

Teaching strategies on corrective feedback

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Corrective feedback occupies a central role in the learning process, particularly in the assessment of essay writing, as it enables students to identify weaknesses and take steps toward improvement. It functions not only as a mechanism for error correction but also as a catalyst for the development of writing proficiency, critical thinking, and reflective learning. Nevertheless, while its instructional value is well recognized, many students report feelings of worry and anxiety when receiving critical comments on their essays.

A major source of this apprehension is the fear of failure. Learners often perceive corrective feedback as a judgment of overall competence rather than as constructive guidance for specific skills. When feedback is interpreted in this way, students may disengage from the process, limiting opportunities for growth. The sense of vulnerability is heightened when feedback is experienced as overly harsh, personal, or judgmental, further discouraging students from engaging meaningfully with the revisions expected of them.

This challenge is amplified in classroom environments where feedback is delivered without sensitivity or encouragement. In such

settings, students may perceive the learning space as unsafe, resulting in reduced motivation and weakened trust in the teacher–student relationship. The absence of rapport and psychological safety restricts students’ willingness to accept feedback and apply it productively, thereby undermining the very purpose of assessment and guidance.

Written corrective feedback is particularly critical because students often struggle to recognize and correct their own errors without external support. Explicit guidance provides clear indicators of mistakes and pathways for improvement, enhancing students’ ability to self-monitor and apply conventions of effective writing. By drawing attention to the different dimensions of writing grammar, coherence, organization, and argumentation feedback helps learners understand the complexity of their challenges and target specific areas for development. This highlights the importance of feedback that is both detailed and purposeful.

At the same time, research indicates that students’ expectations regarding corrective feedback vary. Shinta et al. (2023) emphasize that while some learners prefer direct corrections for clarity and efficiency, others benefit more from indirect strategies that promote independent problem-solving. Such variation underscores the need for adaptive feedback practices aligned with students’ preferences, learning styles, and emotional readiness. In doing so, teachers not only support technical skill development but also nurture learner confidence, resilience, and motivation in writing.

Perceptions and Practices of Corrective Feedback: Aligning Teacher Strategies with Student Preferences in Writing Assessment

Corrective feedback can be defined as a pedagogical method that identifies and capitalizes on embedded learning opportunities (Han, 2019).

It serves as a form of communication intended to influence learners' thinking and behavior by guiding them toward improvement. When students make mistakes, corrective feedback provides structured support: it identifies the error, clarifies the reasoning behind it, and suggests or elicits alternative strategies. In doing so, it prompts students to reflect on what could have been done differently and reinforces more effective approaches to learning.

A growing body of literature confirms the effectiveness of corrective feedback, even though teachers may not always be conscious of providing it during instruction (Ha et al., 2021; Patra et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2025). Learning frequently arises from mistakes, and feedback allows educators to address these productively. For instance, when students introduce misinformation in class discussions, timely corrective input enables teachers to replace inaccuracies with updated knowledge, particularly in language-related subjects where precision is essential.

Research further emphasizes the importance of how feedback is delivered. Melkersson and Annertz (2020) argue that students should view written corrective feedback as a constructive tool for growth rather than as a punitive measure. Harsh or overly critical approaches such as excessive red markings can demotivate learners by evoking anxiety or discouragement. Their study highlights that feedback should be introduced progressively, giving students the time and space to adapt, internalize, and apply it to their work. Importantly, the visual presentation of feedback such as ink color, density of markings, or annotation style also shapes students' perceptions. Overuse of red ink, for example, may create cognitive overload or confusion, thereby undermining its intended purpose.

The present study aligns with this perspective by examining not only the substance of feedback but also its form, considering how visual cues and

delivery styles influence students' motivation and receptiveness. Recognizing these factors underscores the dual responsibility of educators: to provide feedback that is both pedagogically sound and psychologically supportive.

In terms of feedback type, many students consider direct feedback which explicitly addresses grammar, organization, content, and mechanics the most beneficial. Ganapathy et al. (2020) reported that students often prefer teachers to mark every error, believing that comprehensive correction enhances comprehension, clarifies their mistakes, and supports long-term retention. By contrast, Canals et al. (2020) observed that some teachers adopt a more selective approach, choosing to correct only those errors that significantly impede understanding. This method is intended to prevent students from feeling overwhelmed by excessive markings, thereby reducing demotivation and maintaining engagement.

