

Thai Students' Perceptions on the Direct Vs. Indirect Written Corrective Feedback: A Thai University Context

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Abstract

Feedback is an important skill and a valuable part of any language course. The term feedback has been used by various scholars to refer to both negative as well as positive error treatment in both natural settings and the instructional setting. Some researchers have raised objections to corrective use and have pointed out that it is unhelpful or even harmful for students' writing development. Yet others seem to have established evidence in support of corrective feedback. Nevertheless, very few studies have conducted an experiment on the effectiveness in terms of accuracy on business letter writing. This quasi-experimental study involving 63 senior students in two sections of business English classroom at an international university in Thailand were divided into two groups. Each group received one type of feedback. The group that received direct corrective feedback perceived it positively hence they showed better improvement when compared to the group that received indirect corrective feedback which was negatively perceived. Further investigation on different writing types and different native language (L1) background would contribute more to the field's literature as more debate on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback will still need further research to address many unanswered questions.

keywords: corrective feedback, direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, learners' perception, Thai EFL learners

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Introduction

Among the four basic language skills, in recent years, the writing skill has become more necessary than the other skills (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). The need to express opinions and thoughts through writing in the literate societies is very crucial. People are involved in many types of writing in their everyday lives such as personal diaries, business letters, proposals, etc (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). As Hyland writes “for over half a century writing has been a central topic in applied linguistics and remains an area of lively intellectual research and debate” (2003, p.1). It is therefore highly acceptable that writing can be studied from a wide range of perspectives.

In an ESL context, English is spoken as a second language or acts as a medium of communication among people who speak different languages (Ellis, 2008) however, in an EFL context, English language is neither a primary nor a secondary language. In fact, in such context, English is considered as foreign language with very limited usage especially in classroom setting. Teachers dealing with English courses in EFL context, especially writing courses at this international university face many kinds of challenges – dealing with marking and correcting students' writing assignments. A survey of teachers and students of a writing focused English course at an international university regarding homework practices found that most students received written feedback on their written assignments from their teachers and all teachers reported giving such feedback (Parreno, 2015). In giving feedback on students' writings, teachers employ various practices. He explains in his survey that there is no system or standard set by the university on how teachers should give feedback but the two most frequently used was the direct and the indirect corrective feedback. Hence, different ways of commenting on ideas, organization, and language use are common by writing instructors. While giving feedback teachers face day to day challenge of trying to find a right balance between effectiveness of feedback provided and efficiency in their usage of time.

Based on the aforementioned problems, a writing instructor is required to evaluate and provide feedback to students' business letter writing to help them constantly improve. Therefore, the series of writing, evaluating, rewriting and reevaluating require a great deal of time and energy for both the teacher as well as the students. So, it is important for the writing instructor to have evidence on the value of feedback they are providing to their students.

Many studies showed that feedback practices are still debatable as increasing number of studies have also been investigating whether certain types of corrective feedback are more likely to help than others. Truscott (1996, 1999, 2004) argue against the benefit of providing feedback. According to him, correction can only lead to a superficial and transient type of L2 knowledge. Hence, in his view error correction is considered to be entirely unnecessary and ineffective, or even harmful. According to Ferris (1999) if feedback is not provided then the student will not try to improve their writing skill seriously as they will not perceive its importance.

Ferris (1999, 2002) tries to refute Truscott's view on this matter and still recommends that instructors should continue to provide feedback until there is more and comparable research to prove otherwise. To elaborate, Ferris (1999, p.2) criticizes that Truscott's ideas are “premature and overtly strong.” She and other researchers such as Ashwell (2000),

Chandler(2003) and Lee (1997) explain that if students are left without any feedback or guidance, their error will go unnoticed and eventually move to the phase of fossilization.

Besides, almost all studies revolved around the impact of corrective feedback in an ESL context (Bitchener et al.,2005; Sheen, 2007). Ellis et al. (2008) suggest that there is a need for more studies in EFL context. Hence, the findings of this study can provide insights to help us understand these points of views towards the usefulness of feedback and the influence of such feedback on students' L2 learning process. Besides, the findings can contribute to this field's literature with regard to the function of corrective feedback in learning English. Such knowledge is useful for teachers' consideration on whether or not using feedback in English lesson would be hinder or help their students. This study generally seeks the answer to the following question:

1. What are students' perceptions towards direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective on their grammatical errors?
2. Do the students' positive perception towards the corrective feedback result in better production?

