RESEARCH ARTICLE VOLUME 19, ISSUE 2, 121-134

The New English Teacher
ISSN 2985-0959 (Online)

The Differential Effects of Corrective Feedback Strategies on Accuracy in Nouns, Tenses, and Articles in EFL Students' Academic Writing

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Abstract: Corrective feedback (CF) is widely recognized by instructors and students as a valuable tool for enhancing writing skills. For writing teachers, it is crucial to understand the effectiveness of various CF methods and their impact on specific error types. This study aims to examine whether three different feedback strategies—Direct CF, Direct CF combined with written metalinguistic feedback, and Direct CF combined with oral metalinguistic feedback through a mini teacher-student conference— given to 45 undergraduate EFL students on three error types (nouns, verb tenses, and articles) led to improved accuracy in new writing tasks. The inferential statistical analysis reveals that the feedback strategies have differential impacts on students' accuracy in addressing the three targeted errors when analyzed collectively. Participants who received additional metalinguistic feedback in addition to direct CF outperformed those receiving direct CF alone, although no significant difference was observed between the two metalinguistic feedback groups. Notably, when error categories were analyzed separately, significant improvement in verb tense accuracy was observed at four-week intervals, while no such improvement was evident for nouns and articles. These findings underscore the critical role of metalinguistic feedback, either written or oral, in addressing specific error categories and enhancing students' writing accuracy. They also suggest that different error types may require distinct feedback approaches and timeframes for effective improvement of writing accuracy.

Keywords: corrective feedback, metalinguistic feedback, student writing, linguistic error

Received: January 27, 2025 Revised: April 7, 2025 Accepted: April 23, 2025

Introduction

Corrective feedback (CF) is recognized by writing instructors and students as a valuable tool for addressing issues in students' writing, assessing their written assignments, and enhancing their writing skills. However, inconclusive results on the effectiveness of different CF strategies (e.g. direct CF, written and oral metalinguistic feedback) on EFL students' writing have been constantly reported in research studies. This has influenced diverse views and practices among writing instructors and researchers regarding the specific types of CF most effective in enhancing the

writing accuracy of second language (L2) learners. Consequently, most writing instructors rely on personal judgement when determining CF types most suitable for their classroom contexts, especially in large writing classes, where balancing effective feedback and efficient time management becomes challenging. Hence , it is crucial for writing instructors to examine evidence supporting the effectiveness of the CF strategies they employ.

Recently, increased attention has been devoted to the role of metalinguistic feedback in writing in which written and oral explanations of errors are provided, as evidenced by a growing number of studies examining its relative effectiveness (e.g. Azizi et al., 2014; Gholaminia et al., 2014; Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2018; Bozorgian & Yazdani, 2021; Pourdana et al., 2021). These studies have demonstrated strong evidence that metalinguistic feedback is highly salient and noticeable to L2 learners, as it explicitly allows them to identify and address ungrammatical aspects of their language use. Furthermore, metalinguistic feedback serves as a scaffold, enabling learners to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the corrective guidance provided. Both written and oral forms of metalinguistic feedback show potential in improving learners' writing accuracy. Written metalinguistic feedback seems to offer a balance between effectiveness and efficient class time management, while oral feedback promotes two-way communication between students and teachers. However, only a small number of studies have distinguished these two forms and validated their individual effectiveness. Although the provision of metalinguistic explanations resulted in notable improvements in participants' language use, it remains uncertain whether these improvements can be attributed to the written or oral forms of feedback.

Ferris (1999) suggests that the effectiveness of CF becomes more evident when analyzed in relation to the types of errors made by writers. Ferris introduces a pedagogical framework for categorizing errors as "treatable" and "untreatable", based on their correctability. Treatable errors pertain to grammatical issues governed by established rules, whereas untreatable errors involve phonological, morphological, or semantic aspects that lack systematic regularity (Ferris, 1999). For instance, errors related to the use of nouns, articles, and verb forms are classified as treatable due to their rule-based nature, whereas errors in word choice align with the definition of untreatable errors. Therefore, the significance of this study lies in its emphasis on metalinguistic feedback -oral or written, a type of corrective feedback that is likely to yield promising results. Notably, the study compares the effects of written and oral forms of metalinguistic feedback separately, which contributes to more understanding of which CF methods should be effectively used with which error types.

This research aims to investigate whether three feedback approaches—written direct CF; written direct CF with written metalinguistic feedback; and written direct CF with oral metalinguistic feedback—have significant differences in improving the overall accuracy of focused treatable error types (nouns, tenses, and articles) in the students' first and final writing samples, functioning as pretest and posttest over a 12-week period. Additionally, the study evaluates the differential effects of the feedback types on the students' accuracy development in each of the three error types at four-week intervals (Weeks 4, 8, and 12).