Sukha and Listyani (2022) identified three primary corrective feedback techniques commonly used in classroom practice:

- Indirect feedback – drawing attention to errors without explicitly providing the correction, for instance, through underlining, circling, or highlighting problematic areas in the text.
- Metalinguistic feedback – providing learners with error codes or symbols that indicate the nature of the mistake (e.g., grammar, word choice), encouraging students to self-correct.
- Direct feedback – supplying the correct form directly within the student's text, ensuring immediate clarity but potentially limiting opportunities for independent problem-solving.

These techniques illustrate the spectrum of corrective feedback strategies, ranging from highly supportive to more autonomous learning-oriented approaches. The choice of method often depends on instructional

goals, learners' proficiency levels, and the balance teachers wish to strike between scaffolding and fostering self-reliance.

Maawa and Dela Cruz (2019) observed that teachers frequently prefer direct feedback, which involves explicit error correction accompanied by detailed explanations. This method not only identifies the error but also provides guidance on how to correct it, thereby reducing confusion and supporting immediate improvement. Similarly, Madini and Qutob (2020) emphasized the effectiveness of direct feedback in enhancing students' writing performance, as it delivers clear instructional guidance, even if not every error is explicitly marked. By contrast, indirect feedback, while beneficial in encouraging learners to engage in independent problem-solving, may at times be perceived as unclear or ambiguous. Since it highlights the presence of an error without elaborating on its nature or providing a correction, students may struggle to identify the exact issue. A third form, metalinguistic feedback, provides learners with coded symbols or written explanations that specify the type of error. Nawaz et al. (2022) found that teachers often employ this method to address grammatical issues, vocabulary use, capitalization, spelling, and punctuation, while also guiding students on broader concerns such as coherence and cohesion. This approach not only informs learners about the category of their mistakes but also fosters reflection and deeper understanding of language use.

Teachers' Practices and Typologies and Students' Preferences and Uptake of Corrective Feedback for Reflective Essays: A Case Study

This study aims to investigate the practices and typologies of teachers, as well as the preferences and uptake of students, in relation to corrective feedback on reflective essays in the senior high school context.

Specifically, it seeks to: (1) describe teachers' practices and typologies of corrective feedback employed in evaluating reflective essays, (2) identify students' preferences regarding the types and delivery of corrective feedback, and (3) assess the extent to which students incorporate and apply the feedback they receive.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design. Content analysis was utilized to examine teachers' practices and typologies of corrective feedback, while a checklist questionnaire was administered to assess students' preferences and uptake. The questionnaire covered various dimensions of corrective feedback, including level of detail, focus, paper-marking techniques, and feedback type. It also explored students' responses when reading their teachers' comments and their attitudes toward the feedback provided.

The study was conducted in a private college in Quezon Province, Philippines. The participants were 115 purposively selected Grade 12 HUMSS students enrolled in Creative Non-Fiction who had prior experience receiving corrective feedback from their teachers. The total Grade 12 HUMSS population was 300, from which a specific block was chosen through cluster sampling based on the presence of the required study characteristics and willingness to participate.

For the analysis of teachers' practices and typologies, content analysis was employed, whereas students' preferences and uptake were determined through the survey instrument. To ensure clarity, reliability, and organization, the questionnaire was reviewed by the research adviser and validated by three experts. Recommendations from the validators were incorporated, leading to revisions and refinements of the instrument. Upon

approval, the survey was administered in person during the first week of April 2025, with assistance from the Grade 12 English teachers. Respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study and reminded of the importance of providing honest and accurate responses. All completed questionnaires were collected on the same day.

A confidentiality clause was included in the instrument to assure participants that all information would be used solely for research purposes and treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

Findings

The analysis of teachers' corrective feedback practices in reflective essays revealed several notable patterns. In terms of the details of errors, an overwhelming majority of teachers (98.73%) preferred to correct most of the errors in students' reflective essays, while only 1.27% indicated a preference for selecting some repetitive errors. Regarding the color of the correcting pen, the highest percentage of teachers (39.24%) preferred using light-colored pens, whereas the lowest percentage (25.32%) reported using a red pen. With respect to the focus of feedback, the most emphasized aspect was organization and paragraph construction (32.01%), while the least emphasized was content (5.93%). In terms of paper-marking techniques, more than half of the teachers (51.66%) reported using the statement method, in contrast to only 0.91% who employed crossing out errors as a corrective approach. Finally, for the types of feedback, nearly half of the teachers (49.65%) favored indirect feedback as their primary method, whereas negative feedback was the least preferred, reported by only 0.70% of respondents.

