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Learner Agency in Feedback: A Review of Conceptualisations and Related Constructs

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ABSTRACT

Learner agency in feedback, commonly referred to as learner feedback agency (LFA), has garnered significant scholarly attention over the last decade. Despite growing scholarly interest, a comprehensive understanding of LFA's conceptualisations remains limited. This review critically evaluates existing publications to gather insights into the characteristics of prevailing conceptualisations of LFA. Findings indicate an increasing number of studies directly exploring LFA, yet the majority of reviewed literature centres on five key constructs overlapping or encompassing LFA: feedback uptake, feedback engagement, student voice in feedback, student autonomy in feedback, and feedback-seeking. Furthermore, this review identified a network of seven interrelated facets that underpin current conceptualisations of LFA, namely behavioural, cognitive, affective, dispositional, relational, societal, and material facets. Employing the metaphor of a knot, this review attempts to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of LFA by considering it as an intricate and dynamic entanglement among these facets. This review contributes to the field by offering a theoretical synthesis and foundation for future research and discourse on LFA.

KEYWORDS

Learner feedback agency, feedback, student agency, learner agency

Introduction

Learner agency has been widely recognised as vital for effective feedback. Traditionally, feedback has been approached from a transmission perspective, with teachers assuming the responsibility of providing information regarding students' learning or performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Kulhavy & Stock, 1989). This approach assumed a passive role for students, who were seen as recipients of feedback. In recent years, scholars challenged the traditional approach with more learner-centred conceptualisations (Lipnevich & Panadero, 2021; Van der Kleij et al., 2019). This reflects a growing recognition of the need to encourage learner agency and promote active participation in shaping their feedback experiences. This shift recognises that students play a central role in feedback, actively contributing to understanding and improving their learning (Winstone & Carless, 2019). In line with the shift, researchers explored learner-centred feedback, including self-regulation, self-assessment, and peer feedback (Nicol, 2021; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). These practices encourage students to engage in agentic practices such as acting on feedback, sensemaking of feedback, and decision-making.

Despite these advances, the conceptualisation of Learner Feedback Agency (LFA) remains underexplored and inadequately defined. Building on previous definitions (e.g., Winstone et al., 2017; Panadero & Lipnevich, 2022), this review defines LFA as the temporally and contextually constructed involvement of learners in feedback. Current literature often focuses on cognitive and psychological dimensions of agency, adopting an individualistic approach that overlooks contextual influences on feedback (Nieminen et al., 2022). Recognising these limitations, recent propositions advocate for more integrated

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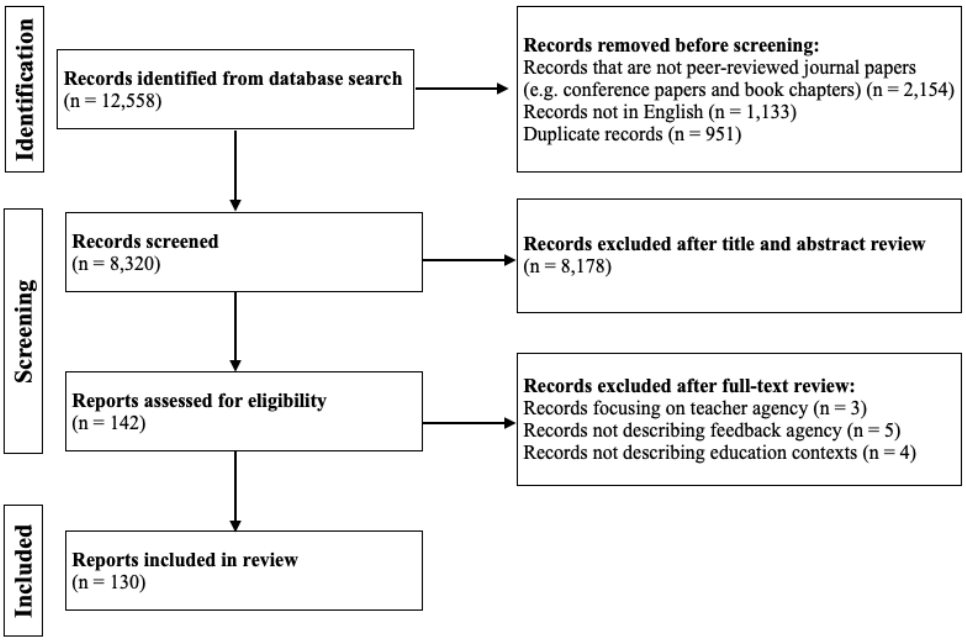
conceptualisations, highlighting the contextual nature of LFA, its underlying deliberative processes, and its entanglement with existing feedback structures (Lee et al., 2024a). However, these conceptual frameworks often lack the operational clarity needed for empirical investigation and practical application, highlighting a gap in the literature that necessitates greater specificity and more concrete theoretical frameworks for research and practice.