Research Questions

1. Do teachers' corrective feedback strategies (written direct CF; written direct CF with written metalinguistic feedback; written direct CF with oral metalinguistic feedback) have a significant different effect on students' overall accuracy performance of the focused treatable errors (nouns, tenses, and articles) in academic writing?
2. Are there significant differences on students' development of accuracy performance of English nouns, tenses and English articles among the three groups of students who receive different CF strategies?

Literature Review

This literature review focuses on various CF strategies in EFL academic writing, exploring their relationship with linguistic error categories and reviewing recent studies on the effectiveness of these strategies in addressing specific error types.

Types of Corrective Feedback

In a writing classroom, teacher's corrective feedback (CF) functions both as an assessment method and a pedagogical tool, supporting the teaching and learning process to improve writing skills (Lee et al., 2015). CF can be delivered in various types or forms.

Direct and Indirect Feedback

Direct CF explicitly identifies errors and provides correct linguistic form or structure, such as placing the accurate form near the error, crossing out unnecessary elements, inserting missing words, providing the correct structure (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008). This strategy is called explicit correction for its clear indication of the accurate linguistic form. Advocates of direct CF point out that its immediacy reduces confusion and aids comprehension while also helping learners address complex errors they may come across in the future. In contrast, indirect CF signals the presence of an error without offering the correct form, thereby requiring learners to identify and correct it themselves. This strategy can involve underlining or circling errors or indicating the number of errors in given sentences. Advocates suggest that indirect CF fosters problem-solving skills, guided learning, thereby enhancing long-term language acquisition and improving written accuracy (Ferris et al., 2000).

Metalinguistic Feedback

Bitchener and Knoch (2008) define metalinguistic feedback as comprising both written and oral explanations. Written metalinguistic feedback entails providing grammatical rules and examples at the end of a student's work, referencing specific errors in the text. Oral metalinguistic explanations typically occur during mini-lessons or one-on-one conferences, where teachers present and discuss grammatical rules and examples with students. Both written and oral forms of metalinguistic feedback hold promise. The former appears to strike a balance between effectiveness and class time management, while the latter facilitates two-way communication between students and teachers. However, only a limited number of studies have differentiated these two forms and confirmed their individual effectiveness. For example, studies by Azizi et al. (2014), Gholaminia et al. (2014), Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2018), Bozorgian and Yazdani (2021), and Pourdana et al. (2021) focused exclusively on written metalinguistic feedback to assess participants' improvements in language accuracy and investigate their perceptions. Other studies, such as those by Bitchener and Knoch (2008, 2010) and Bitchener et al. (2005), examined the effects of metalinguistic feedback on language accuracy by combining both written and oral feedback as a treatment for the experimental group. While the provision of metalinguistic explanations led to significant improvements in the participants' language usage, it remains unclear whether these improvements were attributed to the written or oral form of feedback. In addition to the classifications previously discussed, literature extensively examines the comparative effects of "focused and unfocused" corrective feedback. Ellis et al. (2008) define "unfocused feedback" as the correction of all language errors present in a learner's written text, whereas "focused feedback" targets errors within a pre-selected linguistic domain. Given that different types of errors require distinct approaches, recent research has increasingly emphasized focused feedback, moving away from unfocused methods, with the specific types of errors being a key consideration.

Types of Errors in Writing

Errors in writing have been categorized based on the criteria used for the classification, one of which is their ability to be treated or corrected. Ferris (1999) categorized errors into two types: "treatable" and "untreatable". Treatable errors are those that adhere to rule-governed patterns and can be corrected by directing learners to grammar rules or resources. Examples of treatable errors include issues with verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, plural and possessive noun endings, run-on sentences, comma splices, sentence fragments, article usage, certain word form errors, and some punctuation, capitalization, and spelling mistakes. In contrast, untreatable errors are more idiosyncratic and require learners to rely on their acquired knowledge of the language to correct them. According to the author, these errors often involve phonological, morphological, or semantic aspects that cannot be easily explained within a systematic framework. Examples of untreatable errors include word choice mistakes (except in specific cases like pronoun or preposition use) and unidiomatic sentence structures, such as incorrect word order or the omission of unnecessary words.

