

Cares (Challenges, Adeptness, Reception, Effectiveness, And Satisfaction) in Correction: Written Corrective Feedback in College Students' ESL Writing

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Abstract— This descriptive study explored college students' perceptions of written corrective feedback (WCF) and its effects on their writing. CARES, spelt out in the domains such as Challenges, Adeptness, Reception, Effectiveness, and Satisfaction were differentiated upon surveying the freshmen college students under the college of education in a provincial HEI. The research investigated students' preferences for WCF strategies. Descriptive statistical data revealed that there are no significant differences in the students' perceptions on written corrective feedback when classified according to specialization as categorized to Challenges ($F=.412, p<.0.799$); Adeptness ($F=2.425, p<.0.56$); Reception (Affective Domain) ($F= 1.478, p<.0.218$); Reception (Revision) ($F= 1.226, p<.0.328$); Effectiveness (Benefits) ($F= 1.389, p<.0.247$); Satisfaction (Source of Correction) ($F= 1.170, p<.0.332$); and Satisfaction (Extent of Correction) ($F= 1.292, p<.0.282$). It was notable however, that a significant difference was on the reception of the ink when providing WCF ($F= 2.541, p>.0.047$), a minor difference, that could be attributed to the consideration of the ink or color to be used when providing WCF on students' written work. Results in the survey on perceptions imply that students tend to show a positive attitude towards written corrective feedback, with the non-significance in the differences among groups of specialization attributed to their intrinsic and integrative motivations. The study's findings provide insights into students' attitudes towards WCF and its role in enhancing their writing skills. The research also sheds light on the effectiveness of different WCF strategies and the importance of tailored feedback practices to support students' language learning and error correction. The study's recommendations include the need for continuous training to improve students' writing skills, the importance of using corrective feedback to develop students' written competence, and the value of future research to further explore the impact of WCF on students' writing. The study's findings have significant implications for language education and assessment, providing valuable insights into the role of WCF in supporting students' language learning and writing improvement.

Keywords— written corrective feedback, college freshmen, ESL writing

INTRODUCTION

Feedback is generally an integral part of the learning process and has a significant impact on learning. Many academicians designated it as the most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement. Feedback as a form of formative assessment, is an essential part of effective learning.

It helps students understand the subject being studied and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their learning. Compared to any other teaching behavior, academic feedback has been noted to be more strongly and consistently related to achievement. This relationship is consistent regardless of grade, socioeconomic status, race, or school setting. Feedback can improve a student's confidence, self-awareness, and enthusiasm for learning.

Corrective feedback or error correction has been a long-standing educational practice that can arguably be linked to almost everything we learn (Evans, Hartshorn, McCollum, & Wolfersberger, 2010 in Kurzer, 2018). In language learning, the term corrective feedback refers to any feedback provided to a learner, from any source that contains evidence of learner error of language form (Russell and Spada, 2006).

Undeniably for second language (L2) learners, studying a foreign language imposes a challenge in their establishing of error-free utterances in both oral and writing domains. All learners make mistakes irrespective of the language they are learning (Hussain, et al., 2008). Slips of the tongue and of the pen as lapses, are errors of performance which are commonly observed in L2 classrooms.

As errors are deemed an inevitable part of language learning as they indicate the learner's level of proficiency in the target language, the role of teacher input is imperative. A teacher's role is to assist the learner to work on reducing his/her errors so as to produce students who according to Rivers (1993) in the end are capable of effectively communicating at a high level in the target language, in this case, English (Mariko & Mutema, 2012).

Several researches have indicated that students appreciate feedback that includes error correction, suggestions for improvement, and written comments on content. Similarly, college freshmen view written corrective feedback positively, especially when it is provided in a clear and constructive manner. (Rizqiya, Rizkiani, & Bhuana, 2020).

Although there may not be a direct correlation between students' perceptions of corrective feedback and their academic achievements, students generally see feedback as a valuable tool for language learning and improvement (Yuliawati, Harmanto, Mustikawati, & Maghfiroh, 2021). The value and associated gains on WCF as an academic practice remains an on-going exploration in teaching second language writing.

With the preceding discussion in second language learning and the recommendations of the related previous research undertakings, the researcher attempts to find out the perceptions of first year college students on the provision of written corrective feedback.

This study is aimed at finding out the challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction upon the students' experience of using WCF styles on their writing.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The history of feedback provision is noted from its initial rootedness in the behaviorist perspective to its transformation to a cognitive notion over time. Consequently, several theories have brought about the emergence of providing written error correction in the L2 writing classroom.

