-focused study explores the “conversation” of the discipline (Bazerman, 1980, p. 657), that is, the interaction between supervisors and supervisees concerning the norms of a particular field, in three cases of Japan-based undergraduate/postgraduate research supervision in applied linguistics. The purpose is to show and reflect upon how we, as Japan-based tutors, practically guide and co-construct graduation theses (including for publication in one case) and promote students' own agency to negotiate disciplinary norms (as defined by Gutiérrez, 2008). This is achieved through scaffolding of the writing process by means including: bilingual discussions of research goals and guided readings of Japanese and English literature; intensive direct corrective and metalinguistic feedback; and mind-mapping of thesis structure. We argue these foci on language and content issues are facilitative in helping both non-anglophone and anglophone<sup>1</sup> novice researchers achieve a higher degree of conformity with disciplinary norms, and are

informed by studies in content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and English-medium instruction (EMI). Our personal approaches to these tutorial practices are explored by examining data from languaging correspondence (for a fuller discussion about languaging see, Ishikawa, 2013; Swain, 2006) with students in either Japanese or English over multiple drafts (this translingual literacy is recommended by Lu & Horner, 2013). This analysis is supplemented by long-term collaborative autoethnography (CAE) data, a process in which values and theories underpinning our practices are jointly narrativized between us to develop awareness of practice, as outlined by Chang, Ngunjiri, and Hernandez (2013). Although it has not been possible to gather direct testimony from students to evaluate our supervisory practices, we regard the investigative means of gathering data from various sources, including students' rich, extended correspondence with us and examples of joint thesis negotiation and planning as a supervisor-led means to promote the emergence of our students' agency. The concept of agency, defined by Lillis as "the human capacity to act" (2013, p. 125), is intertwined with issues of identity and voice. This is of particular importance in this study involving emerging scholars in our discipline, many of whom are non-anglophone speakers with differing L1 literacy practices. This study, located in three distinct tertiary contexts in Japan, attempts to cast light on the processes inherent in enhancing student agency.

### **Literature review**

This review addresses supervisory practice for writing theses in English in the Japanese context. We first present the English language situation in the Japanese tertiary context and then discuss feedback types for L1 and L2 writers, literary practices L1 students bring to L2 writing, and how literacy knowledge is enhanced in support networks. Finally, we discuss the role of (trans)languaging in student-supervisor interaction.

In Japan, active discussion surrounds the growth of EMI and CLIL which underpins our supervisory practice. As the Japanese birth rate decreases and universities seek global competitiveness, government initiatives to internationalize elite universities have led to an influx of foreign students, even to the point of becoming the majority among the student body in the university where one of us works, and lower-ranking universities have also followed suit (Burgess, 2015; Stigger, 2018). Imoto (2013) claims this is coupled with the propensity of Japanese students to avoid long-term overseas study by seeking EMI contexts within Japan. Brown (2017) notes, however, that whole-curriculum EMI programmes offered in English in Japan are scarce because only a relatively small number of faculty are willing or able to provide them. EMI is seen as a pedagogical and linguistic challenge for Japanese and non-Japanese undergraduates (Fujimoto-Adamson & Adamson, 2018).

University English-language curricula in Japan have in recent years been influenced by a shift towards EMI and a CLIL approach to teaching and learning. This motivates students with its "dual focus" (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p. 1) and "authenticity of purpose" (p. 5) in the delivery of both language and content in language instruction. The inclusion of materials and methods from the students' content field of study poses difficulties for teachers who are more used to focusing on improving language proficiency than measuring the extent of the learning of content (Llinares, 2015). Recent studies examine the pedagogical effect in early stages of undergraduate study in the Japanese context (Adamson & Coulson, 2014, 2015; Brown, 2017) but few have considered the later stage of undergraduate or postgraduate thesis supervision in English, a context which involves the integration of content and language pedagogies.

Turning to English-language thesis supervision, Bazerman (1980) describes the conversation of the discipline between supervisor and student, an interaction where feedback plays an important role in acclimatizing students to discipline-specific literacy practices. Basturkmen, East, and Bitchener (2014) note the paucity of institutionally-led development of thesis supervisors with regards to feedback provision, and advocate an “academic community discourse perspective” (p. 433) where students’ social worlds (their personal goals and career directions) are of equal importance, during supervision, as a specific focus on the disciplinary genre of the text. In response, Bitchener (2018) finds that both L1 and L2 writers require guidance on the subject-specific use of literature, discourse structure, and language use through genre analysis of the discipline. Casanave and Li (2015) also point to the need for conceptual and theoretical guidance for all novice scholars. This resonates with Hyland’s (2016) view that L1 speakers have no automatic advantage in expertise in genre-specific writing. Bitchener (2018), however, notes that language issues are more important for L2 writers, yet correction of errors is frequently reduced to “editorial marking” (p. 122) so as not to distract from content meaning. For theses in applied linguistics, the field directly relevant to this study, (Bitchener, 2018) and Bitchener, Basturkmen, and East (2010) pertinently note that most L2 students require feedback regarding the literature review and discussion of findings. However, Bitchener (2018) also notes that criticality in using literature is typically lacking in both L1 and L2 writers. Of further pedagogical interest is Bitchener’s (2018) differentiation between feedback on drafts and pre-writing advice, the latter essential for structure and self-management of the overall writing process. We argue that such autonomy represents metacognitive guidance which transcends language and content knowledge.