Furthermore, there is a notable absence of reviews that specifically reviewed the conceptualisations of LFA within the broader feedback literature. Existing reviews in the feedback literature covered limited aspects such as the effects of feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Wisniewski et al., 2020), feedback models (Lipnevich & Panadero, 2021; Panadero & Lipnevich, 2022), and students' role in feedback (Van der Kleij et al., 2019)—however, none related to LFA. This paper aims to fill this gap by conducting a review of the literature pertaining to LFA, seeking to consolidate existing conceptualisations and elucidate the various characteristics of LFA that have surfaced. This review contributes to existing theorisations of LFA by addressing the review question: What are the characteristics of existing conceptualisations of LFA? By addressing this question, the paper aims to advance theoretical understandings of LFA, providing greater clarity and specificity, and laying a foundation for future research and practice in educational feedback.

Method

This review adopted the Preferred Reporting Items of Systematic reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) approach to select and analyse studies. PRISMA was chosen as it is widely recognised as the preferred method for review reporting and ensures that the review meets field standards (Page et al., 2021; Moher et al., 2015). The endorsed processes for conducting high-quality systematic reviews were meticulously followed, with the documentation of literature selection presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1
PRISMA flow diagram



The review utilised several databases relevant to education, including Education Source, Academic Search Complete, APA PsychArticles, British Education Index, Teacher Reference Center, and ERIC (Education Resources Information Centre). These databases were searched through EBSCOhost Information Services. Scopus was also used as an additional database to ensure comprehensive coverage of the review. A

combination of three sets of search terms was used when performing the search within the title and abstract (Table 1). The final search on the three sets was conducted in April 2024, and 12,558 papers published from January 1939 to April 2024 were identified.

Table 1
Search terms

Set	Search terms
Feedback	feedback, feed-back
Student	learner*, student*, graduate*, undergraduate*, pupil*
Student agency	agen*, initiat*, volition, autonom*, led, lead, voice, ownership, choice, seek*, act*

Table 2 summarises the inclusion and exclusion criteria used for this review. This review only included peer-reviewed journal articles to ensure that articles of quality were retained. Conference materials, book chapters, reports and electronic resources were removed. The review excluded non-English papers in view of the authors' language proficiency. Duplicate copies were removed, bringing the search down to 8,320 studies. Next, titles and abstracts were examined to assess the studies' relevance to LFA. During this phase, it was observed that a majority of the studies focused on teachers' agency and how teachers can improve the delivery of feedback. However, the focus of this review is specifically on the students and their ability to exercise agency in feedback. By this criterion, studies on teacher agency (e.g., Biesta et al., 2015), studies on feedback provision, such as timeliness or modality of feedback (e.g., Hung, 2016), and studies not describing students' agentic involvement (e.g., Tärning et al., 2020) were excluded. This significantly reduced the number of studies to 142. Lastly, the full texts of the remaining studies were examined to ensure that the research foci of these studies centred on LFA. The final set amounted to 130 studies. Table 3 shows a summary of the characteristics coded from the papers.

Table 2
Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

Aspects	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Quality assurance	Peer-reviewed journal papers	Journal papers without peer review, conference materials, book chapters, reports and electronic resources
Language	English language	Other languages
Context	Education contexts (e.g., K-12 and higher education)	Non-education contexts
Topic	Theoretical and empirical studies with focus on LFA	Studies not on LFA (e.g., teacher agency, timeliness and modality of feedback)

The number of publications on LFA steadily increased in the past decade, with more than half of its publications published in the past five years. Studies comprised mainly empirical studies (89%). Most empirical studies (83%) focused on higher education, with only a few investigating LFA in K-12 education. Only one study was found in the preschool context.

The research employed an inductive approach to thematic analysis to uncover existing conceptualisations of LFA, its related constructs, and the diverse facets comprising LFA. This approach involved deriving codes from the reviewed literature, facilitating the emergence of themes—such as the facets of LFA—without relying on preconceived frameworks (Charmaz, 2006). Adopted for its flexibility in theoretical stances and its inclusiveness to the diversity of articles reviewed in this study, the inductive approach enabled themes to emerge more easily from the varied and multi-disciplinary literature pertinent to this review (Charmaz, 2006).

