

Effects of Corrective Feedback on Academic Achievements of Students: Case of Government Secondary Schools in Pakistan

Iqbal Ahmad¹, Muhammad Saeed², Muhmmad Salam³

¹Department of Education,
University of Malakand, Pakistan

²Department of Sociology and Social Work
University of Malakand, Pakistan

³Department of Computer Science and IT
University of Malakand, Pakistan

Abstract: *Feedback is an essential aspect of the teaching and learning process. Teachers' feedback is closely related to student's academic development. This study examines the effects of corrective feedback on academic achievement of students. For this purpose, a self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data from a random sample of 200 teachers in 20 government secondary schools in district Chitral Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. To ensure validity and reliability of the data, the questionnaire was piloted in six secondary schools before distributing in the field and refined in the light of the pilot test. Finally, data were collected, tabulated and analyzed for results using simple percentages. Analysis of the data showed that there was a close relationship between teachers' corrective feedback and academic achievements of students. The study further showed that students who get corrective feedback scored high in the examination, have deeper understanding of the concepts, participate actively in the classroom activities, do their classroom assignments in time, easily communicate their views in classroom discussions. Thus, on the basis of this study it is recommended that teachers should provide corrective feedback to students.*

Keywords: corrective feedback, academic achievements, perception of teachers, government schools

1. Introduction

Feedback is an important aspect of teaching and learning. In recent years corrective feedback has received increasing attention from researchers and teachers in different parts of the world, because it has a corrective function which improves the learner's performance in the process of education [1]. Corrective feedback improves learning skills of learners through error correction. Teacher feedback is an integral part of students' learning and improvement. It helps in closing the learning gap. It also increases the learning proficiency of students [2]. Feedback is teachers' response for students' performance. It helps the teacher to know how to respond to students after they demonstrate their knowledge, reasoning, skill or performance. It is in fact the transfer of information from the teacher to the student. It helps the student in meaningful construction of knowledge, understanding of the concepts and development of reading and writing skills [3].

Students formally acquire correct knowledge, understanding of the concepts, and show positive behaviors through continuous practice. All this depends on teachers' guidance and correction in a school subject which is often represented in a traditional way by a percentage of marks obtained in an examination [4].

Secondary education is an important terminal stage in students' life. It serves as a linkage stage between elementary stage and higher education of the learner. It is an important sub-system of the entire educational system because it provides the middle level work force for the national economy. It acts as a feeder for the higher level of education as well [5].

The researchers of this study have worked in district Chitral as teacher trainers for both government and private sector schools. They observed for the last few years that the examination students' results of government secondary schools in District Chitral were poorer as compared to private secondary schools. For example, in many cases it was found that students showed poor results in various annual examinations. To explore the causes of the above phenomenon in secondary schools in District Chitral, this study was conducted to investigate the perceptions of teachers and students about the effects of written corrective feedback on students' academic achievements.

2. Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions

of government secondary schools teachers in District Chitral regarding the effects of corrective feedback on students' academic achievements. Corrective feedback is an error correction or a written comment that constitutes a meaningful unit. It is a written or oral comment of a teacher comprising one sentence or consists of more than one sentence. It defines the level of productive proficiency attained by a learner in an academic work [6].

3. Literature Review

Teacher's correction of errors leads to better students' academic performance. To achieve this purpose teachers use different techniques to provide feedback to students. These techniques are self-assessment, peer feedback, teacher-student conferences, electronic feedback, and teacher written feedback. Of all these kinds of feedback, the teachers' feedback appears to be the most crucial to overall development of students [7]. In view of [8] corrective feedback is the most widely used form of feedback that students receive all over the world. Corrective feedback plays a pivotal role in improving students' performance. It has a direct bearing on the teaching and learning process. [9] elaborates that corrective feedback can take different forms. It may vary with respect to its explicitness, focus, the person providing the feedback and the feedback medium. [10] have investigated methods of feedback and report that some teachers use codes to respond to their students' works in various subjects. Similarly, a study by [11] has explored the types of feedback such as form vs. content in which teachers perceive corrective feedback as being more effective.

[12] found that feedback has significantly positive effects on students in terms of academic achievements. Students who are provided feedback by their teachers show good results in examination and have a greater rate of participation in classroom activities. [13] after examining student progress in written accuracy found that students who received feedback on their errors showed improvement in examination results. [14] examined compared the achievements of students who were given feedback with those who were taught without written feedback. The results indicated that students who had been given continuous written feedback by their teachers got good grades in examination than students who had not received feedback. [15] argue that the accuracy of students in expression of ideas, understating of concepts improves through positive feedback of teachers. [16] concluded that written feedback is effective in improving students' writing skills.

