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The Significance of Online Verbal and Written Corrective Feedback in ESL Report Writing among Tertiary Students

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ABSTRACT

Online corrective feedback (OCF) is important in online teaching and learning to detect and measure students' understanding of the lesson. However, not all researchers agree to this, and continuous debates have been discussed as to whether corrective feedback helps improve language development. This study aims to identify responses to the types of online corrective feedback received by ESL learners and to determine the positive and negative responses to verbal and written corrective feedback. One hundred and fifteen ESL tertiary learners taking the report writing course participated in the study which was conducted during a 14-week semester through the online learning platform. Thereafter, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five randomly selected participants. The findings show that OCF had better responses for verbal corrective feedback than written corrective feedback although both the verbal and written feedback were found to be satisfactory as well as useful to the respondents. In effect, the OCF was able to elicit corrections of content and language. However, for both the verbal corrective feedback and the written corrective feedback, the responses were not all positive. This suggests that online corrective feedback can be effective by means of digital technologies. However, issues such as learner attitude, type of corrections and feedback given, learners' lack of confidence and language proficiency, besides internet connectivity and other issues, should be addressed. In addition, efforts to provide input in the feedback process is required on the part of the instructor and students to enable the learning objectives to be achieved. For future research, it is recommended that research be conducted on the relationship between OCF and writing performance.

KEYWORDS: Online Corrective Feedback, Verbal Corrective Feedback, Written Corrective Feedback, ESL learners, report writing.

INTRODUCTION

Corrective feedback for language development has faced continuous debate in second language acquisition particularly for second language writing. Corrective feedback, whether verbally or in

written forms, has its roots in several language theories. Long (1996) in advocating Interaction Hypothesis states that corrective feedback is aimed at aiding language acquisition and creating opportunities for interaction and negotiation to learners so that they can attain input for acquiring the language and making the language comprehensible. In Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; Schmidt, 1995; Schmidt, 2001) the emphasis of feedback was described as learner's attention or notice of the target language input and the meaning or significance they gathered from the input or feedback. This is further supported by the Output Hypothesis of Swain (1985) and Swain (1995) which states that challenging output raises a learner's awareness of the gap in their linguistic input and therefore encourages learners to produce language above their expectations.

Responses from corrective feedback have indeed testified to the predictions of these language theories. Studies by Sheen (2007) and Sheen (2010) as well as Ferris and Roberts (2001) found improvements in students' linguistic abilities when they adhered to the given feedback and attended to the input-output gaps. However, it is notable too that there are some studies that contradict this and have deemed feedback as largely useless (Truscott, 1996; Truscott, 1999; Truscott, 2004). Overall, it has generally been accepted that corrective feedback has a role for improving language abilities although there remains some dispute over this (Ferris, 2010).

Some quarters have agreed that online corrective feedback is invaluable feedback by a knowledgeable person to help improve the writing via online settings (Agustiningsih & Andriani, 2021; Soo et al., 2013; Xu, 2021;). As such, and in line with current trends of online instructions, the following research questions have been formulated for the study:

- (1) What are the types of online corrective feedback received by ESL learners of report writing?
- (2) How is verbal corrective feedback significant in relation to content and language?
- (3) How is written corrective feedback significant in relation to content and language?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section on literature review has been divided into sections on the types of corrective feedback, responses to online corrective feedback and the effectiveness of online corrective feedback.

Types of Corrective feedback

In general, corrective feedback has always been in the form of either verbal feedback or written feedback. Although there has been found opposing views as to whether feedback is useful to L2 language learners, it boils down to whether learners' responses to the feedback play a role to the improvement and development of their language abilities (Bruton, 2010; Ferris, 1999, 2004; Truscott, 1996; Truscott, 1999; Truscott, 2004). Prior to the pandemic, corrective feedback was given via consultations with students in a face-to-face manner and through physical written comments by the instructor. Ever since online classes were implemented, instructors had no option but to give online corrective feedback. This meant that the feedback must be given virtually and may be delayed due to connectivity and students' responses over the internet. Again, there has been controversial views as to whether online corrective feedback or offline corrective feedback serves a better means to the end (Fu and Li, 2020).

Most research on the effectiveness of corrective feedback have indicated that verbal (or oral) corrective feedback (VCF) has potential benefits for L2 learners in developing their language skills (Nassaji, 2016; Nassaji, 2017). Wang and Li (2021) investigated corrective feedback and learner

uptake in American ESL and Chinese EFL classrooms and found that verbal feedback frequency and patterns in L2 classrooms play an important role in a learner's progress. The efficacy of such feedback has been found to depend on factors such as individual differences, the manner of delivery of the feedback and the conditions in which the feedback is given (Nassaji and Kartchava, 2020).

