

## **The Effect of English Language Teachers' Feedback on Writing Skills of Secondary Level**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Writing skill is an essential component of English language learning, which enhances students' academic success and communication skills, but students face difficulty in expressing grammar, structure, vocabulary, and ideas clearly and effectively. This problem is particularly seen in students who belong to rural backgrounds where exposure to English is limited, such as in Sanghar. This study aimed to see how teachers' positive, constructive, and error-correcting feedback affects students' writing. Looking at these issues, teachers' feedback plays a critical role in their writing development. The main objective of the research was to find out which feedback type is more effective and how students perceive feedback. Quantitative method was used in this study, in which data of 133 students (classes 9th to 12th) were collected through a questionnaire. After analyzing the data, it was revealed that students find positive and constructive feedback more valuable, whereas just pointing out errors has less impact on their performance. The result of this research is that English language teachers should make their feedback techniques more thoughtful, balanced, and encouraging. This research is also helpful for educational planners and curriculum developers who want to make feedback strategies effective for modern classrooms.*

**Keywords:** Teacher Feedback, Writing Skills, Positive Feedback, Constructive Feedback, Error Correction, Secondary Students.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The art of writing is an essential part of learning any language, especially English. For students, acquiring good writing skills is necessary for their future success. In this regard, feedback (Opinion and Advice) given by teachers plays an important role in improving the writing skills of students. Feedback from English language teachers plays a very important role in improving students' writing skills. Writing is not just an academic skill but also an expressive and communicative skill that is essential for students' educational and professional success. To develop effective writing, students not only need to learn grammar and vocabulary but also structured guidance and constructive feedback (Bitchener, 2018; Biber et al., 2011). When teachers assess students' writing and give them feedback on their mistakes, it helps them improve their writing skills. This feedback is not just a way to point out errors but a learning tool that motivates students and makes them better writers (Bakla, 2020). In this context of English learning, feedback is part of a structured learning process. It not only tells students about their writing mistakes but

also guides them on how to improve their writing skills (Brookhart, 2008). Formative assessment and feedback are used to enhance the writing process of students, in which teachers give them step-by-step guidance. This process helps students to make their writing structured and clear improve their language proficiency (Bitchener et al., 2010).

The impact of feedback is different for each student. When teachers give students positive and constructive feedback, their confidence increases and they try to improve their writing (Hamare & Pianta, 2001; O Conner & McCartney, 2007). If the feedback is only negative or based only on criticism, students' motivation may decrease, and they start worrying about their writing rather than improving it (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shah et al., 2025). According to research, students who receive consistent feedback perform better than students who practice their writing without any feedback (Elola & Oskoz, 2016). Feedback is not only a correction tool but also a learning strategy for improving writing skills. It helps students understand where their weak are and how they should correct their mistakes (Evan et al., 2010). English writing is not just about writing ideas but about structured and well-organized writing. The writing process is based on multiple stages such as planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Seow, 2002). But often, students do not follow all these stages properly and write and submit an essay. Therefore, when teachers give feedback, it helps them to learn proper writing techniques. The objective of this research is to find out the impact of English language teachers' feedback on the writing skills of students. This study also explored what kind of feedback is more beneficial for students to help them improve their writing skills. English writing is a dynamic process that is enhanced not just through consistent practice and effective guidance (Richard & Renandya, 2002). If teachers give structured and detailed feedback to students, it not only helps them to correct their mistakes but also makes them independent writers who can analyse their writing. Therefore, teachers' feedback is not just an assessment tool but also a learning support system that helps students to improve their writing skills.

Writing skills are being given a lot of importance in today's academic system, especially in connection with English language learning, but students often face issues such as errors, coherence, structure, and clarity in their writing. Many students experience difficulties while writing, especially those who are learning English as a second language. It is difficult for them to express their ideas clearly, and they often make mistakes in their writing. Such students need proper support to write better. When teachers give direct and constructive feedback, students can understand their mistakes and correct them, but if this feedback is not given effectively, it does not impact students' learning as much as it should. Some students only make surface-level changes and do not focus on deep-level improvement of their writing. Teachers' feedback is considered a very important tool to remove these issues. The basic purpose of teacher feedback is to make students aware of their performance. According to Ferris (2003), effective written feedback can improve both accuracy and fluency of students, but this is only possible when the feedback is relevant, timely, and understandable. According to Hyland (2010), feedback given in a writing class is not just limited to language improvement but also affects students' overall academic confidence and critical thinking skills. Bitchener & Ferris (2012) highlighted that different types of feedback, such as direct (direct answer or correction), indirect (answer without pointing out a mistake), and metalinguistics (through grammar rules or explanation), have different effects on students' writing outcomes. Research by Lee (2008) found that when feedback is unclear or only criticism, students become confused and their motivation decreases. Hattie & Timperley (2007) divided feedback into three levels: feed up (what is the target), feedback (what stage are the students at now), and feed forward (what improvements can be made now). This suggests that feedback should not be limited to simply pointing out errors but rather teaching students to move forward in a better way.