Focusing specifically on types of feedback, Rae (2016) notes the dilemma between addressing micro-errors or more global concerns such as overall coherence in argument. She warns of the dangers to student motivation if excessive attention is given to language feedback. The effectiveness of corrective feedback is also debated. Evidence exists that metalinguistic comments by teachers have a stronger effect than direct corrective feedback (see, for example, Shintani & Ellis, 2013; Truscott & Hsu, 2008). Nevertheless, evidence also exists for the benefits of the latter (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012) so a balance of feedback types is likely to be effective, dependent on the learners’ motivation and disposition. Research by Ruegg (2010) clarifies the varying effects of different types of feedback. She found that with her Japanese students, while direct feedback worked best for grammatical accuracy, indirect feedback worked best for language-level problems and semi-direct feedback for meaning and content issues. Similarly, research on Japanese students by Suzuki (2012) and Ishikawa (2013) points to the benefits for written accuracy when tutors provide written feedback on language errors which was perceived by their students in Japanese-English translation tasks as an effective means to achieve short-term accuracy. This finding is consistent with those of Shintani and Ellis (2013).

Fundamental issues surrounding the transfer of L1 literacy skills to L2 learning are referred to by Gutiérrez (2008) and Moje et al. (2004, p. 41) as “third space” where students negotiate a merging of L1 “first space” literacies with expected L2 norms (“second space”) of learning environments. This research stresses the agency and identity of the L1 writer. Further, this is viewed by Blommaert and Horner (2017) as a negotiable space of mobility where learners can negotiate the use of L1 and L2 literacies. Lu and Horner (2013) advocate L1-to-L2 translation as a means to “foreground writer agency and responsibility” (p. 29). Thesen (2014) terms this negotiated space the “contact zone” between literacy practices and warns of the tension, or risk, it entails as it may not be accepted by teachers who reject the use of L1 and insist on an L2 monolingual (i.e. English-only) environment.

Greater writer responsibility relates more to how writers can seek support from sources than to how supervisors help writers. This is particularly relevant for university thesis writing and publication as university supervisors represent the most accessible source of advice if students wish to publish their work. Studies discuss the role of “text mediators” (Luo & Hyland, 2017) and “brokers” (Lillis & Curry, 2010) facilitating publication, implying that over-reliance on supervisors does not best prepare students for L2 research careers. As Nassaji (2011) argues in a study on Japanese L1 learners, such interaction is more effective where “the feedback is provided in a negotiated and interactive manner” (p. 317). His argument pertains to linguistic development, but can be extended, as in this paper, to include the clearer formation of students’ understanding of content that may otherwise remain poorly articulated due to constraints on L2 ability.

Also relevant to this context is the integration of the writer’s mother tongue into the process of L2 text production. This “integration of (bilingual) language practices” (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p. 80), termed “translanguaging” is widely documented (see Canagarajah, 2014; Creese & Blackledge, 2010) and is regarded as a useful, yet still controversial practice, in L2 learning. Martin-Beltrán, Guzman, and Chen (2017) see it as a mediational tool to support students’ collaboration, which resonates in the current study with our supervisor-student tutorials conducted in the students’ L1 (Japanese) or student-student discussions in their L1 during thesis writing. Blommaert and Varis (2013) view these processes of supervisor-to-student and student-to-student interaction as critical and creative.

This review of the literature suggests that L1-L2 language use with an authentic purpose such as thesis writing naturally directs students and supervisors towards use of language which pragmatically focuses on content and sees languages as tools rather than outcomes. This view of interaction underpins the study reported in this paper.

## **Methodology**

This paper is based on three sets of qualitative data about the supervision of theses in three Japanese tertiary contexts. One set of data emanates from a distance (postgraduate) Master’s programme in Applied Linguistics and TESOL between Japan-based students and a supervisor; the second is drawn from a full-time Master’s programme in Applied Linguistics in Kyoto; and the third from an undergraduate Bachelor’s programme at a regional university in Niigata. The data takes the following forms:

1. Supervisor-student correspondence (feedback) on various drafts of thesis writing in the form of email and social medial messages;
2. Supervisor and student L1 and L2 in-class notes and planning about structure (pre-writing advice) in the form of planning notes, drafts and amendments;
3. CAE narratives between supervisors (the authors of this paper) compiled using an online cloud service which allowed us to share and simultaneously write our narratives.

Data sets 1 and 2 provide evidence of advice, feedback and perceptions during supervisor-student interaction, data set 3 is a jointly-narrativized account of our social worlds as supervisors in Japanese academia. The advantage of this digital CAE was that it resulted in the creation of multiple, written “co-constructions” of narratives (in the words of Jacoby & Ochs, 1995, p. 171), at our own pace over time. This enabled us to mutually reflect and comment on each other’s input which, it is argued, reflects greater synergy than individual narratives could achieve alone (Chang et al., 2013), especially as we were able to extend and clarify our stories in response to each other’s comments.

