THE EFFECTS OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON THE USE OF PRESENT TENSES AMONG ESL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of different strategies of written corrective feedback in improving students' written accuracy. 20 students were recruited and divided into two groups, direct and indirect group. This study was conducted in 3 stages; pre-test, treatment, and post-test. Feedback was provided in treatment stage where group one students received direct corrective feedback while group two students received indirect corrective feedback.

The errors made on each stage were marked and counted to be used to compare among each stage of their writings as well as between the two groups. The results showed that students who received direct corrective feedback outperformed students who received indirect corrective feedback in the post-test. In addition, the results also showed that although the mean number of errors made by indirect feedback group did not decrease in post-test, the mean number of errors made decrease in their revised texts. Thus, it can be concluded that indirect corrective feedback was an effective tool in helping students retaining their language learning over a period of time. Interviews were also conducted to gain insights on other factors that affect students' writing performance. Based on the results gained, two themes which influence the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on students' writing are motivation and scaffolding. Three anecdotal findings were also collected through the interviews. They are related to students expressing their concern on content-related knowledge when writing an essay. In addition, students also stated that teachers should apply mix strategies when correcting different types of errors made by the students based on the

severity. Last, but not least, the interview also revealed the impact of students' exam-orientedness on their language learning.

The results of the study suggest that to some extent, written corrective feedback is effective in reducing students' error in their writing. From the findings, some recommendations are made at the end of this report.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengaji keberkesanan strategi maklum balas yang berbeza untuk memperbetulkan kesilapan pelajar dalam penulisan untuk meningkatkan ketepatan dalam penulisan.. Dua strategi maklum balas yang digunakan ialah strategi maklum balas pembetulan langsung and strategi maklum balas pembetulan tak langsung. 20 pelajar telah diambil dan dibahagikan kepada dua kumpulan, kumpulan langsung dan tidak langsung. Kajian ini dijalankan dalam 3 peringkat; pra-ujian, rawatan, dan pasca-ujian. Maklum balas telah disediakan di peringkat rawatan di mana satu kumpulan pelajar menerima maklum balas pembetulan langsung manakala kumpulan dua pelajar menerima maklum balas pembetulan tidak langsung.

Kesilapan-kesilapan yang dibuat pada setiap peringkat telah dicatatkan dan dikira untuk perbandingan di antara setiap peringkat tulisan mereka dan juga antara perberzaan kedua-dua kumpulan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar-pelajar yang menerima maklum balas pembetulan langsung adalah lebih baik daripada pelajar yang menerima maklum balas pembetulan tidak langsung dalam pasca ujian. Di samping itu, keputusan kajian menunjukkan walaupun bilangan kesilapan yang dilakukan oleh kumpulan maklum balas langsung tidak berkurangan dalam pasca ujian, bilangan kesilapan yang dibuat dalam teks yang sama berkurang selepas pembetulan. Kesimpulannya, maklum balas pembetulan tidak langsung adalah alat yang berkesan dalam mengurangkan bilangan kesilapan yang dibuat di teks yang sama. Temubual juga dijalankan untuk mendapatkan maklumat berkenaan faktor-faktor lain yang mempengaruhi prestasi penulisan pelajar. Berdasarkan keputusan yang

diperolehi, dua tema yang mempengaruhi keberkesanan maklum balas pembetulan bertulis terhadap penulisan pelajar adalah motivasi dan pertolongan. Tiga penemuan anekdot diperoleh daripada temu bual juga. Pelajar menyatakan kebimbangan mereka terhadap kandungan yang berkaitan dengan pengetahuan semasa menulis esei. Selain itu, pelajar juga menyatakan bahawa guru perlu menggunakan pelbagai cara pembetulan apabila membetulkan kesilapan yang berlainan jenis yang dilakukan oleh pelajar-pelajar berdasarkan tahap keterukan. Tidak kurang juga, pelajar didapati berorientasikan peperiksaan.

Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa maklum balas pembetulan bertulis adalah berkesan dalam mengurangkan kesilapan pelajar dalam penulisan mereka. Daripadda hasil kajian, beberapa cadangan dibuat pada bahagian akhir kertas ini.

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CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and statement of the problem

English is deemed as a second language of Malaysia, after the national language, Malay Language. According to Gopala et.al (2012), the advent of information technology and globalization has made English language proficiency imperative for most countries in the world especially the developing countries. As a developing country, Malaysia also uses English extensively in practically all aspects of daily life, from conducting business transactions to labeling products to writing jingles for television advertisements (Murugesan, 2003). Hence, literacy in English is important as it has become a necessity in every Malaysian's life. The importance of English in Malaysia is re-emphasized when the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced that the proposal to make English a compulsory pass subject in SPM examination, a public high school examination, could be implemented as early as 2016 (Stephanie, 2012). However, this decision has attracted many ESL instructors and teachers' attention who also pointed out that the English proficiency levels among Malaysian students is declining (Murugesan, 2003). According to Murugesan (2003), this is mainly due to a backwash effect from a change implemented in 1960s and 1970s where Bahasa Malaysia replaced English as the medium of instruction in national schools and as the language used for official matters. Cheng (2008, in Pan, 2009) defined washback as an intended or unintended (accidental) direction and function of curriculum change on aspects of teaching and learning by means of a change of public examinations. Subjects such as Mathematics, Science, History, which were initially taught in English are taught in Bahasa Malaysia due to the washback. Hence, the usage of English among students are low, which leads to the decline of English proficiency among Malaysian students, especially students from National and Chinese Independent schools.

Under the Malaysia National Education Policy, there are three types of secondary school, which are National school, Chinese school and International school. In National schools, Malay is used as the medium of instruction while in International schools, English is used as the medium of instruction. Chinese Independent schools use Mandarin as medium of instruction. Although these schools use different languages as medium of instruction, in the Malaysia's education system, every student has to start learning English formally at the age of seven when they enroll into primary one up to the age of 17 when they complete their high school education. Normally, students have to attend at least 200 minutes of English per week. However, in the case of independent school, where the research is conducted, Junior one to Junior three students have 400 minutes of English periods while Senior one to Senior Three students have 320 minutes of English periods per week. In addition to sitting for Malaysia's public examination which are UPSR (Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah), PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) and SPM (Sijil Penilaian Menengah), students from Chinese Independent School have to sit for an extra public examination which only cater for Chinese Independent school students in Malaysia. It is the UEC (United Examination Certificate) examinations which are based on Chinese syllabus. The syllabus is mainly based on Taiwan educational syllabus. English is one of the core subjects that students have to pass in these examinations. The language skills which are tested in all these English papers concentrate on writing and reading. The Chinese Independent school students' exposure and usage of English is limited. They only speak and use English during English lessons. This causes most students to have low proficiency level in English as lesser importance is given to English if compare to Mandarin. However, the importance of English especially in

workplace continues to be a top concern among employers in Malaysia, according to a survey conducted by Jobstreet.com in 2009 (Jobstreet Community Digest, 2009).

Thus, in order to raise the proficiency of English among students in Malaysia, some changes have been made in the English examination papers by the Ministry of Education. These include the introduction of literature component into PMR (2002) and SPM (2000) English papers as well as upgrading the reading and writing components to fulfill the demand of good proficiency in English by combining the old SPM English paper with 1119 "O" level paper. Since the writing tasks in the examinations have become more challenging, quite a number of students face difficulty in producing a good piece of writing, especially students who have poor command of English, their second language. This is because writing is a complex and demanding activity that involves organization of idea and content as well as correct usage of linguistic form. Van Beuningen (2011) stated that in order to create a text that meets the requirements of all of those aspects, writers have to engage in a constant cycle of planning, formulating, reading, and revising their text. So, producing a L2 written text is challenging for students as they have to plan, think and write not in their native language. Therefore, it is not surprising that students frequently make errors in their writing.

However, researchers also pointed out that making mistakes when learning a language is seen as part of a typical process by some researchers. Selinker (1972,1992, in He & Mathes, 2001) stated that mistakes are important components of learning a language and must be corrected in order to assist students in producing the target language more accurately. In addition, L2 researchers (Han,2002; Havranek,2002; Swain,1991; in C.G van Beuningen, 2011) stated that in order to foster L2 acquisition during output production, feedback on

language form should be provided. So, the aim of providing corrective feedback to students when they make errors is to help them recognize their errors and produce the correct form of language through the feedback. Corrective feedback is defined as any indication to the learner that his or her use of target language is incorrect (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006, p.197, in van Beuningen, 2011). Thus, corrective feedback is seen as a way to provide students a chance to recognize the errors they make and learn from them so that they can improve in the target language.

However, there are debates on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback as well as the feedback focus and strategies. Truscott (1996) claimed that written corrective feedback does not improve students' writing while Bitchener (2009, 2010) stated that written corrective feedback help improve students' writing. In addition, Bitchener.J & Knoch.U., (2010) who studied on the different effects of different form of corrective feedback showed that groups that received direct corrective feedback showed accuracy improvement across the 10-week but not the indirect corrective feedback group. However, He & Mathes (2001) study on the explicit and implicit corrective feedback showed no significant difference between the two feedbacks provided. Since different results are yielded from different studies, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of direct and indirect written corrective feedback in the Malaysian context.

1.2 **Purpose of the study**

Although numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL context (Botley& Borren, 2007; Ravichandran, 2002; Haja Mohideen,1996), there are very few studies that investigate the use of written corrective feedback on Malaysia Chinese Independent school ESL learners whose medium of instruction is Mandarin. The students who study in independent schools are in the context where English is hardly used and spoken context. Hence, this study is conducted in order to investigate the effectiveness of written corrective feedback among Malaysian Chinese learner of English in the context where English is hardly spoken and used.

Many previous studies on corrective feedback (He.R., 2001; Bitchener.J. Young.S., Cameron.D., 2005; Sheen.Y., 2007; Bitchener.J., Knoch.U., 2008, 2009,2010) distinguish and compare the effectiveness of different strategies of direct and indirect feedback in facilitating accuracy in students' writings. In addition, studies are also conducted to study the effectiveness of focused and unfocused corrective feedback (Sheen et.al, 2008, Bitchener.J, & Knoch.U.,2009). However, there are very few studies which compare the effectiveness of both direct and indirect written corrective feedback on focused written corrective feedback in Malaysia. It is important to look at the influence of direct and indirect corrective feedback in improving the accuracy of students' writing as using the correct corrective feedback strategies is crucial in facilitating error reduction among students.

This study aims to investigate the extent to which corrective feedback resulted in improved accuracy in targeted linguistic error and the differential effects on accuracy for different types of written corrective feedback. More specifically, this study focuses on investigating

direct and indirect written corrective feedback on ESL students' written essays. The focus of the target structure of written corrective feedback in this study is present tenses. Present tenses are chosen as students have learnt present tenses in their syllabus. In addition, since Mandarin is deemed as a language with no tense aspect language while English is a language with tense aspects, it is worthwhile investigating how students can benefit from the feedback provided as well as improve in the accuracy in their writing.

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

(i) To what extent do learners' accuracy in the use of present tenses improve as a result of direct and indirect written corrective feedback?

(ii) What are the other factors that influence students' writing performance?

1.3 Significance of the study

Written corrective feedback is important in L2 learning context as it provides writing teachers insights on effective strategies that help students to learn from errors and improve in their writing. Since there are conflicting views on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in improving students' writing accuracy, the findings from this study may be used to add to the previous studies' findings,(Bitchener., & Knoch., 2005; He., & Glenn., 2001), especially in the Malaysian context.

In addition, Mandarin has no tense aspect like English. Present tenses is viewed as treatable errors (Truscott, 1996; Ferris, 2003). Treatable errors are errors such as subject-verb agreement, run-ons, comma splices, missing articles, verb form errors (Ferris, 1999). Thus, present tenses errors can be considered as rule-governed errors. By looking into treatable

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errors, it will be possible to measure the effectiveness of corrective feedback in writing among learner of English as they are rule-governed. Rule-governed errors are easier to correct and learn than non rule-governed errors as once the learners command the rules, they can construct and use the correct structures as well as make corrections when they make errors. Unlike, non-rule errors like preposition, there is no reason or rule indicating which structures are correct. Hence, this study hopes to provide new insights on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in improving treatable errors in students' writing whose L1 has no tense aspect.

Furthermore, there are very few studies conducted to explore problems students face when correcting their writing tasks based on the corrective feedback provided by instruction. By exploring the factors that influence students' writing performance, more insights on the effectiveness of different strategies of corrective feedback can be gained. The result of this study will add to the previous research findings and help in identifying other factors that have to be considered when providing corrective feedback.

1.4   Conclusion

This chapter has provided the background and statement of the problem, followed by the purpose and significance of the study. Chapter 2 is comprised of literature relevant to this study, followed by chapter 3, which presents a description of methodological steps taken to collect and analyze data for this study. In chapter 4, the results and findings are presented and discussed in the connection to the research questions. Finally, in chapter 5, research and pedagogical implications, as well as, limitations and suggestions for future research are presented.

CHAPTER 2:   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses theories and empirical studies related to written corrective feedback in language acquisition. In the first section of this chapter, theories related to language acquisition are discussed. In addition, discussions are presented on how these theories are related to written corrective feedback. The second section of this chapter presented research evidence of argument for and against written corrective feedback, followed by types of corrective feedback as well as treatable and untreatable corrective feedback.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives

2.1.1 Behaviourist approach

One major theory which brings about the emergence of providing corrective feedback in language classroom is Behaviourist theory. According to Behaviourist theory, language learning is a formation of habits. This occurs when learners respond to stimuli in their environment and gradually remember it after the responses are reinforced. Thus, according to Ellis (1998), habit is a stimulus- response connection.

 In language learning, learners learn language when they are exposed to several stimuli and they response repeatedly till the response is reinforced. Hence, habit is formed. Ellis (1998) stated that learners imitated models of correct language (stimuli) and received positive reinforcement if they were correct and negative reinforcement if they were incorrect When they are exposed to certain stimuli, they responded automatically towards the given stimuli. Thus, in language teaching, learners learn through imitation and drilling of the same

structures over time. Moreover, the theory suggests that structures that are difficult should be focused on by teachers when teaching (Corpuz, 2011). So, by providing corrective feedback to learners, learners will actively respond to the corrective feedback, imitate and repeat the correct structures and finally able to produce the correct structures over time.

However, Behaviourist theory cannot adequately account for language acquisition. Learners cannot reproduce all the input that they gain. Sometimes, they actively construct their own rules on the target structures that they are exposed to. Hence, learning is not just stimuli-response connection.

2.1.2 Cognitive approach

Another school of thought in language acquisition is cognitivism. Cognitive perspective in language acquisition focuses on language rules which central concept of learning is that learning occurs through active, dynamic mental processes. According to Chamot & O'Malley (1996), learners select information from the environment, organize that information, relate it to what they already know, retain what they consider to be important, use the information in appropriate contexts, and reflect on the success of their learning efforts. Anderson (1976, in Chamot & O' Malley, 1996) defines two types of knowledge during the learning or acquisition process: declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is 'what' they know while procedural knowledge is 'what' they know how to do. When something new is learnt, declarative knowledge is learnt first before learners gain procedural knowledge where they know how to do or produce something. Hence, knowledge is learnt or gained through a few steps through practices. During these practices, learners make mistakes or errors. In cognitive approach, this is an important

process as learners command the new knowledge through the mistakes and errors made. Through the feedback received, learners are able to produce accurate targeted language or structure.

