

The effects of teacher feedback in learning English writing among fourth-year English majors at Quy Nhon University

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the influence of teacher feedback on the English writing skills of fourth-year English majors at Quy Nhon University. Specifically, the study evaluates the extent to which feedback improves grammatical accuracy, coherence, and task achievement, while comparing the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback. Using a mixed-methods approach, the author collected quantitative data from 100 students through survey questionnaires and qualitative data via in-depth interviews with both lecturers and students. The findings indicate that most students regard teacher feedback as a pivotal factor in skill development; furthermore, timely and constructive comments enhance students' confidence during the revision process. However, a segment of the student population still encounters barriers in perceiving and applying these suggestions. Despite limitations regarding the sample size at a single institution, the study proposes practical pedagogical implications and suggests directions for long-term research on the impact of feedback on advanced writing competence.

Keywords: *English writing, The effects, Fourth-year students, Teacher feedback.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of higher education, particularly within the framework of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, the development of academic writing proficiency is no longer a peripheral goal but a core academic necessity. At Quy Nhon University, fourth-year English majors find themselves at a critical academic juncture. As they transition from foundational language learning to advanced research-oriented tasks such as graduation theses and professional internships, the pressure to produce high-quality, coherent, and academically rigorous texts becomes paramount. Despite years of formal instruction, many seniors continue to struggle with the complexities of the writing process. This persistent gap between student performance and academic expectations highlights an urgent need to investigate the most vital bridge in the pedagogical process: Teacher Feedback. This study seeks to explore how fourth-year students perceive and utilize this feedback, as their engagement with instructor comments is the primary driver of their writing development.

In an increasingly globalized world, English has solidified its position as the dominant international language, playing an essential role

in various domains such as science, technology, business, and diplomacy. Hyland asserts that a learner's overall language development is intrinsically linked to the improvement of their writing skills [1]. Similarly, David Crystal underscores English as the world's lingua franca, serving as a crucial tool for communication across borders [2]. In Vietnam, the demand for proficient English skills-especially in formal and academic contexts-has never been higher. Among the four macro-skills, writing is widely regarded as the most challenging to master. It is a multifaceted cognitive process that involves not just the command of grammatical structures, but also the ability to organize ideas logically, employ sophisticated vocabulary, and adhere to specific genre conventions. For English majors at Quy Nhon University, writing is not merely a subject; it is a professional tool that determines their future success in an competitive global job market.

Teacher feedback, often referred to as Written Corrective Feedback (WCF), is arguably the most powerful tool in the writing classroom. Harmer argues that feedback is far more than a simple correction of errors; it is a fundamental cognitive process that aids in consolidating language acquisition [3]. Through feedback, learners

receive the necessary "scaffold" to navigate linguistic and cultural barriers, allowing them to internalize complex patterns and apply them in meaningful ways. However, the effectiveness of feedback is not solely determined by the teacher's expertise, but rather by the student's perception and subsequent "uptake." For senior students, the choice between Direct Feedback (explicitly providing the correct form) and Indirect Feedback (using codes or symbols to prompt self-correction) is not just a matter of preference but a strategic decision that affects their long-term learning and memory retention.

The role of feedback is particularly relevant for fourth-year English majors at Quy Nhon University. These students are in a critical "transitional phase" where the focus shifts from general language proficiency to specialized academic production. At this level, the ability to engage with critique is a hallmark of Learner Autonomy. Little emphasizes that students who take active responsibility for their learning through reflective practice and revision are significantly more likely to achieve long-term success [4]. Autonomy in writing allows students to process feedback at their own pace, experiment with different styles, and develop a critical eye for their own work. For these seniors, receiving and acting upon feedback is a rehearsal for their professional lives, where they must constantly adapt their work based on peer or supervisor critique.

Despite the recognized importance of teacher feedback, the process is often fraught with practical and psychological barriers. International literature on EFL education has shown that students frequently encounter "vague feedback" or "illegible handwriting," which leads to frustration and disengagement. Furthermore, the emotional impact of seeing a paper covered in "red ink" can cause significant stress, potentially demotivating students who feel their efforts are overshadowed by their errors. In the local context of Quy Nhon University, where class sizes are often large and contact hours are limited, these barriers can be even more pronounced. When students fail to understand a teacher's comments or feel overwhelmed by the quantity of corrections, they may choose to ignore the feedback entirely, resulting in a missed opportunity for learning.

The present study, titled "Teacher Feedback in English Writing: Perceptions and Practices of Fourth-year English Majors at Quy Nhon University," aims to fill a significant gap in the local research. While many studies have focused on the teachers' perspective, this research prioritizes the "student voice." Specifically, it seeks to examine how senior students value the feedback they receive, which types of feedback they find most beneficial for their graduation preparation, and what specific obstacles prevent them from making effective revisions. By addressing these questions, the study aims to provide evidence-based insights that can enhance both teaching practices and student-centered learning in the Vietnamese university setting.

