

Exploring the Role of Teachers' Feedback for Fostering University Students' Academic Writing Skills

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ABSTRACT

Teaching academic writing skills requires careful attention to the individual and assessing, and providing conducive feedback to all the students within the specific allocated time. However, there remains a gap in research regarding how different types of Teachers' feedback influence students' academic writing development in the particular context of Sanghar. Therefore, the study intends to explore the most effective feedback provided by teachers to foster the academic writing skills of the university Sanghar at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sanghar Campus. To achieve this, the qualitative research method was employed in which semi-structured interviews were conducted with five teachers of the English language to know their perceptions and experiences. The results revealed that personalized and constructive feedback, which includes detailed suggestions and corrections, significantly enhances students' ability to write academically. Moreover, the research highlights the importance of timely feedback in improving writing skills among students. Additionally, encouraging a feedback culture in the classroom could further support the development of academic writing proficiency at the university level in Sanghar.

Keywords: Constructive feedback, Academic writing skills, University students, Teachers' training.

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing skills have become very important for university students nowadays, because these skills directly affect their academic development and performance. These skills are not only about grammar and structure but also cover the ability to effectively summarize your ideas in writing, critical thinking, organize academic research, and present concisely (Ahmed & Naqvi, 2018). Therefore, universities need to develop academic writing as an important skill for students so that students can achieve good results during their higher education. In Pakistan, especially in rural areas like Sanghar, university students face a lot of struggles with academic writing skills, as their academic performance matters. Research shows that there are difficulties in doing this because students do not get resources or proper guidance to develop writing skills (Shah et al., 2025; Raza, 2016). Nevertheless, feedback can play an important role in improving students' writing skills. Feedback from teachers allows students to identify mistakes in their writing. This feedback provides students with a way to understand their weaknesses and improve them (Fahim & Ashraf, 2020). Feedback provides students with a structured process for refining their writing. If the teacher's feedback is timely and detailed, students can improve their writing

significantly, but if the feedback is vague or not timely, it does not enhance students' writing skills (Khan & Shah, 2019). The relationship between feedback and academic writing skills in Pakistan has not been explored in much research, especially in rural areas like Sanghar. In this region, feedback from teachers is very important to improve writing skills, but the quality and consistency of feedback are a challenge for many students. Most students do not receive proper training on feedback, which hinders their improvement in academic writing. This problem is the focus of this research, which will try to understand the connection between teacher feedback and students' writing skills. If we make Teachers' feedback effective, it can significantly improve students' writing skills. This feedback should not be limited to the grammar or structure of the writing, but should help students present their ideas logically and critically (Jamil & Bashir, 2019). The timing and delivery of feedback are also very important, as they are crucial factors for writing improvement. Effective feedback can also motivate students to work harder on their writing and refine their skills. This practice is not yet common in educational institutions in Sanghar. Therefore, it is essential to train teachers in giving feedback so that they can continue to provide effective and constructive feedback. The research aims to explore how teachers' feedback can improve students' writing skills, and this feedback can help them write better.

In rural areas like Sanghar, university students face many challenges in academic writing skills. They find it difficult to write, such as grammar, sentence structure, and ideas. Design this, feedback from teachers can play a significant role in enhancing their writing skills, but much research shows that the improvement does not help students, or the feedback becomes difficult for them to understand (Fahim & Ashraf, 2020). Research also shows that students have trouble accepting feedback, especially when it is not timely or of sufficient quality. This problem hinders the development of their writing skills. The method and timing of feedback delivery are both factors that affect writing improvement (Khan, 2017). If feedback is detailed and specific, students can understand their mistakes and correct them, and thus their writing skills can improve. The focus of this research is to understand how teachers' feedback influences Students' writing skills, and how feedback can be made more effective. In addition, the research also aims to identify ways for teachers to deliver feedback better, so that students can improve their writing skills. The purpose of this research is to understand the connection between feedback and academic writing skills and to see how teachers' feedback can help students improve their writing, especially in rural areas. The research aims to find out how teachers' feedback helps enhance academic writing skills, especially for students in Sanghar.