According to Sakiroglu (2020), there has been arguments on the format of verbal corrective feedback in the English as a foreign language class with regards to methods of correction, timing of correction and target errors. Learner attitude towards the correction is also of concern. The choice of words used to provide the feedback could have positive or negative reactions depending on how the instructor executed the feedback. It could lead to embarrassment or dissatisfaction and could break the confidence in using the language. Thus, instructors must consider the methods of correction, timing of correction, target errors and learner attitude as advocated by Sakiroglu (2020). However, the study revealed that the majority of the students had a preference for being corrected in a nice and friendly manner. Further, verbal corrective feedback could embarrass the students when given in front of the class and may cause them to lose confidence in their language development. It is far more challenging in online settings where learners may fail to hear the comments due to lack of connectivity or disruption of connectivity to the internet. Students may choose to be passive, and this could cause difficulty in detecting their improvement. In general, however, studies have found that verbal or oral feedback both online and offline (face-to-face) have potential for the same results in language development.

Unlike verbal corrective feedback, written corrective feedback (WCF) has more retention value as learners can refer to it repeatedly and it can provide evidence of a record for corrective feedback (Bitchener, 2008). According to Mao and Crosthwaite (2019), written corrective feedbacks are written feedbacks by instructors on students' written work with the aim of improving subsequent work. The purpose is to help students recognise their mistakes and to correct their mistakes accordingly. Although there are no conclusive views on the matter, many have come to believe that written corrective feedback provides a clear, prioritised, and selective guide for students to correct their mistakes (Arrad et. al., 2014). This is an essential pedagogical practice to enable students to improve their writing skills and language proficiency (Bitchener, 2012).

Research on L2 writing has also been found ineffective in written corrective feedback in terms of writing accuracy and writing skills development. Ferris (2010) for example, argued that the effectiveness of WCF is mixed. While WCF can have a positive impact on writing accuracy and skills development, many other studies have found to have no significant effects. Thus, it was suggested that to achieve effectiveness of WCF, factors such as the type of feedback provided, the learners' proficiency level, and the type of writing task should be considered. Whatever the arguments may be, it is crucial to consider the form of written corrective feedback that can lead to successful eventual improvement by the student. Ellis (2008) asserted that direct feedback is represented by the instructor indicating the error and then providing the explicit correct form. This includes crossing out unwanted words or words wrongly used as well as adding the missing content left out in the writing. Agustiniingsih and Andriani (2021) found that the implementation of direct corrective feedback showed improvement in students' writing performance and served as a positive motivation in the writing process.

Syu et. al., (2014) and Ferris and Roberts (2001) looked at indirect written corrective feedback. They described indirect written corrective feedback as the instructor indicating the error without

providing an explicit correct form. Students therefore must diagnose and provide the correct form themselves. This includes underlining or circling the error, numbering the mistakes, or using codes to indicate the type of error.

Another form of written corrective feedback is focused or selective feedback (Ellis, 2008). This is when a selected number of errors are given attention or focus by the instructor to help students improve their writing accuracy. Kassim and Ng (2014) in their study found that this has proven to increase writing accuracy compared to unfocused corrective feedback.

Online written corrective feedback has been found to be increasingly invaluable during the Covid-19 outbreak as indicated by the study conducted by Betha and Rosa (2021). The study explored the lecturers' online written corrective feedback and found that firstly, lecturers preferred using indirect corrective feedback and secondly, the efficacy of the online written corrective feedback depended on the types of writing errors.

Pawlak (2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019) found that there are key differences between verbal and written corrective feedback as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. Differences between verbal and written corrective feedback
(adapted from Pawlak, 2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019)

Verbal corrective feedback	Written corrective feedback
The corrective feedback may not necessarily be clear	Corrective feedback is usually clear
The feedback is online and offline and can be either immediate or delayed	The feedback is offline and is delayed
The feedback can be conducted explicitly and implicitly	The feedback can only be conducted explicitly
Conversational or didactic	Didactic
Direct impact on implicit, procedural knowledge	Only explicit, declarative knowledge affected.

Thus, from past research two types of corrective feedback are commonly used, mainly verbal (oral) corrective feedback and written corrective feedback. The studies also indicate that there are differences in VCF and WCF and arguably, the effectiveness depends on other variables such as individual differences, the manner of delivery of the feedback, the conditions in which the feedback is given, learner attitude, methods of correction, timing of correction and target errors (Nassaji and Kartchava, 2020; Sakiroglu, 2020).

Responses to Online Corrective Feedback

Most research has been found to focus on the forms and strategies for online corrective feedback. Less focus has been found on research related to responses by learners towards the online corrective feedback given by their instructors. Responses by learners must deal with their attitude and perceptions. In a study by Halim et. al., (2021), it was found that both online and offline corrective feedback played a role in improving learners' linguistic ability. Learners' positive response towards the corrective feedback was a motivating learning tool that was useful in supporting the learning process for EFL learners. However, the process failed for EFL learners who were not serious about the given feedback and were unable to differentiate the helpful feedback from what hampers their language learning. In terms of preference for online and offline feedback, it was found that the learners liked both methods and expressed views that corrective feedback is essentially useful for their learning process.

Not all responses to online corrective feedback are positive. In a study by Bhuana and El Fauziah (2021), it was found that excessive correction of students' work had a negative effect on students' feelings especially in the mid and low proficiency level in writing to the point of demotivation. Thus, the study concluded that when teachers give corrective feedback it is important to consider students' feelings.

