Student Perceptions of Written Corrective Feedback in an Online Environment

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Previous research indicates that written corrective feedback (WCF) is effective, but its effectiveness depends on factors such as the type of feedback and the level of learner engagement. However, little is known about learners' interpretation and engagement of feedback, particularly in an online context. Therefore, in this study the researchers investigated two intact groups of learners who received feedback on a paragraph writing assignment, exploring how they processed the feedback using a commercially available online software service known as the Feedback Studio by Turnitin. The researchers analyzed draft revisions and interviewed two students from each group to examine their decision-making process during revisions. The results indicate that direct feedback was more effective and that WCF combined with consultations was considered helpful by the learners. Finally, proficiency was found to play a role in learners' ability to address feedback successfully.

先行研究では、筆記による訂正フィードバック（WCF）は効果的であるが、効果の度合いは、フィードバックの種類や学習者のフィードバックへの取り組み方等の要因によって異なることが明らかとなった。しかし、特にオンライン環境において、学習者がフィードバックをどのように解釈し、それに取り組むのかということについてはほとんど明らかになっていない。よって本稿では、本研究では、段落を書く課題で２つのグループの学生が、Turnitin社が市販するFeedback Studioというオンラインソフトを使って与えられたフィードバックをどのように扱ったのかを調査した。研究では、学習者が文章を修正する上で、どのような決断をしたのかを調査するために、学習者が修正した文章の分析とそれぞれのグループから選ばれた計４名の学習者へのインタビュー調査を行った。結果として、学習者は訂正の内容が具体的に提示されたフィードバックと、筆記と合わせて口頭で与えられたフィードバックが有益だと認識していることが明らかとなった。最後に、学習者がフィードバックに適切に対応できるかどうかは、習熟度が関与していることが明らかになった。

In the late 20th century, the process approach to writing emerged as a response to the product-oriented model and has since become a dominant method in second language (L2) writing instruction. Instead of focusing solely on the final product, this approach emphasizes discovery and revision (Zamel, 1982) through stages that hold pedagogical value (Raimes, 1983). Over time, the process approach has become standard in L2 writing, as reflected in teacher training textbooks (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Hyland, 2003) and its adoption by language programs worldwide. Its dominance stems from its alignment with communicative, learner-centered approaches in L2 learning (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Empirical studies (e.g., Silva, 1990) highlight its adaptability, effectiveness, and ability to promote fluency and accuracy, which are considered key components of learner proficiency (Hedge, 2005).

Central to the process approach is its recursive cycle of pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. This cycle aligns with socio-cultural and cognitive approaches in L2 learning by scaffolding complex tasks, prioritizing content and fluency over accuracy, and fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Williams, 2005).

Background

Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) refers to instructor or peer comments addressing learner errors in writing, aiming to improve linguistic accuracy and writing proficiency (Bitchener & Storch, 2016). According to Ellis (2009), common WCF types include:

1. **Direct Feedback**: Provides the correct form (e.g., "She goes shopping" for "She go shopping").

2. **Indirect Feedback**: Indicates an error without correction (e.g., underlining and noting "verb form").
3. **Focused Feedback**: Targets specific error types (e.g., articles).
4. **Unfocused Feedback**: Addresses a broad range of errors.
5. **Metalinguistic Feedback**: Offers grammatical explanations.

The effectiveness of WCF in L2 writing has long been debated. Truscott (1996, 1999) argued it is ineffective and demotivating, while Ferris (1999) countered that WCF improves accuracy and meets learner expectations. Recent studies support WCF's role in enhancing revision and accuracy (Frear, 2012; Shintani, 2014), and the debate has since shifted toward focusing on improving approaches to WCF rather than abandoning it altogether. At the heart of this debate is a question about what makes WCF "effective". However, the concept itself of "effectiveness" is not one-dimensional in research or in practice. Depending on the context and the learners, it can mean improvement in accuracy (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010), deeper language learning and retention (e.g., Ellis, 2010), the ability to transfer learning to new contexts (e.g., Ferris, 2010), or increased learner engagement with the feedback (e.g., Storch, 2010).