Table 3
General characteristics examined in articles reviewed

Descriptions	N (%)
Year of publication	
2024	10 (8)
2023	38 (29)
2022	17 (13)
2021	10 (8)
2020	6 (5)
2019	9 (7)
2018	6 (5)
2017	7 (5)
2015	3 (2)
2014	2 (1)
2013	6 (5)
2012	2 (1)
2011	2 (1)
2010	2 (1)
2009	2 (1)
2006	2 (1)
2002	2 (1)
2000	1 (1)
1997	1 (1)
1995	1 (1)
1992	1 (1)
Type of publication	
Empirical	116 (89)
Theoretical	14 (11)
Education level of participants (Empirical studies)	
Primary/ elementary school	7 (6)
Secondary/ high school	13 (11)
Higher education	96 (83)
Constructs	
Learner feedback agency	11 (8)
Feedback uptake	15 (12)
Feedback engagement	43 (33)
Student voice in feedback	4 (3)
Student autonomy in feedback	13 (10)
Feedback-seeking	36 (28)

Note. The percentages of participants' education level are only calculated for empirical studies.

Results

Conceptualisations of LFA and Related Constructs

Although many reviewed studies lacked clear definitions of their conceptualisations of LFA, the review categorised these works according to the underlying frameworks and constructs underpinning their scholarly work. Generally, the studies depict LFA as either a crucial attribute for effective feedback or a desirable outcome of learner-centred feedback (e.g., Boud & Molloy, 2013; Nieminen et al., 2022). However, only 11 articles specifically used the term 'agency' in relation to students' contributions and involvement in feedback. Among these studies, six studies adopted a cognitive and psychological approach, describing agency as one's capacity to influence learning (e.g., Nicol & Kushwah, 2023; Sanchez & Dunworth, 2015). The remaining five studies explored ecological and socio-material approaches, portraying agency as an adaptation process influenced by external factors (e.g., Casanova et al., 2021; He et al., 2024). The majority of the remaining empirical works addressed the concept of LFA more obliquely, discussing related constructs that overlap with or encompass LFA.

The subsequent section reviews the five pertinent constructs that overlap or encompass the notion of LFA, namely feedback uptake, feedback engagement, student voice in feedback, student autonomy in feedback, and feedback-seeking. This section consolidates the key ideas of these constructs for subsequent discussions on their relations to LFA.

Feedback uptake

Articles on feedback uptake focused on how students actively utilised feedback information to improve their learning. This construct was explicitly named in fifteen articles, with others using synonymous terms like *feedback acceptance* or *closing the feedback loop* (e.g., Armson et al., 2019). These articles typically describe feedback uptake as a dialogic process that involves developing a follow-up plan to improve learning (e.g., Abdu Saeed Mohammed & Abdullah Alharbi, 2022; Er et al., 2021). Feedback uptake highlighted the importance of students' sensemaking of feedback, which includes comprehending feedback information, engaging in feedback dialogues, and devising follow-up plans. These articles conceived feedback uptake as more than the simple advocacy for feedback adherence. Instead, it focuses on students' behavioural and cognitive involvement—how they respond and plan to proceed with the feedback, be it acceptance, rejection or modification. For example, the study by Ducasse et al. (2019) asked students to examine the feedback and explain how they responded to it without imposing the need for adherence. This shows that feedback uptake does not simply encourage students to follow the feedback received but recognises inaction and counteractions as agentic responses to feedback (Hattie & Clarke, 2018; Lipnevich et al., 2016).

Feedback engagement

Feedback engagement is often characterised as students' active involvement in feedback. Most articles provided brief descriptions of feedback engagement, describing it as the active involvement of "thought and action" (Xu et al., 2021, p. 121) and the "balance of responsibility" (Bloxham & Campbell, 2010, p. 292) with students taking charge of feedback (Wang & Lee, 2021). Few studies adopted a more nuanced and multidimensional approach, incorporating Fredricks et al.'s (2004) and Reeve and Tseng's (2011) four dimensions of engagement: behavioural, cognitive, emotional, and agentic dimensions (e.g., Silvola et al., 2021; To, 2022). This approach extends beyond merely cognitive and behavioural interactions with feedback, as described by *feedback uptake*, to also encompass emotional and agentic dimensions. These studies describe emotional engagement as the affective responses that arise during feedback (Liu et al., 2019), while agentic engagement emphasises the importance of students shouldering a heavier responsibility in feedback (Fletcher, 2022).