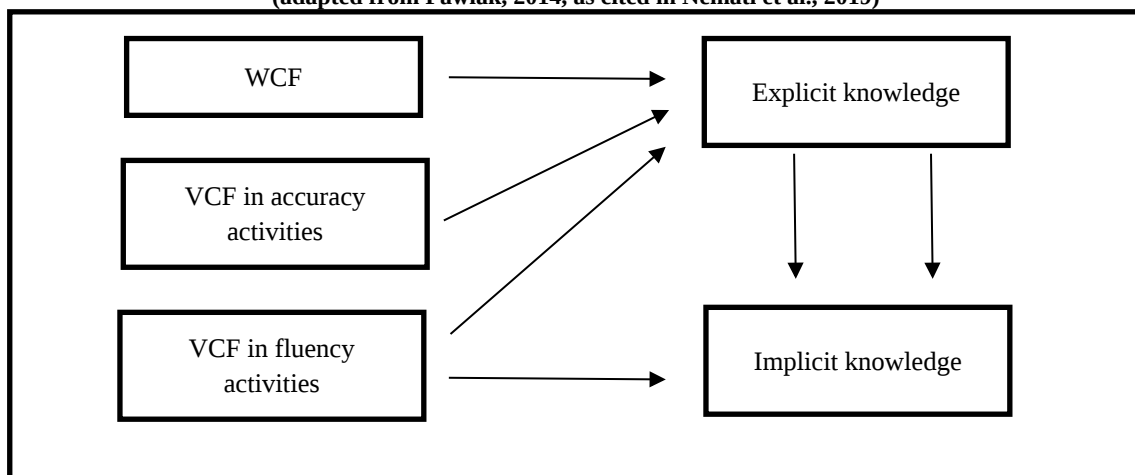
Effectiveness of Online Corrective Feedback

As discussed earlier, there are differing views on the effectiveness of online corrective feedback (OCF). Chen and Liu (2021) examined the effectiveness of corrective feedback from Chinese L2 teachers in the aspects of teachers' perceptions, factors, and interplay. The findings suggested that the teachers' main aim for effective corrective feedback was to raise awareness of errors among students. The factors that affected the effectiveness of the corrective feedback included direct factors such as the way the corrective feedbacks were given, teaching focus, learners' difference, teaching experience and class time, and indirect factors such as empathy, cultural influence, and learners' emotions. And there was interplay influence in the corrective feedback. Xu (2021) studied Chinese university students' L2 writing feedback orientation and self-regulated learning writing strategies in online teaching during Covid-19. The mixed-method study revealed that during Covid-19, students were overall positive towards online written corrective feedback and teachers offered more tutorials and feedback that could be viewed repeatedly, which created a comfortable learning environment. The online interaction between teachers and students in relation to teachers' feedback motivated them to engage more in their writing practices. This was supported by a previous study on online corrective feedback through e-mail which also showed positive effects (Soo et al., 2013).

VCF and WCF Model

Pawlak (2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019) asserted that there was potential to the role of oral and written corrective feedback in explicit and implicit knowledge acquisition of L2 learners. Figure 1 shows the relationship of VCF and WCF and explicit and implicit knowledge to L2 acquisition.

Figure 1. Verbal and written corrective feedback contribution to explicit and implicit knowledge.
(adapted from Pawlak, 2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019)



As shown in figure 1, WCF has the potential of contributing to explicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is conscious awareness of learning while implicit knowledge is unconscious awareness of learning (Ellis, 2005 as cited in Nemati et al., 2019). On the other hand, VCF in accuracy of linguistic activities contributes to explicit knowledge while VCF in fluency activities contributes to both explicit and implicit knowledge.

In the present study, both WCF and VCF were used in giving online feedback to the learners for content and language in the report writing course. It would be interesting to investigate the relationship of WCF and VCF in contributing to the learners' conscious and unconscious awareness to learning in terms of explicit and implicit knowledge as well as factors that contribute to their responses to the Online Corrective Feedback. For example, in the VCF interview question, "Can you explain your views on the verbal corrective feedback given for mistakes related to content?" the feedback given was, "The verbal corrective feedback is good, especially when we can have two-way communication, and we can ask questions and immediately get the feedback like a live session, but we are online." The feedback given shows the learner's conscious awareness of the OCF in terms of implicit and explicit knowledge.

METHODOLOGY

To facilitate this study, a mixed method approach was adopted for the study. According to Creswell (2013), mixed methods research is "an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study". In line with this, the study includes a quantitative online survey via Google Form and a qualitative semi-structured interview session in addressing the objectives of the study. The Google Form was distributed online to ESL learners taking the Report Writing course and the qualitative semi-structured interview session was conducted on a one-to-one online interview session.

Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of 115 students taking the report writing course on a 14-week semester session. They were all in Semester 3 of their bachelor's in communication and media Studies Program. There were 45 male and 70 female respondents, and they were all within the age group of 20 to 25 years old. Prior to the course, they had no or very little knowledge of how to write a research report. Five of the 115 respondents agreed to participate in the interview session. Creswell (1998) recommended that for phenomenological study, interviewees can range between 5 and 25 in numbers as compared to grounded theory study which can range between 20 to 30 interviewees. Similarly, Dworkin (2012) stated that a large amount of research recommends 5 to 50 participants for interviews.

Instruments

An online survey via Google Form and a one-to-one online semi-structured interview were used for the purpose of the research. The survey and interview were adapted from a study by Soo et al. (2013).

The online survey was distributed after the 14-week semester session from March to August 2021. There were 5 items in the survey to get student responses on the VCFs and WCFs given by the lecturer in Google Classroom and Google Meet. The items used Likert scale question types on a

scale of 1 to 5. The purpose was to find out the type of feedback favored by the students and to get their responses on how satisfied and useful they found the online corrective feedbacks.

The semi-structured interview was conducted to get responses from students on how they viewed the online corrective feedback given in relation to content and language. Particularly, they were asked to describe their views based on their experience in receiving VCFs and WCFs during the ODL session.

Research Process

During the 14-week semester, where online learning was conducted, verbal corrective feedback (VCFs) was given via google meet while written corrective feedbacks (WCFs) were given via google classroom to the respondents. After that, all the respondents were requested to fill in the online survey. Five of the respondents were then randomly selected from the pool of respondents for the interview session.

Data Collection and Analysis

The online survey was prepared using Google Forms. It was based on a purposive sampling approach to save time and cost as well as obtain the necessary data (Patton, 2002). All 115 students from a Report Writing class agreed to fill in the survey which was posted on their Google Classroom platform. Data from 115 respondents were analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26, and the results were presented in descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics shed light on the situations faced by the respondents, as the aim of the paper is to investigate the significance of online verbal and written corrective feedback in ESL Report Writing among tertiary students. After this, five students were randomly selected for the interview session. The respondents were randomly selected for the interview to ensure unbiased selection of respondents from the pool of purposive samples. The respondents were given a week to fill in the online survey. For the interview session, it took approximately 15 minutes for each one-to-one online interview. Data collected was then analyzed descriptively in frequencies and percentages.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of the findings will be based on the research questions which are restated here, (1) What are the types of online corrective feedback received by ESL learners of report writing? (2) How is verbal corrective feedback significant in relation to content and language? (3) How is written corrective feedback significant in relation to content and language?

Types of online corrective feedback

The respondents were given exposure to two types of online corrective feedback, namely verbal corrective feedback (VCF) and written corrective feedback (WCF). Table 2 below shows the responses to the types of online corrective feedback given based on the online survey through Google Form.

Table 2. Types and responses to Online Corrective Feedback

Particulars	Verbal Corrective Feedback					Written Corrective Feedback				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction level										
1 – very unsatisfied	-	-	-	32%	68%	-	-	-	(55)	53%
2 – unsatisfied				(35)	(80)					(60)
3 – neutral										

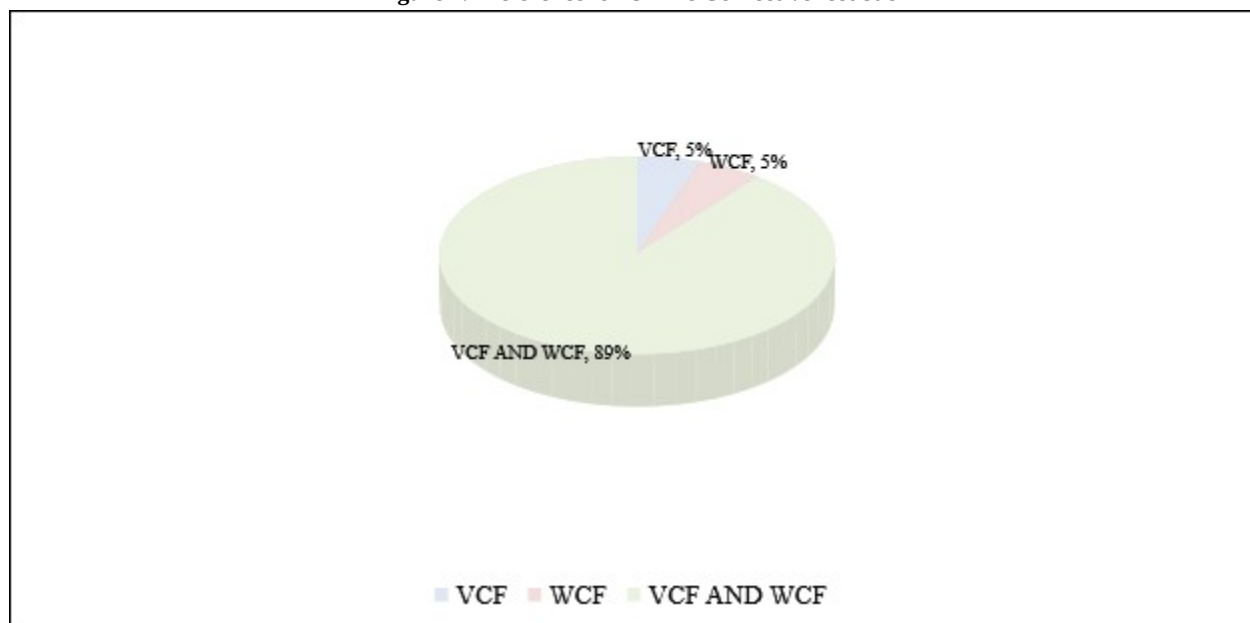
4 – satisfied 5 – very satisfied										
Usefulness level										
1 – very useless										
2 – useless	-	-	-	26%	74%	-	-	-	47%	53%
3 – neutral				(30)	(85)				(55)	(60)
4 – useful										
5 – very useful										