Furthermore, the findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of literature on EFL writing by providing a localized perspective on the feedback-revision cycle. As noted by Dörnyei, understanding learner attitudes and motivations is essential for designing effective pedagogical interventions [5]. For educators at Quy Nhon University, the results will offer practical implications for moving toward more efficient feedback methods, such as the integration of Digital Feedback via Google Docs, which many students now perceive as more accessible and interactive. This shift is particularly timely as modern education moves increasingly toward blended and personalized learning environments.

In conclusion, academic writing is a complex and demanding skill that remains at the heart of an English major's academic journey. Teacher feedback serves as the primary engine for progress in this journey, yet its success depends on a nuanced understanding of student perceptions and practical constraints. As Hyland points out, successful writing involves more than linguistic competence; it requires the ability to think critically and communicate clearly to an audience through an iterative process of drafting and revision [1]. By investigating the feedback practices of seniors at Quy Nhon University, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how students can better navigate the challenges of academic writing to become more autonomous, confident, and proficient writers.

Research questions

The research questions discussed in this research could have been determined from the background research mentioned above. Those were:

1. What are Quy Nhon University's fourth-year English majors' perceptions of the importance and role of teacher feedback in their writing process?
2. How do these students receive and apply teacher feedback during the revision and improvement of their writing?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Theoretical background

2.1.1. Concepts of Teacher Feedback

Teacher feedback is a fundamental pedagogical tool that bridges instruction and the refinement of writing skills. According to Hyland and Hyland, feedback encompasses any teacher reaction to a student's performance intended to provide information for improvement, empowering learners to bridge the gap between their current ability and academic standards [6].

Theoretically, this process is rooted in Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory, specifically the concept of "Scaffolding." [7] Within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), feedback serves as expert guidance that enables learners to tackle tasks beyond their independent reach, shifting the focus from simple error correction to a collaborative dialogue that fosters cognitive development.

Furthermore, Ferris asserts that writing acquisition is not a one-size-fits-all process; effective feedback must address specific student needs, from surface-level linguistic forms to deeper structural content [8]. For senior students, indirect feedback is particularly effective as it encourages self-correction and builds critical thinking skills. Bitchener and Ferris also highlight that feedback effectiveness is significantly enhanced when it is timely, clear, and focused, allowing students to engage in metacognitive reflection and self-regulation [9].

In the context of English majors at Quy Nhon University, teacher feedback is critical for high-stakes assignments like graduation theses. However, challenges such as vague comments or excessive "red ink" can overwhelm students and diminish motivation. Understanding how students perceive and utilize feedback is therefore

essential for optimizing writing instruction at the tertiary level and helping seniors achieve academic proficiency.

2.1.2. Direct and Indirect Feedback

2.1.2.1. Direct Feedback

Direct feedback (also known as explicit correction) involves the teacher identifying an error and providing the correct linguistic form or the precise solution for the student. This can take various forms, such as crossing out a superfluous word, inserting a missing morpheme, or rewriting a confusing sentence to improve clarity. According to Bitchener and Knoch, direct feedback is particularly effective because it reduces the ambiguity that students might face when encountering complex linguistic errors that are beyond their current level of competence [10].

For senior students, such as those in their fourth year at Quy Nhon University, direct feedback remains essential in specific contexts. When students deal with high-stakes academic writing—such as the Literature Review or Methodology sections of a graduation thesis—direct feedback provides immediate "treatable" solutions for idiomatic expressions or complex academic collocations that are not easily self-corrected. Ferris argues that direct feedback is highly beneficial for learners with lower linguistic proficiency or when the errors are "untreatable" (e.g., word choice or idiosyncratic sentence structures), as it prevents the reinforcement of incorrect patterns and provides a clear model for future writing tasks [11].

2.1.2.2. Indirect Feedback

Unlike direct correction, indirect feedback involves indicating an error's presence while requiring students to perform the actual correction through underlining, coding, or marginal comments. This approach is pedagogically valuable as it engages students in profound cognitive challenges, forcing them to utilize their linguistic knowledge for problem-solving. Ferris and Roberts [12]

For fourth-year students at Quy Nhon University, indirect feedback is essential for developing "self-editing" skills necessary for graduation theses. This method promotes "guided discovery," leading to better retention of grammatical rules and structural conventions compared to direct correction. Lalande [13]. By reflecting on coded

errors (e.g., "T" for Tense), senior students reinforce their metalinguistic awareness.

Furthermore, indirect feedback effectively addresses "treatable" errors like subject-verb agreement or verb tense. When prompted to resolve these issues independently, students develop greater autonomy and writing confidence. Bitchener [14]. However, its success depends on the student's proficiency and the clarity of the teacher's hints, particularly for complex organizational or logical issues.

2.2. Previous studies

Teacher feedback is a universal element in language pedagogy and an indispensable aspect of the writing process. A vast body of research has been conducted under the umbrella of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) to explore its effectiveness in human communication and academic development. In recent years, studies have recorded impressive achievements, helping researchers gain insights into the mechanisms of how feedback is formed by teachers and realized by students. However, much remains to be done to understand specific nuances, particularly the impact of academic level and gender on how students process these comments.