Feedback and its Importance

According to Keh (1990) feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to the teaching of writing. It can also be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the purpose of providing information to the writer for a better revision.

Feedback comes in different forms, and one of the most common is correction. Sadler (1989) links feedback to gap-filling in student understanding, and one way to fill the gap is to indicate to learners that they are either correct or incorrect.

Types of written corrective feedback

Language teachers who believe the value of error correction have different practices in giving corrective feedback. Written feedback in broad sense usually takes two forms; direct correction and indirect correction. Direct correction is done when the teacher corrects students' errors on their work by providing the correct structural or lexical forms (Lalande,1982; Semke, 1984; Robb et al., 1986). While in the indirect correction, the teacher points out the error by circling or underlining without providing corrections (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009) . The main distinction between the two is having the learner involve in the process of error correction.

Corrective Feedback and SLA theories' view on error

Several theories have been put forward into helping us understand language learning or language acquisition. However, the researcher would hereby discuss the theories of language relevant to second language learning and have implication on error correction or feedback.

Behaviorism

An outstanding theory of learning in the 1950s, behaviorism views language learning as similar to other kinds of learning, to put in other words, it is the learning as habit formation (Ellis, 1997). Skinner and many other behaviorists believed that children learn or acquire language through the process that he calls imitation. They would imitate anyone significant to their lives be it their parents or any adult. After having been exposed to language stimuli in their

context or environment, they will imitate. The habit formation will occur once these responses are reinforced through a series of repetition.

However, according to Ellis (1995, p.22) errors in this behavioral view is something “undesirable” and are considered to be products of “non-learning”. These errors are to be avoided. Errors in the second language are considered as results of the interference of the first language. To elaborate, second language learners’ knowledge or habit can influence and can be transferred to their usage or habit formation of their first language. Hence, they may commit errors when they speak or even write in second language. Moreover, contrastive analysis was initiated by behaviorists to determine the differences between the learners’ first language and their target or second language.

It cannot be denied that behaviorism has a good amount of implications for language learning even though this view of language learning has been criticized mainly because it could not account for the fact that children produce some words or utterances that they might have never heard anyone speak before. So, there are certain critics who argue that language learning is far more complex process than a stimulus- response concept can explain.

Universal Grammar

Errors from the perspective of Universal Grammar are viewed as a natural part of learners’ language system which is highly tolerated. As there are two types of input used by children to base their linguistic knowledge on. The first type is the positive evidence which is composed of what children hear while the second one is negative evidence which consists of lack of use of positive evidence and corrections. Therefore, correcting of errors can seem to be of minimal value. This is so because learners can revise their linguistic system through positive. Brown (1994) also mentions that as children develop their linguistic system, they also constantly revise their previous knowledge.

Interlanguage Theory

Selinker offers another Nativist view of second language acquisition which has its root in the Universal Grammar model of second language acquisition (SLA). According to Ellis (1997) Interlanguage refers to the language system that learners construct at certain stages of their second or target language (L2) development. From his perspective, L2 learners produce utterances that are different from their L1 and also different from the target language. Their interlanguage has its own rules. This system is influenced by internal and external factors and changes over time. Learners use various approaches in constructing their interlanguage before coming up with different rules at various stages of their target language development. However, fossilization of learners’ grammar or rules is possible. This means that the learners may not reach their target language mastery even though persistent exposure is available and instructions are provided. They believe that errors were inevitable and it is an integral part for second language learners’ acquisition process.

Similar to the Universal Grammar model, interlanguage theorists also believe that errors are a natural aspect of learning a language that one goes through especially in learning a second language. As the linguistic system of learners is transitional, their error corrections via teacher correction and self corrections can play an important role in shaping their interlanguage.

Therefore, a number of proposals were made regarding which errors should be corrected (Ellis, 2000). Firstly, the researcher attempts to distinguish between mistakes and errors and treat them differently. Secondly, many researchers distinguished global and local errors and conflicting arguments still exist whether which should be corrected. Thirdly, stigmatized errors are advised to be corrected as they invoke negative responses. Lastly, correcting errors need to be related to the learners' next stage of development.