Despite all these insights, in developing countries such as Pakistan, feedback practices are often formal, inconsistent, and under-researched. There is not much empirical data available on the extent to which

feedback from English teachers, particularly at the secondary level, has a positive impact on students' writing skills.

This gap highlights a serious research gap. The purpose of the study is to find out what effect English language teachers' feedback has on students' performance, which feedback techniques are more beneficial, and whether positive, constructive, or error correction feedback is more effective. All these aspects should be examined. The findings of this research can lead to improvements in English teaching practices, and writing skills can be improved. This research aims to investigate English language teachers' feedback on the writing skills of secondary-level students.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the role of an English language teacher's feedback on students' writing skills?
2. To what extent are feedback techniques beneficial for students?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

English language teachers' feedback plays a very important role in improving students' writing skills. Teachers' feedback is an essential part of enhancing students' learning and academic performance. When teachers guide students to write better, they get an opportunity to understand and correct their mistakes. Many researchers have researched the positive effects of teacher feedback, which suggests that correctly given feedback can improve students' writing skills.

Hattie and Timperley (2007) found in their research that feedback is effective only when it is timely, specific, and actionable. This means that if the input is given on time, is clear, and helps the students to understand the way to correct mistakes, only then will it have an impact on the students' learning. This research was done at various levels of education, and its positive effect was seen everywhere. Baliarm and Youde (2018) found in their study that students of teachers who give specific feedback perform better. They say that when students are clearly shown their mistakes and the way to correct them, they try to write better in the future. This research was done on primary-level students, but it can be applied to students of all levels.

Yaseni (2021) also found that the method of teacher feedback is important. If the input is vague or given haphazardly, students may not benefit from it. They say that direct feedback is better for intermediate-level students, while advanced-level students can learn more from indirect feedback. This can be useful for students of all levels, because the method of feedback should be according to the learning ability of each student. Cai et al. (2023) studied the effect of feedback in a technology-based learning environment. They argue that feedback is more effective when it is expository, i.e., when teachers are detailed. It has also been shown that a combination of electronic and live feedback is better than electronic feedback alone. This research points to the fact that better results can be achieved by combining modern learning tools and traditional teaching methods.

Plank, Dixon, and Ward (2024) argue that the effect of feedback also depends on the teachers' teaching approach, student-teacher relationships, and class size. According to Gan, An, and Liu (2020), the cultural values of different academic disciplines also impact the effectiveness of feedback. This research suggests that feedback may work differently for other students, and teachers should understand that different students have different learning styles. Askew and Lodge (2000) analysed traditional classroom teaching and stated that feedback is often a one-way communication in which the teacher only speaks and the students do not get a chance to understand their mistakes. Bulter and Winne (1995) introduced the concept of outcome-based feedback in which only correct or incorrect answers are given, but students do not get proper guidance for improvement. This research supports the fact that if the feedback is meaningful and detailed, then students can benefit more from it.