Studies on language and feedback have long indicated that students' perceptions can differ based on various factors, including gender and proficiency level. Specifically, to elaborate on how learners engage with different strategies of feedback, Lee conducted an extensive study entitled "Classroom Writing Assessment and Feedback in L2 School Contexts." [15]. This research aimed to point out the differences in how students react to direct versus indirect corrections. The corpus contained writing samples and student interviews, which were contrastively studied to identify patterns of distribution in feedback uptake. The findings revealed that while most students valued teacher intervention, there was a significant gender-based trend: female students tended to be more reflective and attentive to indirect coded feedback, whereas male students often preferred direct corrections to minimize the time spent on revisions.

Among the considerable number of research works on the speech act of giving and receiving feedback is the work by Ferris, titled "Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing." [16]. This study aimed to shed light on

the politeness and effectiveness of feedback used by EFL learners. Ferris investigated the effect of participants' backgrounds on their perception of "red ink" and direct criticism. Gathering data from a large pool of university students, the study utilized a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques. The findings revealed that gender was an important factor in the emotional rating of feedback. Male learners were often more direct and focused on the "result" of the correction, while female learners exhibited more sensitivity to the "tone" of the teacher's comments, often perceiving harsh red marks as more stressful than their male counterparts.

Another significant study, conducted by Kadir et al., explored digital feedback environments, aiming to identify how students engage with comments in online platforms like Google Docs [17]. Although the original study focused on social media, its principles are highly applicable to modern academic settings. The authors adopted a descriptive qualitative research method to identify the politeness strategies that students prefer. The findings showed that female students utilized punctuation and digital emojis more frequently to seek clarification on feedback, reflecting a higher emotional evocativeness in their writing process.

In the Vietnamese context, Nguyen investigated the speech act of responding to teacher feedback among native Vietnamese speakers [18]. The study aimed to find similarities and differences in how male and female students perceive "vague feedback" (e.g., "Check grammar"). Using an open-ended questionnaire in the form of a discourse completion task with 60 university students, the findings revealed that Thai and Vietnamese males tended to voice their confusion directly to the instructor. In contrast, female students tended to use "hinting strategies" or discussed the feedback with peers before approaching the teacher. This suggests that gender-related cultural influences play a role in how feedback is negotiated in the EFL classroom.

The investigation into how learners perceive and respond to teacher feedback remains a highly relevant field in applied linguistics. Although there have been numerous studies focusing on written corrective feedback in general English writing courses, there is a notable scarcity of research specifically targeting fourth-year English majors. This group of students is at a

critical academic juncture, where they must transition from classroom exercises to high-stakes writing tasks such as graduation theses and professional reports.

Therefore, the present study, entitled "The Impact of Teacher Feedback on the English Writing Process of Fourth-year English Majors at Quy Nhon University," was designed to fill this gap. Instead of looking at general communication, this research focuses on the academic interaction between instructors and seniors within the local context of Quy Nhon University. The study aims to explore how teacher feedback influences the actual writing process of these students - how they interpret comments, the emotional impact of such feedback, and the extent to which they incorporate these suggestions into their final drafts.

By focusing on this specific demographic, the researcher aims to identify the most effective feedback strategies that can bridge the gap between student's current writing abilities and the rigorous demands of graduation. Ultimately, the findings are expected to help both teachers and students at Quy Nhon University maximize the effectiveness of the feedback-revision cycle, fostering greater learner autonomy and confidence as students prepare to enter the professional world.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participant

The participants of this study were 100 fourth-year students from the English Language and English Teaching programs at Quy Nhon University. The group consisted of approximately 70% female and 30% male students, all of whom have been studying English as their major for four years, with a total English learning background of over seven years. These participants were selected through convenience sampling, chosen for their current involvement in advanced writing modules and their willingness to contribute to the research.

3.2. Research method

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. According to Creswell and Creswell, a mixed-methods design is particularly effective as it allows the researcher to provide a more comprehensive understanding

of the research problem than either approach alone [19]. While quantitative data offers a broad overview of trends, qualitative data provides the necessary depth to explore the nuances of student experiences.

In this study, a sequential explanatory design is adopted. First, the quantitative method is implemented through a questionnaire survey distributed to approximately 100 fourth-year English majors. This tool, as suggested by Dörnyei and Taguchi, is an efficient way to collect large-scale data regarding students' perceptions and reported practices of utilizing teacher feedback [20].

Following the survey, the qualitative method is conducted via focus group discussions with five small groups of students (4-6 participants per group). As noted by Vaughn et al., focus groups are highly effective in stimulating interaction among participants, which helps uncover collective insights and detailed explanations that statistical data might not fully capture [21]. This combination ensures that the findings regarding the effects of teacher feedback are both statistically grounded and contextually rich.

3.3. Data collection

a) Quantitative Data Collection:

The quantitative data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms, which allowed for efficient distribution and systematic data management. The questionnaire was specifically designed to investigate students' perceptions, preferences, and practices regarding teacher feedback in academic writing. The instrument was developed by the researcher following an extensive review of established frameworks in written corrective feedback, particularly drawing upon the works of Hyland and Hyland and Ferris [6], [9].