## Findings and discussion

In the following presentation of findings, we refer to ourselves as John, David and Nao.

### *Correspondence*

David's Japanese Master's student owns a children's English school. She hypothesized that some of her learners may have had an L2 reading disability. In supervising her thesis, David flagged various concerns: how to devise a reliable and ethical testing instrument for young learners; misgivings among other faculty members about whether she, as a non-specialist, could speculate on dyslexia; and whether journal editors would accept a submission on this topic. Her advocacy of considering the social world of writing, as well as genre knowledge, is manifested through her relationship with her clients (the children's parents). David's supervision raises questions about how to mediate between textual feedback on drafts and content guidance for both university evaluation and publication purposes.

In an early pre-feedback draft of her methodology section (Extract 1), it is clear that she was capable of expressing complex ideas in English.

Extract 1: Pre-feedback draft (David's postgraduate student)

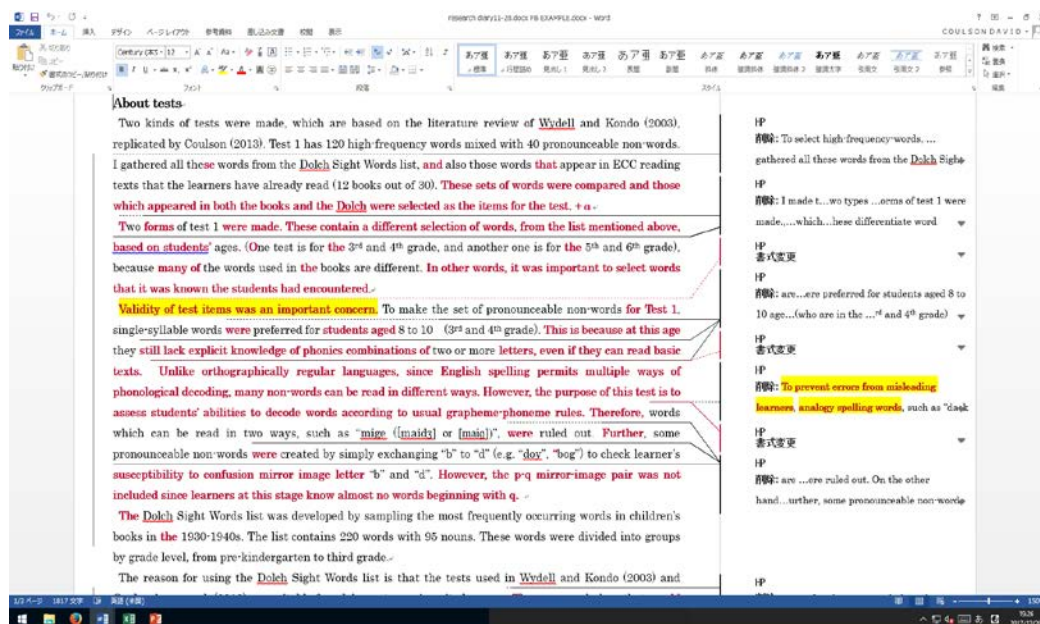
I made two types of test, which differentiate word choice by their ages (one test is for 3rd and 4th grade, and another one is for 5th and 6th grade) because the words used in books are different.

In response to this draft, David's feedback concentrated on: 1) Adjustment to academic language norms, e.g. making the correction "two forms of test 1 were made"; 2) Inserting clarifying sentences, e.g. "These contain a different selection of words, from the list mentioned above, based on students' ages"; 3) Addition of summary implications: "In other words, it was important to select words that it was known the students had encountered"; and 4) Adding of foregrounding orientation e.g. "Validity of test items was an important concern". This mixture of foci on language and content issues invoked Rae's (2016) advice to balance micro-textual concerns of language with more global issues of coherence.

After David's postgraduate student made revisions based on this initial feedback, further feedback was given collaboratively via email correspondence with her, as shown in Extract 2. This shows track change feedback (in English) on the revised English draft, with Extract 1 appearing in paragraph 2. While David gave much prescriptive surface-level feedback, which may appear to constitute writing instruction, in fact the student's response was not just to passively accept these changes, but to position this feedback to display her emerging understanding of the key issues involved. The positioning of this edited feedback before the third paragraph in Extract 2, on the issue of validity, reflects her emergent critical understanding of test-design issues, and how they should be coherently presented in academic writing.

John corresponded in English with his distance Master's student, a Japan-based anglophone scholar in a private language school who was seeking employment in tertiary-level teaching, about publishing his assignment (Extract 3). This illustrates that the conversation of the discipline embraces the social and future professional needs of the student requiring the text mediation (see Luo & Hyland, 2017) and brokering (see Lillis & Curry, 2010) which are necessary for publication. As with Li (2016), it illustrates the important role that supervisors can play in guiding both anglophone and non-anglophone scholars into academic publishing.