As a theory, behaviorism focuses on observable behaviors and contending on the non-philosophical

differences between publicly observable processes (actions) and privately observable processes (thinking and feeling) Bangert-Drowns et. al., (1991) noted that behaviorists viewed feedback more as a stimulus-response process, where the purpose of feedback was to stimulate a person to repeat a correct answer.

The Cognitive perspective, on the other hand, has evolved in response to the behaviorist approach. The Cognitive theory defines learning as "a semi-permanent change in mental processes or associations."

Cognitivists do not require an outward exhibition of learning but focus more on the internal processes and connections that take place during learning. For the cognitivists, feedback is more than just a stimulus-response process.

Proponents of the cognitive perspective, view feedback as a process that assists learners by providing them just enough information to self-control and self-regulate their own learning (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991).

The main delineation between behaviorist and cognitive approaches to feedback provision is in their perspective on the role of the learner in the learning process. The proponents of behaviorist theory view learners as passive receivers of feedback, whereas proponents of the cognitive perspective view learners as active participants in the learning process.

With the preceding discussion in second language learning and the recommendations of the related previous research undertakings, the present study attempts to find out the variety of perceptions of college students on the provision of written corrective feedback.

The challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction on the employment of WCF as a formative strategy is sought.

Figure 1 below shows the schematic relationship diagram of the variables in the current investigation on the perceptions of the respondents on written corrective feedback as regards challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

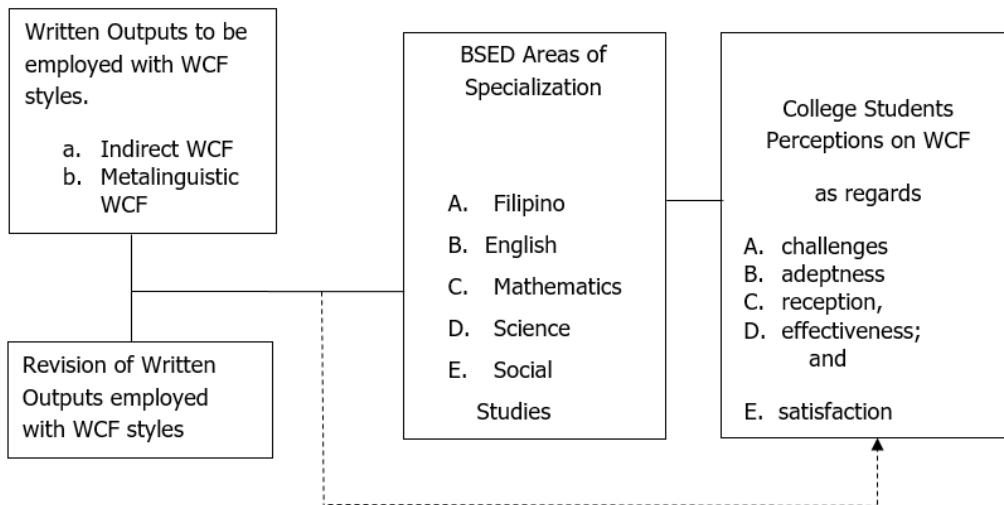


Figure 1. Schematic relationship of the variables in the current investigation on the perceptions of the respondents on written corrective feedback as regards challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study sought to find out the perceptions of college students on written corrective feedback.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the respondents on written corrective feedback as regards challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction, when as taken as a whole group and when classified according to specialization?
2. Are there significant differences in the perceptions of the respondents on written corrective feedback as regards challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction, when as taken as a whole group and when classified according to specialization?

METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study employed stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling is a type of

probability sampling using which a research organization can branch off the entire population into multiple non-overlapping, homogeneous groups (strata) and randomly choose final members from the various strata for research which reduces cost and improves efficiency. Members in each of these groups should be distinct so that every member of all groups get equal opportunity to be selected using simple probability. This sampling method is also called “random quota sampling” (questionpro.com).

The respondents of the study were the first year BSEd students of the ISCOF College of Education for the academic year (AY) 2022-2023.

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents when classified according to their specialization.

Table 1. Distribution of First Year BSEd Students as Respondents by Specialization

Categories	N	Percentage
As a whole group	74	100
Specialization:		
Filipino	26	35.0
English	19	25.0
Mathematics	7	10.0
Science	12	16.0
Social Studies	10	14.0

For the data gathering, the written outputs (journal or short essay) of the students under the course EDUC 03-The Teaching Profession class were gathered and subjected to two WCF styles. The written outputs employed with the WCF were returned for rewriting. Then survey was conducted in the first semester of Academic Year (AY) 2022-2023.