Table 1*Details of corrective feedback*

Area	F	%
Amount of Error		
Correct most of the error	78	98.73
Select some repetitive error	1	1.27
Color of Correcting Pen		
Light Color Pens	31	39.24
Dark Color Pens	28	35.44
Red Pen	20	25.32
Focus of Feedback		
Organization and Paragraph Construction	81	32.01
Mechanics	68	26.89
Grammar	61	24.11
Vocabulary Choice	28	11.07
Content	15	5.93
Paper Marking Techniques		
Statement	171	51.66
Proofreading symbols	74	22.36
Underline errors	65	19.64
Exclamations and Questions	9	2.72
Writing Questions	9	2.72
Crossing out errors	3	0.91
Types of Feedback		
Indirect Feedback	284	49.65
Positive Feedback	165	28.85
Direct Feedback	76	13.29
Metalinguistic Feedback	43	7.52
Negative Feedback	4	0.7

Overall, the findings indicate that teachers generally prioritize correcting the majority of errors in students' reflective essays, employing light-colored pens and focusing feedback on organization and paragraph construction. Their preferred marking technique is the use of statements, complemented by a tendency toward indirect forms of feedback. Collectively, these practices reflect a deliberate orientation toward constructive and structured correction methods designed to guide student learning while avoiding approaches that may appear overly critical or discouraging.

Table 2*Students' preferences in receiving corrective feedback*

Areas	Mean	Interpretation
Amount of Error		
Correct most of the errors	3.72	Strongly Agree
Obvious errors	3.09	Agree
Some repetitive/common errors	2.99	Agree
Does not correct my errors	1.41	Strongly Disagree
Color of Correcting Pen		
Light Color Pens	3.19	Agree
Red Pen	2.84	Disagree
Dark Color Pens	2.46	Disagree
Highlighter	2.24	Disagree
Pencil	1.89	Disagree
Focus of Feedback		
Grammar	3.59	Strongly Agree
Vocabulary Choice	3.55	Strongly Agree
Mechanics	3.5	Strongly Agree
Organization and Paragraph Construction	3.44	Strongly Agree
Content	3.27	Strongly Agree
Paper Marking Techniques		
Statement	3.74	Strongly Agree
Underline errors	3.38	Strongly Agree
Crossing out errors	3.02	Agree
Writing questions	2.99	Agree
Using proofreading symbols	2.69	Agree
Using exclamations and question mark symbols	2.33	Disagree
Types of Feedback		
Strike out the mistakes and correct them	3.61	Strongly Agree
Provide feedback on all the error	3.49	Strongly Agree
Feedback on structure	3.46	Strongly Agree
Give clues or directions	3.19	Agree
Implicit feedback	3.08	Agree
Underline mistakes	2.9	Agree
Making comments about errors	2.67	Agree
Indirect suggestion	2.47	Agree
Point out where the error occur	2.25	Disagree

Legend: 3.26-4.00= Strongly Agree 2.51-3.25= Agree 1.7-2.50= Disagree 1.00-1.75= Strongly Agree

The analysis of students' preferences for corrective feedback yielded several key findings. With regard to the extent of error correction, the highest mean score was 3.72 (Strongly Agree), indicating that students preferred teachers to correct most of the errors in punctuation, organization, spelling, content, and grammar. In contrast, the lowest mean score was 1.41

(Strongly Disagree), reflecting the least preference for having errors left uncorrected in these areas.

In terms of the color of the correcting pen, students expressed a stronger preference for light-colored pens, as shown by a mean score of 3.19 (Agree). Conversely, the use of pencils was less favored, with the lowest mean of 1.89 (Disagree). For the focus of feedback, the highest-rated aspect was grammar including vocabulary, word arrangement, meaning, and tenses with a mean score of 3.59 (Strongly Agree). Vocabulary choice, while still positively received, obtained the lowest rating within this category, with a mean of 3.27 (Strongly Agree).

Regarding paper-marking techniques, the most preferred approach was the use of motivational statements to encourage students in improving their essay writing, with a mean score of 3.74 (Strongly Agree). The least preferred method was the use of exclamation or question mark symbols, with a mean of 2.33 (Disagree). For types of feedback, students showed the strongest preference (mean = 3.61, Strongly Agree) for teachers to strike out mistakes and directly correct them. The least preferred option was error identification without correction, which registered a mean score of 2.55 (Disagree).