Student voice in feedback

Unlike other constructs, the conceptualisation of student voice in feedback primarily focuses on the socio-political nature of LFA. Four studies centred their research on student voice in feedback. Among

these papers, there is a general consensus that student voice in feedback refers to students' sharing their perspectives and opinions on feedback. However, different focuses were identified from the literature. Two studies discussed student voice as part of the dialogic feedback process, where students actively co-create meaning in feedback (Van der Kleij et al., 2017; Mochizuki & Starfield, 2021). One focused on students' semantic position to others in an environment and identified how establishing trust and renegotiating identity are important factors in encouraging student voice (Xu & Hu, 2020). The remaining study highlights the socio-political nature of student voice and its contribution to renegotiating relationships with teachers to allow for student expression (Rodgers, 2018). Importantly, the literature highlighted how encouraging student voice does not diminish teachers' authority but instead legitimises students' opinions and empowers students to contribute to the feedback exchange.

Student autonomy in feedback

Student autonomy in feedback explores both the students' dispositions and their rights in feedback processes. The terms *student autonomy* and *student choice* are often used interchangeably in the reviewed literature. Thirteen studies discussed student autonomy in feedback. These studies commonly described it as students taking charge or controlling the feedback process (e.g., Hyland, 2000). Benson's (2014) multidimensional conceptualisation of student autonomy was most commonly referenced as a theoretical framework, which includes three dimensions: technical, psychological, and political. The technical dimension refers to the skills and strategies required to manage learning. The psychological dimension focuses on the characteristics that lead one to become more independent and critical thinkers capable of taking control of their learning. The political dimension relates to one's ability to overcome power-relationship issues to control the learning process. Unlike previously discussed constructs, student autonomy in feedback accounts for the dispositions toward learning (Hay & Mathers, 2012) and students' rights to engage in decision-making (Hyland, 2000). Different studies have allowed for varying degrees of student decision-making, with some allowing decision-making within defined parameters, such as choice of feedback mode or form (e.g., Sparrow et al., 2020), while others had fewer restrictions where students contribute to co-creating rubrics or engage in self-monitoring activities (Picón Jácome, 2012). Findings suggest that giving students decision-making rights empowers them to have more substantial roles in the feedback process, which helps develop more agentic dispositions (Sparrow et al., 2020).

Feedback-seeking

Feedback-seeking centres on students' ownership of feedback and their behaviour towards searching for information about their learning. Feedback-seeking behaviour originated in organisational psychology and is defined as the "conscious devotion of effort towards determining the correctness and adequacy of one's behaviours for attaining valued end states" (Ashford, 1986, p. 466). Its definition suggests a focus on students' disposition where students uphold their commitment to learning by devoting effort towards self-evaluation and the behavioural act of searching for evaluative information about their learning (Papi et al., 2020; Gaunt et al., 2017). Through feedback-seeking, students are recast from passive recipients of non-solicited feedback to active seekers of feedback (Joughin et al., 2021). This behaviour represents an essential aspect of LFA, as students take the initiative to seek feedback, thereby actively influencing their learning trajectory. Feedback-seeking could manifest in various forms. Students were reported to not only directly inquire about their learning progress through their teachers and peers but also monitor the learning environment for feedback to infer how well they are doing relative to others (Hwang & Arbaugh, 2006; Hwang et al., 2002; Leenknecht et al., 2019). In Wood's (2022) study, feedback-seeking is exemplified by student-initiated contributions to clarify ideas and gather insights on the recommended improvements. Such behaviour is an important display of LFA where students influence their learning by proactively soliciting feedback.

In summary, these five constructs provide a more collective understanding of LFA by highlighting the various ways in which students exert influence over their learning through feedback (see Table 4). It not only provided insights into alternative conceptualisations of LFA but also underscores the interconnectedness of

these constructs within the broader feedback literature.

Table 4
Constructs related to LFA

Related constructs	Description
Feedback uptake	Focuses on students' active use of feedback to improve learning.
Feedback engagement	Describes students' active involvement in feedback, encompassing behavioural, cognitive, emotional, and agentic dimensions.
Student voice in feedback	Centres on students expressing their perspectives in feedback, highlighting the socio-political dynamics of LFA.
Student autonomy in feedback	Explores students' control over the feedback process. Involves students' decision-making rights and the development of agentic dispositions.
Feedback-seeking	Highlights students' proactive efforts in seeking feedback information to improve learning.