## Extract 2: Tracking change feedback (David to his postgraduate student)



John corresponded in English with his distance Master's student, a Japan-based anglophone scholar in a private language school who was seeking employment in tertiary-level teaching, about publishing his assignment (Extract 3). This illustrates that the conversation of the discipline embraces the social and future professional needs of the student requiring the text mediation (see Luo & Hyland, 2017) and brokering (see Lillis & Curry, 2010) which are necessary for publication. As with Li (2016), it illustrates the important role that supervisors can play in guiding both anglophone and non-anglophone scholars into academic publishing.

## Extract 3: Publication advice (Anglophone postgraduate student to John)

Student

Do you have any advice for a student like myself who might like to try to publish one of their articles? I know TEFL/TESL is likely saturated with people attempting to publish their work, but I thought you might have some ideas of where to start looking or how to approach publishing in less well-known journals. Considering where I am at as a MA student at this point, is any publication a good publication?

John

Firstly, I think it is best to try to identify a few peer-reviewed (non-payment) journals first - they could be affiliated with universities or SIGs within larger teaching associations (IATEFL, JALT etc). Your assignments are usually short so may fall into the 'teaching' or practical paper sections of journals rather than the full research paper sections.

In extract 4, a newly-enrolled anglophone postgraduate Master's student seeks John's advice in English about engaging in thesis research. The early focus on publication reveals the student's long-term goals and illustrates a shift in the focus of the supervisory relationship from the current thesis to the role of the supervisor, as argued by Basturkmen et al. (2014), as a guide to an academic career.

Extract 4: Publishing the thesis (Postgraduate student to John)

Student

I am very serious about my thesis and would like to, if possible, carry out and complete research that will be publishable. Is this a possibility?

John

As for the thesis, it's a long way off but many students do manage to publish it in some form - most as a reduced (word length) journal article or book chapter. Assignments too can be occasionally published if up to the standard. One common pathway into publication on the MA is through your own university journal or a conference proceedings after presentation.

At the other end of the time-scale of supervision, in Extract 5, a recent anglophone graduate from a distance postgraduate Master's programme writes in English to ask the ex-supervisor to become a referee. This common occurrence illustrates that involvement by the supervisor in the social world of the student is frequently extended into non-study-related issues, which resonates with the career-oriented dialogue between student and supervisor that Basturkmen et al. (2014) claim is frequently necessary.

Extract 5: Job reference (Ex-postgraduate student to John)

It has been a number of months since we have been in contact, and as I have now finished my MA program I am planning on heading back home to look for teaching opportunities there. I was wondering if you would allow me to include you as one of my references as I apply for some jobs.

## **2. The writing process**

This study revealed three important points in relation to the writing process. Firstly, the importance of pre-writing advice to demonstrate the planning of writing. Secondly, the value of translanguaging to make optimum use of L1 and L2 to facilitate understanding and build confidence. Thirdly, the value of extended dialogues to enhance deeper understanding. These points are illustrated below through extracts from the data.

The first example of planning in the writing process (Figure 1) shows Nao illustrating in English to a student the overall structure of the thesis for her undergraduate Discourse Analysis class using a mind-map for major sections and sub-sections. This pre-writing advice clearly resonates with the views of Bitchener (2018) who stresses the importance of pre-writing orientation.

In a separate session on planning, Nao worked with an undergraduate student using detailed mind-mapping in English and Japanese (Figure 2). The supervisor's and student's common L1, Japanese, helped clarify the meaning in a translanguaging manner (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). The pragmatic use of L1 and L2 illustrates how languages oscillate (Cross, 2016) to focus collaboratively on content issues. This again reveals Thesen's (2014) contact zone in which an academic space is negotiated (Blommaert & Horner, 2017), a simple type of mobility which decentres monolingual practice and encourages the multisemiotic, creative and critical process as noted by Blommaert and Varis (2013).