Dihoff et al. (2003) found that students' learning is not as improved if feedback is given directly. Descriptive written feedback, in which teachers explain in detail students' mistakes and ways to correct them, is more effective. Smith and Janssens (2020) also reported that improvement-oriented feedback that does not focus only on marks or grades can improve students' learning outcomes. According to Ahmed, Saeed, and Salam (2013), students who receive meaningful feedback from teachers perform better and have better class participation. Chandler (2003) emphasized corrective feedback, which gives students the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. Li, Schwabe, Yang, and Chen (2015) say that corrective feedback helps students not repeat their mistakes and inculcates the habit of writing better. Wang & Wu (2017) also consider corrective feedback as an important learning tool. Aravena (2015) argues that learning is improved when teachers highlight students' mistakes and suggest ways to correct them. Meral et al. (2012) showed a strong link between self-efficacy and academic achievement. Ahmed and Safaria (2013) argued that students who are confident in their abilities write better and can tackle difficult subjects confidently. Honicke and Broadbent (2016) also suggest that self-efficacy has a positive impact on academic performance. Karl et al. (1993) highlighted that when students receive good feedback from teachers, their confidence increases and they produce better writing. Omer and Abdularhim (2017) described constructive feedback as an essential part of the learning and teaching process. According to Nyiramana (2017), when teachers give constructive feedback, students are motivated toward self-regulated learning. Research by Sermon, Limnometric, and Pochakorn showed that written or spoken correction feedback helps students improve their writing mistakes. Jamalinesari, Rahimi, Gowhary, and Azizifar (2015) stated that the learning environment becomes more positive when teachers give meaningful feedback to students. Westmacott (2017) stated that indirect corrective feedback, in which students identify their own mistakes, is more effective. Pham (2015) described corrective feedback as an important tool to improve students' self-confidence and writing skills. According to formative feedback, Storch (2010) stated that it is a powerful approach to improving writing skills that guides students through every stage of the writing process. Paran (2012) emphasized that formative feedback enhances students' cognitive writing process, which includes idea generation, drafting, feedback taking, and revision. According to Brookhart (2017), formative feedback allows students to identify their weaknesses and strengths and improve them. Teachers play an important role in providing written feedback. Petrus and Mohd Shah (2017) highlighted that in an ESL classroom, students follow the teacher's guidance. Wang and Wang (2012) argued that that encouragement and constructive comments help to increase student's motivation. Coots (2012) stated that effective feedback increases students' writing efforts and attention.

Lizzio and Wilson (2008) stated that feedback is effective when it is clear and comprehensive so that students can easily understand it. Brookhart (2017) argued that delayed feedback affects students' learning improvement. According to Careless and Bound (2020), the biggest benefit of effective feedback is that it teaches students to understand their mistakes and move towards better writing. This research also suggests that if teachers provide input according to the level and needs of the students, the learning process can be improved. Henderson et al (2021) reported that teacher feedback enhances students' knowledge and precision. When teachers check students' writing in detail and guide them properly, their writing style and content both improve. This research also suggests that student should not only be pointed out their errors but also be taught better ways to write. Winstone and Careless (2020) highlighted in their research that the basic purpose of feedback is to reduce the gap between students' current performance and expected performance. Meaning, if students are writing at a certain level and need to write better, the job of feedback is to take them to that better level.

### **Role of Peer Feedback and Self-Assessment**

Not only teacher feedback, but peer feedback can also help in improving students' writing skills. According to Topping (2020), peer feedback is a collaborate learning strategy that develops students' critical thinking skills. When students check each other's work and give suggestions, they look at the

writing from a new perspective and also start understanding their mistakes. Andrade and Brookhart (2020) have also researched the importance of self-assessment. They say that when students analyze their writing themselves, they start understanding their strengths and weaknesses better. It develops self-regulation and independent learning, which helps them lifelong. Today, thanks to technology, giving and taking feedback has become easy. According to Shute and Rahimi (2020), with the help of digital tools and online systems, teachers can provide instant and personalized feedback, which improves students' engagement and comprehension. It is especially proving to be very helpful in online learning and distance education. Hyland (2020) stated that effective feedback should not be limited to just highlighted errors but should cover all aspects of grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and creativity. When feedback is given from every angle, the overall writing quality of students improves. According to Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2020), formative feedback acts as a guide that helps students improve step by step. It is helpful at every stage of the writing process, including planning, drafting, and final revision. According to the research of Dawson et al (2021), students' perception also defines the effectiveness of feedback. If students find feedback fair and relevant, they are more interested in accepting and implementing it. Therefore, teachers should give feedback in a way that students can understand and that is meaningful for their learning. Hattie and Clarke (20002) stated that early feedback always has more weight, because when students can immediately correct their mistakes, their learning improves, but for some complex tasks, delayed feedback can also be beneficial, because it gives students a chance to think and understand. Bound and Molloy (2022) argued that if students are made part of the feedback process, they can understand the feedback better and start participating actively. Meaning if teachers first ask students what feedback they would find helpful, then they will accept that feedback in a better way.