Facets of LFA

At this stage of the review, the analysis revealed limited studies having conceptualisations that can adequately address the complexity of LFA. The challenge stems from the complex nature of LFA comprising multiple facets. For instance, literature on student voice and autonomy in feedback raised political considerations affecting students' propensity for LFA (e.g., Rodgers, 2018; Van der Kleij et al., 2017), while feedback uptake and sensemaking focused on cognitive processes underpinning how they regulate learning (e.g., Nicol, 2021; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). With various conceptualisations foregrounding specific facets of LFA, these existing conceptualisations are critical but not sufficiently holistic in capturing the multifaceted construct of LFA. Constructs such as feedback uptake, engagement, student voice, autonomy, and feedback-seeking revealed the broad characteristics of LFA involving the intricate interplay of various facets (e.g., behavioural, cognitive, and social facets) within feedback. Further delineation of these facets is essential to facilitate the characterisation of existing conceptualisations of LFA to provide insights into students' agentic enactments in feedback. Upon deeper analysis, the review identified seven interrelated yet discernible facets contributing to LFA. The subsequent section will detail these facets, outlining their unique characteristics and roles in enhancing our understanding of LFA.

Behavioural facet

The behavioural facet encompasses the physical actions that students exhibit when exercising LFA. These behaviours represent students' decisions on their choice of action in influencing the feedback process and, therefore, are the most visible manifestations of LFA. Common actions investigated vary from enacting outcomes of processing feedback information, such as seeking clarifications and modifying practices (e.g., McGinness et al., 2020; Molloy et al., 2020), and eliciting information through feedback-seeking (e.g., Roll et al., 2011). Inaction and resistance to feedback were also viewed as agentic behavioural responses of LFA (Lipnevich et al., 2016; Hattie & Clarke, 2018). For example, students may exercise their agency by rejecting feedback that is not aligned with their learning goals (e.g., Wood, 2022). While four articles in this review explored maladaptive forms of inaction in feedback (e.g., Vattøy et al., 2021), more investigation is needed to understand rejection and inaction as potentially desirable manifestations of LFA to improve existing understanding of the behavioural facet.

Cognitive facet

The cognitive facet accounts for the thoughts and deliberations underpinning students' involvement in feedback. This facet encompasses students' cognitive and metacognitive processes, such as the appraisal

of learning and assessing possible follow-up actions that underpin their agentic behaviour. These processes are crucial to differentiating students' agentic involvement towards feedback. For example, the behavioural response of adherence to instructional feedback may be achieved with or without cognitive engagement since learners are capable of the perfunctory enactment of the recommended instructions. Existing studies predominantly discussed the cognitive facet as students' sensemaking of feedback, where students reference various sources to make evaluative judgements about their progress (Nicol, 2021; Winstone et al., 2017a). Studies also examined how students deliberate over possible follow-up actions to improve their learning (Inouye & McAlpine, 2017; Winstone et al., 2017a).

Affective facet

The affective facet addresses students' emotive responses to feedback. Feedback can evoke emotions that influence students' thoughts and actions, which facilitate or hamper LFA (Molloy et al., 2020). For instance, Inouye and McAlpine (2017) documented a case where a student managed her emotional response to feedback, allowing her to stay in an agentic state and remain motivated to engage with further feedback. The discussions within the reviewed articles revolve around students' valency of emotions with LFA, where positive emotions are seen as constructive and negative emotions as unproductive for LFA (Carless & Boud, 2018). However, such an association of emotion valency to productivity for LFA presents a limiting conception of the affective facet. Receiving feedback can sometimes evoke conflicting thoughts and negative emotions, such as frustration, which may indicate active engagement with the feedback and motivation to seek further information and feedback for resolution. Furthermore, the affective facet could benefit from a broader examination of students' epistemic emotions, referencing students' feelings of arousal as a more accurate reflection of their agentic involvement with feedback.

Dispositional facet

The dispositional facet examines students' beliefs towards feedback and learning. These dispositions are often seen as students' innate characteristics that manifest into students' perceived capacity to contribute to the feedback process (Chong, 2021; Lipnevich & Smith, 2022). Learners' dispositions have been reported to influence their emotions, thoughts, and tendencies toward LFA. Studies have shown that students with a positive perception of feedback and learning tend to take ownership of the feedback process (Leenknecht et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2017). Conversely, students who doubt their ability to influence feedback often act in self-debilitating ways that impede their agentic involvement in learning (Winstone et al., 2017b; Maas, 2017). While recent conceptualisations of feedback often describe students as active agents in feedback (e.g., Carless & Boud, 2018; Boud & Molloy, 2013), studies reported students resisting the shift towards the learner-centred feedback paradigm (Winstone et al., 2017b). For instance, students may maintain passive dispositions as they have been conditioned to have teachers lead the feedback process, which can suppress their LFA (Winstone et al., 2017b).