Previous Research on Corrective Feedback in Relation to Error Types

Corrective feedback, particularly Direct CF, has long been acknowledged for its merit in improving students' writing accuracy, as demonstrated in many studies (e.g., Frantzen, 1995; Padgate, 1999; Ferris et al., 2000; Chandler, 2003; Parreno, 2014; Kalra, 2016). Furthermore, when feedback is examined in relation to a specific error type, the results can guide teachers to decide whether to invest more or less time and effort in addressing a particular type of error. The following section reviews research studies on the effectiveness of metalinguistic feedback in relation to a specific error type. Kubota (1994) examined the effects of implicit and explicit metalinguistic feedback on English dative alternation (e.g., "to buy someone something" vs. "to buy something for someone"). The study found that explicit metalinguistic feedback was particularly effective in helping learners grasp grammatical rules. Additionally, Ortiz et al. (2020) compared the effectiveness of direct and indirect metalinguistic feedback dichotomy among Chilean preservice teachers, focusing specifically on the correct use of the third-person singular present simple verb form. The results showed no significant differences between the groups on the post-test. However, on the delayed test, the group that received indirect metalinguistic feedback outperformed the group that received direct feedback. These findings indicated that metalinguistic feedback can be a valuable tool, although it may take some time to enhance writing accuracy. Another study by Pourdana et al. (2021) investigated the effects of written metalinguistic feedback on the use of discourse markers; however, the results still showed fluctuating trends of the accuracy of discourse marker usage. These studies; however, focused on only one or two language aspects which is not the majority of writing errors produced by learners; moreover, the metalinguistic feedback type involved is that the study was only written one. A study by Mansourizadeh and Abdullah (2014), which compared the effectiveness of written and oral metalinguistic feedback on the accurate use of subject-verb agreement, found that the group receiving oral metalinguistic feedback outperformed the other groups in the effective use of the targeted grammatical aspect. However, the study focused on only one grammatical aspect, which does not represent the majority of writing errors.

Additionally, Bitchener et al. (2005) studied three types of focused errors: the use of prepositions, the past simple tense, and the definite article. Their experimental design included three groups: (1) a group that received direct written CF along with a five-minute student-teacher conference, (2) a group that received direct CF only, and (3) a control group that received no CF, only comments on content and organization. Although no overall improvement was observed across all three error types as a single group, a significant finding was that the combination of written CF and oral metalinguistic feedback notably increased accuracy in avoiding errors in the past simple tense and

the definite article. This suggests that metalinguistic explanations can effectively help reduce these types of errors. In another study, Bitchener and Knoch (2010) investigated the impact of combining direct CF with metalinguistic feedback on the accuracy of article usage. Their study involved three experimental groups: one received direct CF with both oral and written metalinguistic explanations, another received direct CF with written metalinguistic explanations only, and the third received direct CF alone. When compared to a control group that received no feedback, all three experimental groups demonstrated significant improvements in article usage.

Although metalinguistic explanations have proven effective in enhancing grammatical accuracy, it remains unclear whether this improvement can be attributed to written or oral metalinguistic explanations, and this is a gap that this research aims to address.

Methodology

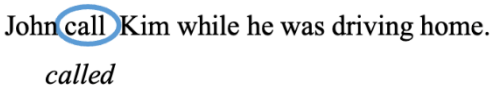
This study is quasi-experimental, which was carried out with 45 undergraduate students enrolled in the *Fundamental Writing Development* course at an international university in Thailand. It should be noted that this study is classified as a quasi-experimental design due to the inability to randomly select participants from a larger population. However, the sampling method used is considered valid for schoolteachers or university lecturers, as the university administration is responsible for assigning participants to the groups for the experiment (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

All participants in the study were Business English majors from the Faculty of Arts and were Thai students in their third year. This course was a requirement for these students, who were required to pass the *Basic English Level 3* course before enrolling in the *Fundamental Writing Development* course. Additionally, a writing pre-test was administered to make sure that all participants have similar English writing proficiency levels. Consequently, the participants were considered homogeneous in terms of age, educational background, nationality, and language proficiency which can confirm validity of the research.

The three groups of participants were randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups, each utilizing a different CF strategy as follows.

Group 1 Written Direct CF

Direct CF occurred when the teacher circled or underlined a student's errors and provided the correct form. It may also involve the deletion of an unnecessary morpheme, word, or phrase, or the insertion of the correct form within the structure (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010), as illustrated below.



Group 2 Written Direct CF combined with written metalinguistic feedback

The direct written CF, as shown above, was provided along with the written explanation of the grammar rules on the erroneous linguistic features as seen below.

The girl plays piano very well.

the piano

We use definite article 'the' to talk about musical instruments.