The Input Hypothesis Model

The input hypothesis model also known as monitor model is one of the most debated model of L2 learning. As proposed by Krashen (1987), the five hypothesis model explained the language acquisition or language learning. Error correction has little or even no value for Krashen (1985) as he believed that linguistic structures and rules learned from the correction will not lead to language being acquired. Cook (2001) states that Krashen's model has been criticized even though it has some few evidences supporting it. Yet still the importance of comprehension on the part of the language learner is crucial. This means that L2 teaching methods and approaches which include error corrections should therefore be provided suitably in order for learners to understand and assist them to comprehend features or linguistics structures that they do not acquire as yet. Also, as this model encourages the process of acquisition through the natural communications, correcting errors can negatively impact learners' confidence and attitude towards using and learning a target language and may hinder their motivation in the acquisition process.

A number of scholars such as (Corder, (1967), Gass& Selinker (1994) and Ellis (1997) believe that ideas about errors produced by learners are significant for researchers to understand the learners. As Corder (1967) states when students are learning to acquire their target language, errors are indication of the state of students' knowledge. He clearly distinguished errors of performance to that of competence. Error of performance refers to mistakes which are usually one-time occurrences or equivalent to spoken language's slip of tongue. However, errors reflect learners' lack of target language knowledge. According to Ellis (1995, 1997) distinguishing errors from mistake can be rather complex.

Methodology

This study involving 63 senior students in two section of Business Communication in English II course was done at an international university in Thailand in the semester 3/2014. The two sections were handled by the same lecturer and were assigned to two different groups by tossing a coin. (Direct Corrective Feedback Group n = 32, Indirect Corrective Feedback Group n = 31). The ratio of male to female participants was almost equal, i.e. 47% males and 53% females. The participants were homogeneous in terms of age and first language background which is Thai. The average age of participants was 21.6.

Feedback was provided on four types of business letter writing practices in accordance with the university's course objective, i.e. informative, persuasive, positive and negative letter writings to both groups consistently. Students had to rewrite their letter writing tasks based on the feedback they received throughout the semester.

Direct Corrective Feedback was done by providing the correct forms above the incorrect words, phrases or sentences whereas the Indirect Corrective Feedback was done by underlining or circling the incorrect words, phrases or sentences without providing codes or correct forms.

Table 1. *Pre-tests and post -tests data*

	Direct Corrective Feedback (Group A)	Indirect Corrective Feedback (Group B)	Number of letter writings
Pre test	32	31	63
Post test	32	31	63

Table 1 shows the total of 126 business letter writings which were obtained from pre-test and post test of both groups. That is, 63 writings were obtained from the pre-test of both groups and the other 63 were obtained from the post test of both groups. The independent sample T-test was used to compare the result of pre-test and post tests of both groups. This statistical test revealed the number of errors by the students in group A and group B. The pre-test result ($p=.34$) verified the homogeneity of the two groups of students.

Table 2. *Error-counts for both groups*

Types of Error	Group A (Direct Corrective Feedback)		Group B (Indirect Corrective Feedback)	
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test
Wrong clause formation	34	20	30	11
Wrong or no subject formation	30	15	26	7
Incorrect Verb/Missing	8	6	22	10
Wrong usage of Relative clause	31	25	23	10
Pronoun error	10	4	24	6
Sentence Fragment	44	35	16	11
Run-on sentence	46	40	30	10
Spelling	7	3	11	13
Capitalization	11	6	6	6
Incorrect tense	29	21	39	5
Subject verb agreement	29	20	14	6
Quantifier	21	20	22	10
Word form	23	17	21	8
Word choice	13	7	16	9
Wrong	10	4	22	2
Singular for plural	24	19	30	4

Plural for singular	21	16	22	2
Conjunction	30	10	31	7
Preposition	50	43	37	17
Missing/misuse articles	36	29	20	9
Negation	33	22	26	12

As Ellis (2000) explains that the study of error treatment must have an operational definition and researchers should be able to identify incidences in a lesson however, this is still challenging for researchers. Hence, it is worth mentioning what counts as error and what doesn't. In order to analyze students' writing accuracy a number of students' writing errors needed to be pointed out. According to Wolf-Quintero et al. (1998, p. 33) looking for writing accuracy is to count the errors in students' production in "some fashion". In this particular study 21 grammatical errors were corrected based on Polio's (1997) error classification.

Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interview

Questionnaire, a survey-based data collection has been used to shed light on learners' views and perception of the usefulness of the feedback they received throughout the semester. As according to Dörnyei, (2003), questionnaire data can measure important areas in applied linguistics research. The instrument that the researcher used in this study was a questionnaire which consisted of 12 items each item in the questionnaire tries to address a particular issue in teacher feedback is sub-divided into three major categories : demographic data, students' perception of feedback they received and their preferences on the types of feedback. The percentage was analyzed and used to determine whether the participants perceived it to be positive or negative. An evaluation using the index of item-objective congruence (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977) is a process where content experts rate individual items on the degree to which they do or do not measure specific objectives listed by the test developer. The result of IOC from five experts in this study was no less than 0.8 which is considered as high.

Interviews are among the most frequently used research methods in applied linguistics (Block, 2000), one of the main reasons is because they can help researchers investigate phenomena that are difficult to retrieve from questionnaire alone. In this case, interviews were used to investigate students' beliefs and attitudes about issues relating to feedback. The objective of having this interview was to collect qualitative data on students' perceptions towards feedback they received. The semi-structured interviews were used as they allowed the respondents to clarify on issues according to the guiding questions (Dörnyei, 2003).

In this study, 12 students; six from each group was selected for a semi-structured interview according to their progress on the grammatical accuracy in business letter writing. The interviews were later transcribed in a light of salient themes and patterns. Based on the inductive analysis (Brice, 2005) the data were group into categories that reflected the major themes. The questions answered from the interviews revolve around students' perceptions of the feedback they had received throughout the semester. Most of the students who received direct corrective feedback showed positive perception and perceived that they improved significantly due to the feedback provided. However, students receiving indirect corrective feedback felt that the

instructor did not care to mark their papers and they were confused on what they need to do in order to improve.

For example, when the students were asked to explain how they benefited from the teacher's feedback. Some said that they benefited in improving grammar and others claimed that they benefited from the teacher's feedback. Below are the six responses from the direct corrective feedback group (DF) and the Indirect corrective feedback group (IF)

1. How do you benefit from your teacher's feedback? Please explain.

DF S1: *I think my grammar got better because sometimes in other subjects when teachers only underline, I don't know what to correct but in this class when you correct my grammar and you write the proper one for me I can learn and next time I think I try to use better words.*

DF S2 : *I think my weakness is grammar but when the teacher correct at first I was confused why I make so much mistake but later in the next assignments I think I try to be more careful and I go back to see the corrected words and I think I don't make those mistake again. Yes I like it and I think my writing is much better than before.*

DF S3: *Yes, I think I improved a lot. I try to write to make it better than my previous ones. I think my last work is much much better than my first work. I want to get every point correct.*

DF S4: *I benefit especially in grammar points. I understand preposition better and I think I will not write wrong preposition in my letter anymore.*

DF S5: *At first, I didn't like because its all red colour, my paper was full of correction. It make me feel sad. But I try to improve and I think I have already improved.*

DF S6: *actually because I hate grammar so much. I never thought I can get better. I think now I write better with fewer mistakes.*

IF S1: *first day I was very confused. I don't know what to do but when I try to check what was wrong I correct and next time I become more careful but I want the teacher to be specific and give me correct answer. I think I can learn better if I know the answer from the teacher. It's difficult to find myself.*

IF S2: *the feedback was good as I need to find out why you underline my work. Sometimes I can sometimes I can't but I try.*

IF S3: *I think I benefit but I want more help from teacher, I want to know how to correct. I am afraid what I think will not be correct again.*

IF S4: *I benefit a lot because teacher didn't correct for me so I correct myself and I learnt more and before I submit I can review and correct myself better and better each time.*

IF S5: *I did not benefit a lot because I still don't know where I can check the correct answers.*

IF S6: *I think today I can write and teacher will not give me a lot of circle like before. Because I know what is wrong, I don't write it again. My weakness was I always forget what article to use, so I double check myself carefully.*

2. Do you prefer that the teacher corrects your errors on the script or that she underlines your errors?

DF S1: *I prefer teacher correct for me because I am not sure what is correct.*

DF S2 : *I want teacher to give me the correct word because I am very weak.*

DF S3: *I am ok if teacher correct or underline because if I don't understand I will go and ask someone.*

DF S4: *I want teacher to correct. Because teacher corrects my work now I know what to use and what I cannot use.*

DF S5: *I don't like too many corrections, I feel sad to see and I have to show my parents and they will think I don't work hard.*

DF S6: *yes teacher should give me the answer if I do it wrong because its teacher's duty to check and correct for students.*