Relational facet

The relational facet focuses on the direct relational and interactional dynamics between the student and stakeholders that contribute to the student's agentic involvement in feedback. The feedback process is inherently a socially-mediated activity involving the dialogic interactions of the feedback providers and receivers (Yang & Carless, 2013). Through interactions, both parties co-construct an understanding of the student's learning progress (Fletcher, 2022), and this process plays a critical role in shaping LFA (Torres, 2022). For example, Torres' (2022) study found that dialogic feedback interactions helped create opportunities for co-regulation and metacognition, allowing students to adopt more agentic roles in learning. Considering the relational facet is crucial as it influences the nature of feedback dialogues. Positive relationships between students and teachers, for instance, often result in increased student participation in the feedback process (Gaunt et al., 2017). Studies also report that if authoritative figures encourage learners to take on more active roles, students are empowered to decide how they would like to influence the learning process (Rodgers,

2018; Bose & Gijselaers, 2013).

Societal facet

The societal facet accounts for the political and cultural structures shaping students' agentic feedback involvement. These structures include rules, norms, and values that impose societal expectations on students' involvement with feedback, which shapes students' roles as learners. Students are less likely to exercise LFA when societal rules, norms, and values discourage them from having autonomy in feedback (Oktaria & Soemantri, 2018). This facet examines society at different levels, from immediate classrooms to institutional or national cultures. Political factors examined in the reviewed literature include power dynamics between students and teachers (Yang & Carless, 2013; Delva et al., 2013) and institution policies and regulations that govern the feedback process (Cutumisu et al., 2015). Cultural factors examined include cultural expectations such as directness and indirectness (Hwang et al., 2002; Areemit et al., 2021), group harmony (Areemit et al., 2021; Oktaria & Soemantri, 2018), and individualism versus collectivism (Hwang & Arbaugh, 2006). The significance of the societal facet is exemplified in Areemit et al.'s (2021) study, which provided a deep analysis of Thailand's culture of Kreng Jai—the consideration for others over self. This national culture has reportedly permeated learning cultures in universities, implicitly establishing a societal hierarchy that places teachers at a higher standing. In consideration of being perceived as dishonouring Kreng Jai, students suppress their agency by being less critical when evaluating feedback and more willing to accept harsh comments from teachers.

Table 5
The seven facets of LFA

Facets	Description
Behavioural	Physical enactments of exercising LFA.
Cognitive	Thoughts and deliberations underpinning students' agentic decisions.
Affective	Emotive responses that contextualise LFA.
Dispositional	Beliefs towards feedback and learning that contribute to their perceived capacity to influence the process.
Relational	Direct relational and interactional dynamics with other stakeholders (e.g. teachers and peers) that contribute to students' agentic involvement in feedback.
Societal	Political and cultural factors at different societal and communal levels (e.g., class, school, nation, discipline, race, etc) that influence LFA.
Material	Non-human factors (e.g., space, time and objects) and their involvement in shaping students' agentic involvement in feedback.

Material facet

The material facet explores the non-human factors that shape LFA. This facet acknowledges the contributions of non-human factors, such as objects, time, and space, in shaping LFA (Gravett, 2022). Gravett's (2022, p. 264) study used a socio-material approach to describe agency as a result of the "interplay of individual efforts, available resources, and contextual and socio-material factors". Materials and tools have been reported to augment LFA. Some examples include learning analytics (Silvola et al., 2021; Casanova et al., 2021) and interactive cover sheets (Bloxham & Campbell, 2010). In Wood's (2022) study, Google Docs served as a mediating space where students are provided with a platform to extend their feedback dialogues with their teachers and peers. Furthermore, the advent of generative AI presents new opportunities for transforming learner involvement in feedback processes (Lee et al., 2024b). For instance, Steiss et al. (2024) found ChatGPT useful for generating feedback in situations where teachers are unavailable. Other

studies examined time as a non-human factor and found that the lack of interaction time with teachers discourages students from exercising more LFA (Milan et al., 2011). With the increasing availability and permeance of novel technology in education transforming how feedback is provided, it is imperative to account for how technologies contribute to LFA and whether they empower or constrain learners in their feedback interactions.

The findings revealed that LFA is a multifaceted construct comprising seven interrelated facets. Table 5 consolidates the facets and their characteristics. In view of the interrelated and complex intertwined relationship of these facets, the discussion section presents our attempt at conceptualising the entangled nature of LFA based on the seven facets.