Brookhart (2021) stated that the use of rubrics and grading guides makes feedback structured, which is easier for both students and teachers. When students know in advance the criteria on which their work will be assessed, they try to follow those criteria. Winstone et al (2020) also called for considering the emotional impact of feedback. They said that negative feedback, if not constructive, can reduce students' motivation and self-confidence. For this reason, balanced and supportive feedback should be given that encourages students and inspires them to improve. Long-term research by Hyland and Lo (2021) shows that if feedback is given regularly and effectively, students' writing skills improve on a sustainable basis. For this reason, the role of feedback is very important in ELT environments, and teachers should not only highlight mistakes but also guide students to learn and develop creativity so that they can improve their writing skills. All this research supports the fact that teacher feedback is a powerful tool that can improve students' writing skills.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

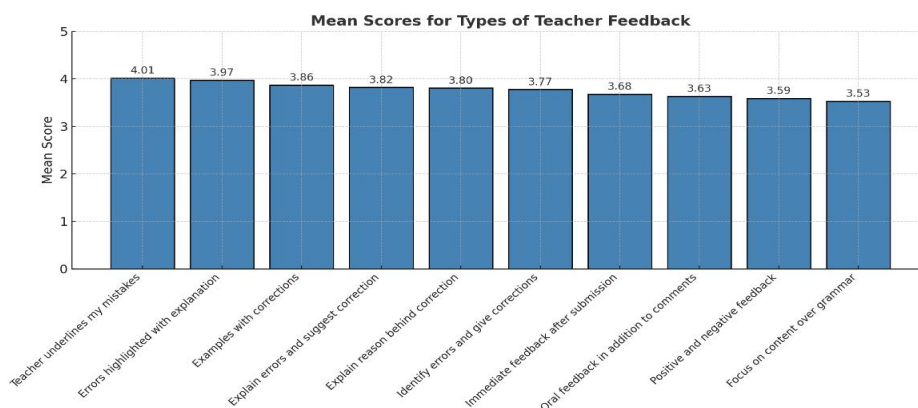
In this research, a quantitative method has been used. This survey aimed to find out how secondary school students perceive teachers' feedback, and which feedback proves to be more beneficial for them, such as constructive (giving a boost to improve), only negative, or only positive feedback. In this study, secondary school students from Sanghar (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th classes) participated. A total of 133 students shared their thoughts through the survey. The sample was based on those students who were available at that time and who were willing to fill out the survey themselves (convenience sampling). These students were from diverse backgrounds, which showed diversity in their views. The survey data was collected in spring 2025. Students were personally given a questionnaire in which they were asked questions related to teachers' feedback. The questionnaire used a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), and some open-ended questions were also asked. Students were told that their data would be used only for research and their answers would be kept confidential. The data collected was analyzed using simple numbers (mean scores, standard deviation, and frequency distribution). The data was explained with the help of graphs. It was found from the results that students like constructive and positive feedback more because it helps them to improve. Students considered only negative feedback



useless and demoralizing. Some students also said that sometimes teachers' feedback is received late or is not that helpful.

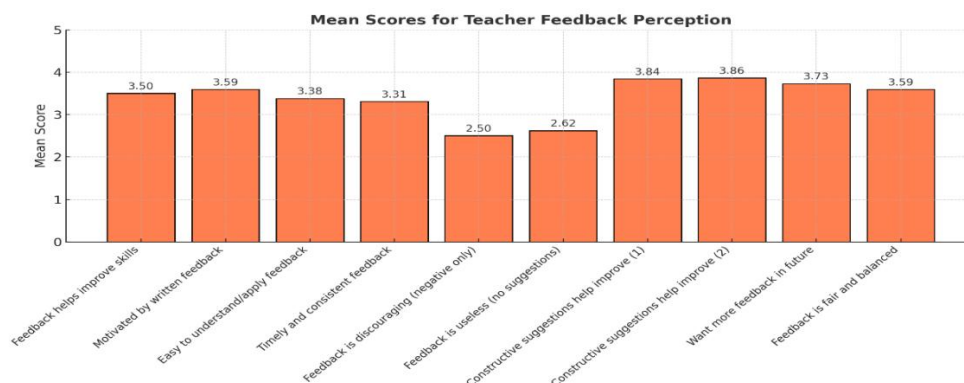
## FINDINGS

### Q1. What is the role of an English language teacher's feedback on students' writing skills?



This graph shows which teacher feedback style students find more helpful for improving writing skills. It is clear from the graph that students like those feedback methods more where the teacher underlines their mistakes or explains the error by highlighting it. Using such techniques, students find it easier to understand their errors and correct them (mean score 4.01 and 3.97). Students also said that they learn better when they get corrections along with examples. When the teacher tells them that something is wrong and also explains why it is wrong and how to correct it, then that kind of feedback is most beneficial for the students (mean score 3.86 and 3.80). It also shows that some feedback, like "identifying errors and giving correction" (mean score 3.77) or "giving foreign feedback after submission" are moderately useful for the students, that is, they are helpful, but they do not have the clarity and details that the students want (mean score 3.68). In comparison to this, students found oral feedback or positive-negative general comments to be less effective (mean score 3.63 and 3.59). They say that when written feedback related to grammar is given, both their understanding and writing improve (mean score 3.53). The graph overall shows that students like clear, written, and explainable feedback more. With such feedback, they not only see their mistakes but also learn their solution and can improve their writing. It is important for teachers that while giving feedback, they do not just point out the errors but also explain them so that the students can confidently improve their concepts.