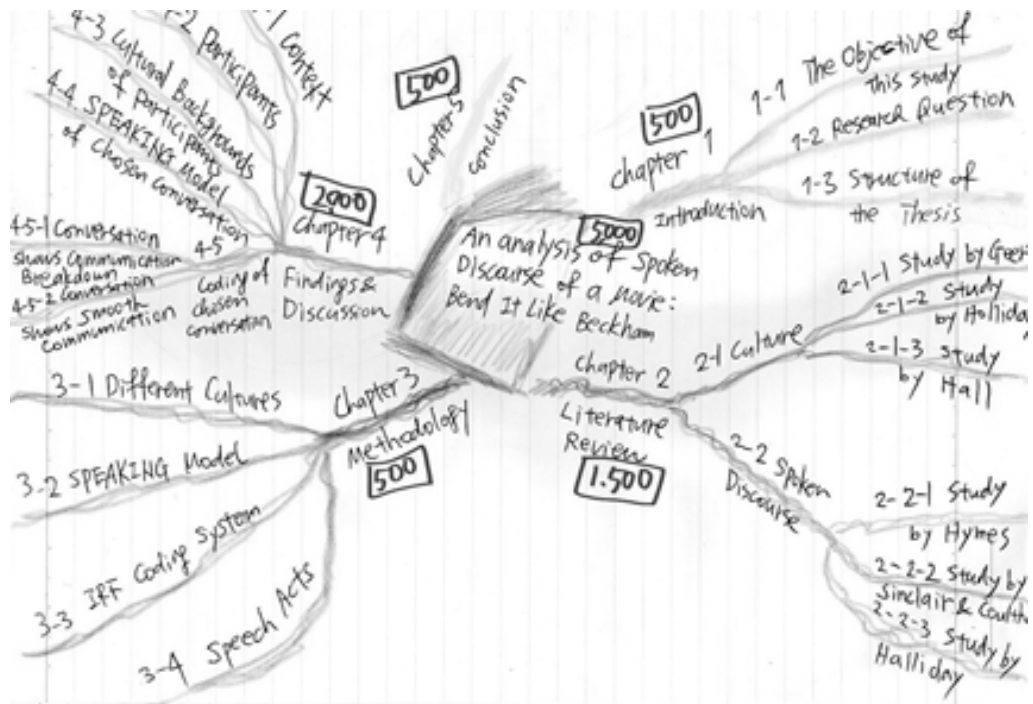


Figure 1: Planning in the writing process (Nao with an undergraduate student)

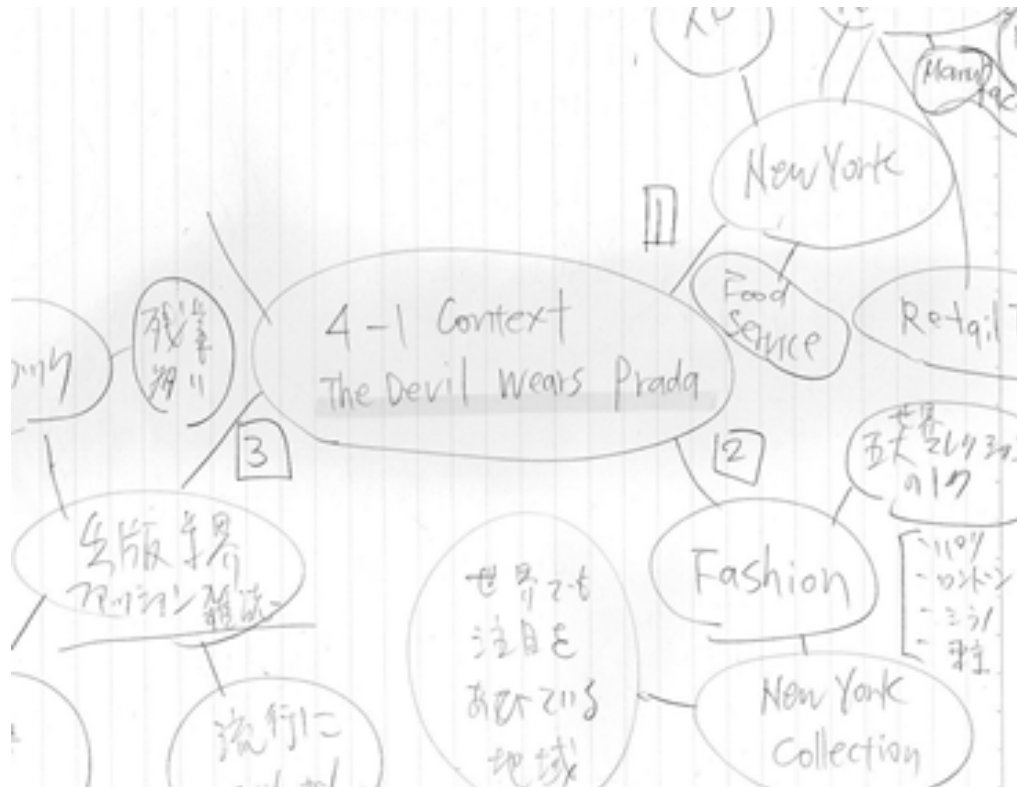


Figure 2: Section mind-mapping (Nao with a postgraduate student)



In addition to the kind of prescriptive feedback mentioned above, David also engaged in dialogue in English with his student to move the supervision towards a metalinguistic consideration of the implications of the text. Extracts 6 and 7 show two rounds of interaction with a student about sections of his MA thesis draft which focuses on children's reading disability.

Extract 6: Written feedback (David to MA student)

Note: Italics = sections of the student's draft

In the following paragraph, I still don't understand what you want to express:

*What is interesting here is participants who prefer native teachers still require deep knowledge of Japanese and its culture/manner for native teachers. This may imply that they need a kind of "insurance" in case if communication with native teachers break down, or they don't want to be misunderstood their reaction by native teachers. In other words, these requirements are essential for low-proficiency learners to continue their interaction with native teachers.*

For the first sentence, do you mean, "still need to rely on their knowledge of Japanese and its culture/manner, such as that native teachers (can usually??) provide?" If so, here is a possible edit to your paragraph. Pay attention to the suggested underlined parts of my suggestion.