Discussion

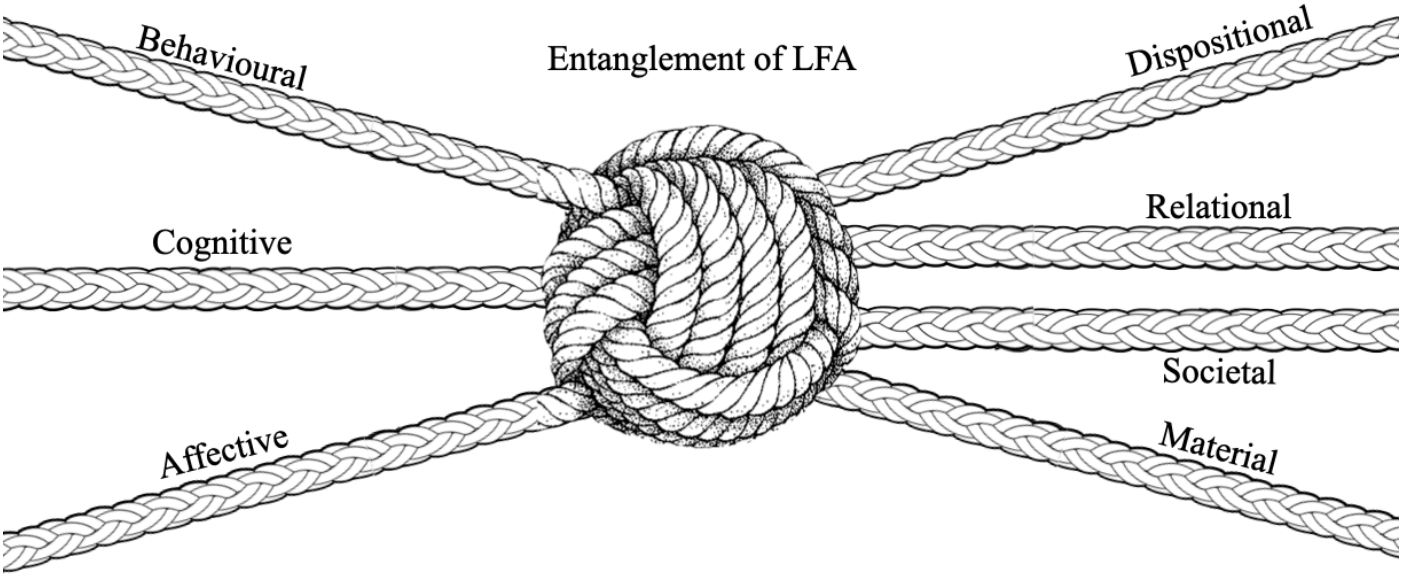
In the endeavour to uncover the characteristics of LFA, a prominent challenge arises from its inherent complexity, which involves not only its multifaceted construct but also the intricate interrelation of these facets. Upon deeper analysis, it was evident that existing conceptualisations often assume a unidirectional influence of personal and contextual factors on LFA. For example, Lipnevich and Smith's (2021) Student-Feedback Interaction Model accounted for how contextual factors and sources of feedback influence students' interaction with feedback but has yet not acknowledged how students' agentic behaviour can also influence the context. Other reviewed studies discussed LFA as an 'emergent phenomenon' through the interplay of various personal and contextual factors (e.g. Gravett, 2022; Chong, 2021), which remains to be vague in revealing the interplay of these factors. Such attempts often oversimplify LFA as direct relationships and neglect the dynamic entanglement of the facets of LFA.

Entanglement is a prominent concept in sociology when discussing agency, with scholars employing terms like *interplay*, *coupling*, and *dualism* to express the need to account for the interdependence of structures and agency (Giddens, 1984). Structures refer to the limitations or enablements that impinge on students' choices and opportunities for exercising agency. Scholars that subscribe to the notion of the interdependence of structure and agency describe their relationship as a duality where agency is inseparable from structures as they shape each other (Shilling, 1992; Giddens, 1984). Drawing upon the notion of the co-constructing relationships in structure-agency duality, this review attempts to advance Lee et al.'s (2024a) conceptualisation of LFA as an entangled construct to encourage empirical research to consider not only the seven facets of LFA but also the interrelationships between them. This encourages the holistic examination of the relational effects of environmental factors (e.g., material, social, and relational facets), individual factors (e.g., cognitive, dispositional, and affective facets), and manifestations of LFA (e.g., behavioural facet). The mapping of the seven facets to environmental, individual, and manifestation dimensions facilitates a parallel discussion of the facets within the context of structure (i.e., environmental) - agency (i.e., individual and manifestation) duality. Extending the notion of structure-agency duality into an entanglement underscores the absence of clear divisions between structural and agentic aspects, blurring the delineation between them.