The data for the descriptive category was gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire from the study of

Range	Descriptive Rating	Description
3.51 – 4.00	Highly Perceived	Strong Positive Attitude
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Perceived	Positive Attitude
1.51 – 2.50	Less Perceived	Negative Attitude
1.00 – 1.50	Least Perceived	Strong Negative Attitude

The statistical tools for the descriptive analysis of the study were the mean and the standard deviation.

The statistical tool used for the inferential statistics was the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All data are to be computer processed using the statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. All levels of significance were set at .05 alpha.

Instrumentation

The research instrument as adopted from Guintivano (2018) contains twenty-five statements that drew out the perceptions and preferences of the respondents towards written corrective feedback. It was presented in a four-point Likert scale format where the respondent is asked whether he/she strongly disagrees, disagrees, agrees, or strongly agrees. The respondents were required to tick the appropriate box (or click in the Google Form) that corresponded to their answer to each statement considering the corrections provided to the six original texts.

The statements focused on concepts such as the source of feedback for the errors in English compositions; the extent of the teacher's implementation of feedback with regard to the errors; the teacher's manner of providing feedback for errors; the importance, necessity, efficiency, and effectiveness of WCF provision for errors in students' compositions; the affective domain for the students' perceptions on the practice; the students' preferences for the usual red ink color, or other ink colors in providing WCF; additional task in the teacher's provision of WCF; the impact of WCF on the meaning intended by the student; and the suggestion for

Guintivano (2018). The questionnaire contains statements to capture perceptions of the respondents on written corrective feedback as regards challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

For the interpretation of the level of the participants' perception on a concept relevant to WCF, arbitrary distributions, corresponding distributions, and descriptions will be employed as follows:

a teacher-student conference with regard to the WCF provided.

The statements in the questionnaire were coded as to the themes in order to guide the researcher in the analysis of the challenges, adeptness, reception, effectiveness, and satisfaction (CARES).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Generally, the respondents have a positive attitude towards WCF. As to the challenges, the inclusion of comments in the provision of corrections is perceived by the respondents. The modifications in the intended meaning as influenced by the corrections are also perceived. Teacher clarification was also perceived by the respondents to be integrated in the WCF provision.

This supports the findings of Corpuz (2011) that teachers perceive WCF as disadvantageous for students might not understand the feedback. Furthermore, the students' perception in the same study talks about the same disadvantage. The gaps on the processing of WCF posit the challenges on the part of the students.

The adeptness of students in using WCF may be affected by the style of correction employed. As revealed, indirect corrective feedback is perceived by the respondents as a WCF style. This is manifested in their agreement that a teacher would simply underline or encircle a student's error. Direct corrective feedback is also perceived by the respondents as a WCF style. This is revealed in their affirmation of the statement conveying that a teacher would underline or encircle a student's error and provide the correct form. Finally, metalinguistic corrective feedback is still perceived by

the respondents in their response to teachers' provision of clues as a WCF style. There is a generally positive attitude towards the WCF Styles when employed.

Reception in terms of the ink used, the affective impact, and the processing of revision are noted in this study. The preference of the red ink for their teachers' corrections is perceived by the respondents. In addition, the preference of other ink colors such as green or violet in marking corrections for errors is also perceived.

The result affirm the claim of two University of Colorado sociologists R. Dukes and H. Albanesi that as an "emotive" color, the red ink could generate anxiety or stir up feelings of blame. Hence, corrections penned in red ink may be perceived as "shouting" or "emotion loading." The respondents' preference may attributed to their adaptation of the usual practice in language classrooms and the in any academic area in general. This result may be linked to the University of British Columbia study (2009) that both blue and red affected motivation and performance, with red enhancing attention and blue boosting creativity (Science Daily).

Still under reception, the feeling of humiliation in response to the marks of corrections in compositions is less perceived by the respondents. Also, the feeling of frustration is less perceived by the respondents as a reaction to the corrections in their compositions. On the contrary, the impression of an assessment in the WCF provision is perceived by the subjects. Similarly, the feeling of excitement as a positive affective behavior was less perceived by the respondents. In contrast, the feeling of being cared for when corrections are provided in their compositions was positively considered. WCF provision as an aid in revisions for a better output is highly perceived by the respondents. Revising of drafts with the corrections is deemed important by the respondents. Consequently, the non-revision of drafts with corrections is viewed a non-necessity. Such positive perceptions of the respondents towards the provision of written corrective feedback supports the cognitive interactionist theories such as the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1991) and the noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1994), proposing that error correction assists language acquisition by helping learners to establish form-meaning mappings. Moreover, the achievement of grammatical accuracy as facilitated by the implementation of WCF is highly perceived.

