

Navigating Students' Perspectives on Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback towards their Narratives: Basis of Assessment Training Program in the New Normal

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Abstract: *This study aims to ascertain the efficacy of the teachers' written corrective feedback in the new normal through the responses of the selected grade 10 students. Corrective feedback is viewed as an indication to the learner that his/her use of the target language is incorrect. The investigation is centered on identifying and analyzing the students' attitude on the written corrective feedback given to their outputs. It also includes determining the common forms of written corrective feedback and how students are affected of the correction they receive. As a qualitative research, interviews and document analysis techniques were utilized to observe the responses of the eleven Grade 10 students who were chosen randomly. The results showed that the most common Written Corrective Feedback students received are focused on grammar correction. Majority of the participants showed positive attitude towards those written corrective feedback. It was concluded that students are most likely to receive grammar correction and they have positive perception towards it. The participants were also looking forward to some writing conferences online, because they believe that this conference will help them understand the WCF clearly. There is a strong possibility that grammar correction and direct CF are effective strategies in checking students written outputs. Considering the positive effects of WCF, it is suggested that teachers should continue to give corrective feedbacks towards students' narratives but should also find time to discuss the corrections made to minimize or prevent the recurrence of the same mistakes on the students' outputs.*

Keywords—Students' perspectives, teachers' written corrective feedback, assessment training program, new normal

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, it has been observed that in a class, everybody can write but few can make it right. There are lots of issues in students' compositions that teachers need to address [1]. Such are issues on form, structure or grammar, content and even on mediocrity. Although it is true that one must write to express and not to impress but teachers always want to see better outputs especially now that the education system is under the challenge of the new normal situation. Thus, they write corrective feedback to students' narratives to ensure quality works [2][3].

However, the efficacy of teachers' Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) has long been controversial and debatable as L2 (Writing) teachers commonly give correction to their students' outputs in a very broad range. Teachers should prevent giving feedback on form, hence they should focus on the content of the students' written compositions [4]. Most of the teachers failed to mention in advance which part of their students' output will be given a great focus. Some of them focus more on correcting the grammatical features, but some also focus on the content of the written output. CF can be used to improve the grammatical accuracy level of the learners [5][6]. For the most experienced writing teachers, giving feedback to their students is considered the most time-consuming and challenging portion of their [7][8]. It was also supported by an author, mentioning that she almost spent her whole weekend checking the written compositions of her students [9][10].

2. RELATED WORKS

Writing is usually thought to be the most difficult skill to acquire, and should only be taught after students have learned the other skills [11]. In order for teachers to help their students in the writing class, teachers should give direct CF in their students' writing because they believe that direct CF is better than indirect CF [12]. This will be applicable to student writers who are considered with low level of proficiency. Direct CF is done when writing teachers notice the error of the students and provide it with the correct form [13].

Teachers find the teaching of writing as a challenging job [14]. It is not only because of the number of students, but also the strategies and techniques that they will apply in correcting their student' writing; essay for example. In some studies, they classified the feedback given to the students as focused indirect feedback, unfocused indirect feedback, and giving no feedback at all [15]. Among the three different types of feedback given to the three groups, the results of their study showed that there was no significant difference [16].

The effectiveness of written CF depends on the response of the students [17]. If the students attend to it, CF will have an impact [18]. In addition to the different techniques in providing written feedback, teachers could also make use of the different mitigation strategies in giving comment to their student's output [19]. Through the mention strategy, the negative impacts of the comments given by the teachers are lessened.

Apparently, there have been several arguments on the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of written corrective feedback on the students. One of these is whether it is really necessary to provide or not to provide error feedback on the

students' work. A correction on error on the structure can improve the learner's accuracy [20]. Same belief was supported by an author, that CF can be used for developing grammatical accuracy in written compositions. But for the learning to occur, the problem or gap should be noticed first, because noticing on its own does not result in acquisition. This is what we call the noticing hypothesis.

Another study claiming the effectiveness of written [21]. His study proposes that "CF is effective in eliminating the errors in redrafts of the students' writing." On the other hand, Professor John Truscott made a very strong stance regarding grammar correction on student writing. He strongly believed that grammar correction does not contribute to the improvement in student writing which called the attention of many people and established a controversy. Correction on grammar plays no role in writing courses and should be disregarded [22]. He also emphasized that providing correction can be harmful to the learners. He strongly argued that grammar correction will not improve students writing.

