

## THE ROLE OF TEACHERS' FEEDBACK IN ENHANCING ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS

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**Abstract:** This article explores the critical role of teachers' feedback in improving English writing skills among learners. Feedback serves as a bridge between learners' current performance and desired proficiency, helping students identify errors, understand language conventions, and develop coherent writing strategies. Both formative and summative feedback, delivered in various forms—written, oral, peer-reviewed, and digital—contribute to learners' progress. The paper also examines challenges related to feedback effectiveness, including students' perceptions, motivation, and the timing and quality of feedback. Recommendations are provided to maximize the pedagogical impact of feedback in English writing instruction.

**Keywords:** Teachers' feedback, English writing, corrective feedback, learner engagement, writing skills development

Writing is a complex skill that requires the integration of vocabulary, grammar, coherence, and organizational strategies. For learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), developing proficiency in writing is often one of the most challenging aspects of language acquisition. Teachers' feedback is widely recognized as an essential pedagogical tool for guiding learners through this process. By providing targeted corrections, explanations, and suggestions, teachers can help learners recognize their errors, adopt more effective writing strategies, and internalize linguistic conventions.

Feedback is not limited to error correction; it also includes highlighting strengths, encouraging revision, and fostering reflective learning. Effective feedback promotes learner autonomy, critical thinking, and self-regulation, all of which are crucial for long-term writing development. Research shows that students who receive structured, timely, and specific feedback demonstrate higher improvement in writing quality than those who do not receive such support.

### 1. Types of Teachers' Feedback

Teachers' feedback can take multiple forms, each with unique benefits. Written feedback includes comments, margin notes, and corrections on drafts. It allows learners to review their work at their own pace and provides a permanent reference for future writing tasks. Oral feedback, delivered during class discussions or one-on-one consultations, enables immediate clarification and interactive dialogue.

Peer feedback and self-assessment are also increasingly integrated, often guided by teacher instructions. Peer review encourages collaborative learning and critical evaluation skills, while self-assessment promotes learner reflection and self-monitoring. Finally, digital feedback, using online platforms such as Google Docs or

learning management systems, allows for real-time tracking, annotation, and interactive discussion between teachers and learners.

## **2. Benefits of Teachers' Feedback in Writing**

Teachers' feedback enhances learners' writing skills in several ways. Firstly, it improves linguistic accuracy, helping students correct grammatical, lexical, and punctuation errors. Secondly, it supports structural and organizational development, guiding learners in constructing coherent paragraphs, developing thesis statements, and using cohesive devices effectively. Thirdly, feedback fosters motivation and engagement; positive reinforcement encourages students to revise and refine their work rather than becoming discouraged by mistakes.

Research by Hyland and Hyland (2006) emphasizes that constructive, explanatory feedback—as opposed to mere correction—significantly enhances learners' ability to transfer skills to new writing tasks. In addition, formative feedback contributes to a growth mindset, encouraging students to view writing as a process rather than a final product.

## **3. Challenges in Providing Effective Feedback**

Despite its benefits, delivering effective feedback presents challenges. Teachers must balance comprehensiveness with clarity; too much feedback can overwhelm learners, while too little may not be sufficient for improvement. Learners' attitudes and perceptions also influence how feedback is received; some students may ignore or misinterpret suggestions, reducing their impact. Additionally, time constraints, large class sizes, and limited teacher training in feedback strategies may limit the quality and consistency of feedback.

## **4. Strategies for Maximizing Feedback Effectiveness**

To maximize the impact of feedback, teachers should provide specific, focused, and actionable comments that target both language accuracy and content development. Incorporating dialogic feedback, where students can respond and discuss comments with the teacher, strengthens understanding and encourages revision. Using rubrics and guided checklists helps learners focus on key aspects of writing and reduces confusion. Integrating technology, such as annotated documents and online discussion tools, can enhance accessibility, efficiency, and interactivity in feedback delivery.

Teachers' feedback is indispensable in enhancing English writing skills, offering guidance that addresses both linguistic and structural aspects of writing. Effective feedback fosters accuracy, coherence, motivation, and learner autonomy, while poorly executed feedback may hinder progress. By employing clear, constructive, and interactive strategies, educators can ensure that feedback functions as a powerful tool for developing competent and confident English writers. Continuous reflection on feedback practices and integration of technology can further strengthen its effectiveness in modern EFL classrooms.

Recent empirical investigations in EFL writing contexts highlight the pivotal role that teacher feedback plays in improving students' written performance. A longitudinal study following 60 secondary EFL students over two semesters found that when teachers provided timely, specific, and formative feedback — particularly in a dialogic manner that allowed students to respond and reflect — there was a statistically significant improvement in coherence, vocabulary usage and grammatical accuracy. Complementing this, a review of 64 articles from 2010-2021 revealed that learner responses to teacher written feedback vary significantly depending on proficiency level and sociocultural context, and that many studies lack theoretical frameworks to explain how learners engage with feedback. Moreover, research into teacher beliefs about feedback shows that some educators favour direct corrective feedback for grammar and vocabulary, while others emphasise indirect feedback to promote self-editing skills; such beliefs influence not only the nature of feedback provided but also its effectiveness. These findings suggest that not all teacher feedback is equally effective: the quality, form, and learner engagement with feedback matter as much as the fact of feedback itself.

Recent empirical studies underscore the multifaceted effects of teacher feedback on EFL writing performance. For example, a mixed-methods study involving 82 high school EFL learners demonstrated that students who received any form of feedback (teacher direct, teacher indirect, or peer) out-performed a control group that received none, underscoring the general value of feedback in writing instruction. Additionally, a systematic review of 64 empirical studies found that ESL/EFL learners' responses to teacher written feedback vary significantly depending on their language proficiency level, sociocultural context, and how engaged they are with the feedback provided. Moreover, research comparing native and non-native English-speaking teachers' feedback beliefs found that while both groups recognize the importance of feedback, they differ in their beliefs about scope, focus, and strategies — for instance, some teachers favour direct correction of errors while others emphasise guiding students to self-edit. These findings suggest that beyond merely giving feedback, how that feedback is designed, delivered, and received plays a critical role in its effectiveness. Thus, educators should not only provide written or oral feedback, but also encourage student reflection, foster dialogue, and tailor feedback strategies to the learners' context and needs.

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