Recent researchers focus on which feedback types work best. Indirect feedback fosters autonomy but suits advanced learners who have the skills to self-correct (Lalande, 1982). Direct feedback, which helps reduce the cognitive load, is more effective for lower-proficiency learners, especially when focused on specific errors (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008). Essentially, the type of feedback should align with the proficiency level of the learners for optimal results.

Providing the appropriate type of feedback for learners is essential, but equally as important is what learners do with the feedback. This includes reviewing the feedback carefully, understanding and reflecting on the changes they are being asked to make, and being able to make corrections with some success (Ellis, 2010; Ferris, 2003). Depth of processing and language aptitude, particularly language analytical ability, also influence success, as learners with higher aptitude are better able to analyze errors and benefit from corrective feedback, leading to greater internalization (Shintani & Ellis, 2015; Williams, 2012). It is important to distinguish aptitude from proficiency: aptitude refers to a learner's capacity to learn a language, while proficiency reflects their current level of language skill. Overall, there is strong evidence that appropriate feedback combined with learner engagement with that feedback ultimately leads to the most effective results with WTC.

Despite significant research on WCF, gaps remain. While numerous quantitative studies have explored WCF in L2 writing (e.g., Chandler, 2003; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007), there has been an overall lack of qualitative approaches apart from case study research (Ferris, 1995; Hyland, 1998; Leki, 1990). Furthermore, there remains a dearth of naturalistic studies on WCF conducted in real classrooms as well as a lack of investigation into combined approaches to WCF. In addition, research into writing instruction in Japanese educational contexts reveals systemic challenges that may influence how WCF is received and used by learners. Mulvey (2016), for example, highlights that most Japanese high school students receive little to no formal instruction in academic writing—either in Japanese (L1) or English (L2)—with writing classes often focused on grammar-translation and sentence-level translation exercises. Essay writing, organization, argumentation, and citation conventions are rarely taught. As a result, many students enter university unfamiliar with even basic paragraphing or critical writing conventions, which may limit their ability to engage with feedback meaningfully. This underscores the need to contextualize WCF research within specific educational settings, as effectiveness may depend not only on feedback type but also on learners' prior exposure to academic writing instruction. Finally, although there remain conflicting views surrounding what makes WCF effective, according to Bitchener and Storch (2016), the current body of research suggests that "the type of written CF that is most likely to be effective for particular learners will vary according to a range of additional factors/variables" (p. 65). Reflecting this perspective of WCF as multidimensional, the focus of this study is on immediate improvements in student drafts, the type and focus of feedback provided, and the extent of learner engagement with it. Therefore, the researchers of this study aim to address these gaps by exploring the following research questions:

RQ1. To what degree do learners address written corrective feedback?

RQ2. How do learners perceive the written corrective feedback they receive?

RQ3. What role does proficiency play in a learner's ability to address written corrective feedback?

Study Design

The study employed an exploratory mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide deeper insights into the results (Creswell, 2009). Participants were 36 first-year Policy Studies majors from two English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing classes at a private university in Western Japan, both taught by the first author. All participants provided informed consent, and the project received approval from the university's institutional review board. As part of

the coordinated program, students were streamed into two proficiency levels based on the Test of English as a Foreign Language – Paper-Based Test (TOEFL PBT). Both groups in this study were part of the higher proficiency stream, but students with top scores (TOEFL ≥ 450) were placed into a slightly more challenging Honors course. An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare TOEFL PBT scores between the two groups of learners. Group A (M = 479.18, SD = 10.30, n = 16) had a significantly higher average score than Group B (M = 446.00, SD = 14.25, n = 20). The difference in means was statistically significant, $t(28.66) = 8.10$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed), indicating a meaningful difference in English proficiency levels between the groups. Therefore, Group A is considered the "High Group" (n =16) and Group B the "Low Group" (n = 20) because of this difference in proficiency.