IF S1: *Teacher always underlines and let me find but I want teacher to correct as it would be easy for me. Sometimes I am busy and I don't have time to find the right answer.*

IF S2: *I like this way, it help me remember because I have to think and find the correct way to write the work but I think if teacher correct for me I can write better too.*

IF S3: *No, I don't want to have only circle or wrong but I want teacher to correct because I have poor grammar and I don't trust myself.*

IF S4: *I want teacher to give me hint like this just show me where I should improve more. I can find out my own mistake and do better next time. If you give all answer then I think I might forget soon.*

IF S5: *I like this way, I want to improve when you underline my wrong spelling and grammar. I think I can do it and you can see I have done better writing assignment.*

IF S6: *I think I prefer that teacher correct difficult point for me but most of the time small mistake I can do myself.*

3. Do you make changes on your writing based on teacher's feedback? Please explain.

DF S1: *yes I changed based on feedback that I get and I remember and do not make same mistake again.*

DF S2: *I see what I did wrong and I changed according to what teacher give feedback*

DF S3: *I changed my revision draft based on teacher's feedback because I want to write better with fewer mistakes.*

DF S4: *I always change after I get feedback from teacher and I remember my mistakes or the points that I do wrong and in my next writing I correct like teacher say and it make my writing better.*

DF S5: *yes I change according to feedback and eventually I get less feedback but I still change every time I get feedback to improve my writing.*

DF S6: *yes I do what teacher correct because my grammar is very bad so when I change it sounds better and next time I remember and try to use the form that teacher correct for me.*

IF S1: *yes I change my writing by thinking what should I correct when teacher underline and then I try to make it right sometimes I am not sure but I always try to do better.*

IF S2: *yes I try to change if I know what is wrong but if I don't know I still try but I am not sure if its correct.*

IF S3: *yes I always change the part that I made mistake, I think first why teacher underlined, and then I try to think of new way to say it or change it to be grammatically correct.*

IF S4: *yes I improve my writing based on teacher's feedback by looking at the mistake but I want teacher to be clear what is my mistake so I can really do better next time.*

IF S5: *yes I try to make changes according to teacher's feedback and make my writing better. I look to see which part I got underline and I try to find out my mistake and do not do again.*

IF S6: *yes I always change and correct by myself based on what teacher suggest. I look at points that I often do wrong and redo and it improve a lot now I think.*

Table 3. *Questionnaire data obtained from Direct Corrective Feedback Group*

Question	Students' responses (Direct Feedback)									
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%

I find my teacher's feedback on my writing beneficial	20	62.5	5	15.62	3	9.37	3	9.37	1	3.12
I understand my teacher's feedback on my writing	20	62.5	7	21.87	4	12.5	0	0	1	3.12
I would like to receive feedback from my teacher in the future	23	71.8	5	15.62	2	6.25	1	3.12	1	3.12
I prefer not to get feedback on my writing	2	6.25	4	12.5	2	6.25	20	62.5	4	12.5
Teacher's feedback on my writing help me to improve	24	75	5	15.62	1	3.12	2	6.25	0	0
My teacher's feedback makes me feel unwilling to do the task again	5	15.62	3	9.37	1	3.12	22	68.75	1	3.12
My teacher's feedback makes me confident of producing a better writing in the future	24	75	3	9.37	2	6.25	2	6.25	1	3.12
My teacher's feedback discourages me from producing a better writing in the future	1	3.12	2	6.25	2	6.25	4	12.5	23	71.8
I prefer when the teacher writes the correction of the error on my paper	22	68.75	5	15.62	3	9.37	1	3.12	1	3.12
I prefer when the teacher underlines the error without correcting it	2	6.25	4	12.5	5	15.62	20	62.5	1	3.12
I wish to receive more written feedback from my teacher	18	56.25	5	15.62	2	6.25	5	15.62	2	6.25
I do not think teacher's feedback is beneficial for me	2	6.25	1	3.12	2	6.25	20	62.5	7	21.87