[17] discovered that giving feedback to students on their class assignments produces significantly high results for students. In this way the students fully understand the concepts. [18] found that students' revisions in response to teachers' written feedback were associated with significantly higher test results. [19] advocates that written

corrective feedback improves learners' speaking and writing accuracy and positively impacts on acquisition of language accuracy. [20] comparing results of students in various language classes concludes that students who receive regular feedback from their teachers have improved linguistic skills such as writing, reading, speaking and listening. According to [21] students with better linguistic abilities show good results in examination and have deeper understanding of difficult concepts.

[22] advocate that error corrections and feedback by teachers leads to students' improved academic results. [23] point out that giving written corrective feedback to students' work is an important and meaningful area of teachers' responsibility. To the contrary [24] discovers that some students take teachers' feedback as frustrating, confusing, grueling and unrewarding. Similarly [25] also found that in some cases students and parents consider teachers' feedback as ineffective and worthless for students due to its ambiguity and less clarity. [26] add that some teachers give written feedback which is generally shorter, less cohesive, less accurate, and contain more errors which creates problems for students. Therefore, [27] advice that teachers should give clear conclusions about the efficacy of the students' work which removes confusion in the minds of the students about the quality of their works. Hence, [28] suggests that error correction and feedback by teachers should be concise, clear and error free. Corrective feedback becomes beneficial for students when it is given at the right time by the teachers. [29] concludes that feedback is a type of guidance by teachers which contributes towards the improvement of students' academic performance in the learning process.

4. Significance of the Study

This research study is significant for the following reasons.

- It will help the teachers in government secondary schools to evaluate their existing written corrective feedback practices.
- It will apprise the teachers about the importance of corrective feedback in government secondary schools.
- It will encourage the teachers to identify and adopt different effective methods of corrective feedback.

5. Objectives of the study

This research study attempted:

- To explore perceptions of teachers' current practices of written corrective feedback in government secondary schools District Chitral.
- To find out the perceptions of teachers regarding the effects of written corrective feedback on student's academic achievements in government secondary schools District Chitral.

- To give suggestions to teachers based on the findings of this research study regarding corrective feedback in government secondary schools District Chitral.

6. Research questions

Following were the main research questions for this study:

- What are the perceptions of teachers' about corrective feedback in government secondary schools District Chitral?
- Why teachers in government secondary schools District Chitral do not give corrective feedback to students?
- What are the barriers that check teachers in government secondary schools District Chitral to give corrective feedback to students?
- What type of suggestions could be given to students on the basis of this study?

7. Hypothesis

On the basis of the review of vast literature this research study is conducted on the following hypothesis that "There will be no significant difference in government secondary school teachers in Chitral district regarding the relationship between academic achievements of students and teachers' corrective feedback".

The importance of the study lies in the fact that error correction by teachers leads to commission of fewer mistakes by students which enables them not only to understand the concepts clearly but also write correct answers in the examination. This brings them good results in the examination on one hand and inculcation of concepts in their attitudes and minds on another. Hence, the role of corrective feedback in the educational achievements of students is well established. This study also attempts to find out the perceptions of teachers in this regard that is there any relationship between students' academic achievements and corrective feedback.

8. Methodology of the study

This is a descriptive design based on survey research study. The study explored perceptions of government secondary school teachers about the effects of corrective feedback on academic achievements of students. For collection of data a close ended questionnaire was used. The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis and results were tabulated, analyzed and results were drawn using simple percentages.

8.1 Population

All the government secondary schools in district Chitral constitute the population of this research study.

8.2 Sample

The study was conducted in District Chitral using descriptive survey method. Out of the overall population of schools, 200 teachers were randomly selected from 20 government secondary schools from Six Tehsils of District Chitral.

8.3 Instrumentation

Data for the study was gathered using a close ended questionnaire. The questionnaire investigated the perceptions of the teachers about the effects of corrective feedback on students' academic achievements. The validity of instruments was checked by a pilot study and for this purpose questionnaires were administered to 20 teachers of three government secondary schools.

The questionnaire was refined for validity of content and reliability test by obtaining expert judgments of two Ph.D qualified professors of education. The questionnaire was designed based on Five Point Likert Scale. The collected data was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in percentages.

9. Analysis of data

Analysis of the views of the respondents regarding the effects of written corrective feedback on academic achievements of students is given below.