Table 2 shows the satisfaction and usefulness level for the verbal corrective feedback (VCF) and written corrective feedback (WCF). For the VCF, it was found that 68 percent of the respondents were very satisfied, and 32 percent were satisfied. For the WCF, it was found that 53 percent were very satisfied while 47 percent were satisfied. The responses indicated that overall, the respondents were satisfied receiving both the verbal corrective feedback and the written corrective feedback. However, the level for VCF (68 percent) was slightly higher than WCF (53 percent), could indicate that the respondents were more satisfied with VCF compared to WCF. Since VCF is online ‘live’ compared to WCF which is returned to the students and not ‘live’, students preference showed they were more satisfied with the VCF than WCF as indicated in the findings.

In terms of usefulness level, it was found that 74 percent of the respondents found VCF very useful while 26 percent of the respondents found it useful. For WCF, it was found that 53 percent found it very useful while 47 percent found it useful. This shows that overall, the respondents found both VCF and WCF useful. The findings also indicated that the respondents found VCF (74 percent) more useful than WCF (53 percent). The preference for VCF again could be accounted for by the online ‘live’ feedback rather than the WCF without the ‘live’ effect. Similarly, in studies by Nassaji and Kartchava (2020) and Sakiroglu (2020), it was found that the manner of delivery of the feedback and conditions in which the feedback is given affected the learners’ responses to the feedback.

Overall, the responses for both VCF and WCF revealed that the students were in favor of both types of OCF. They were satisfied and found the feedback useful. Also, it was found that responses for VCF in terms of satisfaction and usefulness were slightly higher than WCF. The results also indicated that they found VCF more useful than WCF. Verbal Corrective Feedback (VCF) was given online via Google Meet. This means that students would get feedback immediately in real-time. Also, they can immediately ask for clarification and get feedback from the lecturer. They can watch the reactions and share a screen to get the feedback. Although this may be time consuming and requires a set consultation schedule, it seems to have effective feedback and the students seem to prefer this type of corrective feedback compared to WCF. Previous research has also attested to the satisfaction and usefulness of VCF in like manner (Nassaji, 2016; Nassaji, 2017; Sakiroglu, 2020; Wang and Li, 2021).

Figure 2. Preference for Online Corrective feedback



Responses were also taken for preference of the types of OCF namely, verbal corrective feedback (VCF) and written corrective feedback (WCF). Figure 1 reveals that 5 percent of the respondents preferred VCF only, another 5 percent of the respondents preferred WCF only while 90 percent preferred both VCF and WCF. The responses to the types of feedback therefore indicate that majority of students preferred Online Corrective feedbacks and they think that both VCF and WCF are important to their language development for the Report Writing class.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the responses of VCF and WCF conditions in relations to satisfaction and usefulness levels. There was a significant difference in the scores for the satisfaction levels of VCF ($M=4.70$, $SD=0.47$) and the satisfaction levels of WCF ($M=4.52$, $SD=0.511$) conditions; $t(22)=2.152$, $p=0.043$. There was a significant difference in the scores for usefulness levels of VCF ($M=4.74$, $SD=0.449$) and the satisfaction levels of WCF ($M=4.52$, $SD=0.511$) conditions; $t(22)=2.472$, $p=0.022$. These results suggest that the students were satisfied with both the VCFs and WCFs and found both the VCFs and WCFs useful.

Responses to VCF

There have been controversial views as to the effect of corrective feedback on the improvement of language proficiency (Ferris, 2010; Truscott, 1996; Truscott, 1999; Truscott, 2004; Chen and Liu, 2021; Xu, 2021; Soo et al., 2013). In this study, efforts of analyzing the views of students towards OCF applied the qualitative approach of interviewing five respondents selected through the simple random sampling method. A summary of the interview responses to VCF is shown in table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Interview responses to VCF

INTERVIEW ITEMS	RESPONSES TO VCF
General view of VCF	<i>The verbal feedback was immediate. I can respond immediately when corrected and ask for further explanation or clarification.</i>