Taken together, these findings suggest that students favor comprehensive and explicit correction of errors, with particular emphasis on grammar, motivational written comments, and direct teacher-led correction. Preferences also extend to the use of light-colored pens, which are perceived as less intimidating. Overall, the results highlight students' inclination toward feedback that is clear, supportive, and actionable—helping them strengthen their writing competence more effectively.

Table 3*Students' uptake when they read their teachers' comments and correction*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Action towards the feedback		
Read every mark/comment	3.62	Strongly Agree
Concern about the guide	3.41	Strongly Agree
Use internet	3.15	Agree
Ask classmates	3.04	Agree
Make own correction	2.99	Agree
Ask some other teachers	2.79	Agree
Go to library for references	2.3	Disagree
Do not read the composition	1.83	Disagree
Ignore them	1.8	Disagree
Feelings towards the feedback		
Help to know what to avoid/improve	3.79	Strongly Agree
Help to know the mistakes	3.67	Strongly Agree
Make me want to try harder	3.54	Strongly Agree
Mean to encourage.	3.49	Strongly Agree
For improvement	3.39	Strongly Agree
Like the way composition is marked	3.29	Strongly Agree
Comments are specific	3.28	Strongly Agree
Make good feeling about himself	3.28	Strongly Agree
Enjoy the comments	3.15	Agree

The analysis of students' uptake of corrective feedback revealed several noteworthy trends. In terms of reading teachers' comments and corrections, the highest mean score was 3.62 (Strongly Agree), indicating that most students "like to read every mark or comment their teacher wrote on their work carefully." In contrast, the lowest mean score was 1.80 (Disagree), corresponding to the statement, "I ignore them because I do not know how to make the correction." This highlights that while the majority of students engage closely with teacher feedback, a small subset faces challenges in applying it effectively.

Regarding students' feelings about teachers' comments, the most favorable response was recorded for the statement, "My teacher's comments and corrections help me to know what to avoid or improve next

time,” with a mean of 3.79 (Strongly Agree). The lowest mean, 3.15 (Agree), was associated with the statement, “I enjoy the teacher’s comments on my composition.” This suggests that while students strongly value the formative function of comments, they may not always view feedback as an enjoyable aspect of the writing process.

When examining the strategies students employ after receiving feedback, the highest mean was 3.63 (Strongly Agree), reflecting the perception that “The teacher’s written feedback is always helpful.” The lowest mean, 2.68 (Agree), was linked to the statement, “I do not have any problems in rewriting my paper after getting feedback.” This finding implies that while students generally perceive feedback as beneficial, some still encounter difficulties in the revision process, underscoring the need for feedback that is both explicit and supportive.

Overall, the results indicate that students place high value on corrective feedback and actively engage with it when it is clear, actionable, and improvement-oriented. They particularly appreciate comments that guide them in avoiding errors in future tasks. However, the data also reveal that certain students may struggle to operationalize feedback when it is not sufficiently comprehensible, pointing to the importance of clarity, accessibility, and scaffolding in the design of corrective feedback practices.

Recommendation

Based on the study’s findings, the researchers developed a learning module aimed at guiding and enhancing Grade 12 HUMSS students’ understanding of corrective feedback, as well as highlighting their teachers’ preferences in assessing reflective essays. The module is organized into four key sections: teachers’ practices, teachers’ typologies, students’ preferences, and students’ uptake of feedback when reviewing their reflective essays.

addressing critical aspects that can support the development of students' writing proficiency. It is recommended that teachers employ this module as a practical guideline for corrective feedback to:

Evaluate the extent of corrections provided. Carefully consider the potential effects of excessive corrections and strive to identify an optimal balance that promotes learning while avoiding student discouragement.

Align feedback with students' focus areas. Focus on the aspects that students value most such as grammar, organization, and paragraph structure ensuring that feedback remains both relevant and impactful.

Adopt effective paper-marking techniques. Employ feedback methods that students perceive as helpful, including motivational statements and clear corrections, rather than relying on symbols or markings that might cause confusion.

Choose feedback types that foster improvement. Provide feedback that not only identifies errors but also guides students toward correct usage, thereby fostering the development of stronger sentence structures and enhancing overall writing skills.

By implementing these recommendations, teachers can deliver constructive and targeted feedback that promotes student engagement, strengthens comprehension, and ultimately enhances writing proficiency.

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