Group 3 — Written Direct CF combined with oral metalinguistic feedback through a mini teacher-student conference.

After each assignment, when their scripts, marked with direct CF were returned to them, students attended a one-on-one five-minute teacher-student conference. The students had an opportunity to discuss the feedback they received. During the conversation the teacher pointed out the grammatical errors they made and explained the grammar rules related to those errors.

The three groups of participants received three different types of feedback provided in response to their weekly assignments and essay assignments. The control group, Group 1, receiving only written direct CF, represents the standard practice of the course. In contrast, the experimental Groups 2 and 3 received additional metalinguistic feedback as part of the treatment. The course's regular assignments, in the form of descriptive essay writing, were used as writing tests (Test 1, Test 2, Test 3). These tests were administered during weeks 4, 8, and 12, with four-week intervals between each test. The treatments were applied over a 12-week period, during which classes were held twice a week, with each session lasting 1.5 hours.

Data from these tests were analyzed to evaluate students' overall accuracy using an analysis of covariance or ANCOVA, and their accuracy improvement of focused grammatical errors (i.e. noun, verb, article) in the new piece of writing over time, using two-way repeated measure ANOVA. The use of nouns (singularity-plurality), verb-tense forms and functions and article usage were identified as focused grammatical error types because they emerged the three most frequent types of "treatable" grammatical errors produced by the participants in the pre-test as evident in the Table 1 pre-test error count below.

Table 1

Pre-Test Error Count

Identification and Classification of "Treatable" Grammatical Errors	Percentage of Errors Found in the Pretest
singular/plural nouns	**32.02%**
tenses	**23.57%**
articles	**21.66%**
prepositions	**16.09%**
adjectives	**5.60%**
possessive case	**1.06%**

Results

Table 1 summarizes the participants' overall accuracy scores, presented as descriptive statistics showing each group's mean performance scores of the three writing tests. These scores provide a detailed comparison of the groups' progress in addressing the targeted errors after the implementation of the three feedback strategies.

Table 2

Mean Accuracy Performance Scores (Percentage of Correct Usages)

	Group/Types of Corrective Feedback					
	Group 1		**Group 2**		**Group 3**	
	Written CF		Written CF + Written Metalinguistic Feedback		Written CF + Oral Metalinguistic Feedback	
	Mean	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Overall accuracy score time 1	77.84	7.86	77.11	9.87	79.89	7.71
Overall accuracy score time 2	77.96	8.24	79.98	9.86	82.16	7.63
Overall accuracy score time 3	77.76	8.83	80.71	8.87	83.73	8.02

Table 2 illustrates the mean performance scores (% correct usage) across three targeted error categories (nouns, tenses, and articles) in the three writing tests. Groups 2 and 3, who received metalinguistic feedback, showed clear improvement. Group 3, who received both written CF and oral metalinguistic feedback, achieved the highest gains, progressing from 79.89 in Test 1 (Week 4) to 82.16 in Test 2 (Week 8) and reaching 83.73 in Test 3 (Week 12). Group 2, who received written CF along with written metalinguistic feedback, also demonstrated a clear improvement, with mean accuracy scores increasing from 77.11 to 80.71 over the same period. In contrast, Group 1, who received only written CF without additional metalinguistic explanation, showed no consistent improvement. Their mean accuracy scores fluctuated narrowly, starting at 77.84 in Test 1, slightly increasing to 77.96 in Test 2, and then declining to 77.76 in Test 3. The results presented in Table 2 were analyzed using an ANCOVA analysis of mean scores from Weeks 4 and 12 to examine the differential effects of feedback strategies and address Research Question 1, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The Results of an ANCOVA Test on Overall Accuracy Performance

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: OverallAccuracyPostTest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2851.550[a]	3	950.517	76.347	.000
Intercept	38.420	1	38.420	3.086	.086
OverallAccuracyPreTest	2583.515	1	2583.515	207.512	.000
Treatment	150.623	2	75.312	6.049	.005
Error	510.447	41	12.450		
Total	296669.427	45			
Corrected Total	3361.998	44			

a. R Squared = .848 (Adjusted R Squared = .837)

As shown in Table 3, the results from an inferential statistical analysis indicate a significant difference in overall accuracy performance among the three groups, who received different feedback strategies when the three error categories (use of nouns, verb tenses, and articles) were analyzed as a single group. The ANCOVA results revealed a statistically significant differential effect among the groups at the 0.05 level ($F(2, 45) = 6.049$, $p = .005$). The analysis confirmed that the feedback strategies had varying impacts on students' accuracy in addressing the targeted errors. Pairwise comparisons further demonstrated that both Groups 2 and 3 outperformed Group 1, although no significant difference was found between Groups 2 and 3. These findings underscore the important role of metalinguistic feedback, whether written or oral, in addressing the three targeted error categories (use of nouns, verb tenses, and articles) and in potentially enhancing students' accuracy in academic writing.