Theoretically, cognitive approach can explain how written corrective feedback is applied in language acquisition. However, the effectiveness of written corrective feedback does not rely on cognitive approach only. There are some other possibilities such as motivation and scaffolding under the socio-cultural perspectives, which affect the effectiveness of written corrective feedback.

2.1.3 Socio-cultural perspectives

While cognitive approach focuses on mental processes in learning, socio-cultural theories focuses on how different people learn differently. Socio-cultural approach is proposed by Vygotsky (1978). The central concept of socio-cultural theory is that children's development and learning are influenced by the social world. However, other factors such as motivation and scaffolding also influence individual's learning.

Motivation is one of the factors that determines a learner's performance in learning. According to Skehan (1989, in Yang, 2010), there are four sources of motivation: (1) The learning activity itself to which learners may be attracted by the classroom or learning situation may or may not hold their interest after they leave. (2) The success experienced by a learner where the learner receives encouragement or rewards if they succeed. (3) The internal motivation which are the goals the learner wants to achieve in the process of learning or doing something. (4)Rewards, which are rewards that encourage them to succeed.

Motivation is important in the process of learning as it is one of the sources that encourages and maintains learners' interest in learning. For example, a learner who is motivated to improve his writing ability is aware that the corrective feedback provided by his instructor will benefit him. Hence, the corrective feedback acts as motivator which motivates the learner to continue learning. However, motivation level to continue learning in every learner varies. Learners who have successful past learning experience may exhibit higher motivation level to learn if compared to learners who do not. Although motivation level in learners may influence their learning and performance, other factors such as scaffolding may also influence their success in learning.

In the field of second language learning, scaffolding is viewed as a way to help learners to acquire language with the help of those who are more competent than them such as their teachers or friends. According to Wood et.al (1976, in McLeod, 2010), scaffolding is defined as those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence.

Stuyf (2002) stated that other than engaging the learners, scaffolding also motivates learners to learn as well as minimizing the level of frustration of the learner, especially with learners who have low self-esteem and learning disabilities. This is because learners are given positive feedback and hence they develop the "can" do attitude. It is also helpful for those who usually give up or get frustrated easily when completing their tasks.

In Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the main concept of the theory is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Raymond(2000, p.176, in Yang, 2010) defined the zone of proximal

development as the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistant. Through scaffolding, learners are given supports based on their ZPD. Hence, learners are able to use their prior knowledge and internalize the new knowledge when they are completing their tasks. So, when corrective feedback is given, it is important for teachers to provide it according to the learners' proficiency level. Teachers should provide corrections that learners have the ability to fix and leave out the errors that are beyond their language competency. Only then, through the corrective feedback provided, learners are able to figure out the errors they made, and with help and assistance given, they are able to correct the errors.

Several theories such as behaviorist theory, cognitive approach and socio-cultural perspectives provide guidance on how corrective feedback can be given when students make errors in their learning process. It is usual for language learners to make errors when they are learning a language. So, applying appropriate theories of language learning when providing corrective feedback can help students gain maximum help when they make errors.

2.2   Errors

Making errors are common among language learners. Even native speakers of a language usually make errors. However, native speakers' errors are considered as performance errors which include repetition, slip of tongue, and false starts. Errors in L2 acquisition, on the other hand, according to Hendrickson (1978, in Purnawaman, 2011) is an utterance, form, or structure that a particular language teacher deems unacceptable because of its inappropriate use or its absence in real life discourse. Making errors is seen as important when learning a language as it enables learners to develop and internalize the rules of the

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language they are learning (Zhu 2010). Through making errors, teachers know what has been learnt and what else needs to be learnt by the language learners. So, teachers are concerned about measure that can be taken to help students improve and command the language. One of the ways is through providing corrective feedback. Corrective feedback is usually provided orally or in written form when errors are made by language learners.

2.3   Corrective feedback

Since Truscott's studies (1996) which looked at the Grammar Correction in L2 Writing claimed that grammar correction in L2 writing should be abandoned because substantial research showed it to be ineffective and unhelpful as well as brings harmful effects, several studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback (Ferris, 1999; Chandler, 2003, Bitchner,Young, & Cameron, 2005; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima 2008). Ferris (1999) who studied the argument of Truscott (1996) concluded that grammar correction should be used in improving students' accuracy in writing and Chandler (2003) who studied the effectiveness of the correction of grammatical and lexical errors and how error correction should be carried out concluded that correction is effective.

There are several definitions of corrective feedback. According to Lightbown and Spada (1999, in Zhang.et.al, 2010), corrective feedback is any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect. This includes various responses that the learners receive. Chaudron (1988, in Zhang. et.al, 2010) referred the term "treatment of error" to any teacher behavior following an error that minimally attempts to inform the learner of the fact of error (p.150). Long (1996, in Zhang.et.al, 2010) has a more comprehensive view of feedback. He suggested that there are two categories of environmental input which can be

provided to the learners about the target language. They are the positive and negative evidence. "Positive" evidence according to Long (1996) is providing the learners with models of what is grammatical and acceptable in the target language. "Negative" evidence, on the other hand, is providing the learners with direct or indirect information about what is unacceptable. In the context of this study, corrective feedback refers to feedback given when learners use incorrect linguistics form in the target language in order to help students use correct linguistics form in their production. He and Mathes (2001) stated that the objective of giving feedback is to help the learners recognize a problem with their production, resulting in the correct form being used following feedback.

2.3.1 Corrective feedback on oral and written production

Several studies had been conducted to study the effects of corrective feedback on oral production errors. Among the types of corrective feedback that are frequently used in correcting students' oral production include explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. These strategies differs in term of its explicitness or implicitness. Nassaiji (2009) who studied the effects of recasts (explicit) and elicitations (implicit) on learning linguistic forms that arose incidentally in dyadic interaction, found that recasts showed a higher degree of immediate post interaction than elicitation as students were more likely to notice explicit corrective feedback than implicit corrective feedback. However, there is another study by Li (2010) , suggests that implicit corrective feedback has longer effects than explicit corrective feedback. Hence, the types of strategies used depend on the aim of the correction.

One of the explicit corrective feedbacks that are frequently used is explicit correction. It refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. Students' errors are indicated clearly by teachers when correction is given. For example "You should say" (Lyster & Ranta, 2007). Another strategy is recasts. Recasts involve the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error. It is usually implicit as words such as "You mean" are not being used by the teachers when providing correction. According to Spada and Frohlinch (1995, in Lyster & Ranta, 2007), clarification requests indicate to students either that their utterance has been misunderstood by the teacher or that the utterance is ill-formed in some way and that a repetition or a reformulation is required. It usually includes phrases such as "Pardon me" (Lyster & Ranta, 2007). Another form of feedback which is not provided explicitly is metalinguistic feedback. It usually contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the students' utterance. It is generally used to indicate that there is an error somewhere by using question such as "Can you find your error?" (Lyster & Ranta, 2007). Elicitation is used to directly elicit the correct form from the students through at least three techniques. Teachers elicit completion of their utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to "fill in the blank", or use questions to elicit correct forms such as "How do you say it in English?" and lastly by asking students to reformulate their utterance. The last method that is usually used to provide oral corrective feedback is repetition where in isolation, according to (Lynster & Ranta,2007), teacher repeats students' erroneous utterance by adjusting their intonation so as to highlight the error.

Among the six corrective feedback strategies listed, the most frequent feedback used by teachers in their classroom is recast. This is shown in Sheen's (2004) study where she studied

four communicative classroom settings (French Immersion, Canada ESL, New Zealand ESL, and Korean EFL) using Lyster & Ranta's (2007) taxonomy of teacher's corrective feedback. The study found that recast were the most frequent feedback type in all the four contexts especially in Korean EFL and New Zealand ESL. Recasts is preferred than other strategies because teachers believe that recasts do not break the communicative flow or stop the flow of classroom interaction during lessons (Othman, 2012). Another study which investigated the effectiveness of recast was conducted by Philip (2003). He recruited 33 adults ESL learners to work on oral communication tasks in NS-NNS pairs in order to investigate the extent to which learners may notice native speakers' reformulations of their interlanguage grammar in the context of dyadic interaction. He found that learners noticed over 60-70% of recasts although the accurate recall was constrained by the level of the learners' proficiency and by the length and number of changes in the recast.

When deciding the type of corrective feedback strategies, an important factor which must be taken into consideration is the types of errors students make during production. Mackey et.al (2000) and Nishita (2004, cited by Yoshida, 2008) categorized errors into '*morphosyntactic error'*, '*phonological error', 'lexical error',* and '*semantic and pragmatic error'*. Learners who make '*morphosyntactic error'* usually use incorrect word order, tense, conjugation and particles. '*Phonological error'* is made when learners mispronounce words (or it could also include suprasegmental errors). The third type of error is '*lexical error'* where learners use vocabulary inappropriately or they code-switch to their first language because of their lack of lexical knowledge. Lastly, '*semantic and pragmatic error'* is committed when learner's utterance is misunderstood, although there is not any grammatical, lexical or phonological

errors.

Other than oral corrective feedback, another type of corrective feedback which is studied is written corrective feedback. There are several strategies of providing written corrective feedback. This includes direct and indirect written corrective feedback as well as focused and unfocused written corrective feedback (Bitchener et.al, 2005; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Sheen,2007) . Direct corrective feedback is feedback that provides students with the correct answers above or beside the errors made. Indirect corrective feedback is feedback which does not provide correct answers to the students. Instead, it is either coded, underlined or circled to acknowledge the students that there are errors. Focused corrective feedback is provided where the teachers only correct specific linguistics errors made by the students such as article system (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008) while unfocused corrective feedback is provided to all range or errors made by the students.

In written corrective feedback, a system of classification of errors was established based on previous taxonomies established by researchers such as Corder (1974), and Ferris (2002), They are categorized as grammatical errors (prepositions, articles, singular/plural, adjectives, tenses); lexical errors (word choice, informal usage, idioms); syntactic errors (sentence structure, word order); and substance/mechanical errors (capitalization, punctuation, misspelling) (O'Sullivan & Chambers, 2006). Different studies were conducted to look at the effectiveness of different written corrective feedback on different categories or types of errors. For example, Ellis et.al (2008) studied the effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback among Japanese university students on article system. The focused group only received correction for article errors while the unfocused group received

correction of article as well as other errors. The results showed that corrective feedback is equally effective for both groups. Other than looking at grammatical error, studies are also conducted to investigate the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on overall accuracy, grammatical complexity as well as lexical complexity in writing. Mubarak (2013) studied the effectiveness of direct and indirect written corrective feedback found that although students improved in the course of the experiment, both direct and indirect corrective feedback do not bring significant effect on students' accuracy, grammatical complexity or lexical complexity in their writing. From these previous studies, the effectiveness of written corrective feedback yield different results and hence the current study is conducted to investigate the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on one specific linguistic feature, which is present tenses.

2.4   Argument against and for corrective feedback

The effectiveness of corrective feedback has been debated for the past decades (Truscott, 1996; Ferris, 1999; Chandler, 2003; Bitchener et.al., 2005; Ellis et.al., 2008). Some studies stated that corrective feedback is ineffective and even brings harm (Truscott,1996; Truscott & Hsu, 2008). For example, in the Truscott & Hsu (2008) study, they found out that corrective feedback does not improve students' grammar in writing as participants who received corrective feedback in their studies did not perform better than participants who did not receive corrective feedback in their new writing tasks. However, some studies stated that corrective feedback is helpful (Bitchener et. al., 2005; Bitchener, 2010). In Bitchener et.al (2005) study, they found out that participants who received corrective feedback

outperformed those who did not in definite articles and past simple tenses which are treatable errors but not on untreatable error, preposition.

2.4.1 Argument against corrective feedback

Corrective feedback is seen as important by L2 teachers as they view corrective feedback as one of the ways to help improve students' accuracy in producing the targeted language. However, Truscott (1996) argued that grammar correction is ineffective and harmful and hence should be avoided in L2 writing. In his study, three arguments against corrective feedback are presented. According to him, corrective feedback, like teaching practices that rely on transfer of knowledge, without any concern for the processes underlying the development of the language system, is not promising. So, students cannot be expected to be able to produce the correct structure or form in future if they are corrected before as language development system is complex.

In addition, Truscott (1996) second argument is corrective feedback is ineffective if the students are not ready to receive the corrections as there is natural sequences of acquisition. According to him, students acquire grammatical rules and structures in a specific orders. They will not be able to learn the form and structures if they are not ready. Hence, corrective feedback is not effective when learning sequences are inconsistent with the feedback given by the teachers.

Thirdly, he stated that knowledge gained from corrective feedback is superficial and possibly transient form of knowledge as interlanguage development processes is complex. So the knowledge gained from corrective feedback will only retain for short term. According to

Selinker (1972, in Purnawaman, 2011), interlanguage is the language produced by a student while in the process of learning either a second or foreign language. So when students' actual developing system is not ready to receive the corrective feedback provided, students do not acquire any knowledge in the targeted language.

Truscott (1996) argument is further supported by a study conducted by Truscott and Hsu (2008) who involved 47 English as Foreign Language students. They found out that although students produce lesser errors in the writings which they received corrective feedback, the effect did not extent to new piece of writing. This arises the doubt if corrective feedback should be provided since students keep making the same mistakes after being corrected.

2.4.2 Argument for corrective feedback

Contrary to what Truscott (1996) claimed, several studies support that corrective feedback benefits language learner in improving the accuracy in writing. Ferris (1999) who responded to Truscott (1996) stated that there is some effective ways to respond to error correction in L2 writing and he has under- or -over stated the results and claims of the original studies to suit his own generalizations or arguments. Ferris' (1999) argument led to several studies which looked into the effectiveness of corrective feedback. (Chandler, 2003; Bitchener et.al 2005; Sheen, 2007; Sheen et.al, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch,2010).

Chandler (2003) investigated the effect of corrective feedback on the efficacy of corrective feedback in writing among 31 students. They were divided into two groups. They were taught in the same way as well as received the same feedback. However, they received different treatment. The experimental group was asked to correct their underlined errors

before submitting their second assignment while the control group was asked to do corrections after the first drafts were handed in. Chandler (2003) found that students who did corrections after corrective feedback outperformed those control group students. This shows that students who do correction after receiving corrective feedback improve in their accuracy in writing.

This finding is supported by Bitchener et.al (2005) who investigated the effect of different types of corrective feedback on three different types of errors-simple past tense, definite article and prepositions among 53 adult migrant students over a 12-week period. Although the finding revealed no significant differences between the groups, students who received direct corrective feedback and conferencing outperformed other groups in simple past tense and definite article.

Study on the effectiveness of corrective feedback is further investigated by Sheen (2007) who looked into the differential effect of two types of written corrective feedback on the acquisition of articles. 91 adult immediate ESL learners of various L1 backgrounds were divided into a direct-only correction group, a direct metalinguistic correction group and a control group. Participants were asked to write two narratives to elicit article errors from them. Both treatment groups outperformed the control group on the immediate post-test, although the direct metalinguistic correction group performed better than the direct-only correction group in the delayed posttests.

Another study was also conducted to compare the effectiveness of focused and unfocused corrective feedback by Sheen et.al (2008). 49 students enrolled in general English classes in a national university in Japan were recruited and divided into three groups. One group

received focused correction, another unfocused correction and treatment group. This study was conducted using a pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test designed through three narratives. The focused group was corrected only on the article errors while the unfocused groups were given correction of articles as well as other error corrections. The results revealed that both groups outperformed the control group, which received no correction on the second posttest.