Question 1 How would you describe the online verbal corrective feedback?	<i>I can see the visual expression and hear the tone of voice of the lecturer through Google Meet. However, I think I may not remember all the corrective measures to take unless it is recorded or written.</i>
	<i>Some students may feel offended or embarrassed to be corrected on Google Meet in front of the class. I feel they may not have courage to ask online. They may feel awkward.</i>
	<i>I felt like I could ask the questions online better than face-to-face. I guess I was less shy.</i>
	<i>I like the online feedback because in a way, it felt as if I was in the classroom face-to-face. There was some communication with the lecturer, and I was able to ask questions.</i>
Feedback for Content Question 2 Can you explain your views on the verbal corrective feedback given for mistakes related to content?	<i>I like the fact that we have small chat rooms for each group to discuss our project, which is great. Since the other groups are doing other research work, they may not be interested in what we are doing.</i>
	<i>I find how you can show us through google meet and explain what we did wrong, and need corrected very helpful. How we share our screen to show what needs to be corrected and why is very practical.</i>
	<i>The verbal corrective feedback is good especially when we can have two-way communication and we can ask questions and immediately get the feedback like a live session, but we are online.</i>
	<i>It is good that we have our private rooms to discuss because it is quite embarrassing to show our mistakes to the class via share screen.</i>
	<i>It is not easy to explain our specific mistakes in understanding a concept for our content and it is good that the lecturer specifically addressed our group's problem.</i>
Feedback for Language Question 3 Can you explain your views on the verbal corrective feedback given for mistakes related to language?	<i>I think we have a lot of problems here with grammar mistakes and vocabulary for the report.</i>
	<i>I think we sometimes use the language by direct translation from the Malay language. To us, it may sound right but it is wrong.</i>
	<i>In my opinion, when it comes to speaking in English, we may lack confidence as we are not sure of certain pronunciation and our mistakes are not intentional.</i>
	<i>It is difficult to see the grammar mistakes and I am usually not sure because I am weak in English.</i>
	<i>Language mistakes like grammar, it is hard to detect for me. Maybe it is direct translation from Malay.</i>

Table 3 shows the summary of interview responses for VCF. The respondents were asked to explain their general view of VCF as well as their views on the verbal corrective feedback for content and language given by their lecturer throughout the 14-week period for the Report Writing course.

The responses of their general view on verbal corrective feedback (VCF) show that the respondents viewed the VCF as feedback that is immediate and two-way with visible visual expressions of the lecturer (e.g., “I can respond immediately”, “I can see the visual expression and hear the tone of voice of the lecturer”). However, they also said that after the VCF session, they may forget what corrections were to be made as it was not written. They also expressed being embarrassed when corrected online in their groups and not having the courage to ask questions. In Sakiroglu (2020), VCF although had positive responses, was said to be able to cause students to feel embarrassed and passive.

Verbal corrective feedback for content revealed that the respondents like having small group discussions with the lecturer where their corrections are discussed openly with the help of google meet share screen and whiteboard (e.g. *"I like the fact that we have small chat rooms for each group to discuss our project"*, *"It is good that we have our private rooms to discuss because it is quite embarrassing to show our mistakes to the class via share screen"*).

Verbal corrective feedback for language showed that the respondents were not confident of the use of grammar for report writing. They were also not sure if their grammar mistakes were due to direct translation from their mother tongue, the Malay language. They tried their best but were skeptical of their pronunciation in English (e.g., *"I think we sometimes use the language by direct translation from the Malay language"*, *"we may lack confidence as we are not sure of certain pronunciation and our mistakes are not intentional"*, *"It is difficult to see the grammar mistakes and I am usually not sure because I am weak in English"*). Previous studies, likewise, attested to this in terms of grammar proficiency and pronunciation (Ellis, 2008; Ferris, 2010)

Responses to WCF

Table 4. Summary of Interview responses to WCF

INTERVIEW ITEMS	RESPONSES TO WCF
General view of WCF <i>Question 1</i> How would you describe the online written corrective feedback?	<i>I feel that it is easy to read the feedback given as it is typed-written and the places that we need to make corrections are highlighted and pointed out through track changes. But I also feel that the downside is, we cannot get immediate response from the lecturer.</i>
	<i>Some written feedback uses short form or highlights or comments in red and sometimes there are a lot of mistakes in this manner. It can be difficult to understand and quite confusing.</i>
	<i>Sometimes I miss the reply given by the lecturer online even with the Google classroom prompt. It requires effort to make the corrections and a lot of the work must be done independently as we are all in ODL classes.</i>
	<i>It is good that we get some written feedback from the lecturer so we can discuss whether we need to make any changes.</i>
Feedback for Content <i>Question 2</i> Can you explain your views on the written corrective feedback given for mistakes related to content?	<i>The written feedback is good in case we miss out anything when the lecturer spoke to us.</i>
	<i>To check the content part, I think it is how we can apply what we learnt about the report like for example, how to do the graphs and charts and analyse the data. We must really understand it to avoid the mistakes.</i>
	<i>We receive feedback from the lecturer like 'needs revising', 'perhaps it is suggested...' which is helpful.</i>
	<i>For the content, it is quite tedious to go through the comments and suggestions and sometimes we still get it wrong.</i>
	<i>I think sometimes after reading the written feedback, I am not sure how to do the corrections. Maybe I am not clear about the what the content is. For example, limitations of the study. I put in not enough time and the lecturer commented it should focus on the study and not on my time.</i>
Feedback for Language <i>Question 3</i>	<i>The feedback may not be clear enough in writing and should be explained verbally as well.</i>
	<i>The lecturer types the suggestions, and it is clearly written. The feedbacks are for example, 'grammar mistakes detected', 'check sentence structure', 'wrong use of vocabulary', 'consider changing to...'</i>