The questionnaire was structured into four core sections to ensure a comprehensive capture of the required data:

Demographic Information: Collecting participants' academic backgrounds and their experience with English writing courses at the tertiary level.

Perceptions of Teacher Feedback: Assessing students' attitudes and beliefs

concerning the role of instructor comments in their writing development.

Preferences and Practices: Exploring students' inclination toward different feedback types (direct vs. indirect) and their reported routines for incorporating feedback into revised drafts.

The survey was distributed to 100 fourth-year students majoring in English Language and English Teaching at Quy Nhon University. This cohort was selected due to their extensive exposure to academic writing requirements and their current engagement with high-stakes writing tasks, such as graduation theses. Participants were given one week to complete the questionnaire, and a follow-up reminder was sent mid-week to ensure a high response rate and data reliability.

b) Qualitative Data Collection:

To complement and elaborate on the survey results, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted with approximately 25 to 30 fourth-year English majors. This method was chosen over individual interviews to foster a dynamic environment where students could interact, debate, and share collective experiences regarding teacher feedback. As noted by Morgan, the synergy of a group discussion often uncovers deeper layers of student perceptions and shared challenges that might remain hidden in a one-on-one setting [22].

The participants were divided into five small groups (each consisting of 5-6 students) to ensure that every individual had sufficient opportunity to contribute. Each session followed the Focus Group Discussion Protocol (see Appendix B), which was structured into five thematic phases: (1) Attitudes and perceptions, (2) Preferences for feedback types, (3) Practices and uptake, (4) Barriers to revision, and (5) Recommendations for improvement. These sessions, lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes

each, were conducted in a neutral and comfortable setting to encourage open and honest communication.

With the participants' prior consent, all discussions were audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy of the data and to facilitate the subsequent transcription process. The researcher also took field notes to capture non-verbal cues and group dynamics that might be significant during the analysis phase. By integrating both the broad-scale survey data and the nuanced insights from the focus groups, this study ensures a comprehensive and well-rounded examination of the feedback-revision cycle among advanced EFL learners at Quy Nhon University.

3.4. Data analysis

This section describes the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were processed using statistical tools to identify patterns in students' perceptions and preferences regarding teacher feedback. Qualitative data from the focus group discussions were analyzed to explore students' deep-seated attitudes and the specific challenges they face during the revision process. These findings offer insights into how students engage with feedback and the factors influencing their writing development.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Demographic Information

Based on the analysis of the collected survey data, the researchers obtained quantitative findings regarding the demographic characteristics of 100 fourth-year English Language majors at Quy Nhon University, including their gender distribution and self-assessed English writing proficiency

4.1.1.1. Participants' gender

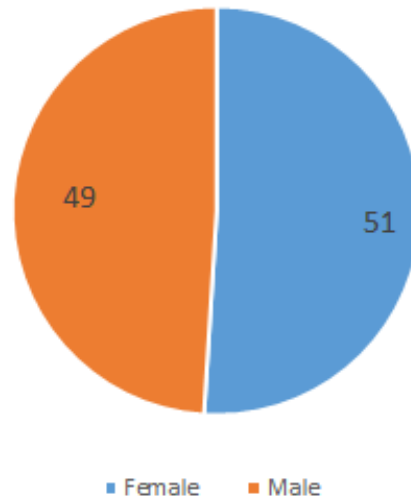


Figure 1. Student's gender.

Figure 1 presents the gender distribution of 100 fourth-year English Language students at Quy Nhon University who participated in the survey. The data from the chart shows that the study

sample is significantly balanced in terms of gender, specifically: female students account for 51% (51 students) and male students account for 49% (49 students).

4.1.1.2 English writing proficiency assessment

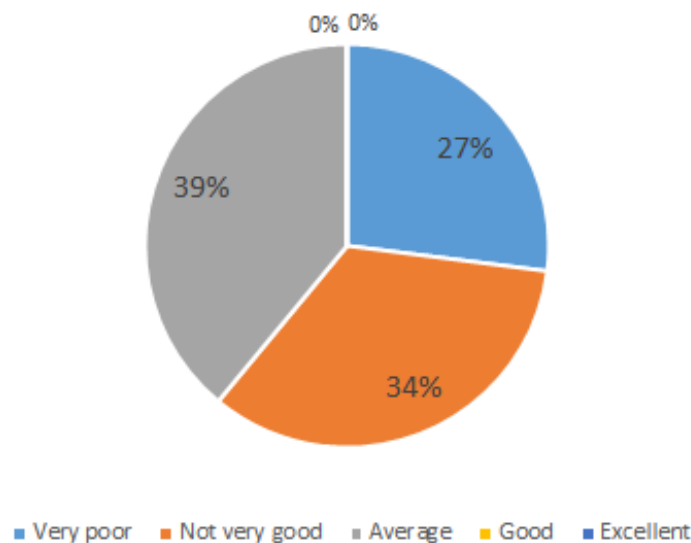


Figure 2. English writing proficiency assessment.