Bitchener & Knoch (2010) conducted a 10-month investigation on the effects of written corrective feedback on two article systems among 62 advanced L2 learners in USA as they wanted to find out the efficacy of corrective feedback among advanced L2 learners as well as the long term efficacy of corrective feedback. Participants were divided into a control group and three treatment groups. The first treatment group received written meta-linguistic explanation, another treatment group received indirect circling of errors, while the other treatment group received written meta-linguistics feedback and oral form-focused instruction. All groups were asked to write about a picture of a different social setting. All three treatment groups performed better than the control group in the immediate post-test although the level of improvement across 10- week period was only shown by two direct feedback group and not the indirect group.

Taking all the evidence highlighted above into account, the effectiveness of written corrective feedback worth further exploration. In addition, from previous studies, different types of corrective feedback produced different results. Hence, the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback should be explored.

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2.5 Types of corrective feedback

Some previous studies used more than one treatment option when providing corrective feedback. These include direct feedback and indirect feedback. (Chandler, 2003; Sheen, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009). Other than revealing the effectiveness of written corrective feedback, they also compared the relative effectiveness of different corrective feedback in improving the accuracy of writing. Hence, corrective feedback can be categorized as direct and indirect feedback.

2.5.1 Direct corrective feedback

Direct corrective feedback is defined as the provision of the correct linguistic form or structure by the teacher to the student above or near the linguistic error. It may include crossing out of an unnecessary word/ phrase/ morpheme, the insertion of a missing word/ phrase/ morpheme, or the provision of the correct form or structure (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). It is usually given to the students together with the correct form of linguistic or grammatical structures so that they are aware of their errors, as well as, the correct form of linguistic or grammatical structures. It aims to improve students' accuracy in the language use. Lee (2003, in Purnawarman,2011) stated that direct feedback may be appropriate for beginner students, or in a situation when errors are 'untreatable' that are not susceptible to self-correction such as sentence structure and word choice, and when teachers want to direct student attention to error patterns that require student correction.

Several studies which employed the use of written direct feedback yielded different results on students' errors. Bitchener & Knoch (2008) who studied the effectiveness of three

different written corrective feedback (error correction plus written and oral meta-linguistics explanation; error correction plus written meta-linguistics explanation; and error correction) over 10-month on two functional uses of the English article system with 52 intermediate ESL students in Auckland showed that there was no difference between the three groups although they outperformed the control group.

On the other hand, Chandler (2003) who studied on the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback involving 31 ESL learners found out that students preferred direct corrective feedback as it is the easiest and fastest way for them to make revisions. Sheen (2007) who studied the differential effect of two types of written corrective feedback (direct only correction; direct meta-linguistics correction and control group) involving 91 ESL learners found out that all the treatment groups outperformed the control group and direct meta-linguistics group did better than the direct correction group in post-test.

2.5.2 Indirect corrective feedback

Indirect corrective feedback is defined as corrective feedback which indicates that in some way an error has been made, but correction is not supplied. This may be provided in one of the four ways; underlining or circling an error; recording in the margin the number of errors in a given line; or using a code to show where an error has occurred and what type of error it is (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). Indirect feedback is given to draw students' attention to their errors and make them correct the errors by themselves without being given explicit correction. According to Pollard (1990), teacher acts as a 'reflective agent' who provides meaningful and appropriate guidance and extension to the cognitive structuring and skill development arising from the students' initial experiences through indirect feedback. So,

through indirect feedback provided, students are able to identify the locations of the errors made. By relating the errors to the context, they are able to make sense of the errors made and try to discover the correct linguistics forms based on their prior knowledge.

Chandler (2003) who studied the various effects of teacher feedback on revision and subsequent writing involving 31 ESL university undergraduate students found out that indirect feedback is more preferred although some students stated that direct feedback is the easiest to correct. Indirect feedback with underlining on students' errors is preferred as it makes the students think of the error by themselves and this makes them remember the errors and will not repeat them again. She also added on that in order to improve in writing, it is important for students to do something to their corrections instead of just receiving it as it helps them notice a mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language facilitate second language acquisition. Hence, it is worth noticing that in order to improve the accuracy in writing, it is important for students to produce revised drafts after receiving corrective feedback.

Other than the types of corrective feedback, either direct or indirect corrective feedback is one of the concern on how corrective feedback should be provided, another dilemma faced by teachers when providing corrective feedback is whether they should focus on certain errors which are rule-based or attend to all errors made by students.

2.6 Treatable and untreatable corrective feedback

Truscott (1996) stated that corrective feedback is ineffective as acquisition of a grammatical structure is a gradual process, not a sudden discovery as the intuitive view of correction

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would imply. Grammatical knowledge is not acquired or learnt suddenly. Instead, it is learnt in specific order and time. Bitchener et.al (2005) stated SLA insights and studies of error correction point to the fact that different linguistic categories should not be treated as if they are equivalent because they represent domains of knowledge that are acquired through different stages and processes. Hence, Ferris (1999) introduced 'treatable' and 'untreatable' errors.

'Treatable' errors are errors that occur in a patterned, rule-governed way such as subject-verb agreement, run-ons, and comma splices, missing articles and verb form errors (Ferris, 1999). This type of errors enables students to resolve the errors based on a set of grammatical rules they are taught or learnt. On the other hand, 'untreatable' errors include a wide variety of lexical errors and problems with sentence structure, including missing words, unnecessary words, and word order problems. This type of errors are non-idiomatic and idiosyncratic. So, learners have to solve the errors using the previously acquired grammatical knowledge (Ferris, 1999). Thus, students who do not have the required proficiency level are not able to figure out the errors made although corrective feedback is provided. Even if students are provided with direct corrective feedback, they may not be able to produce the correct structures in their new writing task as the errors made are idiosyncratic and non-idiomatic. Thus, different strategies of corrective feedback should be provided based on the types of errors made by the students.

Bitchener et.al (2005) who studied the effect of different types of corrective feedback on past simple tense, definite article and prepositions among 53 adult migrant students over a 12-week period found out that students improved past simple tense and definite articles but

not prepositions. This study supported Ferris (1999) who stated that it is easier for students to improve 'treatable' errors which occur in patterned and rule-governed way than 'untreatable' errors like prepositions which are more idiosyncratic. Bitchener's study yielded the same result with the study conducted by Bitchener & Knoch (2009) on the efficacy of written corrective feedback on two functional uses of the English article system: the referential indefinite article 'a' and referential definite article 'the' among 52 low intermediate ESL writers in Auckland. They found that students in the groups receiving corrective feedback on articles outperformed the control group in all four post-tests. Another study conducted by Sheen (2007) which examined the differential effect of two types of written corrective feedback on the use of English articles by 91 ESL learners of various L1 backgrounds also showed that students who are in the treatment groups did better than students in control group.

The discussion on the findings on the previous studies indicated that the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in improving the accuracy of students' writings is inconclusive. By conducting the present study, the potential benefits of written corrective feedback can be further understood and the findings can benefit teachers and students by filling in the gap which exists in teaching and learning writing skills in particular context of ESL in Malaysia Chinese Independent School.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented some important elements in the study of corrective feedback. It started by reviewing the literature relating to corrective feedback starting with the learning

theoretical perspective, error in general, and lastly focusing on corrective feedback. The different types of corrective feedback as well as the importance of corrective feedback which helps students learnt the targeted structures were explained by referring to previous studies conducted. In the next chapter, the research design underpinning the methodology used in current study will be discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 3:   METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the participants, designs, instruments, target structure and procedures used to answer the research questions in this study. This chapter is divided into six sections where section one discusses the students who participated in this study while section two discusses the design of the study. Section three discusses the instrument used to collect the data in this study while section four discusses the target structure of the study. Section five and six discuss the data collection procedures as well as how data is analyzed respectively.

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of different corrective feedback in improving the accuracy of students' writing by using a design of direct and indirect written corrective feedback. The targeted linguistics errors is present tenses. In order to investigate if students' writing accuracy improves, students write three essays; the first essay at the beginning of the study (pre-test) the second essay, which is the treatment essay, and the third essay (post-test), which is conducted two months later. The number of errors made by students from pre to post-test is calculated to investigate the effectiveness of the written corrective feedback given.

3.1   Participants

Participants consisted of 22 Tsun Jin High School students. They were aged between 17-18 years old. They were in senior three when they participated in the study. All the participants selected were from the Kuala Lumpur area. They were enrolled in Advanced level in Just English Programme. Just English programme was established in 2002 and it aims to provide

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total solutions for English language teaching and learning in the Malaysian market. All participants had taken the English placement test when they enrolled into the school in Junior one.

These participants were selected based on convenience sampling. Marshall (1996) stated that convenience sampling is the least rigorous technique, involving the selection of the most accessible subjects. It is least costly to the research, in terms of time, effort and money. Hence, convenience sampling was adapted in this study due to availability and ease of access to the sample. All the 22 selected participants came from the same English class taught by the researcher. Although these participants were selected based on convenience sampling, to some extent, they did represent the Malaysian Chinese Independent School students as the curricular and non-curricular programmes where these participants received their education were similar to other Chinese Independent Schools in Malaysia.

The students were divided into two groups. Each group consists of 11 participants. Participants from group one received direct feedback while those from group two received indirect feedback.

Although 22 students did the pre-test and treatment, only 20 students completed the study. 2 students did not attend the class when the post-test was conducted. Thus, data related to these two students were eliminated from the study.

3.2   Design

This study is an experimental study which consisted of one independent and dependent variables. The independent variable in this study was the corrective feedback provided by

the teacher. In this context, the two corrective feedbacks were direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback. The dependent variable in this study was the students' accuracy in writing. It was measured by the number of errors made by the students in their writing (Pre-test, Treatment, and Post-test) over a period of 19 weeks. Figure 1 showed the research design of this study.

20 Chinese independent school students.

Pre-test (Week 1)

*Factual essay (Do we need to travel to see other cultures. discuss.)

*To establish point of comparison

Treatment (Week 4-10)

*Factual essay. (Travelling enhance one's outlook in life. What are your views)

Direct feedback

*Correct answers directly given.

Indirect feedback

* Indirect with symbols.

Post-test (Week 19)

*Factual essay. (Best knowledge can be gained through travelling. Discuss.)

Interview session

* 3 students from direct feedback.

*3 students from indirect feedback.

Figure 1: Research design of the study.

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A total of 20 Chinese Independent school students from Advanced level were recruited into the study. They were divided into two groups, the direct feedback and the indirect feedback groups. The study was divided into three stages, which were the pre-test, treatment and post-test. All essays written were factual essays. Pre-test was conducted in week 1 to establish point of comparison between the two groups. Treatment was done from week 4 to week 10. During the treatment, students received either direct or indirect feedback when the teacher returned them the first draft. Direct feedback group students were provided with correct answers directly while indirect feedback group students were provided with symbols. During treatment, only the indirect group carried out revision. The direct corrective feedback group only corrected the errors directly based on the answers provided. However, the indirect corrective feedback group had to correct and rewrite the same essay based on the symbols given. The number of errors found the in second draft, which was also known as the revised text, were counted again to see if they made lesser errors in their revised texts. Post-test was conducted in week 19, which was nine weeks after treatment, to investigate if students improved in their writings' accuracy. The post-test had to be conducted 9 weeks after the treatment process due to unforeseen circumstance, that is these students were having their public exams between the period of the treatment and post-test.

Finally, face-to-face interview sessions were conducted. Three students from direct feedback group and three students from indirect feedback group were picked randomly for the interview. The aim of interviewing the students was to gain insights on the problems students faced when doing corrections based on the corrective feedback given as well as suggestions on how corrective feedback could be provided.

3.3   Instruments

Students produced three pieces of factual writing. Factual essays were selected in this research for two reasons. This study aimed to look at present tenses, and factual essays required participants to use present tenses to convey content in their writing. So, the use of present tenses was chosen based on this reason. Secondly, factual essays were selected because it was part of the coverage of grammar items stipulated in the syllabus of English lessons.

Interviews were also conducted in this study with participants from direct and indirect written corrective feedback groups. Six students; 3 from direct corrective feedback group and another 3 from indirect corrective feedback group were selected randomly to be interviewed. This was carried out to get more insights on the problems faced by participants and how they dealt with the problems when they were provided with indirect written corrective feedback.

In this study, different tables were also used to organize the data collected. A comparison table of percentage of number of errors made in the three tests was tabulated to measure if the percentage of number of errors made by the students decreased across pre-test to post-test. Lower percentage of number of errors made in post-test as compared to pre-test would reveal that written corrective feedback was effective. Another comparison table was tabulated to compare the mean percentage of errors made and standard deviation per feedback group and tests. This was tabulated to reveal the impact of types of corrective feedback on the students' use of present tense in their writing

3.4 Target Structures

Compared to previous studies on the value of written corrective feedback, (Bitchener, 2005) which looked at three linguistic errors- preposition, past tense, and definite article, and (Bitchener.J, & Knoch.U., 2008) which looked at definite article, "the", and indefinite article , "a", this study examined the effect of written corrective feedback on "treatable" (Truscott, 1996; Ferris, 2003) error category. The purpose of limiting the focus to only looking at the target structure was because several previous studies on written corrective feedback had shown positive results when examining specific treatable errors. (Sheen, 2007; Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010). So, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of direct and indirect written corrective feedback by focusing on only one specific linguistic category.

Present tenses were used to refer to present situations. There are four sub categories of present tenses. They are simple present, present continuous, present perfect and present perfect continuous. The researcher decides to focus on present tenses because although present tenses were one of the earliest learnt lessons in English class, many Chinese students still face difficulty in using the correct form of present tenses in their writing. This might be due to the influence of their first language as Chinese is a language without tense aspect, as pointed out by Sharon.S, Kelly.T, Nallammai.S, Kamaruzaman,J.,(2009). So, this study aimed to investigate if this is also one of the structures that participants face difficulty when using it in their writing

3.5   Data Collection

Data was collected in 19-week period, beginning from the pre-test, treatment one and treatment two followed by post-test. In total, 80 essays were collected in the whole process of data collection for this study.

This study was carried out in three stages. Although participants were divided into two groups, they shared same similar essay topics from pre-test to post-test. Only the corrective feedback received by the two groups differ during the treatment. Group one received direct written corrective feedback. Each time an error was made, the teacher would mark and provide the correct answers on top of the errors. Group two received indirect written corrective feedback. When an error was made, correction in term of symbol would be provided.(Refer to Appendix 7 for the symbols used in this study). For example, VT stands for verb tense error. Instead of using "she is buying a pair of shoes now", participants wrote "she buys a pair of shoes now". So on top of "buy", the teacher would write VT. Explanations of each symbols were provided when students were doing the corrections.

During the pre-test, all participants were given a topic, 'Do we need to travel to see other cultures? Discus.' (Refer to appendix 3) to write about. No discussion was allowed, no help or guidance was provided. Participants were given an hour to complete the essay. For the treatment process, another topic 'Travelling enhances one's outlook in life. What are your views?' (Refer to appendix 4 & 5) would be given. Both group of students had to write the essay twice. For the first draft, both direct and indirect corrective feedback students would write the essay by their own, without help and guidance. When the first draft was written and corrective feedback provided, students from group one, who received direct feedback,

had to correct the errors based on the direct feedback given. For indirect feedback group's participants, they received indirect feedback where symbols were provided for them. They were requested to correct their errors based on the symbols provided. They could seek help and assistance from teacher and friends if they could not correct the errors.