However, even though there have been already many published studies focusing on the ESL writing teachers giving their written feedback, studies dealing with the responses of students towards the efficacy of those feedback was limited.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this new normal, this paper aimed to explore the efficacy of the written CF the students usually receive from their teachers, and it further tries to evaluate their perceptions which served as basis for the assessment training program not only for language teachers, but also for teachers from all subject areas.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted among eleven Grade 10 students of Kaong National High School. The researcher chose Grade 10 students because among the fourth-year levels of junior high school, he knows that they are more exposed to writing activities and it will not be difficult for him to collect written outputs from them through their teachers. The participants were selected through Reputational-case sampling wherein he asked the English teachers in the said school to recommend him the name of the students who can be the best participants of his study.

The participants were selected through Reputational-case sampling where the researcher asked the English teachers of the said school to recommend students who can be the best participants of their study. They recommended 11 grade 10 participants because, according to them, they are the ones who have been more exposed to writing activities and it is much easier for the researcher to collect written outputs from them.

The researcher collected the data using two of the three data collection techniques which are the interviews and document analysis (Merriam, 2019) and Focus Group Discussion for free and open discussion via zoom meeting regarding their experiences on teachers' written corrective feedback. The documents were gathered from the English

teachers of the participants of this study. However, the researcher still asked permission from the students allowing him to have access on their output. All of their written activities were kept in their respective folders that make it easier for the researcher to collect unlike when they have it in separate papers. The researchers assured the teachers and the students that their personal information will not be disclosed unless given permission. In addition to the written outputs of the students, the researcher also conducted an interview following the predetermined interview protocol that they designed. The researcher also analyzed the recorded interview and transcribed it for easier and clearer analysis on their part as researcher. The researcher looked for his inter-coders to make sure that the results of his study were reliable. He had his own predetermined standard for choosing his inter-coders. The inter-coder should have knowledge and background in analyzing data. He chose those who already had experiences in data analysis in research writing. He did this to make sure that his inter-coders were qualified. He asked his one colleague in the English department who was then a teacher in research writing in college and his head teacher who is presently taking her Doctorate degree. He oriented and informed his inter-coders about the objectives of his study.

The documents gathered from the teachers of the 11 students were analyzed through looking for the patterns of the comments present in the students' output. But the researcher did not only focus on the teachers' corrective feedback but also on how students accept those corrections. The analyses that he could get from the documents collected served as the basis and content of his interview questions. He identified the different themes present in the data. For the validity of the results, he conducted an interview to the 11 participants. There were initial and final interviews. The questions from the initial and final interview were almost the same. He only paraphrased and used other terms, but the meaning and content of the interview questions were just the same. The final interview was done a week after the first interview. After the data collected from the students, he also invited their teachers for a short interview via google meet. He wanted to know if the teachers were able to receive comments from their students after they gave back the outputs to them. He also wanted to know if the teachers conduct a writing conference online. Through writing conference, there is a chance for them to explain why they gave those kinds of comments. And also, chances are for the students to ask and respond to their respective teacher's written corrective feedback.

In adherence to the research ethics and policies, the researcher cogently explained this paper's nature, scope and objectives to the participants before the data were collected. He told them that their participation would help clarify the issue this paper wanted to investigate. When things were already clear to them, the researcher gave them a letter requesting their involvement in the said study. Since they are minors, a parental consent was also sought.

When everything was set, the researcher started to collect the needed documents from them. Likewise, interviews were conducted to augment the data gathered from their written narratives. It was assured that all the information they could give would be kept confidential.

It was further explained to the participants that there would be no expected risks in their participation. If doubtful, they would have all the options to quit and to get back the documents they submitted.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

An extensive analysis of the eleven individual interview transcripts of Grade 10 students resulted in several themes which are presented in this section under the two dominant categories, namely Common Written Corrective Feedback and Positive Perception on Written Corrective Feedback.

Research Question No. 1. Common Written Corrective Feedback

The paramount Written Corrective Feedback students receive from their English teachers accentuates the following themes: grammar, spelling, tenses, point of view, and structure. As illustrated in table 1 below, all of the students stated that the common WCF they receive from their writing teachers focused on the structure and form.