Figure 2 presents the self-assessment results of English writing competence among 100 fourth-year English Language majors at Quy Nhon University who participated in the survey. The

data reveal a clear variation in students' perceptions of their current writing ability. Specifically, the Average level accounts for the largest proportion, representing 39% (39

students). This is followed by the Not very good category, which comprises 34% (34 students), while 27% (27 students) evaluate their writing competence as Good. Notably, no participants selected the extreme levels of Very poor or Excellent, both of which recorded 0%. These findings suggest that although a certain proportion of final-year students have developed a degree of confidence and consider their writing

skills to be at a good level, the majority still perceive their competence as average or below average. In fact, the combined percentage of students rating themselves as average or not very good reaches 73%, indicating that writing remains a challenging skill for a considerable number of learners even at the end of their undergraduate program.

4.1.2. Students' Perceptions of Feedback

4.1.2.1 Types of feedback received from lecturers

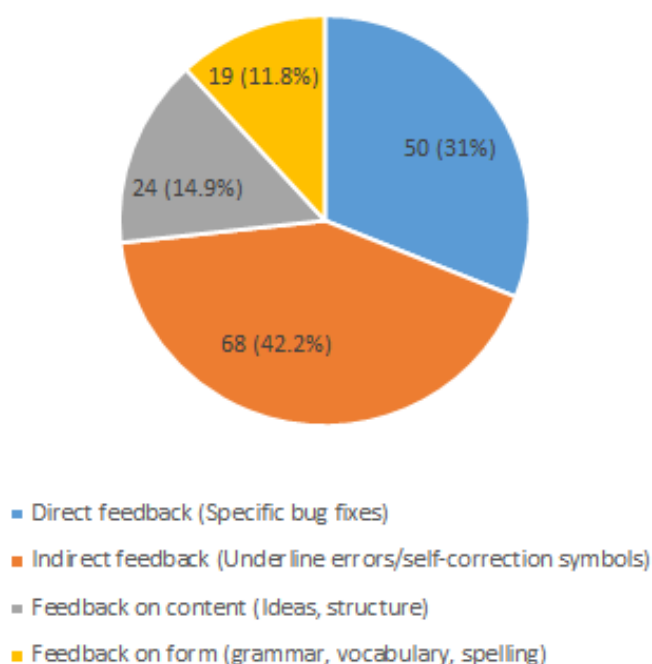


Figure 3. Types of feedback received from lecturers.

Figure 3 presents data on the specific types of feedback that students receive from lecturers during the process of learning English writing. The survey results reveal that indirect and direct feedback account for more than 70% of the total responses, indicating that lecturers mainly emphasize corrective strategies to help students identify and revise errors in their written work. In particular, indirect feedback - through underlining mistakes or using coded symbols for students to self-correct - is the most common form, representing 42.2% (68 selections). This suggests that lecturers may encourage learner autonomy by prompting students to actively engage in the

revision process. Direct feedback, where lecturers provide the correct form immediately, follows with 31% (50 selections), reflecting its importance in offering clear guidance for students.

By contrast, feedback addressing Higher Order Concerns such as content and ideas accounts for only 14.9%, while detailed language-form feedback (grammar, vocabulary, spelling) records the lowest proportion at 11.8%. Overall, these findings indicate that students mainly receive feedback focused on error correction, whereas global aspects of writing receive comparatively less attention.

4.1.2.2. Perception of Feedback's Impact

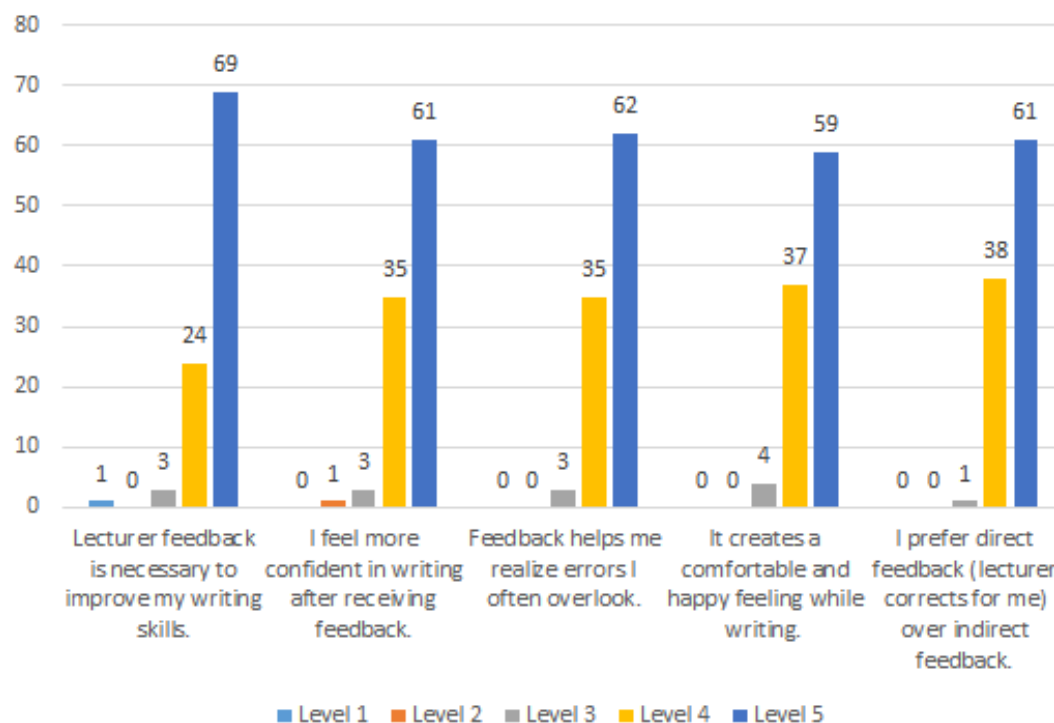


Figure 4. Perception of feedback's impact.