Post-test would only be conducted nine weeks after the students completed their treatment. Both groups only wrote the same essay in order to investigate if students improved in their writing. There was a gap of three weeks between the pre-test and treatment process. For the post-test, the gap was nine weeks. It was conducted slightly later for two reasons. Firstly, the study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback overtime, that is the students manage to retain the knowledge gained during the treatment process. Secondly, the students were having their public exam during the weeks between the treatment and post-test. The title used in the post-test was 'Best knowledge can be gained through travelling. Discuss.'(Refer to appendix 6)

All the essays were written in the class during class hour. The students were not allowed to complete their writings at home in order to ensure the authenticity of the essays produced by the students.

After all the data was collected and analyzed, short interviews were conducted randomly with participants from both direct and indirect corrective feedback group. The interviewed were audio-taped. Through the interviews, students provided their opinions and shared the problems they encountered when carrying out the corrections. This is to gain insight if corrective feedback is effective. Interview has been used as it is an effective tool which provides useful information when one cannot directly observe participants, and it permits

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participants to describe detailed personal information (Creswell, 2012). Hence, in this study, interview was used to find out the other factors that influence students' performance in their writing.

3.6   Data Analysis

Uses of present tenses were identified in each essay. Percentage on the wrong usage of the targeted function was calculated and tabulated. Interviews were also used to elicit insights from students. Students expressed how they viewed the different feedback provided by the teacher. In addition, the interview questions were also meant to detect other factors that influence students' accuracy in writing. The interview questions were:-

1. What are the problems you face when doing correction based on the symbols or direct corrective feedback given, without help from teacher and friends?

2. Is teacher or friends' assistance useful when doing correction?

3. Overall, does corrective feedback help you in your writing? If yes, how does it help you? If not, why do you think it is not helpful?

Based on the feedback obtained, the researcher will attempt to detect explanations or reasons that may explain factors which influence students' use of present tense which are related to the provision of direct and indirect feedback.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the design of the study, the description of the participants, data collection and data analysis. The rationale of utilizing the methods and choosing the target

structures were also explained. The next chapter will describe and discuss the results obtain

from the data collected.

CHAPTER 4   RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This study investigated the effectiveness of different strategies of corrective feedback on the advanced learner of English. Teacher feedback was provided directly on the essay the learners wrote. Two types of feedback were provided, namely the direct and the indirect feedback only. The different feedbacks were provided during their treatment through a two-draft writing process. At the end of this study, students were given a new writing task. This was to examine the effects of different corrective feedback strategies on revised text as well as new text. In addition, face-to-face interviews were also conducted randomly in order to gain more insights on the problems students faced when dealing with corrective feedback, the strategies they applied when facing problems during corrections, as well as if students had suggestions regarding what would be helpful in terms of provision of corrective feedback. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

(i) To what extent do learners' accuracy in the use of present tenses improve as a result of direct and indirect written corrective feedback?

(ii) What are the other factors that influence students' writing performance?

The results of each research question are presented in this chapter and the research outcomes are discussed in relation to previous literature and studies.

4.1   Results of Research Question 1

This study comprised of three stages, which comprise the pre-test, treatment, and post-test. During the pre-test, help and assistance were not given during this stage because it was

conducted to identify the initial number of errors students made in their writing. The second stage was the treatment. During this stage, students received either direct or indirect written corrective feedback from the teacher. Students were divided into two groups where group one students received direct feedback (the symbol D is used to represent direct feedback).Direct written corrective feedback group (D) only received the feedback and corrected the errors based on the correction provided. For the indirect written corrective feedback group,(the symbol ID is used to represent indirect feedback) they received the feedback and had to rewrite the essay. They rewrote the essay and corrected the errors based on the symbols given. The number of errors were counted again. In the final stage, students had to write a new piece of essay. The total number of participants at the beginning of the study was 22 students who were randomly assigned and evenly distributed into two groups. However, only 20 students completed the experiment. Of the 20 students, each submitted four essays (1 for pre-test, 2 essays during treatment, and 1 for post-test each) during the study and thus the total number of essays collected was 80. All the 80 essays were included in the analysis to answer the first research question. The number of errors made in all the tests were calculated in order to determine the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on students writing in the two groups.

The descriptive statistics of the study is displayed in Table 1. The percentage of number of errors made by the students forms the basis of comparison in this study. The percentage was calculated based on the total number of errors made divided by the total number of present tense verbs in the essay. For example, in one script, four wrong usage of the targeted features from ten obligatory occasions mean a 40 percent error rate. In terms of identifying the

student with the type of corrective feedback given, students in odd number were students who received direct written corrective feedback (D) while students in even numbers were students who received indirect written corrective feedback (ID).

Table 1: Percentage of number of errors made in three tests.

Test / Students	Pre (%) Week 1	Treatment (%) Week 4-10			Post (%) Week 19
		(%) of errors detected in essay for student receiving direct written corrective feedback (D)	(%) of errors detected in essay for student receiving indirect written corrective feedback (ID)	(%) of errors detected in revised work of students who received indirect written corrective feedback (ID)	
1(D)	32.00	27.42			32.43
2 (ID)	18.87		23.40	12.20	29.03
3(D)	9.43	9.30			4.00
4 (ID)	30.19		26.92	16.98	33.33
5 (D)	43.59	42.00			30.00
6 (ID)	14.58		29.03	19.35	31.43
8 (ID)	11.76		16.33	11.36	31.71
10 (ID)	18.87		22.64	5.88	34.48
11 (D)	9.09	5.00			11.43

Student					
12 (ID)	14.75		27.12	5.88	32.50
13 (D)	9.80	10.64			10.20
14 (ID)	14.29		14.29	9.62	23.53
15 (D)	11.86	15.79			12.20
16 (ID)	18.43		13.95	8.00	27.50
17 (D)	11.63	18.00			36.36
18 (ID)	15.00		15.22	12.50	28.00
19 (D)	25.45	24.49			48.57
20 (ID)	16.67		15.38	8.33	29.27
21 (D)	18.33	29.00			38.10
22 (ID)	31.58		14.63	8.57	13.89

Note: D= Students receiving direct written corrective feedback.

ID= Students receiving indirect written corrective feedback.

From Table 1, 3 students (student 3, 5 and 22) showed improvement in accuracy from pre-test to post-test. Students 3 and 5 were students who received direct written corrective feedback while student 22 was student who received indirect written corrective feedback. For student 3, the percentage of error in pre-test was 9.43. In post-test, she improved and only made 4.00% of errors. For student 5, she made 43.59% of error in pre-test. In post-test, the percentage of errors made decreased to 30%, with a percentage difference of 12%. For student 22, he made 31.58% of error in pre-test and the percentage reduced to 13.89 in post-test. The result of these 3 students partially supported (Bitchener et.al, 2005; Bitchener &

Knoch, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010) argument that corrective feedback is effective. This meant the students, who showed improvement, read through the written corrective feedback given to them, understood them and noticed the accurate forms of the target structure and hence produced them in their new writing. They were able to use the knowledge they gained from the previous corrective feedback into their new piece of writing. However, it was only effective for these 3 students. The remaining 17 students from both group did not benefit from the corrective feedback provided as they did not show improvement in accuracy in their post-test. This might be due to their inability to understand the rules of the targeted linguistic feature or master the knowledge in such a short period as Mandarin, their first language, do not have tenses structure like English language. Hence, they need higher capability and proficiency to understand and deal with the different types of tenses in English language.

Although students who received indirect written corrective feedback did not show improvement in post-test, they managed to reduce the number of errors committed in their revised work during the treatment period. They made lesser number of errors in their revised texts, after correcting their work based on the symbols given in their first draft. For example, students 2. Initially, she made 23.40% of errors in her first draft. In her revised work, she only made 12.20% of errors. The same situation was observed in students 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 and 22 whereby these students who received indirect corrective feedback during the treatment process managed to decrease the number of errors in their revised work. (Refer to Table 1). This showed that students improved when they revised their first draft as they managed to correct some of the errors they made based on the symbols given. This finding indicated that advanced learners of English had the ability to edit the errors they made in

their writing based on the symbols given as their formal knowledge had come into play at the editing phrase, where they were directed to the locations of the errors they had made. However, the effect of the written corrective feedback did not extent to the new writing task as students did not show lower percentage of errors made in their post-test which was conducted 9 weeks later. The result had similar finding with Truscott & Hsu (2008) study, where they found that correction helped students in reducing their errors on the writing on which they received correction. However, the effect did not extent to a new writing task which was conducted a week later. This was also similar to Truscott (1996) claim where he stated that successful revisions did not ensure students of becoming better writer as knowledge that learners gained from written corrective feedback might only be kept as short-term knowledge. They might not understand the rules of the targeted linguistics so they were unable to use the correct form in their new piece of writing over time.

In order to compare the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback in improving the accuracy of writing, table 2 was tabulated to provide the mean percentage of errors made across the three writing tasks.

Table 2: Mean percentage of errors made and standard deviation per feedback group and tests.

Group	Pre –test		Treatment				Post-test	
	Mean	SD	Mean		SD		Mean	SD
Direct group	19.02	12.22	20.18		11.67		24.92	15.65
Indirect group	18.64	6.44	Mean percentage of error made in unrevised work	Mean percentage of error made in revised work	SD in unrevised work	SD in revised work	28.61	5.78
			19.90	10.79	5.95	4.30		

As shown in table 2, the mean percentage of errors made for direct group is slightly higher than the indirect group in pre-test. Students who received direct written corrective feedback made a mean percentage of errors of 19.02% in pre-test while the indirect group made only 18.64%. The mean difference was only 0.38%. This showed that both groups were quite similar in terms of mean percentages at the time of pre-test and indicated that the proficiency level between the two groups were quite similar. This is an important factor to be considered as Chia (2013) found out that teacher corrective feedback may be more beneficial to more skilled writers than to less skilled writers in helping with their problems in grammar. So, with almost similar proficiency level between the two groups, the effectiveness of teacher's written corrective feedback should be almost equal between the two groups.

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During the treatment, students who received direct written corrective feedback made a mean percentage of error of 20.18% while the indirect written corrective feedback group made only 19.90% of error. The difference of mean percentage between the two groups was only 0.28%. This result was similar to the pre-test where the students from direct group made slightly higher mean percentage of error than the indirect group.

However, in post-test, the trend reversed where students who received indirect written corrective feedback made higher mean percentage of error than the direct written corrective feedback group. The indirect corrective feedback group made a mean percentage of error of 28.61%, which was 3.69% higher than the direct corrective feedback group, which only made a mean percentage of error of 24.92%. The result indicated that direct written corrective feedback was more effective than indirect written corrective feedback as after the treatment, students who received direct written corrective feedback made lesser errors than students who received indirect written corrective feedback. This contradicted with the claim which stated that the direct approach was ineffective as it did not provide students the opportunity to correct and recognize the errors by themselves. Instead, it only made the students merely copy the correction provided by the teachers. (Fregeau, 1999; Cohen & Cavalcanti; in Chia, 2013). In this study, students who received direct written corrective feedback did not merely copy the corrections provided only. Instead, they looked at the corrective feedback given, tried to find out the reasons why the initial tenses that they used were wrong by using the formal knowledge they had previously received or asking help from their friends or teacher before doing the correction. From the experience of the researcher, who is their teacher, it is assumed that this group of advanced learner of English has the

motivation to learn from the errors they made as they are aware the importance of having good command of English for their future use when they need to further their studies.

4.2 Results of Research Question 2

To answer the second research question, face-to-face interview were conducted randomly with three students each from one group. Since it is important to not give unnecessary pressure on weak students, the interview was conducted in language that students felt more comfortable with. Students were informed that they could speak in the language which they were comfortable with when answering the questions in the interview. In this case, both the teacher and the students spoke in Mandarin as students' first language is Mandarin and they could express their opinions in Mandarin more clearly and fluently. In addition, the students were also told to express their opinions without any hesitation even if they had negative comments. The students were told that the researcher would like to get authentic view of students regarding the effectiveness of both direct and indirect written corrective feedback.

Through the interview, the problems faced by the students when carrying out correction, the strategies they applied when facing problems during correction, as well as suggestions on the strategies of corrective feedback were collected. After the data were collected and analyzed, themes were identified relating to research question two. After analyzing the data, two key themes, which were motivation and scaffolding, were identified from the responses of the students. From the data analyzed, the next section outlines each theme that emerged as well as providing example excerpts of the students' responses during the semi- structured interview.

4.2.1 Motivation

Based on the results collected, motivation is one of the factors that influence the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in improving the accuracy in writing. For example, from an interview with one of the students, she agreed that corrective feedback helped her to improve her next piece of writing. The excerpt is outlined in figure 2.

Interviewer: 你看你写的这篇作文，你对老师给你的 corrective feedback, 就是改正，有什 么看 法？ When you look at this piece of essay, what do you think of the corrective feedback (correction) provided by teacher? Student:　　Seriously, it helps me a lot in some mistakes I did and then it helps me a lot to improve it whenever the next time I write the essay.

Figure 2: Student's response towards teacher's corrective feedback.

From the response that she gave, it could be assumed that this student favoured corrective feedback and found that corrective feedback was useful in improving her writing. Hence, she was motivated to learn from the feedback given so that she could use them in her next writings.

Another student also expressed that from corrective feedback, her writing and sentence structures improved. The excerpt is outlined in figure 3.

Interviewer:	基本上，对老师 给的改正有什么看法？
	Basically, what is your perception/opinion towards teacher's corrective feedback?
Student :	感觉到老师给的改正过后整个句子会比较顺啦，更美的句子出现。
	I feel that after teacher's correction, the whole sentence is smoother, and there are better sentences.

Figure 3: Student's response towards teacher's corrective feedback.

The student who was interviewed in figure 3 was a weaker student. Like student from figure 2, she also favoured corrective feedback. However, unlike student in figure 2 who needed corrective feedback to avoid making the same mistakes in her next piece of writings, this student hoped that from corrective feedback provided, she could construct better sentences. She was not only motivated to learn grammar from the feedback, but also viewed the corrective feedback to serve as models of writing good sentences as her proficiency level was lower.

This finding corresponded with the researcher's original presumption that corrective feedback helps in improving students' writing as students were motivated to learn from the errors they made so that they would not make the same errors for the second time in their new piece of writing as well as improving their overall writing skills. In addition, five out of six students agreed that corrective feedback led them to focus on one particular aspect of grammar and hence enabled them to notice their errors. Once they noticed the errors they made, they would try to figure out the correct answers for the errors they made as well as the reasons why they made the errors initially. This showed that students were motivated to

learn by thinking and figuring out the errors that they made in order to correct the errors. One plausible explanation may be due to students' intrinsic motivation. Although getting the right sentence structures or answers for the mistakes that they made were challenging, they enjoyed the process as they felt a strong sense of accomplishment when they successfully got the right answers. So, the process of correcting enables the learners to acquire knowledge so they can use the correct structures in their future writings. According to Skehan (1989, in Lu,2010), learners may have the motivation to do something when they are attracted by what is happening in a classroom. So, by receiving corrective feedback in their writing, students knew they were expected to look at the errors they made, notice their errors, and hence looked for the correct structures for the errors made or learnt from the feedback provided by teacher.