Table 1. Summary of Students responses on interview question No. 1

<i>What are the most common error corrections do you receive from your writing teacher?</i>	
Student 1	Grammar
Student 2	Grammar and Spelling
Student 3	Grammar and Spelling
Student 4	Grammar
Student 5	Redundancy of words, grammar, and wrong words
Student 6	Grammar, tenses, and Point of View
Student 7	Grammar and Structure
Student 8	Grammar, Structure, and redundant ideas
Student 9	Grammar
Student 10	Grammar
Student 11	Structure and unclear idea

As shown in Table 1, the most commonly focused of the WCF students received from their writing teachers are on grammar and structure.

Research Question No. 2. Positive Attitude towards Written Corrective Feedback

The dominant responses of 11 students show positive attitude towards their teachers' WCF. This leads to the identification of the following themes: acceptance, happiness,

and more corrections. Students' responses are demonstrated in the table 2 below.

Table 2. Summary of the Students' responses during the interview

Interview Questions	Students' Responses
How do you perceive those corrections?	Acceptance, helpful, fine, and serves as a motivation
How do you feel about your teacher's corrections?	Happy, helpful, sad, fine, feel great, and challenged
Do you find these corrections offensive?	10 students said No; 1 student said sad and offended
Do these corrections help you to improve your paper/composition?	All of them answered Yes
Which do you prefer, more correction or less correction?	8 students prefer more correction; 3 students prefer less correction
Do you think writing conferences will be helpful for you in understanding the different WCF?	All of them answered Yes

The discussion of the findings is connected with the two research questions which stimulate this study. We begin with the first question: *What are the common written corrective feedbacks students receive?*

A careful qualitative analysis of the data collected through the individual interview between the researcher and the student produced a general conclusion that students' writing teachers written corrective feedback are generally "Grammar Correction" (Ferris, 2014). All of the writing teachers of the 11 participants were all focusing on the grammar rather than the content. These teachers used Direct CF wherein students are provided with the correct form (Ellis, 2009). Direct CF could only be effective if the student is not capable of identifying and correcting his error.

This result indicates a possibility that grammar correction specifically providing direct CF can be helpful for students in acquiring some grammatical features (Sheen, 2017).

Based on the result, it is almost certain that most of the English teachers are focusing on grammatical features when checking their students' written composition. To determine the efficacy of those provided WCF towards students written outputs, the second research question will be discussed: *How do they treat those written corrective feedback?*

Majority of the participants showed positive attitude upon receiving their teachers' WCF. Almost all of them mentioned that they consider those corrections as something that could help them improve their writing ability. One participant stated that she likes it when her teacher provides WCF on her composition, because she knew that her writing was given time and attention by her teacher. There is a strong

possibility that grammar correction and direct CF are effective strategies in checking students written outputs.

Different aspects can be seen in the findings of this study. First, it was carried out with different students from different classes and different teachers. Second, the questions during the interview may not be well modified to fit the participants of this study. Third, confounding variable might have affected the results of this study. But, the findings of this study must be claimed as conclusive as it was only a little scale study. Thus, the result of this study cannot be generalized.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, the eleven students who participated in the study mostly received grammar corrections. These students were generally positive towards the WCF they receive from their writing teachers. The participants were also looking forward to some writing conferences online, because they believe that this conference will help them understand the WCF clearly.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the positive effects of WCF, teachers are highly encouraged to develop materials and use appropriate strategies to help their students improve their composition writing skills, especially on vocabulary and language use, grammar and writing mechanics as corrections on these were appreciated by the participants. The purpose of which is for students to achieve better results in their future writing compositions even though they are not physically met by their teachers.

Since students are all equipped with the technological knowledge, teachers are likewise encouraged to maximize their Facebook group page by posting activities that improve students spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing as several errors on writing mechanics were spotted on the students' narratives. They may also include grammar drills that utilize authentic materials such as current event stories and fiction materials like comics and cartoons or books and films as these have been proven effective in the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and language use and writing mechanics.

Teachers should continue to give corrective feedbacks towards students' narratives but should also find time to discuss the corrections made to prevent the recurrence of the same mistakes on the students' outputs. In the end, this practice can achieve better performance on the part of the students and higher level of satisfaction on the part of the teacher. Research focusing on the effect of WCF to students' performance in school should further be localized and analyzed.

Lastly, assessment training program should be held to discuss the result of this study to disseminate awareness on the importance of written corrective feedback.

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