Can you explain your views on the written corrective feedback given for mistakes related to language?	<i>The comments are useful, and the lecturer allows for the corrections to be done several times so we can improve our report.</i>
	<i>We did not realise we made the same grammar and language errors repeatedly until the lecturer highlighted them to us.</i>
	<i>It is quite clear that there are some written language mistakes that the lecturer highlighted. But I cannot see the mistakes and have to ask my friends.</i>
	<i>I feel the language mistakes is because I don't know the right words to express my ideas properly.</i>

Table 4 shows the summary of interview responses for WCF. The respondents were asked to explain their general view of WCF as well as their views on the written corrective feedback for content and language given by their lecturer throughout the 14-week period for the Report Writing course.

The responses of their general view on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) show that they found the feedback readable in general. However, the short forms used by the lecturer as feedback were not always understood and unlike VCF, they cannot ask questions immediately. In fact, they may also not do the written corrections after they have read the feedback given (e.g., *"I feel that it is easy to read the feedback given as it is typed-written and the places that we need to make corrections are highlighted and pointed out through track changes. But I also feel that the downside is, we cannot get immediate response from the lecturer."*). Correspondingly, Mao and Crosthwaite (2019) asserted that WCF is ineffective when inaccurate or unclear feedback is given.

Written corrective feedback for content revealed that the respondents found the written feedback helpful but tedious. In effect, they sometimes corrected the written draft and still made mistakes on the correction (e.g., *"For the content, it is quite tedious to go through the comments and suggestions and sometimes we still get it wrong."* *"We receive feedback from the lecturer like 'needs revising', 'perhaps it is suggested...' which is helpful"*). According to Ellis (2008), direct and indirect feedback can be helpful as can be seen in the responses given for it *"needs revising"* etc.

Written corrective feedback for language showed that the respondents liked the clearly typed written feedback by the lecturer and they can rewrite the drafts easily and they can see that they have done certain grammar mistakes repeatedly like a pattern of frequently made mistakes (e.g., *"The lecturer types the suggestions, and it is clearly written."*).

The result of the interviews for online corrective feedback shows that there were positive and negative responses of the VCF and WCF feedbacks. The feedback from both the VCF and WCF showed that the respondents liked receiving feedback. They commented that *"I like that we have small chatrooms for each group to discuss our project, which is great," "The verbal corrective feedback is good," "I feel that it is easy to read the feedback given"* showed positive responses towards the OCF. There were also some negative responses that needed addressing such as *"I think I may not remember all the corrective measures to take," "I feel they may not have courage to ask online," "we may lack confidence as we are not sure of certain pronunciation," "It can be difficult to understand and quite confusing," "For the content, it is quite tedious to go through the comments and suggestions and sometimes we still get it wrong."*

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the significance of OCF in the form of verbal corrective feedback and written corrective feedback during the pandemic when classes were conducted mainly online. The objectives were to determine the types of online corrective feedback from ESL learners of report writing and to investigate the significance of VCF and WCF in relation to content and language in report writing.

From the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the types of Online Corrective Feedback used were adequate as students were generally satisfied and found them useful. There were mainly two types of online corrective feedback, namely VCF and WCF. The respondents' responses towards the VCF and WCF in the 14-week academic period were satisfactory as they concluded that the OCF was useful to their language development. Overall, it was noted that the responses to VCF were slightly better than WCF. There were several factors that could have contributed to this such as immediate feedback if they had questions and did not understand or if they needed clarification. This supports previous studies by Nassaji (2016) and Nassaji (2017) on the potential effectiveness of verbal (or oral) corrective feedback (VCF) for L2 learners in developing their language skills. Similar research on VCF have also supported this (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2020; Wang and Li, 2021).

In addition, it was found that responses for preference of feedback showed that most of the respondents favoured receiving both the VCF and WCF instead of only the VCF or only the WCF. This indicates that WCF was also found to be important to the respondents and could be helpful in improving their language. Previous studies on WCF testified to the effectiveness of WCF too. Mao and Crosthwaite (2019) had found that written corrective feedbacks can help in improving subsequent written works. Arrad et. al., (2014) concluded that written corrective feedback provided a guide for students to correct their mistakes. Studies have also indicated that WCF helped improve students' writing performance and served as a positive motivation in the writing process (Agustiniingsih & Andriani, 2021).