Figure 4 illustrates students' perceptions of the impact of lecturer feedback on their English writing development. Overall, the results show a strongly positive attitude toward teacher feedback, as the majority of responses fall into Level 4 and Level 5 across all statements. Specifically, for the statement "Lecturer feedback is necessary to improve my writing skills," 69 students selected Level 5, while 24 chose Level 4, indicating that nearly all participants consider feedback essential for writing improvement. Similarly, regarding confidence, 61 students reported Level 5 and 35 selected Level 4 for the statement "I feel more confident in writing after receiving feedback." This suggests that feedback not only supports skill development but also enhances learners' self-assurance. In addition,

lecturer feedback was perceived as helpful in identifying errors that students often overlook, with 62 responses at Level 5 and 35 at Level 4. The emotional benefits of feedback were also evident, as 59 students strongly agreed (Level 5) and 37 agreed (Level 4) that feedback creates a comfortable and positive feeling while writing.

Finally, students expressed a preference for direct corrective feedback over indirect feedback, with 61 participants selecting Level 5 and 38 selecting Level 4. Notably, very few respondents chose the lower levels (Level 1–3), confirming that students generally recognize lecturer feedback as a crucial and beneficial factor in improving their writing performance.

4.1.3. Feedback Uptake and Application

4.1.3.1. Frequency of Carefully Reading Feedback from Instructors

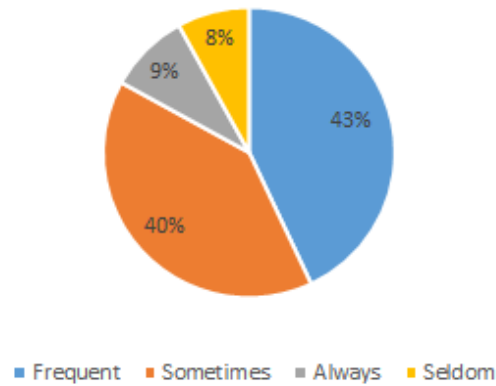


Figure 5. Frequency of carefully reading feedback from instructors.

Figure 5 illustrates the frequency with which students carefully read the feedback provided by their instructors. Overall, the results indicate that most participants pay considerable attention to lecturer feedback, as a large proportion reported reading feedback either frequently or sometimes.

Specifically, 43% of the students stated that they frequently read feedback carefully, representing the largest group in the sample. In addition, 40% reported that they sometimes review feedback in detail. Together, these two categories account for 83% of the responses, suggesting that the majority of fourth-year English majors recognize the

importance of teacher feedback in improving their writing performance.

However, only a smaller proportion of students indicated a consistently high level of engagement, with 9% selecting always. Meanwhile, 8% of the participants reported seldom reading feedback carefully. Although this percentage is relatively low, it may imply that a minority of students do not fully utilize feedback as a learning resource. Overall, the findings highlight that while most students demonstrate positive feedback uptake, there remains room to encourage more consistent and thorough engagement with instructor comments.

4.1.3.2. 4.1.3.2 Student Actions After Receiving Feedback

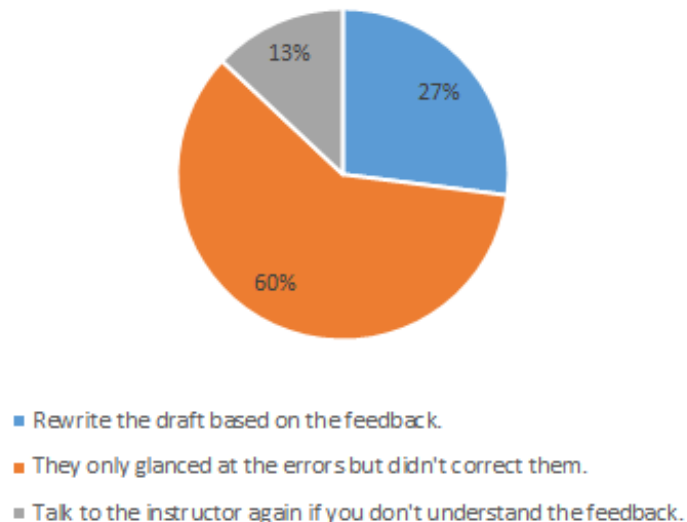


Figure 6. Average time per self-study session for English writing.