*What is interesting here is that although some participants expressed a preference for native teachers, these individuals still benefit from relying on their L1, and the reassurance of its familiar culture and manners which most Japanese L1 teachers can provide. This may imply that they need a kind of "insurance" in cases where communication with native teachers breaks down, or where they would prefer to avoid having their reactions misunderstood by native teachers. In other words, such contingencies are essential for low-proficiency learners to be able to positively continue their interaction with native teachers.*

A logical error remains in the paragraph. If communication breaks down with a native teacher, how is it an insurance policy for a student to rely on Japanese, if the non-Japanese teacher doesn't understand? This may be solved in team-teaching with L1 speakers of each language. But this form of teaching is the minority of cases in TESOL.

Concerning this, further consider these two points:

- a) How could native teachers address the learners' need to avoid being misunderstood in talk?
- b) You assume that non-native Japanese speakers are not fluent enough to resolve such an issue in Japanese. Does this mean that native English speaker teachers should be proficient in Japanese?

Extract 7: Written feedback

Note: Italics = sections of student's draft

I may understand your intention now. Does my wording match what you mean?

>> *What is interesting here is although those participants admit the importance of interaction in English, at the same time they require native teachers to be able to use Japanese and understand its culture and manners. This may show that they need a kind of "insurance" against breakdowns in communication with non-Japanese speaking native teachers, since they would prefer to avoid having their reactions misunderstood by native teachers. This does not mean all native teachers of English should have to acquire the language and cultural background of Japan, or any other local teaching setting. However,*

*it does imply that being a native speaker of English is not the only qualification to be considered capable of teaching in ELT classrooms.*

There are two key points of English:

- 1) You wrote, "*They require ability of using Japanese and understanding its culture/manner for native teachers.*" I suggest you change this to, "*they require native teachers to be able to use Japanese and understand its culture and manners*"
- 2) You wrote, "*However, it does not be said that only native teachers of English are capable for teaching in ELT classroom.*" I suggest you change this to, "*However, it does imply that being a native speaker of English is not the only qualification to be considered capable of teaching in ELT classrooms.*"

This interaction resulted in a more cogent argument. The student's revisions (commented on in Extract 7) show evidence of attending to David's supervisory comments in a critical manner. Having completed the initial prescriptive corrections, the dialogue then aimed to initiate a conversation of the discipline. The final outcome of this dialogue was a text which was subsequently published in a journal.

### **3. Collaborative autoethnography**

This section draws on the CAE narratives co-constructed by the authors to discuss our perceptions of our role as writing supervisors. It looks at experiences which may influence current practice and at pedagogical influences on teaching writing.

The influence of the roles of editor and of Self Access Centre mentoring on writing supervision is notable in John's and Nao's narratives (Extract 8). The sensitivity demanded by both roles is particularly important for thesis supervisors. Furthermore, the skills developed as editors and mentors also give students insights from a wider potential network of brokers (Lillis & Curry, 2010) which they need in order to move away from overdependence on the university supervisor, for their career-development.

Extract 8: Influences prior to supervising (from CAE narratives)

John (CAE narrative)

I've had experience teaching writing from the early 1990s for testing (IELTS), college, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels, as well as editorial work which I feel has some overlap in how I give feedback. For me, there is an overriding sense then of always having a clear objective for writing.

Nao (CAE narrative)

When I worked at a university Self-Access Center, I advised 1st year [Undergraduate] students about academic writing as a mentor for English academic writing. Mentors are mediators between teachers and students, therefore, it was necessary for us to understand teachers' instructions when checking student writing. This was a very good experience for me to learn the process of teaching academic writing. Later, I started to teach 4th year students for their undergraduate thesis on sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. Like John, I'm also involved in editorial work for a few journals. Writing for publication is not the same as supervising university students, but I noticed some similarities such as how to give clear but sympathetic feedback, edit according to specific formats to fit the guidelines of journals and a university.

Also of interest, are the pedagogical influences on how we now supervise students. In Extract 9, John and David discuss modelling, or scaffolding, of academic writing, John

discusses primarily from a translanguaging perspective, and David focuses on a clear methodological approach. Both share the collaborative nature as a “mediational” means (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2017) to assist us as supervisors and our students, which shifts the onus of mediation onto the students themselves.

Extract 9: Pedagogical influences on teaching writing (from CAE narratives)

John (CAE narrative)

The idea of scaffolding comes to mind. My Japanese students need models of other students' work, not necessarily native speaker ones, so that those writing for the first time get a sense of the whole structure and 'doability'. Other influences are possibly the idea that the process can be shared with other students - peer review - a process which gives the writer the chance to verbalise what they are trying to do. Discussing drafts like this is, I suppose, a kind of 'linguaging' and can be done in the students' L1 so, a translanguaging process starts. I think the idea of L1 use to aid L2 writing for me evokes a sense of use of the mother tongue which creates 'safe' zones of practice.

David (CAE narrative)

Concerning what John wrote about scaffolding, I brought up this topic in my SLA class last week. I tried the idea of Modified Dictogloss in academic writing where the learners are given a list of key phrases (formulaic sequences) from the text. As they listen, they can notice the phrases printed on their sheets as they listen, and this helps them to recreate the meaning of the source text as they collaboratively make their own text. The idea matches John's idea of scaffolding. I think it is probably a more useful exercise than my usual track-changes methodology for teaching useful phrases for academic writing.