The study occurred during the first semester of a two-year program. Both classes followed identical syllabi, with two major assignments: a paragraph about the best season to visit one's hometown and a four-paragraph essay on topics related to education. The main difference was that the High Group incorporated facts or statistics from outside sources. This study focuses solely on the paragraph assignment. Students submitted papers, received instructor feedback, and revised drafts in a structured process:

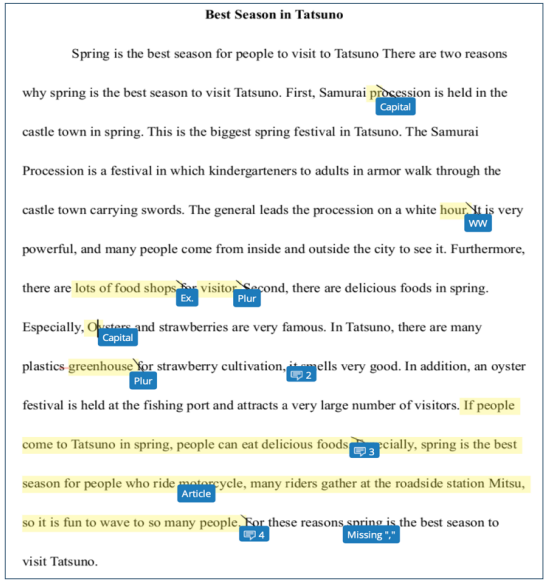
1. General feedback on common issues was given during class.
2. Students reviewed their specific feedback and began revising.
3. The instructor held one-on-one consultations for clarification.
4. Students submitted a second (final) draft.

Turnitin Feedback Studio was used for submissions and feedback. While known for plagiarism detection, Turnitin also offers teacher tools for feedback, such as customizable symbols, the ability to add personal comments, and create rubrics (Turnitin, n.d.). It integrates with major Learning Management Systems, such as Blackboard, Canvas, and Moodle, which became a more important feature during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many classes were taught exclusively online. Among the tools available in the Feedback Studio, three types of feedback were used by the instructor during this study:

1. **Quickmarks**: Highlighted text linked to a code explaining errors (e.g., "Plur" for plural forms) (see Figure 1a). Clicking on the code produced a pop-up window displaying its meaning with an explanation (see Figure 1b).

Figure 1a

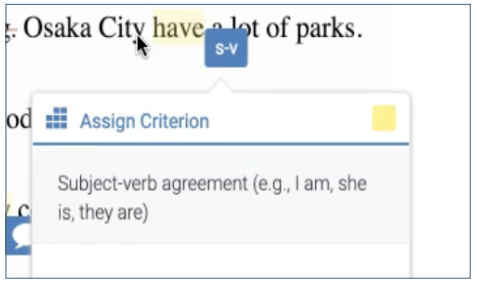
Turnitin Feedback Studio interface showing Quickmark codes



Note. Screenshot captured by author.

Figure 1b

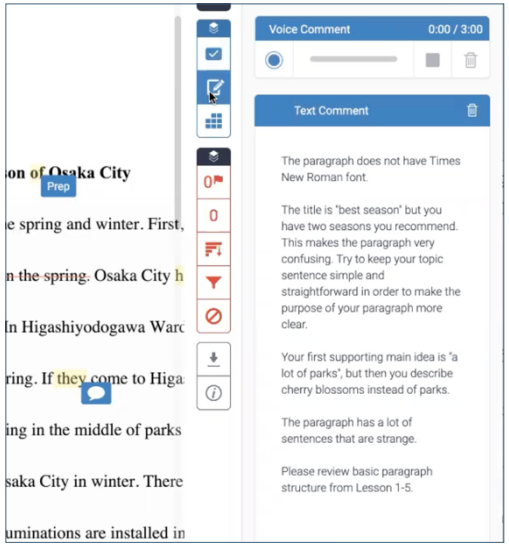
Turnitin Feedback Studio interface showing Quickmark codes and pop-up window with explanation.



Note. Screenshot captured by author.

2. **Instructor Comments**: Overall feedback on structure, organization, and idea support (see Figure 2 for an example).

Figure 2
Turnitin Feedback Studio interface showing Comments features



Note. Screenshot captured by author.

3. **Rubric Scores**: A 50-point rubric evaluating five weighted categories: Topic Sentence (15%), Supporting Ideas 1 & 2 (25% each), Conclusion (15%), and Language/Format (20%).