The benefits or advantages of WCF is taken under the effectiveness domain. As revealed, the avoidance of grammatical slips or common mistakes is affirmed by the respondents in their positive perception. Similarly, WCF in compositions is seen as a practice that assists the learners to learn the English language better. These results support the perceived importance of WCF; hence, the basis of teachers in the provision to target skills and competencies such as the improvement of writing accuracy, the promotion of independent learning, and the encouragement of students for more reading.

In terms of satisfaction for the source of correction, teachers are viewed as the most reliable source of corrections for students' English compositions. Friends or peers are also considered as source of feedback for corrections in compositions. Finally, self-revision without the teacher's feedback is accepted by the respondents.

The results support the study conducted by Voric (2008) suggesting a general approval of teacher feedback for errors. Peer feedback is also valued because it enhances a sense of audience, raises learner's awareness of their own weaknesses and strengths, encourages collaborative learning, and fosters ownership of text (Tsui & Ng, 2002). Independent revision of drafts as approved by the participant-respondents may be attributed to the findings of Paulus (2000) where students can make surface-level revisions on their own; in contrast to the meaning-level orientated feedback teachers and peers.

In terms of the extent of correction, teachers as source of feedback are expected to correct all kinds of errors that students may commit in their compositions. The affirmation of the students to unfocused error correction is implied. The entire group's disagreement to the statement that teachers should correct only particular errors deemed important is a manifestation of their disapproval of focused error correction.

The results are supported by the study of Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) where the students "thought it most useful for teachers to provide WCF on as many errors as possible." Furthermore, these are partly reinforced by Shen et al (2016) where the respondents opined that instructors should correct all errors. The result is in contrast to the same study where the same number respondents chose that the instructor should correct only

major errors. However, still in Shen et al (2016) the preceding options are slightly overcome by the option for the instructor correcting only the errors that interfere with communicating ideas.

It could be inferred that the direct written corrective feedback generally preferred by the respondents over the other two styles. The indirect corrective feedback comes second and the metalinguistic corrective feedback last.

As compared to the study of Shen et al (2016) where the respondents preferred most the instructor “locating the error and also indicating the type of error” (metalinguistic corrective feedback), this result is in contrast with the present study where the participant-respondents most preferred that “a teacher would underline or encircle a student’s error and provide the correct form” (direct corrective feedback). While the present study presents a different order of preference, this still upholds the participant-respondents approval of corrective feedback regardless of the strategy. As indicated in the study of Shen et al (2016), the more advanced the students, the less they required explicit feedback on their grammatical errors. The preceding study somehow supports the result of this present research where the least favored technique was “simply indicating that you have an error in the sentence by

putting a cross next to it without locating or correcting the error.” The study found that the direct written corrective feedback was generally preferred by the respondents over the other two styles. The indirect corrective feedback came second, and the metalinguistic corrective feedback was last. This preference is in contrast to the study of Shen et al (2016), where the respondents preferred the instructor “locating the error and also indicating the type of error” (metalinguistic corrective feedback). However, the present study upholds the participant-respondents’ approval of corrective feedback regardless of the strategy. The more advanced the students, the less they required explicit feedback on their grammatical errors, as indicated in the study of Shen et al (2016). The result of the present research where the least favored technique was “simply indicating that you have an error in the sentence by putting a cross next to it without locating or correcting the error” is in line with this finding.

Inferential data analysis revealed the significance of the differences in the students’ perceptions of written corrective feedback in their outputs in English when grouped according to their specialization. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed for the purpose of determining the significant differences in the students’ perceptions on written corrective feedback in their outputs in English when grouped as stated.

Table 2. Differences in the Students’ Perceptions on Written Corrective Feedback According to Specialization using the ANOVA.