However, motivation itself was insufficient as according to Truscott (1996), learners may wrongly understand their errors as well as the corrections provided and hence they may make incorrect conclusion of the feedback provided. In this case, they may be similar to those who are not motivated to learn from the feedback provided. For example, a student expressed that she would not do anything (asking help from friends or teacher) if she did not understand the correction provided by teacher. This shows that this student was not as motivated. When students have low motivation when receiving corrective feedback, their desire to improve their writing is low. Hence, this could be have explained why students did not improve in the post-test which was conducted 9 weeks after the treatment. From the experience of the researcher, who had been their teacher for two years, this may be due to students not fully

comprehending the rules of the structures of grammar and hence unable to produce the correct structures in their new writing.

Other than low intrinsic motivation among the students, some students expressed their problems of not being able to figure out the correct answers for the errors if they were provided with indirect feedback. They stated that they knew the aspects of grammar that they were wrong but they were not sure of the correct answers and hence unable to make the corrections as they did not know the reasons why they made such errors. For example, one student stated that she felt at times she did not understand the corrections given or use the corrections given in the correct way. A sample excerpt from one of the interviews is shown below:

Student: 只是有时侯有些改正我看不明白，因为有时侯我不会用。。。
Sometimes, I cannot understand some of the corrections provided
because I do not know how to use them.

Figure 4: Student's response towards teacher's corrective feedback

This might be because they had insufficient knowledge about the grammar item. Not knowing the rules well enough, made them unable to correct the errors that they made. Hence, they faced confusions when deciding the types of tenses to be used in their writing. This is one of the major problems faced by those Chinese learners of English as Mandarin is a language which does not have tense aspects. So when they did not have full understanding of the rules, they were unable to differentiate the differences among the tenses, although they were usually taught that they needed to go back to the sentences as well as traced back where

the paragraph began in order to decide the sequence and time frame when the events took place when deciding the tenses.

Besides, when being interviewed, four out of six students stated they favoured indirect feedback than direct feedback. This might be due to motivation as when they were provided with indirect corrective feedback, they did not know the correct answers to the mistakes that they made. So, they needed to find out the correct answers by themselves. This makes learning from indirect corrective feedback more challenging than direct corrective feedback. In the process of looking for answers, they were challenged to find the correct answers. So, if they successfully found the correct answers, they felt satisfied and were motivated to find out more answers for the mistakes that they had made. In this case, students had deeper impression of the errors they made and hence the same error can be avoided although sometimes, the motivation of learning did not last long after they had left the classroom. This finding is similar to Lu (2010) finding where she stated that students may not sustain the same passion or motivation after they leave the classroom, although the process of correcting their errors by themselves may help them have deeper impression of the type of errors they had made, so they can avoid making the same errors twice.

4.2.2 Scaffolding

According to Olson & Pratt (2000, in Lu, 2010), teacher should scaffold learners with instructions that are slightly beyond their proficiency level. Students might understand certain linguistics rules that they were taught in class but they may not be able to correct the errors by themselves. One of the plausible explanation may be due to insufficient of reading. Since students' first language was Mandarin and they were Chinese independent school

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students, whose exposure of English was extremely scarce, it would be seen that without much reading of English material, their proficiency level was not sufficient for them to self-edit their own work when errors were found. Hence, they needed help and scaffolding.

There are several ways how scaffolding can be provided in language learning. Ellis and Larkin (1998) provided a simple scaffolding structure. Scaffolding can be done in four ways. The first way is '*the teacher does it*'. In this method, the teacher models how to perform a new or difficult task using method such as thinking aloud. Secondly, through '*the class does it*' way, teacher and students work together to perform the task. '*The group does it*' way is used when students work with a partner or a small cooperative group to complete the task. Lastly, scaffolding can be done through '*the individual does it*' way. This is when an individual has the ability to complete the task independently by himself by receiving necessary practice to help them perform the task automatically and quickly. In this study, scaffolding was done through what is defined by Ellis and Larkin (1998), '*the class does it*', '*the group does it*',* and *'the individual does it*'. '*The teacher does it*' was used when the teacher worked together with the students when the students could not get answers after trying. '*The group does it*' was used when students asked help from their friends and they

discussed the answers together. And lastly, '*the individual does it*' was used when the student tried to figure out the answers by himself without help and assistance from both teacher and friends. Hence, it can be concluded that scaffolding in language classroom can be any form of help and assistance from anyone. It does not have to solely come from teachers. It can be

from friends as well. Through minimal help from friends and teachers, students may be able to figure out the correct answers for the errors that they made as what they needed was more support and help from others. A sample excerpt from one of the interview is shown below.

Ji Ching:	问题。。。就好像，是错了，想了原因，可是还是想不通为什么会错。
	The problem is…After thinking for the reasons why I am wrong, I still can't figure out why.
Teacher:	这样，如果你在这种情况下，这样你会做些什么呢？
	If that is the case, what will you usually do?
Ji Ching:	找朋友解释或问老师咯。
	I will ask help from friends and teachers.
Teacher:	朋友解释或问老师。
	Asking help from friends and teachers.
Ji Ching:	啊。
	Yes.

Figure 5: Student's response towards teacher and friends' scaffolding.

From the interview excerpt shown above, student would seek for teacher and friends' assistance when they faced problem in their writing. Thus, this proved that teacher and friends' assistance could help students figure out the correct answers for the errors that they made in their learning process.

In addition, help from friends were usually in discussion form, where students who needed help and students who helped usually discuss the errors together and trying to figure out the reasons why such errors were made as well as the answers to the errors made. Through this

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kind of interaction, students could learn more effectively and had deeper understanding as they were actively involved in the learning process. Unlike scaffolding solely from teacher, sometimes, students did not participate in the discussion as teacher was the only one who did the talking and students did the listening. So, students might not have as deep impression as the one where they were actively involved in the learning process.

Although teacher's help might not be as effective as friends, all six students expressed that teacher and friends' assistance were helpful when they were doing correction. This shows that scaffolding plays an important role in improving students' accuracy in writing. A sample excerpt from one of the interviews is shown below.

Teacher:	Ok. 谢谢。Ok. 这样， 基本上，你觉得老师或者朋友在，的帮助,其实有用吗？ Ok. Thanks. Basically, do you think teacher and friends' assistance useful?
Student:	有。 Yes.
Teacher:	有。 如何呢？可以，觉得它怎么，通常你的老师或者你的朋友怎么帮你吗？ Yes. How? How do your teacher and friends usually help?
Student:	就很像，erm..因为我华，就很像…有时候英文的 vocab 就不知道就怎样讲，然后就问朋友，然后就懂咯。就记下来，原来要这样子讲。 Erm, normally I do not know the vocab. So I will ask my friend. I will know how to use it and I will remember it.

Figure 6: Student's response towards teacher and friends' scaffolding.

The sample excerpt above showed that the student benefited from her friend's help when she did not know the vocabulary when writing the essay.

According to Stufy (2002), written corrective feedback should be able to help learners notice their errors, and based on the symbols they receive, to correct the error. When students were given indirect written corrective feedback, they needed to figure out the errors themselves although symbols were given. So, if scaffolding such as extra meta-linguistics explanation is provided, students may be equipped to figure out the answers. Moreover, they may be more motivated to find out the answers as the tasks will not be too challenging for them. With the provision of scaffolding, the students might gain the confidence to attempt correcting the errors as some of them believed they did not have the ability as well as the formal knowledge to correct the errors by themselves.

When students were asked about the strategies they applied when facing problems during correction, only three out of six students stated that they would re-read or look at the sentences where they made mistakes. Another three stated that they would ask help from their friends and teacher only. However, when the answers provided by their friends were different from the answers that they had in mind, they would ask their friends for explanation and try to see if the answers given were correct. A sample excerpt from one of the interviews is shown below.

Teacher: 如果，比如，你心里通常都会有一个答案，然后你朋友给的答案根

你的答案不 会很相式的话，这样你会以什么心态和什么解决放法来
解决？

If, for example, you have an answer in your mind, and your friend's answer is different from yours, then, how will you solve it?

Student ： 我会再，就是自己看过，然后再问朋友，然后自己再看咯。

: I will look at it again, then ask my friend again, and look back at it again.

Figure 7: Student's response towards friend's scaffolding

This shows the importance of scaffolding in assisting students acquiring the correct rules as well as targeted form and structures in learning process. Besides, since the students were students in advanced level, they somehow had the ability to self- check their work. They did not only rely fully on their friends' help. After gaining some assistance from their friends, they would still think about the answers and explanations given by their friends before writing down the answers provided by their friends. So, scaffolding is an extra help that they need in the learning process.

4.2.3 Anecdotal Findings

Other than the main two themes, motivation and scaffolding, which were found from the interviews, several anecdotal findings on corrective feedback were also collected. They were categorized as anecdotal findings. Among them, content-related knowledge, strategies of providing corrective feedback as well as student's exam-oriented attitude emerged from the interview data.

4.2.3.1 Content-related Knowledge

It is found that students were more worried about the content of the writing rather than the grammatical errors. A sample excerpt from one of the interviews is shown below.

Student: 我会不明白那个题目。。。可能是讲十年以后，可是我会把它当十
年以前这样子咯。。。

I don't understand the topic..the topic is about something ten years

later,but I will interpret it as ten years before. ..

我的 point 会一直重复咯。就是我可能，我可能，在华语的时候，我
会很懂我要写什么什么什么，可是如果要翻译去英文的话，我会不
懂，不懂我要写什么，就是我懂华语那个叫什么，可是我不懂英文
字那个叫什么，所以我就不会写。。。

My points keep repeating. Maybe, when I write in Mandarin, I know what
I want to write. If I have to translate into English, I don't know what to

write. I know it in Mandarin but not English. That's why I don't know
how to write.

Teacher: 这样，那你觉得在写作文方面，什么比较重要呢？最重要的东西会
是什么？

Then, which do you think is more important in writing?

Student: Point 够不够。还有够不够生动。

Whether I have enough point or not and if my writing is attractive enough
or not.

Figure 8: Student's response towards content-related knowledge

According to a student, grammar was only part of an essay. Inability to write the essay due to not having idea of what to write in the essay was the biggest challenge in writing task. In addition, inability to interpret the essay topic accurately was also another challenge that she

faced when writing essay. Thus, it is evident that some of these students were much concerned about what sort of content is deemed suitable for the essay.

4.2.3.2 Mix strategies

In addition, another anecdotal finding was the method of providing corrective feedback. A student suggested that different strategies of corrective feedback should be provided in different types of errors or problems. Instead of applying a type of corrective feedback, teachers can apply mix strategies of corrective feedback in their writings depending on the severity of the mistakes or errors. A sample extract of the interview is shown below.

Student: 如果是好像是错一个字一个字这样子的话，最好是用那种 symbol

marking.如果 好象是那种整个句子不 顺的话，就直接是把它改美

它，给它印象深刻记住咯。

If the error is a single word error, the best way to correct it is using

symbol marking. If it is sentence structure problem, teacher can directly
correct the whole sentence so that students can remember the correct
sentence better.

Figure 9: Student's response towards different strategies of corrective feedback

According to the student, by combining indirect feedback for word level errors and direct feedback for sentence type errors, students will be able to correct their errors in terms of word choice based on the knowledge they have previously acquired, while also be able to attend to non-idiomatic and idiosyncratic errors such as word order problem which are more challenging to be corrected without scaffolding. Hence, this can help minimize students'

level of frustration and motivate them to challenge their abilities to correct those errors which are within their proficiency level.

4.2.3.3 Exam Oriented

Another possible factor why students had higher percentage of errors made in their post-test which was conducted 16 weeks after the treatment test may be due to the fact that the students were exam-oriented. This experiment started in June and ended in October, after they had sat for their Senior Three public examination. Students had an average of 18.83% and 20.04% of error made in pre-test and treatment respectively. However, in post-test, the average percentage of mistake made increased to 26.77%, which was an increment of an average of 6% if compare to treatment test. One of the plausible explanation may be the washback effect. According to Hughes (1989,in Lynda,2005), 'washback' has been used to refer to the way a test affects teaching materials, classroom learning, teaching and management. In this study, students were found to be only learning and doing things for purpose of sitting for exams. Hence, due to the post-test timing, it is possible for them to not taking the test as the practice opportunity to improve their writing skills as their high stake exam was over. This is similar to situation in China where students would only study for exams especially high stake exams where their scores will profoundly influence their future.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the key findings of the study, and discussed them with reference to the two research questions. The findings have also been considered in relation to the previous studies as well as other possible factors that lead to such results.

In relation to the effectiveness of corrective feedback, the findings contradict Truscott's (1996) view that written corrective feedback is ineffective and support previous studies (Bitchener.et.al, 2005; Shen, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010) on the claim that written corrective feedback is effective in certain contexts.

In addition, interviews were conducted to gain insights of the problems faced by students when carrying out correction, as well as strategies and suggestions on corrective feedback. Two key themes, motivation and scaffolding were identified. However, anecdotal findings also revealed that content-related knowledge, mix strategies of corrective feedback and exam-oriented attitude were some plausible factors that influence how learner views corrective feedbacks.

The next chapter will summarize the key findings and present the research and pedagogical implications. The last part of the chapter 5 will discuss the limitations and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5   OVERVIEWS OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of this study. First, key findings of this study will be presented in section 5.1, followed by research and pedagogical implications of the research in section 5.2. In section 5.3, suggestions and limitations are provided and identified. Finally, a brief summary is presented in the last section of the chapter.

5.1 Summary of the key findings

This study involved 20 English learners at a Chinese Independent school. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the study to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback on present tenses, as well as, the other factors that affect the effectiveness of corrective feedback on students' writings overtime. The study provides positive evidence in support of written corrective feedback as students who received corrective feedback showed improvement in their writing. From the finding, it is shown that students who received direct corrective feedback improved because they read through the feedback provided and noticed the correct ways of using the tenses. In addition, the results showed that they did not merely copy answers provided. Thus, they were able to avoid making the same errors in the next writing. For students who received indirect corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback helps them in reducing the number of errors made in their revised text. When being interviewed, most students expressed that they favoured indirect corrective feedback, as it encouraged them to think. However, they found difficulty in getting the correct answers as they were not proficient enough.