Research Question

1. How do students receive and respond to teacher feedback?
2. What challenges do teachers and students face during the feedback process?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Pakistan, teacher feedback is considered essential to improving writing skills, but its effectiveness depends on a number of factors, including the type of feedback, when it is given, and how students interact with it. This literature review explores the role of teachers' input in developing university students' academic writing skills, with a particular focus on how well-developed academic writing abilities shape scholarly communication and critical thinking, and how well-developed academic writing abilities can impact academic success across disciplines. Concentrate on the background of Sanghar, a Pakistani location with little research done there. It emphasizes the value of feedback, its various forms, the difficulties teachers encounter, and how feedback affects students' writing results.

The Importance of Academic Writing Skills: Writing academically requires a variety of skills, including the capacity to organize concepts logically, employ proper terms, and make sure your arguments make sense. Students use it as a tool to interact with books, communicate their comprehension

of subjects, and participate in scholarly discussions. Ghaith (2016) says that academic writing is essential to the learning process, especially at the university level, when students must write extensively in their disciplines for assignments, research papers, and dissertations. Academic writing abilities are regarded as a key indicator of student achievement in Pakistan. (Shah & Khan, 2017) emphasize that these abilities are crucial for critical thinking and scholarly work in addition to finishing school assignments. Discussion. In higher education, students must write academic papers that rationally and persuasively communicate their views; the development of these abilities is crucial. However, there are a number of obstacles that hinder the growth of writing abilities at Pakistani universities, particularly in semi-urban regions like Sanghar. These include a lack of funding, poor training for teachers, and a lack of emphasis on writing teaching in some curriculum (Shah & Khan, 2017). Writing academically well involves more than just knowing language and syntax; it also calls on the ability to think critically, synthesize data, and make persuasive arguments. Students in many Pakistani universities, however, find it difficult to build these competencies successfully. According to Ali & Khokhar (2015), these difficulties are exacerbated by insufficient feedback systems and a deficiency of focused writing instruction.

Teachers' Feedback and Its Role in Academic Writing: Students' academic writing abilities are significantly shaped by the feedback they receive from their teachers. Feedback, according to Hyland & Hyland (2006), is an essential component of the learning process because it enables students to recognize the advantages and disadvantages of their writing. Students can reflect on their writing and strengthen their weak areas by using their teachers' input. Writing abilities significantly improve when feedback is immediate, precise, and constructive. In higher education, where students are expected to produce academic work of a higher caliber, the role of feedback becomes even more crucial. The learning process enables students to recognize the advantages and disadvantages of their writing. Students can reflect on their writing and strengthen their weak areas by using their teachers' input. Writing abilities significantly improve when feedback is immediate, precise, and constructive. In higher education, where students are expected to produce academic work of a higher caliber, the role of feedback becomes even more crucial. As stated by Bitchener & Effective writing feedback, according to Knoch (2010), concentrates on several writing levels, including grammar, substance, coherence, and structure, all of which enhance a paper's readability and impact. Furthermore, feedback enables students to comprehend academic writing standards and how to satisfy them (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). The feedback process isn't always simple, though. In Pakistan, instructors frequently encounter a number of obstacles while attempting to give constructive criticism, especially in rural and semi-urban areas like Sanghar. Shahzad and Ijaz (2019) contend that although educators in Pakistan acknowledge the significance of feedback, they frequently find it difficult to respond promptly and thoroughly because of big class sizes, limited time, and a lack of professional development in giving helpful feedback (Shahzad & Ijaz, 2019). As a result, enhancing the caliber and efficacy of feedback in these domains needs knowledge of the obstacles as well as strategies for increasing the impact of feedback.