Figure 6 presents students' actions after receiving feedback from instructors in the writing process. Overall, the findings reveal noticeable differences in how students respond to lecturer comments, ranging from active revision to more passive engagement. The largest proportion of participants (60%) reported that they only glanced at the errors pointed out by instructors but did not make corrections. This suggests that although students may be aware of the feedback provided, many do not fully utilize it to improve their drafts, possibly due to time constraints, limited

motivation, or difficulties in applying corrections independently.

In contrast, 27% of the students stated that they rewrite their drafts based on the feedback, indicating a more active approach to revising and learning from teacher input. Additionally, 13% reported that they would talk to the instructor again when they do not understand the feedback. This reflects a smaller yet important group of learners who seek clarification to ensure effective revision.

4.1.3.3. Challenges in Implementing Feedback

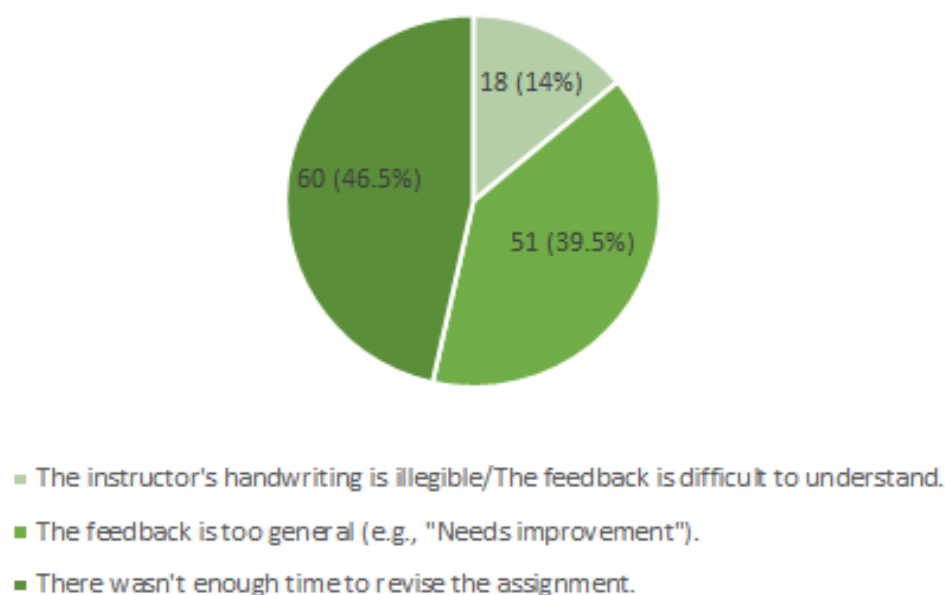


Figure 7. Challenges in implementing feedback.

Figure 7 provides an overview of the difficulties encountered by students when attempting to apply lecturer feedback to their writing revisions. Among the reported challenges, insufficient time to revise assignments emerges as the most dominant issue, with 60 responses (46.5%). Specifically, 51 students (39.5%) indicated that feedback is sometimes too general, such as brief

remarks like “Needs improvement,” which may leave learners uncertain about how to make meaningful changes.

Furthermore, 18 participants (14%) pointed out that the instructor’s handwriting is unclear or that the feedback is difficult to interpret.

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Perceptions and Attitudes

The findings indicate that fourth-year English majors at Quy Nhon University generally hold positive perceptions of lecturer feedback, although emotional reactions may vary.

Quantitative results from Figure 4 show that almost all participants strongly agreed that feedback is necessary for improving writing skills, with 69 students selecting Level 5 and 24 selecting Level 4. Similarly, most students

reported increased confidence after receiving feedback (61 at Level 5 and 35 at Level 4). These results suggest that students recognize teacher feedback as an essential component of writing development.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that while feedback may create short-term pressure, students tend to perceive it as valuable and supportive in the long term, especially as they approach graduation and academic writing demands become more serious.

4.2.2 Feedback Impact on Writing Skills

The empirical results of this study confirm that lecturer feedback serves as a fundamental pillar in supporting the writing improvement of EFL students. Quantitative data from the surveys reveal a high level of student trust in the utility of these interventions; specifically, a vast majority of participants believe that feedback helps them identify linguistic errors they frequently overlook, with 62 responses at Level 5 and 35 at Level 4 on the Likert scale. This cumulative total of 97 positive responses suggests that students perceive feedback not merely as a corrective tool, but as a crucial diagnostic mechanism for their writing development. Furthermore, the psychological impact is significant, with 59 students strongly agreeing that feedback creates a more comfortable and positive writing experience. This indicates that constructive interaction from lecturers effectively lowers the "affective filter," fostering a secure environment that encourages students to express complex ideas more confidently.

Regarding the specific modes of delivery, the data in Figure 3 illustrates a clear pedagogical preference for corrective strategies. Indirect feedback (42.2%) and direct feedback (31%) collectively account for more than 73% of the total responses. This dominant trend indicates that lecturers primarily emphasize language accuracy and systematic error reduction. Such an approach is particularly beneficial for EFL learners at Vietnamese universities, where mastering grammatical precision and academic vocabulary remains a primary challenge. Notably, the fact that indirect feedback is the most prevalent method (42.2%) suggests that lecturers are intentionally prompting students toward "guided discovery." By flagging errors without providing immediate solutions, lecturers force students to

engage in deeper cognitive processing and self-correction, which is essential for developing the independent editing skills required for their upcoming graduation theses.

