Depth of processing in L2 writers' appropriation of written corrective feedback. Comparing the affordances of written languaging and think-aloud protocols

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Depth of processing (DoP) has become a key concern in theoretical and empirical written corrective feedback (WCF) studies (e.g., Caras, 2019; Cerezo et al., 2019; Leow, 2020, forthcoming; Leow & Manchón, 2020; Manchón et al., 2020). However, some critics (e.g., Leow & Manchón, 2020) have called for more controlled, methodologically-oriented studies in which the validity of the research instruments used to tap into DoP is tested. As a response to this call, our study explored the affordances of three WCF processing conditions (through the use of 3 introspection techniques: think-aloud, written languaging, and a combination of think-aloud and written languaging) in terms of (a) depth of feedback processing, and (b) accuracy of the texts produced in each condition. We additionally inspected whether any observed effects were moderated by writing environment, i.e. pen-and-paper versus computer-mediated writing.

The study was a pre-test/treatment/post-test design. The participants (41 English majors) were asked to complete a pre-test writing task in time-constrained conditions. The task was a problem-solving, picture-based "Fire Chief" task (Gilabert, 2007), with 18 participants completing the task on pen-and-paper and 23 on the computer. All participants were subsequently provided with unfocused direct WCF and were further divided into three WCF experimental processing conditions: they were asked to engage in languaging about their errors via (i) think-aloud, (ii) written languaging (noticing table), or (iii) simultaneous written languaging and think-aloud protocols. The final session (post-test) invited all participants to rewrite their original texts in the same conditions as in the pre-test. The processing data collected was transcribed and coded according to Leow's (2015) definition of DoP and the texts written as pre- and post-test were graded according to standard accuracy measure. Results on the effects of processing/writing conditions on the 2 dependent variables will be reported and methodological implications for research on WCF processing will be discussed.