### Q2. To what extent are feedback techniques beneficial for students?



This graph shows that students like constructive feedback the most, i.e., the feedback that does not just point out their mistakes but also gives them a way to improve. According to the survey, statements have the highest (mean score 3.84 and 3.86) in which constructive and useful feedback is mentioned. This means that students consider feedback comments more helpful, which helps in improving their writing skills. Students say that such feedback motivates them and they think it is fair and balanced (mean score 3.59 and 3.50). It has also been seen that most students understand the feedback easily and apply it, which shows that the feedback is clear to them. It has also been mentioned in this that some students feel that teachers' feedback is not always timely and of consistent quality (mean score 3.31). The lowest (mean scores 2.50 and 2.62) was received by feedback that was only negative or in which suggestions were not given. Students consider such feedback as worthless and discouraging. Overall, in this graph, it has been shown that if teachers' feedback is positive, clear, and helpful, then students like it more. They learn more from such feedback, which guides them, makes them better, and increases their confidence. This is why teachers should not just highlight mistakes but also give constructive suggestions for improvement so that students get motivated and can trust themselves.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

This study aimed to find out how secondary school students perceive teachers' feedback and what type of feedback proves to be more beneficial for them. When the data was analyzed, it was found that most students preferred constructive and positive feedback. Constructive feedback means feedback that not only points out mistakes but also suggests ways to improve them. It has been found in several previous research studies that constructive feedback enhances both learning and motivation of students (Hyland, 2006). While answering the first question, students said that they like such feedback where the teacher underlines their mistake or explains it by highlighting it. This kind of feedback helps students to understand their mistakes and rectify them. Students benefit the most when teachers not only say that something is wrong but also explain why it is wrong and how to correct it. The average rating of such feedback has also come higher in the graphs. These findings match those of the study by Ferris (2011), which found that explicit and written feedback led to a noticeable improvement in student writing, but when only oral feedback or just general positive-negative comments were given, students perceived them as worthless and demotivating. Written feedback in which grammatical errors are explained in writing improves both students' writing and understanding. Students prefer clear, written, and detailed feedback in which they can understand their mistakes as well as correct them. This type of feedback reduces students' self-confidence, and they withdraw from the learning process (Shute, 2008).

In response to the second question, it came to light that students like constructive feedback the most. They said that such feedback increases their motivation, and they feel that teachers help them to improve their writing. Students called such feedback comments fair and clear. Some students also said that sometimes the feedback is not received on time or is not as effective as it should be, but still constructive feedback was liked the most. Brookhart (2008) also highlighted that timely and consistent feedback is important for student improvement. Students also reported that when feedback is motivational and acknowledges their hard work, their confidence increases. This also aligns with Dweck's (2006) "growth mindset" model, which states that if students feel they can improve through their hard work, they are more likely to seek to learn actively.

That is, this study proves that if teachers give positive, detailed, and constructive feedback to students in which they not only point out the mistake but also provide a solution for it, then students feel more confident and their writing skills improve. Therefore, English language teachers should not consider feedback as just a means of correction but should make it a guidance tool that enhances both the writing development and motivation of students.

## CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study is to find out how teachers' feedback affects students' writing skills. This study found that students find feedback more beneficial if it clearly points out their mistakes and tells them the way to improve. Students liked constructive and positive feedback most, which teachers highlight their mistakes and tell them the way to improve. When the feedback is only negative or general comments are given, students do not find it that beneficial. It was also shown in the Literature review that if the feedback is timely and detailed, it is more advantageous for students. Findings show that students find constructive and positive feedback more effective, while only negative feedback demoralizes them. It is also said that if teachers give clear and constructive suggestions in their feedback, then students not only understand their mistakes and can rectify them, but their confidence also increases. This research also shows that if feedback is given on time and in the right manner, then students get help in understanding their mistakes and rectifying them. The overall conclusion of this research is that teachers' feedback is an effective tool in improving students' writing skills, but the method and timing of feedback are also very important. Teachers should use their feedback as a constructive and motivating tool so that students get a chance to improve their writing skills.

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