Each item of the questionnaire is measured on Point Like scale (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SDA))

10. Results and Findings

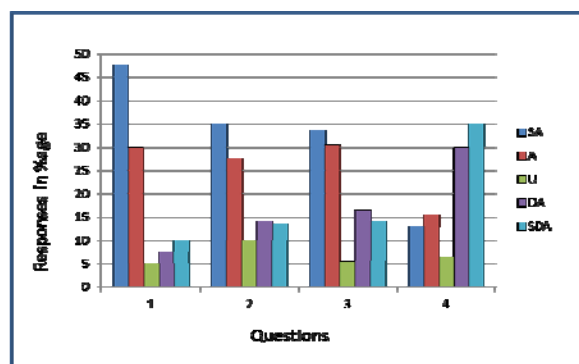


Figure 1: Questions Vs Responses

Figure 1 shows that 47.5% of the students strongly agree that feedback improves students' learning. In the same way, 35% of the teachers think that those students who get corrective feedback from their teachers perform better in the examination. 33% consider corrective feedback as an essential aspect of teaching and learning process. According to 35% of the respondents corrective feedback is not a burden on the teachers.

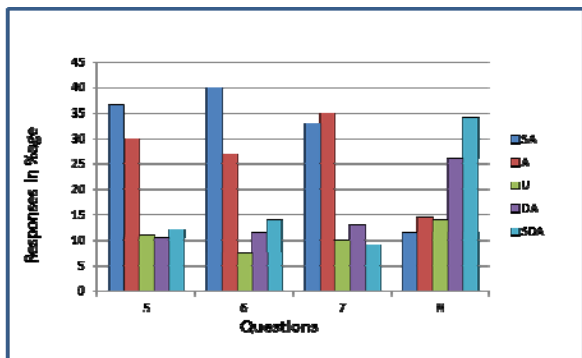


Figure 2: Questions Vs Responses

Figure 2 shows that according to majority of the respondents 40 % corrective feedback enhance confidence of the students. 36% think that schools must encourage their teachers to give corrective feedback to the students. 33% are of the opinion that students who get corrective feedback from their teachers have high self esteem. 34% do not agree that corrective feedback is a cumbersome task for teachers.

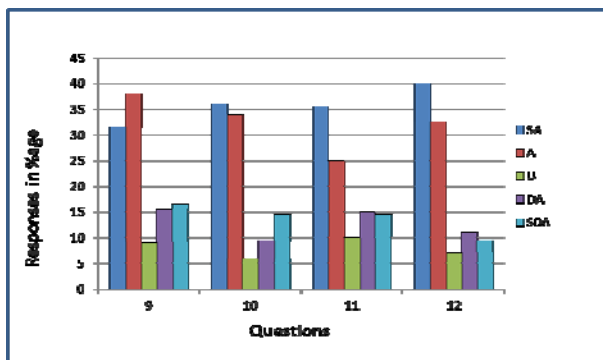


Figure 3: Questions Vs Responses

Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondents 38% opine that students who get corrective feedback have better communicative skills. 36% strongly agree that corrective feedback improves writing accuracy of students. 35% strongly that corrective feedback helps students overcome their reading weaknesses. 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that teachers must give clear and meaningful corrective feedback to students.

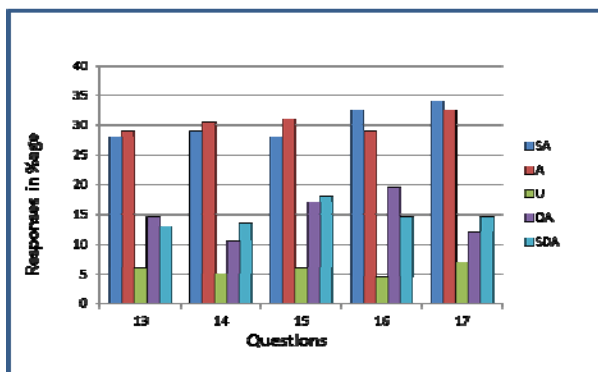


Figure 4: Questions Vs Responses

Figure 4 shows that 28 % of the responds agree that teachers must give follow up to the given corrective feedback. 30% also agree that teachers should consistently give corrective feedback to learners. 31% of the respondents agree that teachers should provide corrective feedback in all subjects. 32% of the respondents strongly agree that teachers should explain to students the given corrective feedback. 34% of the respondents also strongly agree that less clear corrective feedback creates problems for students.

11. Conclusions

On the basis of this study it can be concluded that corrective feedback improves students’ learning. In the same way, students who get corrective feedback from their teachers perform better in the examination. Corrective feedback is an essential aspect of teaching and learning process.

Therefore, as a result of this study it can be concluded that schools must encourage their teachers to give corrective feedback to students. Corrective feedback enhances students’ confidence. Corrective feedback increases students’ self-esteem. The study also revealed that corrective feedback improves communication and writing skills of students. Corrective feedback helps students overcome their reading weaknesses. For this reason, this study concludes that teachers must give clear and meaningful corrective feedback and follow up. For this purpose teachers must give corrective feedback to students consistently and in all subjects. The teachers must explain to the students the written corrective feedback, because this study strongly concludes that less clear feedback creates confusions and problems for the students.

12. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

- Teachers should provide corrective feedback to students as it improves students’ learning
- Teachers should give clear and meaningful corrective feedback. Less clear feedback may confuse the students
- Head teachers should provide guidance to the teachers to give corrective feedback to the students. For this purpose teachers may be trained in provision of feedback to students.
- Parents should check the corrective feedback given by the teacher. This will help the students in reinforcement of their learning.
- Schools should also encourage the teachers to provide corrective feedback consistently to the students from time to time. This will develop a supportive environment in the school.
- Education officers and supervisors should advice

teachers in the schools to regularly provide corrective feedback to students.

- Students should ask their teachers to give them corrective feedback. This will generate among the students sense of responsibility, self-directed learning attitude and self-assessment attitude.

References

- [1] I. Lee, "Ten Mismatches between teachers' Beliefs and written feedback practice", *ELT Journal*, 63, 13-22, 2009
- [2] J. Bitchener, "Evidence in support of written corrective feedback". *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7, 102 – 118. 2008
- [3] T. Ashwell, "Patterns of teacher response to student writing in a multiple-draft composition classroom: Is content feedback followed by form feedback the best method"? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(3), 227-258. 2000
- [4] Govt. of Pakistan, National Education Policy, Ministry of Education, Islamabad, p.5, 39-41, 108-110. 1998
- [5] E.H. Mory, "The use of informational feedback in instruction: Implications for future", *Journal of Teacher Education*. 20 (2), 23-34 1992
- [6] K. Hyland, and F. Hyland, (2006), "Feedback on second language students" writing. *Language Teaching*, 39(2), 83-101.
- [7] J. Bitchener, "The value of written corrective feedback for migrant and international students". *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 409-431, 2008
- [8] J. Chandler, "The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing". *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12(3), 267-296. 2003
- [9] C. Knoblauch and L. Branon, (1981).Teacher commentary on student writing: The state of the art. *Freshman English News*, 10, 1-4.
- [10] Y. Sheen, "The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles". *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 255 – 283. 2007
- [11] T. Ashwell, "Patterns of teacher response to student writing in a multiple-draft composition classroom: Is content feedback followed by form feedback the best method"? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(3), 227-258. 2000
- [12] D.R. Ferris, Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the shorthand long-term effects of written error correction, pp. 81-104. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2006
- [13] J. Bitchener and U. Knoch, "The value of a focused approach to written corrective feedback". *ELT Journal*, 63(3), 204-211.2008
- [14] D.R. Ferris, et al, "Teacher commentary on student writing, Descriptions and implications". *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 6(2), 155-182. 1997
- [15] F. Hyland, "Providing effective feedback". *ELT Journal*, 44(4), 279-285. 1990
- [16] D.R. Ferris, "Response to student writing: Implications for second language students". Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum. 2003
- [17] R. Ellis, "A typology of written corrective feedback". *ELT Journal*, 63(2), 97-107. 2008
- [18] Y. Sheen, "The effects of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles". *TESOL Quarterly*, 40, 241 – 253. 2007
- [19] J.H. McMillan, "Classroom assessment, (4th ed), Pearson Education, Inc. research", *Educational Technology Research & development*, 40(3), 5-20. 2007
- [20] R. Beach and S. Eaton, Factors influencing self assessing and revising by college Freshman, New York: The Guilford Press. 1984
- [21] L.A. Stern and A. Soloman, "Effective faculty feedback: The road less traveled", *Assessing Writing*, 11, 22-41. 2006
- [22] J. Bitchener, S. Young and D. Cameron, "The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing". *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14, 191-205. 2005
- [23] I. Lee, "L2 writing teacher's perspectives, practices and problems regarding error feedback". *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(3), 216-237. 2003
- [24] N. Ziv, The effect of teacher comments on the writing of four college freshmen. *New directions in composition research*, Guilford Press. 1984
- [25] R. Ellis, et al, "The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in English as a foreign language context". *System*, 36, 353-371. 2008
- [26] P. Tunstall and C. Gipps, "Teacher feedback to young children in formative assessment: A typology". *British Educational Research Journal*, 22, 389-404. 1996
- [27] K. Sheppard, "Two feedback types: Do they make the difference?" *RELC Journal*, 23, 103-10, 1992
- [28] D.R. Ferris, (2006), Responding to student writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(1), 79-101.
- [29] H.D. Marshall, *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom* (pp. 178-190). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005

Authors Profile

Iqbal Ahmad is MS in Education and teaches in Malakand, Pakistan

Muhammad Salam is M. Phil in Computer science and teaches in Malakand University. Pakistan

Muhammad Saeed is PhD in Sociology and teaches in Malakand University, Pakistan.