Looking back on our CAE shows how our previous experiences in various contexts, both in-class pedagogy (teaching IELTS and scaffolding writing) and out of class (in a Self-Access Centre and giving editorial feedback), have shaped our current supervisory practices. This represents, in its simplest form, data for this study. However, in the absence of training in how to supervise students' thesis writing, the process of conducting this CAE between us can also be argued to constitute a healthy awareness-raising exercise to bridge that gap in supervisory knowledge. In this sense, Bazerman's (1980) conversation of the discipline manifests itself not only in how we interact with students in our scaffolding of writing, but, importantly, in how we as practitioners share supervisory beliefs and experiences to develop ourselves.

## Conclusion

This study of our academic supervisory practices reveals a mixture of experiences and attitudes towards L2 thesis writing. Although these practices are underpinned by our own beliefs about the construction of knowledge, the diversity between us also provides us with a mutual source of reflective insight into our development as writing supervisors. This has helped us recognize the importance of a balance between explicit, prescriptive feedback for Japanese users of English, and guiding the emergence of critical awareness in our supervisees' writing. This is realized in our scaffolding of pre-writing structure and language use, and our cognizance of the importance of affording students' agency. This is fundamentally a negotiated process, punctuated, in Nao's case particularly, by the use of translanguaged planning and modelling. David and John stress the extension of supervision into a co-constructed, dialogic, as well as critical, discussion of students' academic development, social worlds and professional needs. This is seen in the nurturing

of supervisees' critical awareness through discursive and feedback interaction, publication advice and understanding of both Japanese and anglophone students' professional contexts. The CAE data reveals multiple approaches, often experimental, which stress the importance of experiences, such as being journal editors or Self-Access Centre mentors, in shaping our beliefs as supervisors. The data presented above provides the opportunity for collaborative exchanges of teaching experiences and beliefs. This cannot be generalized across all supervisory contexts but may have resonance with practitioners in similar settings where EMI is practised. When EMI thesis supervision depends upon practitioners' own efforts to develop rather than abiding by institutional training, this study indicates the potential benefits of sharing examples of practice and collaborative reflection on beliefs.

### Note

1. In this study we use the terms anglophone to refer to native speakers of English and non-anglophone to refer to non-native speakers of English in order to avoid confusion with native speakers of Japanese.

### About the authors

John L. Adamson is a professor of English in the Department of International Studies & Regional Development, University of Niigata Prefecture.

David Coulson is a professor of English in the Graduate School of Language Education and Information Sciences at Ritsumeikan University. His research is in the field of applied linguistics, especially vocabulary acquisition.

Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson is an associate professor in the Department of International Studies, Niigata University of International and Information Studies. Her research interests are team-teaching in Japanese secondary schools, the history of ELT in Japan and academic publishing.

### References

- Adamson, J., & Coulson, D. (2014). Pathways towards success for novice academic writers in a CLIL setting: A study in an Asian EFL context. In R. Al-Mahrooq, V. S. Thakur, & A. Roscoe (Eds.), *Methodologies for effective writing instruction in EFL and ESL classrooms* (pp. 151-171). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Adamson, J., & Coulson, D. (2015). Translanguaging in English academic writing preparation. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, 10(1), 24-37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/22040552.2015.1084674>
- Basturkmen, H., East, M., & Bitchener, J. (2014). Supervisors' on-script feedback comments on drafts of dissertations: socialising students into the academic discourse community. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19(4), 432-445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.752728>
- Bazerman, C. (1980). A relationship between reading and writing: The conversation model. *College English Teaching & Research*, 41, 656-661.
- Bitchener, J. (2018). *A guide to supervising non-native English writers of theses and dissertations*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Bitchener, J., Basturkmen, H., & East, M. (2010). The focus of supervisor written feedback to thesis/dissertation students. *International Journal of English Studies*, 10(2), 79-97.
- Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. (2012). *Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing*. New York: Routledge.
- Blommaert, J., & Horner, B. (2017). Mobility and academic literacies: An epistolary conversation. *London Review of Education*, 15(1), 2-20. <https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.15.1.02>
- Blommaert, J., & Varis, P. (2013). *Life projects* Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies (Paper 58), Tilburg: Center for the Study of Superdiversity, Tilburg University. Retrieved from [https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/c37dccc-f-242d-4fca-b79f-d3d366b0a505\\_TPCS\\_58\\_Blommaert-Varis.pdf](https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/c37dccc-f-242d-4fca-b79f-d3d366b0a505_TPCS_58_Blommaert-Varis.pdf)