In investigating the relationship of WCF and VCF in contributing to the learners' conscious and unconscious awareness to learning in terms of explicit and implicit knowledge as well as factors that contribute to their responses to OCF, the responses given showed there was conscious awareness to learning as shown in the survey response where the majority of respondents indicated they were very satisfied and found the feedbacks very useful. In Pawlak (2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019) VCF and WCF were construed to have differences. VCF may not necessarily be clear compared to WCF. This study however, showed that the respondents received VCF better than WCF and overall, preferred the implementation of both VCF and WCF. They had found explicit knowledge given in WCF was helpful in improving their language and content for report writing. With regards to this, Pawlak (2014, as cited in Nemati et al., 2019) states that only explicit, declarative knowledge was affected in WCF. Applying and making corrections to the given OCF, suggests that implicit knowledge was also gained. Therefore, this implies that both conscious and unconscious awareness of learning may have taken place with the receiving of VCF and WCF.

Investigation of the significance of the responses to VCF in relation to content and language found that VCF provided immediate feedback and they were able to note the expressions from the

instructor. However, they also responded feeling awkward to respond online and embarrassed to being corrected in the group. In relation to being corrected for content verbally online, they found the explanation given and the screen sharing for clarification very helpful. They also appreciated the online live two-way communication for the feedback for content. In relation to being corrected for language verbally online, the respondents admitted to making grammatical mistakes but were unsure how to improve on their mistakes as they did not detect the mistakes. They also admitted to lack of confidence in their pronunciation of the language and the mistakes they made were unintentional. This suggests that the respondents lacked proficiency of the language and made mistakes as well as were unable to detect the mistakes or correct the mistakes due to this. Hence, while the VCF for content was generally easier to understand and rectify, the respondents found it more difficult to rectify language mistakes like grammar and pronunciation. This also emphasizes the need for more attention to the use of language and more exercises and practice for grammar and pronunciation for VCF to play a significant role in improving content and language in the report writing process.

Investigation of the significance of the responses to WCF in relation to content and language found that the online WCF was easy to understand and read with the help of highlights and track changes. Also, as stated by Mao and Crosthwaite (2019), WCF has retention value whereby students can repeatedly refer to the feedback given. However, when there are too many highlights due to too many mistakes, it becomes confusing to them. The written feedback also did not provide an avenue for immediate feedback if they needed further clarification. It required effort to go through each mistake and make the needed corrections. In relation to WCF for content, the respondents found it tedious, but the examples given when applied were helpful. Even though they read the comments and suggestions, they still got it wrong. This confirms that they have little knowledge of report writing and with lack of experience and skills in research, they may have had difficulty in doing the corrective feedback for content. In relation to WCF for language, the respondents found the comments and suggestions very helpful. The allowance of corrections to be done several times also allowed for room for improvement in the language. Furthermore, they found that they did not realize that they had repeatedly made the same mistakes. Thus, it can be concluded that the WCF seems to play a significant role and have benefited the respondents although it was tedious for them.

Finally, it can be concluded that for both the VCF and the WCF, the responses were not all positive. The implication here is that although online corrective feedback can be effective by means of digital technologies, issues such as learner attitude, type of corrections and feedback given, learners' lack of confidence and language proficiency, besides internet connectivity and other issues, must be considered. In addition, efforts to provide input in the feedback process is required on the part of the instructor and students to enable the learning objectives to be achieved. While there were more positive responses than negative responses towards OCF, the respondents preferred receiving both the VCF and WCF together and not in isolation. Therefore, it is recommended that VCF and WCF continue to be given to ESL learners. Furthermore, for future research it is recommended to investigate the relationship between OCF and writing performance. Also, learner attitude and the different types of correction such as recast, repetition, elicitation, and metalinguistic cues can be further investigated.

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APPENDIX 1

Significance of Online Corrective Feedback

By filling out this survey form, you agree to give your consent for use of the information without prejudice. All information will be kept private and confidential and only be used for research purposes.

Thank you.

Dr. Soo

*** Indicates required question**

1. Verbal Corrective Feedbacks are feedback given during the online class orally. *

Rate your level of satisfaction for the Verbal Corrective feedback given to you during the Report Writing course.

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ very unsatisfied
- ☐ unsatisfied
- ☐ neutral
- ☐ satisfied
- ☐ very satisfied

2. Rate how you feel about the usefulness of Verbal Corrective Feedback *

Mark only one oval.

☐ very useless

☐ useless

☐ neutral

☐ useful

☐ very useful

3. Written Corrective Feedbacks are feedback given in written form. *
Rate your level of satisfaction for the Written Corrective feedback given to you during the Report Writing course.

Mark only one oval.

☐ very unsatisfied

☐ unsatisfied

☐ neutral

☐ satisfied

☐ very satisfied

4. Rate how you feel about the usefulness of Written Corrective Feedback *

Mark only one oval.

☐ very useless

☐ useless

☐ neutral

☐ useful

☐ very useful

5. Which of the following Online Corrective feedback given during the Report Writing course do you prefer? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Verbal Corrective Feedbacks

☐ Written Corrective Feedbacks

☐ Verbal and Written Corrective Feedbacks

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