Table 4. *Questionnaire data obtained from Indirect Corrective Feedback Group*

Question	Students' responses (Indirect Feedback)									
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I find my teacher's feedback on my writing beneficial	5	16.12	2	6.45	5	16.12	20	64.51	9	29.03
I understand my teacher's feedback on my writing	3	9.67	2	6.45	2	6.45	21	67.74	3	9.67
I would like to receive feedback from my teacher in the future	4	12.9	4	12.9	2	6.45	15	48.38	6	19.35
I prefer not to get feedback on my writing	5	16.12	3	9.67	2	6.45	14	45.16	7	22.58
Teacher's feedback on my writing help me to improve	3	9.67	2	6.45	5	16.12	14	45.16	7	22.58
My teacher's feedback makes me feel unwilling to do the task again	14	45.16	5	16.12	3	9.67	3	9.67	6	19.35
My teacher's feedback makes me confident of producing a better writing in the future	3	9.67	3	9.67	2	6.45	5	16.12	18	58.06
My teacher's feedback discourages me from producing a better writing in the future	17	54.83	6	19.35	2	6.45	3	9.67	3	9.67
I prefer when the teacher writes the correction of the error on my paper	27	87.09	2	6.45	1	3.22	1	3.22	0	0
I prefer when the teacher underlines the error without correcting it	3	9.67	5	16.12	2	6.45	10	32.25	11	35.48

I wish to receive more written feedback from my teacher	22	70.96	2	6.45	2	6.45	2	6.45	3	9.67
I do not think teacher's feedback is beneficial for me	18	58.06	10		1		2	6.45	0	0

Results and Discussions

After a series of treatment in one semester, the next step was to detect the changes in students' writing accuracy. Paired sample T-test was employed to analyze the pre-tests and post-tests of the students in the same group. This statistical analysis revealed the progressive writing by the same subjects in their correspondence writing. Group A, receiving the direct corrective feedback improved significantly ($p=.00$) while Group B, receiving the indirect corrective feedback shows marginal improvement ($p=.050$).

Even though the value of written corrective feedback has been heavily criticized (Truscott, 1966, 1999, 2004, 2007; Ferris, 1999, 2004), this study has provided an evidence of the efficacy of error correction. Nevertheless, this study refuted the claims made by researchers such as Krashen (1985) and Schwartz (1993) that correcting grammatical error can be entirely harmful and ineffective which may not provide positive outcome. The studies of Fazio (2001) and Lalande (1982) found corrective feedback to have a negative influence.

The findings of this quasi-experimental study are in line with some of the previous research work (e.g. Bitchener et al., 2005; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, 2009; Sheppard, 1992; Fazio, 2001) which state that written corrective feedback has a positive effect on grammatical accuracy of students' writings. However, the result contradicts the study of various researchers (Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2004; Truscott and Hus, 2008; Ashwell, 2000) claiming that written corrective feedback did not show any effect on students' written work.

Turning to the findings of questionnaires, for the direct corrective feedback group there are many indications that feedback is highly valued. They believe that using the teacher's feedback helped them in improving their business writing, mainly in terms of grammatical aspects. Furthermore, students' interview answers amplify the results of the questionnaires as well as statistical data. Contrastingly, students receiving indirect corrective feedback, even though showed marginal improvement, they still perceive this type of feedback negatively. Most of them were confused when the instructor only underlines or circles their mistakes. They preferred to get more feedback in the form of direct correction. The result was in line with the interview. The findings theoretically imply that written corrective feedback in both forms of direct and indirect corrections can help in learning certain linguistic structures of a second language by helping learners notice the gap between their production and the target language's structure. Moreover, in the view of cognitive processing models of second language learning, awareness and understanding develop explicit or declarative knowledge and make that knowledge become more automatic or procedural. Apparently, the overall findings suggest that there is a strong bond between providing language learners with error correction and their

improved accuracy. However, writing instructor also needs to know how their students perceive the feedback they received in order to achieve the highest effect.

Recommendation for Further Studies

Firstly, in order to gain deeper insights, further studies need to be conducted on other types of writings. Also as Truscott (1996) mentioned, without incorporating measures of complexity in students writing, written corrective feedback may actually be brought about due to avoidance, so future studies should measure the lexical and structural complexity as well. Additionally, this study is only based on L2 learners from only one L1 background which is Thai. For future research, it is suggested that two or more different L1 background groups may be tested.

Conclusion

The researchers would conclude that it is definitely worth providing written corrective feedback which the students perceive positively as this would provide learner with opportunities to notice the gaps in their language development and test their interlanguage hypothesis. As students receiving direct corrective feedback positively perceive it to be beneficial, they value and think highly of it. According to them it is considered as being one of the useful tools in improving their writing skills. However, more debate on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback will still need further research to address many unanswered questions.

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