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┌──────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────┐
│  Direct Feedback │          │     Indirect     │
│                  │          │     Feedback     │
└──────────────────┘          └──────────────────┘
```

Direct Feedback

*Students read through the feedback provided and noticed the correct ways of using the tenses.

*Results showed that they did not merely copy answers provided.

Indirect Feedback

*Corrective feedback helped students in reducing the no. of errors made in their revised text.

*Students favoured indirect feedback because it encouraged them to think.

*Students found difficulty in getting the correct answers if they were not proficient enough.

Motivation

*Students were motivated to find the correct answers.

*Getting the right answers motivated them to avoid making the same errors and had deeper understanding of the correct structures.

*Lowly motivated students did not improve as they didn't do anything even if they didn't understand.

Scaffolding

*It helped students acquire the correct structures.

*Scaffolding from friends gave deeper impression as they were actively involved in lookng for the correct structures.

*Teacher usually provided it in meta-linguistics form so that students could acquire the correct structures.

Anecdotal findings

*Students felt that content-related knowledge was more important than grammatical knowledge in writing.

*Students suggested teacher to apply both direct and indirect feedback for different errors made.

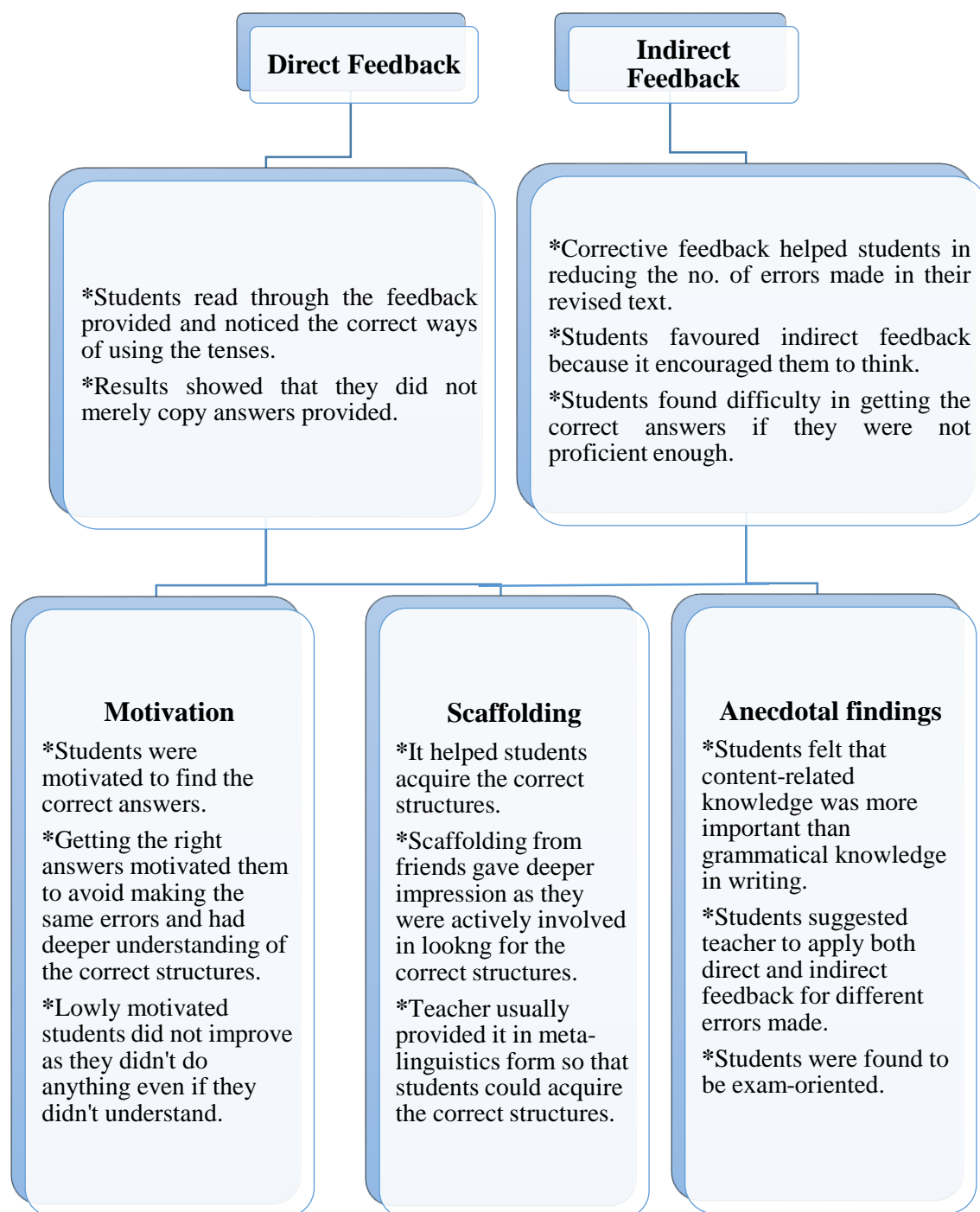*Students were found to be exam-oriented.

Figure 10: Summary findings of the study

Other possible factors that affect the effectiveness of written corrective feedback is also another topic of interest in this study. Six students were randomly picked to participate in

the face-to-face interview to gain more insights about written corrective feedback. Other possible factors that were mentioned by the students were analyzed and categorized into two themes, motivation and scaffolding. Students indicated that written corrective feedback motivated them to find the correct answers. Getting the right answers motivated students to avoid making the same errors as well as had deeper understanding of the correct structures. However, for students who were lowly motivated, they would not do anything even if they did not understand the corrective feedback provided by their teacher. So, they did not improve much in their writing.

Students also stated that scaffolding helped them acquire the correct structures. Scaffolding came from friends and teacher. However, when scaffolding came from friends, they had deeper impression as they were actively involved in looking for the correct structures. Scaffolding from teacher was usually in the form of meta-linguistics explanations where students were provided with the explanation of the rules of the correct structures.

Several anecdotal findings also emerged from the interview. One of the main concerns of students was the content-related knowledge. Students expressed that although grammatical knowledge was important in writing, without sufficient content-related knowledge, they could not produce good piece of writing. Besides, a student also suggested teacher to apply both direct and indirect corrective feedback when providing corrective feedback, depending on the types of errors students made in their writing. Besides, from the interview, it was found that students were exam oriented. Since the post test was conducted after their 'high stake exam', they did not took the exam seriously.

5.2 Implications

This section presents how the findings presented in this study can add to the pedagogical and implications of written corrective feedback in language learning.

5.2.1 Pedagogical Implication

The results of this study showed that written corrective feedback is indeed helpful in improving students' accuracy in writing. By providing students corrective feedback on specific types of linguistic errors (Present tenses) based on their language proficiency level, will enable students to improve not only after they receive the corrective feedback but also their writing overtime.

When providing corrective feedback, it is suggested that teachers provide corrective feedback according to students' proficiency level. For advanced learners of English, teacher can provide students with indirect corrective feedback instead of direct corrective feedback. Students at this level should have the ability to self- correct their own errors, and may have the ability to realize the errors that they made so that they can avoid making the same errors in their next writings. All students from this study are advanced learner of English and they were found to have the ability to self- correct their own errors in the treatment as they produced lesser number of errors in their revised texts. This proved that this group of advanced learner of English had the ability to self-edit their own work at their proficiency level.

In addition, when giving written corrective feedback to students, teacher should give correction only on specific type of errors, which learner has the knowledge and proficiency

level to deal with the errors made. For example in this study, the type of error that is studied is present tenses. Students in this study have the ability to self-correct and made fewer errors for present tenses, but it does not mean they have the ability to correct all other linguistic forms. So, if the linguistic errors made are beyond their proficiency level, they may not have the knowledge to edit or benefit from the corrective feedback even if teacher correct the errors made for them.

Furthermore, when providing corrective feedback, especially indirect corrective feedback, it is important that students receive some help from teacher and friends as well. Although students, especially advanced learner of English may have the ability to self-correct, they do not necessarily understand all linguistic structures and forms. Hence, with a little more scaffolding from teacher, such as correction with meta-linguistics explanation, students can benefit more from the feedback provided. Moreover, teacher can also allow students to sit in group or pair when doing correction. With interaction with their friends, where each of them will scaffold one another, it is believed students can benefit more from the correction, as well as, the discussion, as they may have deeper impression of the correct structures and forms that they are actively involved in finding during the discussion.

5.2.2 Research Implications

In this study, the sample size is small (n=20) and hence the result from this study cannot represent all Chinese Learner of English in Malaysia Chinese Independent school. A larger sample can be used in the future to investigate more conclusively if written corrective feedback is effective in improving students' accuracy in writing.

Apart from sample size, timing is also another important factor to be taken into consideration when study is conducted. In this study, one of the reasons why the number of errors made in the post-test was higher than pre-test was the timing when the post-test was conducted. Post-test of this study was conducted after the students' 'high stake' exam in October. Students were assumed to not taking the test as seriously as when they were participating in the pre-test and during treatment, which were conducted before their 'high stake' exam. When the pre-test and treatment were conducted, they took them as practice opportunity for their year-end 'high stake' exam. So, this shows that the timing of the study should be well-planned so that students' performance does not vary greatly in the tests due to timing factor, especially if the researcher wishes to carry out a longitudinal study.

In addition, it is important to have immediate and delayed post-test in order to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback overtime. In this study, only delayed post-test were used. By having both immediate and delayed post-test, the researcher can compare the results of the students in both tests and hence find out the other factors involved that yield the different results between the two tests, as well as, to investigate whether efficacy of corrective feedback extents overtime.

5.3 Limitations and recommendations

This section will discuss the limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future studies.

5.3.1 Size of Sample

In the study, the number of participants was only 20 students and all of them were of the same age, race, school and same proficiency level. Hence, the result yield cannot be used to represent all Chinese learners of English in Malaysia. It would have been ideal to recruit more participants of different age, race, school and different proficiency levels to investigate the effectiveness of written corrective feedback for different groups and background of students so that a more generalized result can be obtained. Besides, by examining wider group of participants, more themes on other factors that influence the effectiveness of written corrective feedback can be gained from the interview.

5.3.2 Number of Post-test

In addition, in the study, only a single post-test was administered 9 weeks after the treatment. Multiple post-tests should be conducted in future studies in order to investigate the immediate effects as well as the delayed effects of written corrective feedback so that researchers can identify whether time is a one of the factors that affect the efficacy of written corrective feedback, as well as, to investigate to what extent teacher's corrective feedback is utilized by students in their writing tasks.

5.3.3 Use of Questionnaire to Complement Interviews

Last, but not least, only interviews were used to gain insights of the students regarding the factors that influence their writing's performance. Taking this into consideration, it might be possible for students not to tell or share their actual thinking and beliefs as they were worried they might say something that the researcher did not want to hear. So, questionnaire can be

administered together with interviews to elicit richer information on students' perceptions on corrective feedback so that the credibility of students' perception and other factors that affect the effectiveness of written corrective feedback can be strengthen.

5.4 Conclusion

The study revealed that written corrective feedback is to some extent effective when it is used on present tenses. It is found that indirect feedback, which was believed to encourage thinking and left deeper impression among students, was more favoured by students. The result showed that students who received direct feedback outperformed students who received indirect feedback in post-test. Although students who received indirect feedback did not perform as well as direct feedback students in post-test, they showed improvement in their revised text. Hence, it is shown that corrective feedback is an effective tool in helping students improve their written accuracy in their revised text. Other factors that affect the effectiveness of written corrective feedback include motivation and scaffolding.

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Appendix 1: Interview with Student 1. (Direct Feedback)

Teacher: Ok, Lei Ying, 现在你看着这篇作文，你写的作文，然后你看我给你的改正，在这边可以看到的是，我给你 direct feedback 就是，你错的，我直接帮你改对的答案。Alright, 基本上，你对这种的 feedback 有什么看法吗？

                     Ok, Lei Ying. When you look at this essay and the correction method, you received direct feedback. That is when you have errors, I helped you to correct and provide you with answers directly. Alright, so, what is your opinions about this type of corrective feedback?

Lei Ying: Erm….我觉得这样子改会比较好，就是 direct, 直接，因为直接的话会让我们懂原来我们是错这个，应该是要用这一个。读的时候就方便读咯。就再读一次就方便念，还是可以直接读咯，不需要用，就讲，做什么我错这里。

                     Erm, I think this method is better because I can know my errors and know what to use instead. It enables me to revise easily.

Teacher: 这样，当老师给你答案的时候，老师在你错那一边圈圈，然后给你答案的时候啦，这样你会去，可能去想为什么你会错吗？

                     If you are provided with answers directly, would you find out why you made such errors?

Lei Ying: 会。

                     Yes.

Teacher: 会。

                     Yes.

Lei Ying: 会。会看为什么，噢，原来，做什么老师要用这一个，原来是要用这个字才对。就会想。以后就讲，噢，以后要用这个句子，以后是要这样子用的。

                     I will know the correct words to be used and use in future.

Teacher: 你会遇到你，erm…你不明白你为什么会错的，就是老师给的答案你不明白怎么这才是真确的吗？有遇过这样的请况吗？

	Will you ever encounter situations where you don't understand the correction?
Lei Ying:	有。 Yes.
Teacher:	有。这样，normally, 你会怎么面对这个问题或者解决这个问题呢？ Yes? Then, normally how do you solve it?
Lei Ying:	大多数问朋友或者是老师。有时候就问朋友会为什么这里错，朋友就讲。如果不懂的话，就问老师咯。 I would usually ask help from teacher and friends. If my friends cannot explain, then I will ask teacher.
Teacher:	Ok. 当老师或朋友解释过后，通常你会去怎样， 你会，你会。。你接下来会做什么呢？ After receiving explanation, what would you usually do next?
Lei Ying:	就要提醒自己原来是这样。下一次就懂了咯。就要提醒，就是真样讲呀，er…..让自己记得呀。下次就会记得。 I will always remind myself the correct structures so that I will remember next time.
Teacher:	Ok. 如果你看这一篇作文的话，er….在这一边，er…你会选择 it also will let us gain more knowledge and information. Ok. 可以解释，大概跟我解释一下，为什么你会选择用这个 tense 吗？ Ok,look at this essay. Erm, can you please explain why you use this tense when writing ' it also will let us gain more knowledge and information.'
Lei Ying:	Er…..
Teacher:	Will Let us
Lei Ying:	那个华语 translate 那个英文。因为华语是讲它可以让我们得到很多知识跟那种资料方面的东西。所以英文就 translate it also will ， 它会。 Because when Chinese translates to English, it means 'will gain more knowledge and information.' So, I translate to ' it will also'.