Initial drafts revealed a performance gap between groups based on Draft 1 rubric scores, but the Low Group made greater improvements on the second drafts, narrowing the gap. Average scores are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1
Writing Draft Average Scores

Class	Draft 1 (M, SD)	Draft 2 (M, SD)	Improvement Score (M)
Low Group	34.2 (9.4)	41.5 (6.1)	+7.3
High Group	39.6 (4.3)	43.9 (3.7)	+4.3

Procedure

The first author compared drafts from individual students in each class, analyzing how they responded to feedback. Each Quickmark and comment from Draft 1 was coded using an emergent approach, where codes are developed during data analysis (Saldaña, 2021). Codes were partly derived from qualitative interviews in which the second author noted student responses to feedback. These initial codes were refined by the first author and applied across the data set. Five codes—*sufficient*, *somewhat sufficient*, *insufficient*, *no change*, and *deleted*—were developed and are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Feedback Response Coding

Code	Description
Sufficient	Effectively responded to the feedback in a way that met expectations
Somewhat Sufficient	Responded to the feedback in a way that mostly met expectations
Insufficient	Responded to the feedback, but did not meet expectations
No Change	Did not respond to feedback
Deleted	Responded by deleting problematic word/phrase/sentence

All the codes, except for *deleted*, were used for both Quickmarks and comments. Often, students would delete phrases or sentences that were targeted for feedback with Quickmarks, but there were no cases where aspects targeted in the comments were simply deleted by students. A brief description was developed for each of the codes. If a student responded to the feedback in a way in which they successfully made

the correction that the feedback was intended to produce, it was coded as *sufficient*. For instance, a Quickmark prompting capitalization resulted in *sufficient* if corrected. However, a vague explanation added in response to the Quickmark "explain more" was labeled *somewhat sufficient*, while an incorrect preposition change was *insufficient*. Cases where feedback was ignored or text was deleted were coded as *no change* or *deleted*, respectively.

Feedback Response Results

Coding was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and tabulated based on the extent to which each Quickmark and comment was addressed in the second draft. The totals for both the Low and the High groups are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Total Group Feedback Codes

Code	Low Group		High Group	
	Quickmarks	Comments	Quickmarks	Comments
Sufficient	135 (64%)	15 (28%)	120 (75%)	18 (43%)
Somewhat sufficient	27 (13%)	16 (30%)	15 (9%)	9 (21%)
Insufficient	6 (3%)	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	4 (10%)
No Change	33 (15%)	23 (42%)	16 (10%)	11 (26%)
Deleted	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	4 (3%)	0 (0%)
Total	211	54	160	42
Avg.	11.11	2.84	10	2.63

The data show that on average, both groups received a similar number of Quickmarks and comments, with the Low group slightly above the High group in both categories. The Quickmark data reveal that both groups sufficiently addressed most feedback, with similar proportions of insufficient revisions. However, small differences were noted: the High group addressed a higher proportion of Quickmarks sufficiently, while the Low group had more instances of no change and a slightly higher proportion of deleted feedback.

The comment data show that neither group was able to address the majority of the comments at a level that was considered *sufficient*. However, the High group was able to address a much larger proportion of the comments in a *sufficient* manner than the Low group. Even though the Low group addressed a larger proportion of the feedback in a *somewhat sufficient* way than the High group, the total between *sufficient* and *somewhat sufficient* combined was still a larger proportion for the High group. Another notable difference between the two groups is that there was a much larger proportion of *no change* for the Low group when compared to the High group.

Qualitative Interviews

To explore student perceptions of WCF, the second author conducted qualitative interviews with four participants (two from each class). The number of interview participants was limited due to time and logistical constraints, with two students per group selected to allow for manageable yet meaningful qualitative analysis within the scope of the study. The participants were selected by the first author, with priority given to students who attended regularly, completed practice tasks diligently, and demonstrated a conscientious effort to apply feedback in their work. Ai and Lui (pseudonyms) represented the Low Group, while Ami and Mao (pseudonyms) belonged to the High Group. Interviews were held online within a week of the participants receiving feedback on their second draft. All the participants showed score improvements from the first to the second draft (See Table 4), indicating that they most likely incorporated some of the feedback successfully. The interviews, conducted in Japanese (the students' first language), lasted 30–40 minutes and were audio- and video-recorded.