Type of Feedback in Academic Writing: The two main categories of feedback in academic writing are formative feedback and Summative feedback. Although they serve different purposes, both kinds aid students in honing their academic writing abilities. Formative feedback is provided while students are writing and is intended to assist them in refining their work prior to final submission. It emphasizes particular aspects of writing, like argument clarity, coherence, and organization. According to Li (2016), formative feedback is crucial for assisting students in participating in the revision process and making continuous progress. Students are encouraged to gradually improve their writing with this kind of feedback, which promotes skill growth over the academic semester. Conversely, summative feedback is given at the conclusion of the writing work or assignment and concentrates on assessing the finished product. Topping (2017) points out that although summative feedback is necessary for grading, it might not provide the comprehensive direction or offer practical guidance that can be applied to enhance particular aspects of the job. Due to time constraints and huge class sizes, formative input is often

ignored in Pakistani colleges, especially in smaller cities like Sanghar, according to Yousaf & Shahid (2018). They contend that putting more of a focus on formative feedback as opposed to just summative feedback would enable students to interact with their writing more fully and grow over the semester (Yousaf & Shahid, 2018).

Teacher-Student Interaction and Its Impact on Writing Skills: The quality of the teacher-student relationship is just as important to effective feedback as the feedback's actual content. The significance of meaningful teacher-student interaction in creating a positive feedback environment is emphasized by Chaudhary and Rahman (2020). When Students are more likely to appreciate the reasoning behind the recommendations and feel inspired to make changes in their writing when professors have one-on-one conversations with them and offer tailored feedback (Chaudhary & Rahman, 2020). In areas like Sanghar, where students may encounter obstacles including a lack of resources, a lack of exposure to academic writing norms, or a lack of prior academic preparation, the teacher-student interaction is especially crucial. Students can overcome these obstacles and feel more comfortable editing and enhancing their work if they have a supportive relationship with their teacher. Students are more inclined to ask for explanations, provide examples, and make the required edits to enhance their writing abilities when they feel at ease with their teachers, according to Hamid (2015). Furthermore, a feedback loop that encourages students to ask questions and respond to the feedback produces a dynamic learning environment that promotes academic advancement, as noted by Ahmed & Rizvi (2021).

Challenges Faced by Teachers in Providing Feedback: Giving constructive criticism is not always easy. Khan & Khan (2016) draw attention to the problem that many teachers lack the knowledge required to give thorough, helpful feedback, particularly in rural or underdeveloped locations like Sanghar. Additionally, teachers may find it difficult to strike a balance between the requirement to give personalized feedback and the demands of grading and assessing a lot of work quickly (Khan & Khan, 2016). Large class sizes and admin demands can significantly reduce teachers' time to provide students with tailored feedback, according to Jamil & Ahmed (2019) feedback is less effective at encouraging writing progress when it is given insufficiently, since it is often broad or cursory (Jamil & Ahmed, 2019). In order to sustain student involvement and promote a growth mentality in academic writing, teachers may also find it difficult to provide feedback that is both stimulating and corrective. Raza & Ali (2020) go on to say that time restrictions also have an impact on the quality of input since professors may put finishing syllabi ahead of giving students thorough feedback on their work. The difficulties children have in developing their writing abilities are made worse by this circumstance (Raza & Ali, 2020).

The Role of Peer Review: Peer review can be a useful method for enhancing students' academic writing in addition to teacher input. Students can participate in collaborative learning and get other viewpoints on their writing through peer criticism. Peer feedback, according to Rashid & Hussain (2018), promotes critical thinking and aids students in gaining a deeper comprehension of academic writing conventions. Ahmed & Khalid (2017) warn that peer review isn't always trustworthy. Students might not have the abilities to offer helpful criticism, which could lead to Students might not have the skills essential to give useful feedback, which could lead to criticism that is either basic or unduly severe. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Rashid & Hussain (2018) contend that peer and teacher feedback together might offer a thorough method of enhancing writing abilities (Ahmed & Khalid, 2017). Feedback from teachers is essential for developing university students' academic writing abilities. In areas like Sanghar, the value of feedback in enhancing writing is especially significant.