4.2.3. Factors Influencing Engagement

While students theoretically acknowledge the value of lecturer comments, their actual engagement with this feedback is heavily mediated by practical and contextual constraints. According to Figure 5, the vast majority of students demonstrate a general interest in their evaluations, with 83% reporting that they read feedback either "frequently" or "sometimes." However, a critical gap exists between reading and acting upon these comments. Figure 4.6 reveals a significant discrepancy in feedback uptake: 60% of students admitted to only glancing at marked errors without performing the necessary corrections. This finding suggests that while feedback is being consumed, it is not consistently translating into active revision or the "deep processing" required for linguistic development.

A primary obstacle to effective engagement is the pressure of time constraints. As illustrated in Figure 4.7, insufficient time to revise assignments emerged as the most prevalent challenge, cited by 60 respondents (46.5%). This high percentage indicates that the heavy academic workload and the lack of multiple drafting opportunities within the curriculum may be preventing students from applying feedback in a meaningful way. Without dedicated time for reflection and rewriting, the feedback loop remains incomplete, and the potential for long-term acquisition is diminished.

Furthermore, the quality of engagement is also hindered by the nature of the feedback itself. Approximately 39.5% of students identified the lack of clarity and specificity as a recurring issue, noting that comments are occasionally too general. Brief, evaluative remarks such as "Needs improvement" without specific diagnostic guidance leave students uncertain about how to bridge the gap between their current performance and the required academic standard. Consequently, when feedback lacks specific "how-to" guidance, students are more likely to ignore the corrections, further contributing to the passive engagement patterns observed in Figure 6.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effects of teacher feedback on the learning of English writing among fourth-year English Language majors at Quy Nhon University. By combining quantitative data from questionnaires with qualitative insights from focus group discussions, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions, attitudes, and engagement with lecturer feedback in academic writing courses.

Overall, the findings indicate that teacher feedback is widely perceived as necessary and beneficial for improving writing performance. Most students reported positive attitudes toward feedback, recognizing its role in increasing confidence, identifying errors, and supporting writing development. In particular, indirect and direct corrective feedback were the most frequently received forms, suggesting that lecturers mainly emphasize error correction to help students revise their written work.

However, the study also reveals that feedback uptake does not always result in active revision. Although many students stated that they read feedback carefully, a large proportion admitted that they only glanced at teacher comments without making corrections. The challenges in implementing feedback were largely related to limited time for revision, vague or general remarks, and difficulties in interpreting handwritten comments. These barriers may reduce the effectiveness of feedback and prevent students from fully benefiting from instructor guidance.

In conclusion, teacher feedback plays an essential role in supporting fourth-year students' writing development, yet its impact depends not only on the feedback provided but also on students' ability and willingness to engage with it. Therefore, improving the clarity, specificity, and practicality of feedback, along with encouraging more active student revision practices, may enhance the overall effectiveness of feedback in university writing instruction.

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declare no competing interests.

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Ảnh hưởng của phản hồi từ giảng viên trong quá trình học Viết tiếng Anh của sinh viên năm tư chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại Trường Đại học Quy Nhơn

TÓM TẮT

Nghiên cứu này khảo sát ảnh hưởng của phản hồi từ giảng viên đối với kỹ năng viết tiếng Anh của sinh viên năm thứ tư ngành Ngôn ngữ Anh tại Đại học Quy Nhơn. Cụ thể, đề tài đánh giá mức độ cải thiện của phản hồi tới tính chính xác ngữ pháp, sự mạch lạc và khả năng hoàn thành văn bản, đồng thời so sánh hiệu quả giữa phản hồi trực tiếp và gián tiếp. Bằng phương pháp nghiên cứu hỗn hợp, tác giả đã thu thập dữ liệu định lượng từ 100 sinh viên qua phiếu khảo sát và dữ liệu định tính thông qua phỏng vấn sâu giảng viên cùng sinh viên. Kết quả chỉ ra rằng hầu hết sinh viên đều coi trọng phản hồi của giảng viên như một yếu tố then chốt để phát triển kỹ năng; trong đó, những phản hồi kịp thời và mang tính xây dựng giúp sinh viên tự tin hơn khi chỉnh sửa bài viết. Tuy nhiên, một bộ phận sinh viên vẫn gặp rào cản trong việc tiếp nhận và áp dụng các góp ý này. Dù còn hạn chế về quy mô khảo sát tại một đơn vị đơn lẻ, nghiên cứu đã đề xuất các hàm ý sư phạm thiết thực và gợi mở hướng nghiên cứu dài hạn về tác động của phản hồi đối với năng lực viết chuyên sâu.

Keywords: *Kỹ năng viết tiếng Anh, Tác động, Sinh viên năm thứ tư, Phản hồi của giảng viên.*