Table 4
Writing Draft Scores

Class/Participant		**Draft 1**	**Draft 2**
Low Group	Ai	22	28
	Lui	29	39
High Group	Ami	34	40
	Mao	35	41

The interviewer began by asking participants to explain their interpretations of each Quickmark they received and why they made or did not make specific changes based on the feedback. Next, participants were asked to interpret the instructor's comments, describe how they incorporated the feedback into their revisions, and explain the reasoning behind their decisions. Finally, they were asked to identify the types of feedback they found most helpful for revising their writing.

The second author analyzed the interview data in the original language. After repeated listening, preliminary codes emerged, such as *sufficient change*, *somewhat sufficient change*, *insufficient change*, *no change*, and *deleted*. The reasons participants provided for their decisions were recorded alongside each code, and interpretations such as "understood the feedback correctly" or "lacked linguistic knowledge to make appropriate corrections" were added. Once coding was completed, each case was individually examined, followed by a cross-case analysis to identify common characteristics among the four participants. The second author translated the excerpts used in this article into English.

Participant Interview Findings

Low Group - Ai

Ai revised her second draft by deleting parts of her first draft and responding to seven of the ten types of Quickmark feedback. She also made two *sufficient* changes and two *insufficient* changes. The reason why she rewrote the majority of her draft was because the feedback suggested that her topic sentence had two main ideas rather than one. This feedback was included in the comments section. However, she did not know this section existed until it was pointed out during the interview. Accessing this section required students to click and expand the menu, which had been demonstrated in class by the instructor. When asked about how she was able to know that she needed to do to make this revision without knowing about the comment feature, she explained that it was pointed out that she had not addressed the issue during class consultation with the instructor.

When asked about the first *insufficient* change, she explained that it was simply a mistake. The second *insufficient* change concerned the concluding sentence. The student misunderstood the instructor's feedback, which highlighted both the concluding sentence and a stray word ("in") to question why they were separated from the paragraph. She thought the comment referred only to the stray word and deleted the entire concluding sentence because it contained "I," which she believed was not allowed in academic writing. This response shows both a misreading of the feedback and a lack of understanding about how to construct a proper concluding sentence.

Low Group - Lui

Lui received 22 Quickmarks, and he made 16 *sufficient* changes, one *no change*, three *deleted* parts, and two *insufficient* changes. As for one *no change*, he explained that he simply forgot about it. When asked about why he deleted some sentences, he explained that it was because he had already met the required word count. Lui also made two *insufficient* changes. First, he misinterpreted the feedback, which asked him to combine the first two sentences to make a topic sentence. However, because the Quickmark was inserted at the end of the second sentence, he combined the second and the third sentences, contrary to the instructor's intentions. This change indicates that rather than fully understanding what a topic sentence contains, he simply responded to the feedback based on the location of the Quickmark. The other insufficient change also indicated a lack of linguistic knowledge. The first feedback suggested adding an article to the word "main event". He explained that he added "a" because "there is only one event, and I forgot to add an article". The instructor's intention was for him to use the article "the" as it refers to a specific event. However, Lui's lack of linguistic knowledge about article use led him to make this *insufficient* change.

Lui received six comments, which he said he read first. He *sufficiently* made five of the changes, which overlapped with some of the Quickmark comments. One comment he received concerned sentences providing examples of events in his hometown. The comment asked him to clarify whether "cherry blossom" was an event that occurred in his hometown (e.g., cherry blossom festival) or simply a time of year when the flowers bloom. When asked to explain how he interpreted this comment, he responded that he needed to simplify the sentence and deleted "and so on" from the end of the sentence, which was suggested by a Quickmark. This again indicated his lack of linguistic knowledge to understand this comment and instead rely on the direct feedback of the Quickmark to solve the issue.

High Group - Ami

Among 11 Quickmarks, Ami made eight *sufficient* changes, two *no changes*, and one *insufficient* change. One *insufficient* change had to do with her misunderstanding of feedback, which suggested capitalizing the word "castle" in the name of a proper noun. Instead of capitalizing the "C", she deleted the word and added "Capital". When asked to explain the change, she said that, "...instead of castle, I was told that it is better to use the word, capitalize or capital". Her lack of understanding of metalanguage such as "Capitalize" used in giving feedback led her to make this *insufficient* change.