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates how Sanghar University students' academic writing abilities are developed through teacher feedback. To learn more about how teachers view input and how it affects students' writing skills, a qualitative research approach was used. The study used a qualitative exploratory design

to investigate teachers' perspectives and experiences with feedback methods and how these affect students' academic writing. Understanding the complex role of feedback in the writing process requires the collection of rich, detailed data, which is made possible by the qualitative approach. Five university teachers were chosen for the study by purposive sampling. These educators were picked because they actively participated in giving students comments on their scholarly writing. Since all of the participants were from Sanghar universities, their backgrounds were guaranteed to be pertinent to the study's local setting. To enable a thorough examination of individual viewpoints, a modest sample size was selected.

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data, allowing us flexibility in examining each teacher's experiences while guaranteeing that important topics pertaining to feedback were addressed. Depending on the professors' availability, interviews were conducted in person or online and lasted anywhere from thirty to sixty minutes. A popular technique in qualitative research, thematic analysis, was used to examine the gathered data. First, the interview transcripts learned with, and then the main topics were identified and coded. Following that, these themes were divided to represent the function of feedback in the academic writing process. In order to make sure the themes appropriately reflected the data and the study's goals, they were lastly examined and improved. The primary limitation of the research is its limited sample size, which could restrict how broadly the results can be applied. Nonetheless, the complete qualitative data offers insightful information on how teachers provide feedback in the Sanghar context.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which Sanghar University students' academic writing abilities are improved by teacher feedback. Two main research questions were the subject of the study: (1) How do students receive and respond to teacher feedback? (2) What challenges do teachers and students face during the feedback process? Five university instructors (T1 through T5) were interviewed for this qualitative study in order to obtain their perspectives. The conclusions drawn from these interviews provide a better understanding of the difficulties faced by both teachers and students, as well as the emotional and intellectual components of feedback.

Q:1 How do students receive and respond to teacher feedback? Although feedback is essential for academic writing, there are differences in how students absorb, comprehend, and use it. The following major themes were identified from the instructor interviews.

Emotional Response to feedback

A lot of students have emotional reactions to feedback, especially when it is harsh. T1 stated, "A lot of students take negative feedback personally, which makes them feel disappointed and discouraged." According to T3, students who have poor self-esteem are particularly impacted by feedback and see helpful feedback to be a reflection of their skills rather than a means of becoming better. But T4 revealed that when feedback is given with both favorable Students are often more open to ideas for improvement and reinforcement. "I always begin by recognizing what they did well, which helps them stay open to feedback for improvement," T4 stated.

Student Engagement with Feedback

Instructors saw that students frequently engaged with feedback in a selective manner. "Many students only look at their grade and ignore the feedback altogether," T2 clarified. T5 said, "Once they see the grade, students usually move on." They don't spend enough time thoroughly reading the comments. This implies that even while feedback is given, many students do not use it to its full potential. However, T3 noted that when feedback is connected to upcoming assignments, students are more likely to pay attention

to it. For example, students are more likely to evaluate and use comments when they relate to how they can get better on the following task.

Understanding and Applying Feedback

Instructors found that a large number of students had difficulty understanding and successfully applying the comments. T2 noted that some students find feedback less useful because of the complicated wording utilized. T5 went on to say, "Students find it difficult to apply the feedback to their writing when there are no clear examples." T1 recommended that comments be specific and clear, providing real recommendations for enhancement. For instance, rather than stating, "improve sentence structure," educators ought to give particular examples. T4 underlined that in-person conversations or oral comments frequently aid students in comprehending input more fully.

Feedback as Motivation and Demotivation

"Even if a student's writing is weak, they tend to feel motivated to improve when I praise their effort," T3 stated. But as T2 noted, giving students too harsh feedback could demotivate them and make them less inclined to work on their writing. Teachers highlighted that in order to support students and help them grow, feedback had to be balanced.

Q:2 . What challenges do Teachers and Students face during the feedback process?

Time Constraints and workload

All five professors believed that time restrictions were one of the greatest problems in providing effective feedback. T1 commented, "In my class, I have 40-50 students, and it's difficult to give detailed feedback to everyone." T4 stated, "We are usually rushing to meet deadlines, which affects the caliber of feedback we can provide." Teachers said this problem might be resolved, and more individualized input could be given with smaller class numbers or more help, like teaching assistants.