Teacher:	Ok. 如果我只是强调 will let. 为什么你会选择 will let 这个 tense 呢？
	Ok. If I only emphasizes on 'will let'. Why do you choose 'will let'?
Lei Ying:	顺口。
	Fluent.
Teacher:	顺口。通常 er… 你可以大概跟我讲，你怎样决定用什么 tense 吗？
	Fluent? How do you usually decide the types of tense to use?
Lei Ying:	决定用什么 tense 啊？我会先看问题，它是是讲过去，还是现在，还是未来。 然后，过后，才决定写。
	I will look at the question to see if it talks about past, present or future. Then, I decide.
Teacher:	Er…可以深，er 再多解释一下, 为什么你认为这一边会是将来，will, 呢？
	Can you explain more why you use 'will' here?
Lei Ying:	因为，如果我做了这件事，如果我去 travel 的话，对不对，我将会得到，所以我觉得是以后，如果我去的话，就将会得到，就是未来的。
	Because if I 'travel', I will get. Will get. So is future.
Teacher:	Ok. 谢谢。Ok. 这样， 基本上，你觉得老师或者朋友在，的帮助,其实有用吗？
	Ok. Thanks. Basically, do you think teacher and friends' assistance useful?
Lei Ying:	有。
	Yes.
Teacher:	有。 如何呢？可以，觉得它怎么，通常你的老师或者你的朋友怎么帮你吗？
	Yes. How? How do you teacher and friends usually help?
Lei Ying:	就很像，erm..因为我华，就很像…有时候英文的 vocab 就不知道就怎样讲，然后就问朋友，然后就懂咯。就记下来，原来要这样子讲。

Erm, normally I do not know the vocab. So I will ask my friend. I will know how to use and I will remember it.

Teacher: Ok..Erm…那如果在 tenses 方面呢？

Ok. Erm…How about tenses?

Lei Ying: Tenses 方面啊。

About tenses.

Teacher: 他们,他们的帮助会多 effective 呢？

Do they help? How effective is it?

Lei Ying: 有，就是他们有解释，解释清楚什么时候要用 present 啊，past tense 啊，或者用 future，有，有解释。 会让我明白一点。

Yes. They explain when to use present, past and future tense. I can understand.

Teacher: Ok. 你通常在老师或朋友的帮助之下，还会面对问题吗？还会说，可能你朋友解释了过后，或者老师解释了过后，你还有面对那些问题吗？

After teacher and friends' help, what other problems do you face?

Lei Ying: Erm…应该是我自己粗心咯。

Erm.. Carelessness

Teacher: Ok, 所以基本上，除了不是很 sure 之外，粗心也是个原因。

Ok, other than unsure of the correct answers, carelessness is another factor.

Lei Ying: Erm, 粗心也是个原因。

Yes. Carefless is another factor.

Teacher: 还有其他原因吗，你觉得？你为什么会，有时会，用错 tense 啊，这一些？有什么其他原因吗，可能？

Any other reason? What are the other factors of using wrong tense?

Lei Ying: Erm…就基本上哦，如果 grammar 问的话，会答的出。可是写的时候，就是照着顺口 translate 那个英文, 就是，就会错

很多了。就会好像加上粗心。就一下忘记。 就没有检查清楚。

Erm, for grammar, I usually use translation from Chinese to English. Adding carelessness, I will make more errors.

Teacher: Erm, 这样， 基本上， erm…你觉得啦，在班上学的 grammar lesson 对写作的帮助，会多吗？

Basically, do you think grammar lessons help in writing?

Lei Ying: 会。

Yes.

Teacher: 为什么呢？

Why?

Lei Ying: 因为让他们懂，就是，啊。。。就是那些 present 啊，那种 past tense 啊， 要怎样用，要怎样放。

Because we know when to use different types of tenses.

Teacher: 这样，基本上，在这一篇作文里面，你觉得是什么因素导致你选择你所用的 tenses ,全部，这边?你可以用一些时间看过你的 tense, tense 全部基本上是 highlight 的这一些。 可以大概跟我分享一下你是以什么因素来确定你怎么选择这些个 tense 吗？

Basically, in this essay, what causes you to use these tenses? You can take some time to read through. The one highlighted are tenses.

Lei Ying: 因为它不是过去的事嘛，它只是，一种，它题目是一种，讨论的，一种 discuss 的那种。所以就不可一用 past tense 咯。因为 past tense 是过去了的嘛。所以我就用 present tense 咯。有些是 future, 因为，就是，如果我做这事的话，将来我就会得到莫一些。

Because it is not something which has past. The topic is discursive type. So, we can't use past tense. So I use present tense. Sometimes, I use future tense because if I do something, I will gain something.

Teacher: 这样，你在这一篇作文啦，你几时才会，你说，如果做这些事情，我才得到，那个你就选择用 future tense. 这样你怎么选择用 present tense 呢，在这篇作文？

You said that you would use future tense when you wrote something you would gain through travelling. Then when do you use present tense?

Lei Ying: Erm…其实怎样用 present tense 啊。。。

Erm…how to use present tense..

Teacher: 你有像，啊，这一边。。。we also can enjoy. Ok. Travelling can let us enjoy. Erm, 这一些，你基本上就用 present. 不过在这边呢，你就写，so it will not let us become. 在这边，你有用 future tense。这样，你可以大概分享为什么前两句你就用 present, 然后，后面的两句，你就用 future.

Like 'we also can enjoy.' Ok. 'Travelling can let us enjoy.' Basically you use present tense here. But, in 'so it will not let us become'. Here, you use future tense. Can you explain why?

Lei Ying: 因为它们，it will also can enjoy, 就是，就是，事实。事实不是要用 present 么？

Because 'it will also can enjoy' is fact. Fact has to use present.

Teacher: En…

Lei Ying: 然后就用。因为它真的可以让我们得到很多经验，这个是事实嘛。然后 it may become independent, 不是每个人一定会 independent 嘛, 所以就，可能，maybe 会 independent. 所以我就没有用 present tense.

Then, because we can gain a lot of experience. This is fact. 'It may become independent', not everyone becomes independent. So I use 'maybe' will become 'independent'. So I never use present tense.

Teacher: 所以你就选择 future tense.

So, you choose future tense.

Lei Ying: Future tense. En.

Teacher: Ok. 基本上，你觉得，你对 corrective feedback, 基本上，overall, 有什么看法吗？老师帮你纠正你的作文，啊，有什么看法吗？

Ok. Basically, what is your opinion about corrective feedback. Overall, what is your opinion?

Lei Ying: En…..

Teacher: 或者你有什么建议呢？或者说，有什么问题呢？当你收到这些 corrective feedback 的时候？

An suggestion or problem when receiving corrective feedback?

Lei Ying: 就是这些写答案给我，这些。。。

Just like these answers…

Teacher: En,en.在这一方面的话，直接给你答案的话，你觉得他对你有帮助吗？在你写作有帮助吗？

Do you find direct feedback helpful in your writing?

Lei Ying: 有。帮助就是懂，懂，原来我这个词是用错的。就不可以用这个词，就会懂。

Yes. I can understand I can't use some phrases.

Teacher: Ok. Ok. 这样，如果我给你比较一下这个两篇作文。Ok. 这一篇呢，就用 coded 或 symbol marking.你们的错误，老师圈了，然后写一些这些的意识，给你知道到底你错在什么方面。可能在 Verbs 啊,可能在 punctuations 啊, preposition 啊。而这个呢，是老师直接给答案。如果，你对这两种不同的corrective feedback 有什么看法？

Ok,ok. If you were to compare these two essays, this is marked using coded or symbol marking. Your errors are circled and codes are provided such as wrong in verbs, punctuation, and preposition. As for this, teacher provides answers directly. What are your views regarding these two corrective feedback?

Lei Ying: 这个的话，我就要慢慢，又要翻回去，是什么问题咯。就这个会比较麻烦。就是要找回去啊，然后不懂是要添那一个。

For this, I have to slowly find the answer by looking back at the essay to find out the problem. Is more troublesome. And I do not know the correct answer.

Teacher: 你讲你不懂的话，你觉得是什么，或者为什么你会不懂呢？

You said you don't understand. Why do you think so?

Lei Ying: 很像它是讲，很像它是讲如果是 grammar mistakes 的话啦，就讲我用错那里勒，就是讲我要用 future 好呀，past 好 呀，还是 present 好。就是。。。

	If it is grammar mistakes, I do not know to whether use future, past or present.
Teacher:	在这一篇，你讲到说，你不是很确定自己要用什么 tense, 你觉得什么，什么原因呢，会导致你不是很清楚，或者不能决定要用什么 tense？
	For this essay, you said you can't decide which tense to use. Why are you unsure or undecided what tense to use?
Lei Ying:	En....可能，就英文不是很强嘛，所以就对自己没有这样有信心。就是会觉得，就是，就是你讲有 grammar mistakes 啦，应该是 put is qua, 可是，想想想一下，是放 present 吗， 就会怕自己会放，就是改错，订正错。
	Maybe, because I am weak in English so I am lack of confident. When it comes to grammar mistakes, I think I should use 'put'. But after thinking again, I can't decide whether to use present tense or not. I am scared I make the wrong correction.
Teacher:	这样，ok, 这样当你这样犹豫不决的时候，通常你会于什么方法来解决你的问题呢？
	Ok, when you are indecisive, what do you usually do?
Lei Ying:	也是问老师跟朋友咯。
	Ask teacher and friends.
Teacher:	就问老师跟朋友啦。然后，如果比如，朋友给的答案，跟你，通常我们自己心里也会有一个答案，跟你的不是很像式的话，你又会怎么解决这个问题呢？
	Asking teacher and friends. After that? If the answers given by friends are different from your answers, what would you do?
Lei Ying:	就会问为什么要用这个勒，我就会问，要，我就会， 要求他解释，就问为什么
	I will ask why it should be used in that tense. I will ask for explanation.
Teacher:	然后解释了过后呢？你通常会怎样呢？
	After explanation, what will you usually do?
Lei Ying:	就，我就会问啦，不是用这一个么？我就会提出自己的答案，然后，他过后就会讲，其实不是这个，就会解释为什么不是这个，就让我懂了。

I will ask why not using certain tense. I will tell my answers. Then my friend will explain why my answers are incorrect to make me understand.

Teacher: Ok. 所以你基本上觉得朋友的解释对你很有帮助。 如果，这样你对这两个不同的改正方式又有什么看法吗？

So, friends help is useful? What are your opinions regarding these two types of correction?

Lei Ying: En…

Teacher: 这是直接给答案，这个是给 code. 还有其他的看法吗？

This is direct and this is correction giving with code. Any other opinions?

Lei Ying: 没有。

No.

Teacher: Ok. 这样你还有什么建议或者你觉得平常你在收到不同的改正所面对的，可以分享一下吗？所面对的问题。

Ok. What are the other problems that you face when receiving different types of corrective feedback.

Lei Ying: 所面对的问题. 如果是这个，就没有问题。这个的话

For this, no problem.

Teacher: 就是 direct.

Direct?

Lei Ying: En…这个就没有问题因为可以直接懂嘛，原来我错那里吗，就，直接懂。 如果是这个的话，的话，就要到处问咯，为什么要用这一个。这个就比较麻烦。

En, for this I can understand where my errors are directly. But for this, I have to ask around why must use certain tenses. A bit troublesome.

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Appendix 2: Interview with student 2. (Indirect feedback)

Teacher: Ji Ching, 你看着这一篇作文，alright, ok, 你看这些改正,这些老师给于你的改正, ok, 你基本上，对老师给的改正有什么看法吗？

Ji Ching, look at this piece of essay, look at the corrections, the corrections provided by teacher, what is your opinion?

Ji Ching: 没有。

No.

Teacher: 老师给你的改正你有什么特别的看法？不是针对老师，而是改正，对于改正这件事情，有什么看法吗？

Regarding the corrective feedback provided, what is your opinion?

Ji Ching: 感觉到老师的改正过后整个句子会比较顺啦，更美的句子出现咯。

Better sentences are constructed after teacher's corrective feedback.

Teacher: Ok, 还有其他的吗？你对于改正还有什么想法还是想说的吗？

Ok, do you have any other opinions regarding corrective feedback?

Ji Ching: 只是有时候有些改正，我看不明白，因为有时候我不会用。像，好像，travelling 那些。 因为有时候前面第一个字是要-ing 吗，可是中间也是有 travel 这个字的时侯，有时候是要-ing,有时候是不要-ing, 就不会分啦。

Sometimes, I don't understand the corrective feedback provided. Sometimes, I don't know how to use. For example, travelling. Sometimes, I need to use 'travelling' as the first word. But when it is in the middle of a sentence, sometimes I need to write 'travelling' while sometimes I only need to write it as 'travel'. I do not know how to differentiate.

Teacher: 这样，如果当你遇见这样的不会分的情况或者你不确定的时候，你通常会怎样做呢？

If you meet this kind of situation, what will you usually do?

Ji Ching: 统一完全部。要就 travel, 要就 travelling.

I will unify all the words. I will either use 'travel' for the whole essay or 'travelling'.

Teacher: 为什么，为什么你觉得自己会选择这个方法？

Why do you choose this strategy?

Ji Ching: erm….怕等下一边写 travelling, 一个写 travel 的话，这边又错，那边又错，干脆统一的话，会比较多分咯。

I am worried if I use both 'travelling' and 'travel', I will make more errors. So I prefer to unify all so that I won't have so many errors.

Teacher: 那，你觉得你采取统一的话，这样会有什么后果吗，会有什么效果吗？

What are the effects of using this strategy?

Ji Ching: 有。。。至少有， 会有一些分可以保握住咯。

At least, I can have some marks.

Teacher: Ok, Ok, 这样，你对于老师这种，给你这种 symbol 或 coded marking 的，有什么特别想说的吗？老师会在白板写好 VT 是什么，VF 是什么, SV 是什么，你对于这一种的改正， 老师给于的改正有什么看法吗？

Ok,Ok. What would you like to say about symbol or coded marking? Teacher will provide you will the definition of VT,VF and SV.

Ji Ching: 一开始是觉得很乱啦， 可是再订正多几次， 再看到这些的时候，变成练习了咯，看到的时候就会想，这个东西错在哪里，然后就会想，到底是为什么会错，错了之后看到原因的话，就知道会改正了。

Initially, I am confused. After a few times, it becomes practices. When I see the errors, I will start thinking why I am wrong. If I can find out the reasons, I will be able to do correction.

Teacher: 你通常会以什么 strategy 来决定怎么来改这一些东西呢？

What are the strategies you use to decide how to make correction?

Ji Ching: Erm….

Teacher:	像，譬如这一个，老师写了 go out to travel without parents can make yourself independent. 老师圈了写 VF. 这样你怎么，用什么 strategy 来找答案呢？
	For example, when teacher circles and writes VF at the sentence ' go out to travel without parents can make yourself independent.' What is the strategy you used to get the right answers.
Ji Ching:	一开始是想咯，看有什么字是对的咯，然后过后不确定的话，就问朋友咯。
	I will start thinking to see what are correct. If I am not sure, I will ask my friends.
Teacher:	Ok. 通常老师给你这种的改正方式，你会面对哪一些问题呢？
	Ok. What are the problems you usually face when you receive this type of corrective feedback?
Ji Ching:	Erm…面对问题啊。。。
	Erm… Problems faced.
Teacher:	有什么问题你会面对的啊？
	Is there any problem that you will face?
Ji Ching:	问题。。。就好像，是错了，想了原因，可是还是想不通为什么会错。
	The problem is…After thinking for the reasons why I am wrong, I still can't figure out why.
Teacher:	这样，如果你在这种情况下，这样你会做些什么呢？
	If that is the case, what will you usually do?
Ji Ching:	找朋友解释或问老师咯。
	I will ask help from friends and teachers.
Teacher:	朋友解释或问老师。
	Asking help from friends and teachers.
Ji Ching:	啊。
	Yes.
Teacher:	当老师或朋友给于了解释，你会像，接下来做些什么呢？

After teacher and friends explain, what will you do next?

Ji Ching: Erm…比较深刻印象。就解释了，搞清楚了嘛，好像是一个过程这样子，你会记在心里面咯。

Erm, I will have deeper impression. After explanation, it is like a process, I will remember it.

Teacher: Ok. 譬如当。。。erm….我们来做一下比较。 Ok, 譬如你这一个，你第一次的时候， 你选择了 then back home, when the sky are dark. 不过第二次， 当老师给你了 SV 这个改正，你选择用 is. 在第二次的改正那时候，你用 is. 你可以解释一下，为什么你会 come to this answer 吗？就为什么你会从 are 改去 is. Ar…什么原因啊，或者是什么导致你会选择 are 去到 is，去 这个对的答案。

Ok, for example. For the first time, you wrote " then back home, when the sky are dark.' However, for the second time, after teacher provided you SV, you change 'are' to 'is'. Can you explain how you come to this answer? How do you change from 'are' to 'is'? What are the reasons or what causes you to do so?

Ji Ching: 一开始是 the sky are dark 是因为整片天空嘛，整片天空看起来像很大这样， 就放 are 咯。 然后知道错了过后， 原因是 SV 嘛， 就想咯，一片天空，华语都有讲一片罢了，就有可能是 is, 就换 is 咯。

At first, I wrote 'the sky are dark' because it is a sky. The sky looks big. So I chose 'are'. However, after making errors, and the reason is SV, then I thought back. A sky. Chinese also uses 'A". So I change to 'is'

Teacher: Erm, ok. 所以，你还有觉得你要加，补充一下吗？你对， 你有什么问题吗？或者平常你做这种改正，面对到的问题吗？

Erm, ok. So, do you have anything to add on? What are the other problems that you face when correcting using this type of corrective feedback?

Ji Ching: Erm…有时候是真的是想不到错在那里，要怎样去改啦，因为认为那个是对的，然后问朋友也觉得是对的，可是不明白错在哪里。

Erm… sometimes, I do not know where I am wrong and how to correct it because to me it is correct and my friends also feel it is correct. So I don't know where it is wrong.

Teacher:	这样，过后你会怎样解决呢？
	So, how do you solve it then?
Ji Ching:	解决啊。啊。。。除了问老师的话，就再换整个句子，不然就换一些词咯。
	Other than asking teacher, I will change the whole sentence or phrases.
Teacher:	你觉得如果你换词，换整个句子的话，会有什么 impact 啊，或着有什么效果呢？
	If you change the whole phrases and sentences, what do you think is the impact?
Ji Ching:	Erm..好像整个句子有点不成比例啊.
	The sentence is like not coherent.
Teacher:	不成比例。。。
	Not coherent.
Ji Ching:	不是比例，就是讲，好像本来是那个故事了的，就中间换了一些的话，好像改了一些东西这样，不完正。
	It is like, after changing something, the sentence is incomplete.
Teacher:	这样，你会采取什么行动呢， 来解决？