The two *no change* revisions Ami failed to make were simply unnoticed. One of the Quickmarks indicated the use of a wrong preposition, but it was overlapping somewhat with another Quickmark on the screen that suggested she delete an article. She deleted the article, "the", but failed to change the preposition. When asked about why she made only one change and not the other, she said, "It's overlapping…I thought it was a comment related to what to do with 'the'". This demonstrates that the placement of the Quickmarks made it difficult for her to notice each one. As for the other unnoticed feedback, she said she had understood it correctly on her own and admitted that she forgot to make the change.

There were five comments, and she revised four of them that were considered *sufficient*. Two of them were done in conjunction with teacher consultations. For example, one of the sufficient changes related to combining two sentences into one. She was able to make the change successfully because of the feedback comments from the instructor. However, it was through the consultation with the instructor she was able to confirm her understanding of the feedback and her response. She said, "We had a bit of a chance to discuss if I understood this comment during class, so I got a confirmation from the teacher when I asked, 'Since the first and the second sentences are the same, I should combine them, correct?'" She referred to another change she *sufficiently* made based on a comment, which suggested dividing two similar ideas into different sections. Reflecting on how she made the change, she said she understood the content and sentence were redundant, but "when I was actually told (by the teacher), I was convinced that because they were overlapping, I was again reminded that I needed to make the change, and I could finally make the change". These examples demonstrate the importance of clarification and confirmation through teacher consultations.

One change that was considered *insufficient* was related to how to write a concluding sentence. The comments said, "The concluding sentence is too similar to the topic sentence". She did make the change by deleting some words and switching the subjects; therefore, the sentence still looked similar to the topic sentence, suggesting her lack of knowledge of how to write a concluding sentence.

High Group - Mao

Among 27 Quickmarks, Mao made 25 changes that were *sufficient*, one that was *insufficient*, and one *no change*. The one that was *insufficient* was related to an article. The feedback suggested she consider the "article" before a singular noun. She understood this feedback but did not know if she should use "a" or "the". Therefore, instead of adding an article, she added the plural "s". Next, she failed to make a change related to formatting. When asked to explain what the feedback meant suggesting she align a sentence to the left, she said she did not understand it. She explained that she did not make this change either because she did not notice it when she first saw it or she did not understand what it meant, so she may have skipped it to check it later and forgot about it.

Mao had a total of four comments, which she was not aware of until it was pointed out in the interview. Therefore, she made only one *sufficient* change, as it was also suggested in a Quickmark. Although instructor comments and Quickmarks were generally distinct, there was occasional overlap; for example, the instructor sometimes added broader comments such as "Be sure to check your verb tenses throughout" to reinforce or encompass language issues already flagged in the Quickmarks.

Summary of Interview Findings

Overall, the main reason behind changes that the participants made was the result of the feedback suggested by the instructor, especially the Quickmarks, but also including the Comments, at least for the two participants that noticed them. Moreover, the participants found the Quickmark function to be more helpful as they were more specific and easier to understand. Reasons why the participants did not make changes based on Quickmark feedback included being unnoticed, forgotten, or not understood. Even with the High group students, such as Ami and Mao, many students may struggle with the metalanguage often used in feedback, such as "capitalize" and "left align", and it may require further explanations and/or specific examples.

The participants explained that explicit feedback provided by the Quickmarks was more helpful than indirect feedback given in the Comments and that the feedback in combination with instructor consultations was more helpful than just written feedback in revising their draft. During the interviews, the students suggested that what they like about explicit feedback is that it often included brief explanations and clear suggestions as to how to make changes, such as "use *the*" instead of an indirect clue such as *articles*. Furthermore, students appreciated when the feedback included clear, specific locations of where the error occurred. Finally, the students generally believed that written feedback followed by face-to-face consultation was helpful in assisting them in being aware of any feedback they may have not noticed, as well as the opportunity to check if their understanding of the written feedback was correct.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine learners' understanding of WCF in an online environment. For the first research question, which explored how learners addressed feedback, the results showed that both groups responded to Quickmark feedback more frequently and with a higher proportion of *sufficient* revisions. Instances of unaddressed Quickmarks were often due to oversight or failure to notice the feedback, while *insufficient* revisions typically resulted from a lack of linguistic knowledge or self-correction ability. These findings align with Ellis's (2009) observation that direct feedback is particularly beneficial for lower-proficiency learners. In contrast, instructor comments were addressed less frequently and less sufficiently overall. Interview data revealed that some students were unaware of the comments feature, while others lacked the linguistic competence to revise effectively.