Lack of Student Interest in Feedback

Students frequently exhibit little interest in comments, according to teachers. T5 clarified, "Students typically don't care to look at the feedback once they receive their grade." T2 stated that students are unlikely to interact with feedback in a meaningful way unless they are clearly instructed on how to use it to enhance their work. Universities might provide seminars to teach students how to use feedback for improvement, according to T3, which could boost students' interest and involvement.

Language and Comprehension barriers

A further significant barrier was language limitations. Many Sanghar pupils are from Urdu or Sindhi-speaking families, so they frequently find it difficult to comprehend English-language criticism. When provided feedback in English, many pupils either fail to read it or misunderstand it, according to T3. T2 proposed that students might comprehend the feedback more easily if it were given in bilingual or simpler language. Given the region's multilingual background, teachers recognized the significance of tailoring input to students' linguistic proficiency.

Teacher Training and Feedback Skills

A few educators acknowledged that they lacked formal training on how to provide helpful feedback. T4 stated, "We usually provide feedback based on our own experience, but it would be helpful to have structured training on how to deliver effective feedback." T1 stated that a lack of training in teaching could occasionally result in feedback that is too severe or unclear. Teachers said they wanted professional development to help them give better feedback, especially when it came to academic writing.

Overload and Feedback Fatigue

Teachers also pointed out that giving pupils too much feedback may confuse them. T1 clarified, "Students frequently feel overwhelmed when they receive a page full of corrections." "It's better to focus on one or two key issues per assignment rather than overwhelming students with too many comments," said T5. Students feel exhausted as a result of this feedback overload, ignoring the remarks or becoming unsure of what to emphasize. Teachers proposed that children would benefit more from specific feedback that addressed the most crucial issues.

The results show that although teacher feedback is essential for enhancing academic writing, its efficacy depends on a number of variables, such as the feedback's clarity, the students' emotional reactions, and the teacher's time and resource management skills. Feedback is most helpful when it is positive, specific, and easy to understand. The efficacy of feedback is, however, limited by issues such as emotional responses, language problems, and a lack of student involvement. Insufficient instruction in feedback processes, big class sizes, and time limits are some challenges teachers encounter.

RECOMMENDATION

According to the study's findings, teachers from universities in Sanghar are advised to give students frequent, detailed, and helpful comments in order to develop their academic writing abilities. Feedback should clearly outline areas for improvement in addition to pointing out mistakes. Teachers must get training through professional development seminars that emphasize current feedback practices, such as the use of digital technologies and formative assessment procedures, in order to increase the efficacy of feedback. Students should also be urged to actively respond to criticism by considering their errors and making necessary revisions to their work. Teacher-student one-on-one feedback sessions can improve this process even more. The Students will have a better understanding of the requirements and evaluation methods if clear guidelines for writing assignments are introduced. In the end, fostering an environment in the classroom where feedback is viewed as a tool for development rather than as a means of challenge can greatly enhance academic writing abilities among Sanghar University students.

The results of this study show that improving university students' academic writing abilities in Sanghar is greatly aided by professors' feedback. The majority of students stated that receiving prompt, thorough comments enabled them to correct their grammar, enhance their writing's organization, and formulate stronger arguments. Instructors also recognized the value of providing helpful feedback as opposed to just noting errors. The study did, however, also draw attention to some issues, such as insufficient time for one-on-one feedback and inadequate teacher preparation for efficient feedback techniques. These results are consistent with earlier studies that highlight how important feedback is. Overall, the study emphasizes how students' academic writing skills can be greatly improved by enhancing the feedback process, particularly in underserved places like Sanghar.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that university students in Sanghar benefit much from their lecturers' criticism in terms of improving their academic writing abilities. The results of the study show that students gain a great deal when they get prompt, helpful, and transparent feedback from their teachers. Universities in Sanghar must thus fund teacher training, encourage the use of digital tools, and foster an academic climate that values feedback if they hope to see an improvement in academic writing. In addition to improving pupils' writing skills, these actions will help them succeed academically in general.

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