- Brown, H. (2017). Investigating the implementation and development of undergraduate English-medium instruction programs in Japan: Facilitating and hindering factors *Asian EFL Journal*, 19(1), 99-135. Retrieved from <https://www.elejournal.com/1541/2017/asian-efl-journal/the-asian-efl-journal-quarterly-march-2017/>
- Burgess, C. (2015). To globalise or not to globalise? 'Inward-looking youth' as scapegoats for Japan's failure to secure and cultivate 'global human resources'. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 13(4), 487-507. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2014.966805>
- Canagarajah, S. (2014). EAP in Asia. In I. Liyange & T. Walker (Eds.), *English for academic purposes (EAP) in Asia* (pp. 93-102). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Casanave, C. P., & Li, Y. (2015). Novices' struggles with conceptual and theoretical framing in writing dissertations and papers for publication. *Publications*, 3(2), 104-119.
- Chang, H., Ngunjiri, F. W., & Hernandez, K.-A. C. (2013). *Collaborative autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press Inc.
- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 103-115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x>
- Cross, R. (2016). Language and content 'integration': The affordances of additional languages as a tool within a single curriculum space. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 48(3), 388-408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2015.1125528>
- Fujimoto-Adamson, N., & Adamson, J. L. (2018). From EFL to EMI: Hybrid practices in English as a medium of instruction in Japanese tertiary contexts. In Y. Kırkgöz & K. Dikilitaş (Eds.), *Key issues in English for specific purposes* (pp. 201-221). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Garcia, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gutiérrez, K. (2008). Developing a sociocultural literacy in the third space. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(2), 148-164. Retrieved from <http://lchc.ucsd.edu/mca/Mail/xmcamail.2014-12.dir/pdftsnR0mXbcJ.pdf>
- Hyland, K. (2016). Academic publishing and the myth of linguistic injustice. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 31(C), 58-69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.01.005>
- Imoto, Y. (2013). Japan: Internationalisation in education and the problem of introspective youth. In P.-t. J. Hsieh (Ed.), *Education in east Asia* (pp. 127-152). London, UK: Bloomsbury.
- Ishikawa, M. (2013). Examining the effect of written languaging: The role of metanotes as a mediator of second language learning. *Language Awareness*, 22(3), 220-233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2012.683435>
- Jacoby, J., & Ochs, E. (1995). Co-construction: An introduction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 28, 171-183.
- Li, Y. (2016). Chinese postgraduate medical students researching for publication. *Publications*, 4(3), 25. <https://doi.org/10.3390/publications4030025>
- Lillis, T. (2013). *The sociolinguistics of writing*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Lillis, T., & Curry, M. J. (2010). *Academic writing in a global context*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Llinares, A. (2015). Integration in CLIL: A proposal to inform research and successful pedagogy. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 28(1), 58-73.
- Lu, M.-Z., & Horner, B. (2013). Translingual literacy and matters of agency. In A. S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *Literacy as translingual practice* (pp. 26-38). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Luo, N., & Hyland, K. (2017). Intervention and revision: Expertise and interaction in text mediation. *Written Communication*, 34(4), 414-440. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088317722944>
- Martin-Beltrán, M., Guzman, N. L., & Chen, P.-J. J. (2017). 'Let's think about it together': How teachers differentiate discourse to mediate collaboration among linguistically diverse students. *Language Awareness*, 26(1), 41-58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2016.1278221>
- Moje, E. B., Ciechanowski, K. M., Kramer, K., Ellis, L., Carrillo, R., & Collazo, T. (2004). Working toward third space in content area literacy: An examination of everyday funds of knowledge and discourse. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(1), 38-70. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.39.1.4>
- Nassaji, H. (2011). Correcting students' written grammatical errors: The effects of negotiated versus non-negotiated feedback. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(3), 315-334.
- Rae, J. L. (2016). Corrective feedback: Sharing ideas and perspectives teacher to teacher. *OnCUE Journal*, 9(3), 273-286. Retrieved from [http://jaltcue.org/files/OnCUE/OCJ9.3/OCJ9.3\\_pp273-286\\_Rae.pdf](http://jaltcue.org/files/OnCUE/OCJ9.3/OCJ9.3_pp273-286_Rae.pdf)

- Ruegg, R. (2010). Who wants feedback and does it make any difference? In A. M. Stoke (Ed.), *JALT2009 conference proceedings* (pp. 683-691). Tokyo: JALT. Retrieved from <http://jalt-publications.org/archive/proceedings/2009/E111.pdf>
- Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2013). The comparative effect of direct written corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation on learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the English indefinite article. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 22(3), 286-306. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2013.03.011>
- Stigger, E. (2018). Introduction: Internationalization in higher education. In E. Stigger, M. Wang, D. Laurence, & A. Bordilovskaya (Eds.), *Internationalization within higher education: Perspectives from Japan* (pp. 1-19). Singapore: Springer.
- Suzuki, W. (2012). Written languaging, direct correction, and second language writing revision. *Language Learning*, 62(4), 1110-1133. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2012.00720.x>
- Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language proficiency. In H. Byres (Ed.), *Advanced language learning: The contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London: Continuum.
- Thesen, L. (2014). Risk as productive: Working with dilemmas in the writing of research. In L. Thesen & L. Cooper (Eds.), *Risk in academic writing* (pp. 1-24). Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters.
- Truscott, J., & Hsu, A. Y.-p. (2008). Error correction, revision, and learning. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17(4), 292-305. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2008.05.003>