The representation of LFA is proposed as a knot comprising seven intertwined ropes, with each rope symbolising a facet. A figurative description of LFA's manifestation as a complex entanglement of these seven facets into a knot is provided (Figure 2). By employing the metaphor of a knot, the review illustrates that LFA is not merely the sum of its individual facets. As such, attempts to conceptualise LFA that focus exclusively on selected facets may overlook the complexity of the whole. This metaphor also underscores the interconnected and malleable nature of the facets, emphasising how they co-construct each other. This metaphor aligns with Lee et al.'s (2024) notion of LFA as an entangled phenomenon, where students are not simply responders to any given situation but complex beings capable of making sense of, engaging and, most critically, influencing contexts (Bandura, 1989; Archer, 2003). The knot challenges previous narrower conceptualisations by illuminating the reciprocal effects of the facets of LFA, recognising both the individual and environmental factors influencing students' agentic enactments and conversely, how students can also

influence the facets of LFA.

Figure 2
The entanglement of LFA



This metaphor aids in the holistic understanding of the complex phenomenon of LFA. Fletcher's (2018) study on help-seeking practices in primary school English writing classes serves as an illustrative example to discuss LFA using the entangled knot metaphor. As an intervention study, the teachers provided planning templates to guide students in self-regulated learning. In this study, the use of planning templates as a tool to augment the feedback experience highlighted the material facet as the most prominent facet that entangles or is entangled with other facets. As reported by the study, the provision of planning templates empowered students to plan their work and monitor their progress (i.e. cognitive and behavioural facets). It also delegated responsibility for feedback practices to the students (i.e. relational, societal, dispositional facets) and provided students with opportunities for agentic behaviour (i.e. behavioural, societal, dispositional facets). Trust is also established with teachers (i.e. relational, societal facets), which makes students feel more comfortable and confident to engage in the feedback process (i.e. affective, dispositional, behavioural facets). Furthermore, the study found that students sought help from teachers to improve their work (i.e. behavioural, relational facets), and teachers responded by modifying lesson designs to include point-of-need teaching as additional learning support (i.e. relational, societal facets). The students' involvement in this example demonstrated how they can influence the entangled knot of LFA by interacting with specific facets, which in turn prompts other facets in the knot to adapt and evolve. Like a constantly evolving knot, the entanglement representation acknowledges the dynamism of LFA where each facet is not assumed as static and, instead, tugs at different instances and magnitudes across time, triggering other facets to respond simultaneously. The application of the knot metaphor illustrates the importance of considering facets integrally and their mutually constructive nature.

Limitations

The limited time and resources necessitated a focus on the 130 studies most relevant to addressing the review question. Despite intentions to conduct a deeper analysis of various facets, particularly the material and affective facets, details were often under elaborated to allow for a more thorough analysis. Lastly, the aspiration to compare conceptualisations of LFA across different education levels, such as K-12 and higher

education, was impeded by a lack of studies focusing on the K-12 level, limiting insights for comparison. Future research should work towards uncovering the various facets of the LFA entanglement and the co-constructive effects of the LFA entanglement.

Conclusion

This review was conducted in response to the rise in discourse in feedback literature on LFA. Through analysis, the conceptualisations of LFA from existing studies were synthesised into seven interrelated facets. This review proposed the knot metaphor for two main purposes. First, it highlights that LFA cannot be understood merely as a monolithic variable but rather as a complex and dynamic construct comprising seven interconnected facets. Second, the knot metaphor presents a novel perspective on LFA, acknowledging the interdependence of its facets and the reciprocal influences among them. It considers not only how external factors influence students' agentic enactments but also how students can affect other facets of FA. By showcasing the entanglement of LFA, this metaphor also highlights the challenge of studying this complex phenomenon and cautions against simplistic pedagogical approaches aimed at promoting LFA. Instead, this metaphor advocates for comprehensive interventions that collectively address a spectrum of LFA facets, fostering conditions and learning environments conducive to enhancing and facilitating LFA. Lastly, it is essential to acknowledge that this review should not be perceived as an endeavour to present a definitive understanding of LFA but rather as an initial contribution to an ongoing discourse about LFA. This proposed metaphor serves as a lens for guiding future research on LFA, emphasising the importance of accounting for various facets and their co-constructive effects.

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