		Mean Square	F	Sig.
Challenges	Between Groups	.061	.412	.799
	Within Groups	.147		
	Total			
Adeptness	Between Groups	.507	2.425	.056
	Within Groups	.209		
	Total			
Reception (Ink Preference)	Between Groups	.673	2.541	.047
	Within Groups	.265		
	Total			
Reception (Affective Domain)	Between Groups	.199	1.478	.218
	Within Groups	.135		
	Total			
Reception (Revision)	Between Groups	.137	1.226	.308
	Within Groups	.112		
	Total			
Effectiveness (Benefits)	Between Groups	.256	1.389	.247
	Within Groups	.184		
	Total			

Satisfaction (Source of Correction)	Between Groups	.160	1.170	.332
	Within Groups	.136		
	Total			
Satisfaction (Extent of Correction)	Between Groups	.755	1.292	.282
	Within Groups	.585		
	Total			

Table 2 indicates that there are no significant differences in the students' perceptions on written corrective feedback when classified according to specialization. It was notable however, that a significant difference was on the reception of the ink when providing WCF ($F=2.541$, $p=>0.047$). Though a minor difference, this would imply on the consideration of the ink or color to be used when providing WCF on students' written work.

With the descriptive results in the survey on perceptions, it can be suggested that students tend to show a positive attitude towards written corrective feedback as in the study of Hossein Nassaji, H. and Liu, Q. (2016).

The non-significance in the differences among groups of specialization may be attributed to their intrinsic and integrative motivations.

Intrinsic motivation can be associated with the inner feelings of learners and it considers how learners engage in the task, and if they are willing to be involved in the activity. The rewards do not relate to external factors Griffiths, C. (2012). Deci and Ryan (1980) suggest that learners who are intrinsically motivated learn well and are high achievers. The learners' positive view of the WCF provision is a manifestation of such engagement they have.

Furthermore, this positive view regarding the WCF provision as a practice in the L2 classroom, manifests the level of the students' integrative motivation. According to Gardner (2001), integrative motivation plays a major role in successful language learning. When the learners' attitude towards L2 is positive, they easily become a part of L2 culture (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, 1972).

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

Written corrective feedback as a strategy in facilitating one of the macro-skills in second language learning still holds its significance. As a long-standing practice in

language classrooms, the provision of WCF is expected to be integrated with consistency even for students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Students generally manifest a positive view of written corrective feedback as a strategy to enhance their writing skills. Relative to this is their view of the teachers as a reliable source of WCF aside from the presence of peers or the independence to self-correct

As regards the extent of error correction, students value WCF provision for all types of error rather than on specific or limited ones.

The common types of WCF styles employed by teachers are acceptable. However, a stronger preference to receive direct corrective feedback is manifest, although they can process the indirect and the metalinguistic corrective feedbacks.

The use of the red ink as a marker focusing attention to target errors for correction remains valued. As may be established by habit, the red ink for teachers' corrections is still preferred by students despite their acceptance of other ink colors such as green or violet.

Students perceive the positive impact of WCF provision on their writing. It is noted that the perception on the effectiveness in terms of benefits was highly perceived. Similarly, they perceive the revising their drafts with the corrections as an important part of the practice; hence, to them, revision is a necessity. The students also value the gain towards improvement and efficacy. The students see WCF as a tool to make revisions for a better output, achieve grammatical accuracy, avoid the same mistakes, and learn the English language better.

Some of the corrections may be difficult to understand. Hence, it is suggested that teacher's comments should go with corrections. Moreover, since some corrections changed the intended meaning in the student's writings and some of the corrections needed

teacher clarification, necessary adjustments such as teacher and student dialogs are needed.

WCF is a tool that facilitates improvement student's writing, especially in their grammatical control. The provision of WCF to the drafts of the students facilitated a positive yield for their uptake. The students were able to utilize the two WCF strategies to improve their outputs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the preceding findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are advanced:

Students have to be trained to continuously improve their writing skills in order for them to cope with academic and social demands. Their exposure to and performance of various writing tasks will facilitate the honing of the required sub-skills. They need knowledge of the writing process and the relative preparations to be ensured of their progress in the discipline.

Teachers should use corrective feedback to help students develop their written competence, with the goal of developing students' writing skills. Understanding that errors are inevitably part of L2 learning and progress, teachers should continue to provide negative evidence to students written outputs. A teacher-student dialog must be included in the practice to give way to some misconceptions and queries of the learners. Furthermore, an observation and analysis of the learners' background should be considered in the light of WCF style used.

Future researchers may consider conducting studies that focus on the use of corrective feedback on improving students' written outputs. It is also recommended that the present study be replicated using a large sample size and longer period of intervention time to help increase the validity and reliability of this research. Also, related studies such as the integration of teacher conferences in the provision of WCF may be undertaken.

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