For the second research question, which examined learner perceptions of feedback, students found Quickmarks helpful due to their explicitness in identifying and explaining errors. This supports arguments by Bitchener & Knoch (2009) and Bitchener & Ferris (2011) that direct feedback reduces cognitive load and enhances language learning by providing clarity. Students also highlighted the importance of teacher consultations, which helped them understand and apply the feedback. This aligns with literature emphasizing the value of guided feedback (Ellis, 2009; Ferris, 2003, 2010; Shintani & Ellis, 2013).

Finally, regarding the role of proficiency in addressing feedback, the High group made a greater proportion of sufficient revisions for both Quickmarks and comments. In contrast, the Low group had more unaddressed feedback. Although the proficiency gap between the groups was small, this pattern supports findings by Williams (2012) and Shintani & Ellis (2015) that higher language aptitude leads to greater engagement with and benefit from WCF, resulting in more accurate revisions.

Implications, Limitations, and Conclusion

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, L2 writing instructors have increasingly adopted digital tools like LMS platforms. Turnitin's Feedback Studio was used in this study for collecting drafts, providing feedback, and scoring compositions. While the results are not fully generalizable, the findings offer important insights for instructors using WCF in online L2 writing instruction.

The study underscores challenges with implicit feedback, particularly for less proficient learners. Direct feedback via Quickmarks was more effectively addressed than comments, which often went unaddressed due to limited linguistic knowledge, unfamiliarity with metalanguage, or difficulties with the user interface. This highlights two issues with this type of WCF. First, the implicit nature of instructor comments, which provide more general feedback and are often couched in metalanguage, is perhaps more intrinsically complex and challenging for learners. This type of feedback can pose additional challenges, as it not only points out errors but also offers commentary or encouragement without clearly specifying the actions required from the learner. Second, it highlights the importance of tailoring feedback to individual learner needs and proficiency levels, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development. While indirect feedback fosters autonomy (Shintani & Ellis, 2013), its timing and delivery remain critical.

Students valued one-on-one consultations for clarifying and applying feedback, supporting research on the importance of guided feedback. The study also supports the steps outlined by Ferris (1995, 2010) as essential for effective feedback: learners must notice the feedback, understand its meaning, and have the necessary background knowledge to implement it. Challenges with software quirks, metalanguage comprehension, and limited linguistic knowledge often hindered this process, emphasizing the need for improving L2 linguistic skills alongside feedback.

The study had small, unbalanced group sizes and did not assess the impact of the feedback on accuracy. Future studies could measure accuracy using tools like Polio's (1997) error-free clause ratio (EFCR). The study's short duration (one 15-week semester) limited insights into long-term effectiveness, and only a paragraph assignment was analyzed, excluding the more complex essay task. Another issue was revealed during the interviews when two students admitted that they did not initially know how to access and view the instructor's comments within the online feedback system. Although this skews the interview data regarding how error comments were handled and the conclusions drawn from it, it also reveals some of the inherent problems with user interface in online feedback platforms. Furthermore, the study did not investigate whether written corrective feedback led to improvements in future writing. It focused primarily on students' responses within a single multi-draft assignment, without measuring overall gains or development in writing ability. While this focus is valid given the challenges of assessing such outcomes, future research should address whether responding to feedback supports sustained improvements in composition and self-editing skills. Finally, future research should also examine diverse backgrounds and proficiency levels, a greater variety of writing genres, and the longitudinal impacts of WCF in digital environments.

Although most teachers have moved beyond the pandemic and have mostly readjusted back to face-to-face classroom practices, the changes to teacher practices wrought on by that period remain. One of those changes is the use of online platforms used for submitting student work and providing teacher feedback. Despite the conveniences these platform tools bring to teachers and students, questions remain about how learners engage and respond to feedback in these environments. In this study, we revealed some of the issues surrounding this feedback environment and indicated some of the pitfalls as well as future directions for improving the effectiveness of online written corrective feedback in digital learning environments.

Bio Data

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