	So, what will you do to solve this problem?
Ji Ching:	因为错了一个字又不懂怎样改嘛，换了句子的话，又觉得不顺嘛，这样，只好是这样咯，没有办法。
	If I am wrong because of a word and I don't know how to change. Then I will just change the whole sentence.
Teacher:	Ok. 这样，你觉得，当你做改正的时候，老师跟朋友的帮助，对你会有帮助吗？
	Ok. So, do you think friends and teachers' assistance help?
Ji Ching:	老师是一定是有帮助啦，因为问老师的话，老师都是会帮我们解决嘛。至于朋友的话，有些是好像看起来给了我答案啦，可是我觉得好像，自己也好像怀疑不决定这样子，所以我就觉得自己也担心这个答案对还是错咯。如果一些朋友看起来是很有信心知道这个答案是错了的话，跟我讲这个答案的话，我就会信任他咯。

Teacher's assistance is helpful because teacher will clarify our doubts. For friends, sometimes, they seem to give me answer. However, they are unsure of the answers as well. So I am worried as well. If they are confident, then I will trust them.

Teacher: Ok. 这样你还有，当你不是很确定你朋友给的答案的时候，你通常会怎么做呢？就可能你朋友也不是很确定，你也不是很确定你朋友的答案，这样你通常会怎么做呢？

Ok then, if you are unsure of the answers given by your friends, what do you usually do? If your friends are unsure of their answers as well.

Ji Ching: 不确定朋友给的答案我就试下读咯，顺的话就用咯，不顺的话，再找另外个朋友看下他有什么看法咯。

I will try to reread my answers again if I am not sure of the answers given by my friends. If it is ok, I will just use the answers. If not, I will seek for other friends' opinions.

Teacher: Ok, 这样，erm…基本上，你对 erm…改正，就是老师给你的改正，不管是用什么方式的改正都好，你有什么看法吗？

Ok, so what is your overall opinions about corrective feedback

Ji Ching: 看法是。。。。

Opinion..

Teacher: 你觉得改正。。。你对改正，这个东西，在作文，写作方面，改正，有什么特别的看法吗?有什么想说的吗？

What is your opinion about corrective feedback in writing? Do you have any opinions?

Ji Ching: 就是平时我用的句子已经写在一张纸给老师做改正的话，就把整个句子本来很不完美的，老师改了过后就变的很完美的话，就以后记着很完美的东西，然后自己写出来的东西就忘掉它咯，只记着老师改的咯，这样子的话，以后写在纸上也会比较完美咯。

Teacher usually changes the sentences that is improper to better sentences. So I will remember to correct sentences and structures so that I can use them in future.

Teacher: Erm…还有呢？还有什么想补充的吗？

Erm, what else?

Ji Ching:	应该没有。
	No more.
Teacher:	Ok. 当你。。。Ok, 这一篇，这一篇作文呢，是以另外一种改正方法来改，你的改正方法叫做 symbol marking, 或者 coded marking, 老师只是给你符号，根据符号去改那个错误，而这一种呢，是整篇老师直接给答案。对于这个两个不同的改正方式，你有什么看法吗？
	Ok. Let's look at this essay. It is marked using another type of corrective feedback. The corrective feedback you receive is called symbol marking where teacher provides you with symbols and you correct based on the symbols given. What is your opinion about these two types of corrective feedback?
Ji Ching:	直接给答案的话，好像是小学那种做法啦，直接是改正错字那种啊。就算改了过后，写到很美，没有错了，很快就会忘记了。
	Providing answers directly is like primary school' correction method. It will be forgotten easily.
Teacher:	为什么你会觉得很快就会忘记呢？
	Why do you think it will be forgotten easily?
Ji Ching:	因为好像再抄多一次罢了，只是改一些东西的话，很容易就忘了。因为没有思考过嘛。 没有思考过的话，印像比较不深刻。
	Because you just need to copy again, changing only some parts of it. You do not need much thinking. If it does not involve thinking process, you won't have impression on it.
Teacher:	这样意识是说，当老师直接给答案的话，基本上，你只是抄罢了，你不会深入的去思考。
	So basically, you will merely copy them without much thinking?
Ji Ching:	啊。。。
	Yes.
Teacher:	相反的这个呢？
	How about this one?

Ji Ching: 这个的话，就因为写了那些 tips 给你嘛，你会自己去想嘛，自己去找答案的话，因为有很多过程嘛，你就会比较记在心里面咯。

For this one, because we are given tips. So we need to think and look for the answers. It involves many processes so it can be remembered more.

Teacher: 还有了？有什么想补充的吗？对于这个两个不同的改正方式？

What else do you want to add on regarding these two different corrective feedback.

Ji Ching: 如果直接给答案的话啦，虽然是很快忘啦，可是，好像有，对我来讲啦，有时候一些发现到一些新的句子，比较美的话，我会比较印象深刻。

Although direct corrective feedback will be forgotten easily, sometimes when I found some good structures and sentences, I will remember them.

Teacher: 什么是说谓比较美的句子呢？

What are good sentences.

Ji Ching: 就，我觉得那个句子其实我是乱乱写的，只是偏一个句子出来，来接下一句的，可是老师改了过后，直接写答案给我过后，觉得句子应该是这样子用的，我就会记着咯。好像是如果错一个字两个字，跳来跳去错的话啦，很快就会忘记了。

Sometimes, I created some sentences in order to link to next sentences. After teacher corrected them, I knew the correct ways of writing it so I will remember them. If it is one or two words errors, it will be forgotten easily.

Teacher: Ok. 所以。。。基本上你对，还有什么想加的吗？就对于这两种不同改正方式，还有什么，比如你有什么建议呢，补充呢？

Ok. So what else do you want to add on or suggest?

Ji Ching: 如果是好像错一个一个字这样子的话，那最好是用那种 erm…

If it is one or two word errors,then use erm…

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Teacher:	symbol marking
Ji Ching:	symbol marking.如果是很像整个句子很不顺的话，就直接是把它改美它，给它印象深刻记住。
	Symbol marking. If it is sentence structures problems, then it is better to change the whole thing so that I can remember it.
Teacher:	然后你还有什么想补充，想提议的，so that 老师可以在改正的时候更帮的到你们吗？
	Anything you would like to add on so that teacher can help you more during correction process?
Ji Ching:	就那两个 point 罢了咯。就一个是好像那种 has 啊 ,have 啊 ,is, are 那些错的话就直接给 symbol marking 咯。如果是整个句子很不顺的话，直接是从写过， 一段句子。
	Just these two points. If errors are like 'has', 'have', 'is', 'are', then use symbol marking. If it is sentence problem, then rewrite for us.
Teacher:	可以深入的解释什么是很不顺的句子吗？或着你给一个句子啊？
	Can you further explain what sentence problem is? Or can you give me a sentence?
Ji Ching:	像有些人英文差的话 是把华语翻译去英文嘛。就那段句子很有华语的。。。那种句子，感觉。因为我们想不到英文要怎样写吗，这样老师可以乘这个机会把整个英文的那个语言写下来咯，给我们知道啦。
	For those who are weaker in English, they usually direct translate the sentences because we do not know how to write it. So teacher can rewrite it for us so that we know the correct ways of constructing it.
Teacher:	Ok. 然后，如果，你的建议是，整句不是很顺就改整句。
	Ok, so for sentence structures problems, you suggest teacher to rewrite the sentence for you?
Ji Ching:	啊
	Yes.
Teacher:	如果是说一两个字错就给 symbol marking.

	If it is a one-two-word errors, then use symbol marking.
Ji Ching:	啊。
	Yes.
Teacher:	还有想加或着想说的吗？对于这种改正方式？
	Anything else?
Ji Ching:	没有。
	No.
Ji Ching:	Ok. Thank you.

Appendix 3: Sample of pre-test essays

Do we need to travel to see other cultures. Discuss.

Knowledge, likes the sea, it won't be full whenever. Seeing our local culture is not only is not enough to improve ourselves. There are lots of interesting and important things should be completed before our life ends. We need to travel to see other cultures although this is so dangerous for us. When we are travelling to see other cultures, may be we will facing lots of problem, but all of them also will become an unforgotten memorable. There are several reasons, why we need to travel to see other cultures.

First of all, we can learn more understand about other cultures. It would improve our knowledge too. After that, For the example, we will have more interesting experince to share with our family or friends. It also can us to help us to maintain the our friendship. Just try to memorise the knowledge of other cultures by ownselves Then, if you will discover the wonderful point of other cultures.

Besides that, we also need to travel to see other cultures because different countries have different kinds of story of their cultures. Learning to be respect the other cultures, your attitude also will be more bigger greater than other people.

According the travel, we would know how to set a budget of its. Howere go travel to see other cultures should pay many money, but we would understand the important of earning money. The changes of travel to see other cultures is not too much, may be your able of economic are low, but just work hard to enjoy the life. In the opposite side, actually we can see other cultures from television programmes also, not only the ways of travell. The local cultures also can't understan

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Appendix 4: Sample of treatment essay (Direct written corrective feedback)

Essay Title: Travelling enhances one's outlook in life. What are your view?

People always have the same habit in their life. Woking up when the sky hasn't light and busy with work until no time to relax. When they go back home, the sky is dark. Everyday, they do the same habit they things. People feeling no energy and feeling bored with their lives. Travelling is a great teacher. Indeed, travelling enhances one's outlook in life.

First of all, went go travelling you can enjoy your life like you have never before. In your daily life, you are always busy with work and have to take care of your family. This will make your become stressful. So, you should go travelling to explore new sights. Travelling provide you the each enhance chance to rejuvenate and relax yourself from your hustle and bustle lifestyle. Therefore, travelling enables you to relax and enjoy your life.

Besides, travelling can open your mind. For example, through travelling to different country, you can learn different cultures, food, clothes and lifestyles. Cultures of different country are congruant and vastly different from each other, although we live under the same blue sky and breathe in the same air. Travelling also provides us freedom and space to see with bigger and clearer eyes.

Next, travelling can get you out of your comfort zone. Going out to travel without parents can make you independent. Parents should are not and awalys by our sides. So, through travelling, we can learn so much about ourselves. We will discover and learn more the difference things in yourself and can get more experence when going travel. So, travelling is a chance to get to know your real self.

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Appendix 5: Sample of treatment essay (Indirect written corrective feedback)

Essay Title: Travelling enhances one's outlook In life. What are your views?

Nowadays, most parents will bring their children to travel, their children do not know travel's meaning, they think that travel is funny. Many people said that travelling enhances one's outlook In our life. Travelling is a great teacher and it also provides freedom and space to see the world with bigger and clearer eyes. So that, travelling have many benefits and it very important to us. can help us have new outlook of our lifes

Firstly, we will know about other countries' cultures. It is very congruat and vastly different from each other eventhough we live under the same blue sky. For example, if we go to Korea, we will know that manners is priority for them. Besides that, we also become open-minded and we have new outlook too. For example, we when we go to the Africa or some third country, we will see that Everyday we will we can't see everything we can see more culture from others country and we will can explore new sights when we are travelling. For example, we knew that now the foreign celebrate their new year or carnival if we go to Europe. It will write us know many things that we cannot learn from our book.

Besides that, when we have travel by ourself we will get increase of our comfort zone. It is because we need to travel ourself nor follow the family or travel agency. we go travel ourself and plan everything by ourself so that, It will make us more independent It also makes us become more alerteness because we will watch out our bag and luggage. If we follow go with our family trip there have someone to help us to take care our things so that we will not to take care about our things.

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Appendix 6: Sample of post-test essays

Essay Title: Best knowledge can be gained through travelling. Discuss.

Travelling can enrich ourself in many things. Travelling is the best experience and best knowledge can be gained. Our thoughts will be mature with this. There are several good and bad knowledge can be gained through travelling.

Travelling with friends we can learn how to booking tickets, how to find the cheper hotel and can be learn about the geography and the cultures of the place. We also can meet new friends in different country.

Beside that, travelling can make our thoughts be mature. Travelling we can explore many locations, food and others. We also can explore many locations for example hiking, skydive, bungee jump and others.

On the other hand, travelling also have bad knowledge can be gained. Travelling can make people waste the money to play or go to shopping. They don't care about the money and go to buy their likes. After back from travelling, they will have many burden.

Next, travelling also have dangerous in other country. In other country, we don't know about the politic. They like to live there and don't want to come back to their country. So, many people will go to other country and don't have to come back.

In conclusion, there are many good and bad knowledge can be

Appendix 7: Writing correction symbols

Category	Symbol	Error	Examples
Articles	MA	Missing article	There was / cat in my class today.
	WA	Wrong article	*an* I saw @ elephant walking down the road.
	UA	Unnecessary article	There was ⊘ rubbish all over the road.
Prepositions	MP	Missing preposition	*of* She takes care / her mother.
	WP	Wrong preposition	*on* The meeting is ⊙in April 26.
	UP	Unnecessary preposition	Most ⊘of students like pop music.
Nouns	PS	Plural/Singular	*students* Most student study very hard.
Verbs	MV	Missing verb	*is* Bob ∧ taller than I am.
	WV	Wrong verb	*has* She ⊙is very beautiful hair.
	VF	Verb form	She ⊙was bought a new dress.
	VT	Verb tense	*forgot* Sue forgets her book yesterday.
	SV	Subject-verb agreement	Tom don't like doing homework. *doesn't*
Words	MW	Missing word	*we* It was a sunny day, so ∧ went to the beach.
	WW	Wrong word	*There* ⊙Their were many people at the party.
	UW	Unnecessary word	I was ⊘playing skating yesterday.
	WWF	Wrong word form	He has a lot of ⊙responsible. *responsibility*
Mechanics	C	Capital letter	*Chinese* I speak ⊙chinese fluently.
	P	Punctuation	She sings ⌄ dances and plays the piano.
	Sp	Spelling	I ⊙fell very excited today. *feel*
Sentence Construction	Fragment	Sentence Frag	Because he was late, [he missed the flight.]
	RO	Run-on sent	The movie was boring, / I never laughed.
	UC	Unclear	She wanted never going to be happy.
	?	Can't underst.	??????

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