In the next section, the researcher further explored students' development of the accuracy performance of focused errors at four-week intervals considering the three error types separately.

Table 4

Mean Performance Scores for Each Type of Focused Errors (Percentage of Correct Usage)

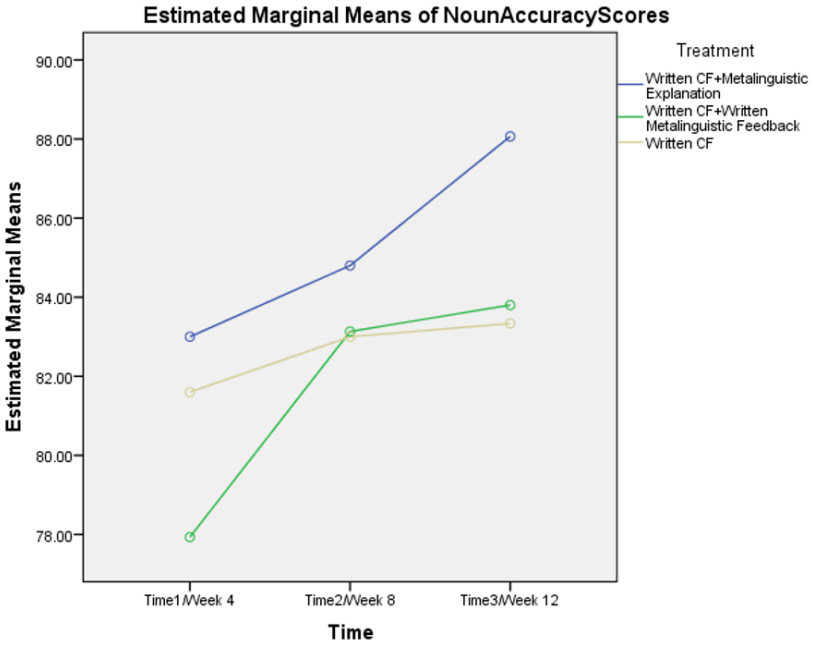
	Types of Corrective Feedback					
	Group 1		**Group 2**		**Group 3**	
	Written Direct CF		Written Direct CF + Written Metalinguistic Feedback		Written Direct CF + Oral Metalinguistic Feedback	
	Mean	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Noun accuracy score time 1	81.60	7.28	77.93	12.40	83.00	8.68
Noun accuracy score time 2	83.00	7.15	83.13	11.98	84.80	8.53
Noun accuracy score time 3	83.33	9.08	83.80	11.31	88.07	8.81
Tense accuracy score time 1	66.13	14.82	67.60	15.76	72.20	14.48
Tense accuracy score time 2	64.93	14.48	69.60	14.69	74.40	14.24
Tense accuracy score time 3	65.80	14.73	70.80	14.53	74.93	14.91
Article accuracy score time 1	85.80	5.42	85.80	6.21	84.47	6.41
Article accuracy score time 2	85.93	7.43	87.20	6.86	87.27	8.01
Article accuracy score time 3	84.13	7.89	87.53	6.44	88.20	8.29

Table 4 presents the mean performance scores for each type of focused error. The descriptive statistics indicate an overall improvement in writing performance across the three writing tests among the three groups. For tense and article accuracy, Group 2 (written direct CF with written metalinguistic feedback) and Group 3 (written direct CF with oral metalinguistic feedback) demonstrated consistent improvements in mean scores from Test 1 to Test 3, similar to the observed improvements in noun accuracy scores. In contrast, Group 1 (written direct CF only) showed more fluctuations in tense and article accuracy scores across the three tests. Specifically, for tense accuracy, the mean score of Group 1 began at 66.13 in Test 1, decreased to 64.93 in Test 2, and rose slightly to 65.80 in Test 3. For article accuracy, the mean score initially stood at 85.80 in Test 1, experienced a minor increase to 85.93 in Test 2, but decreased to 84.13 in Test 3.

To further examine accuracy improvements for each error category and address Research Question 2, two-way repeated ANOVA analyses were conducted to investigate the differential effects of the treatments on the development of accuracy for each of the three focused error types: noun (Figure 1), tenses (Figure 2), and articles (Figure 3).

Figure 1

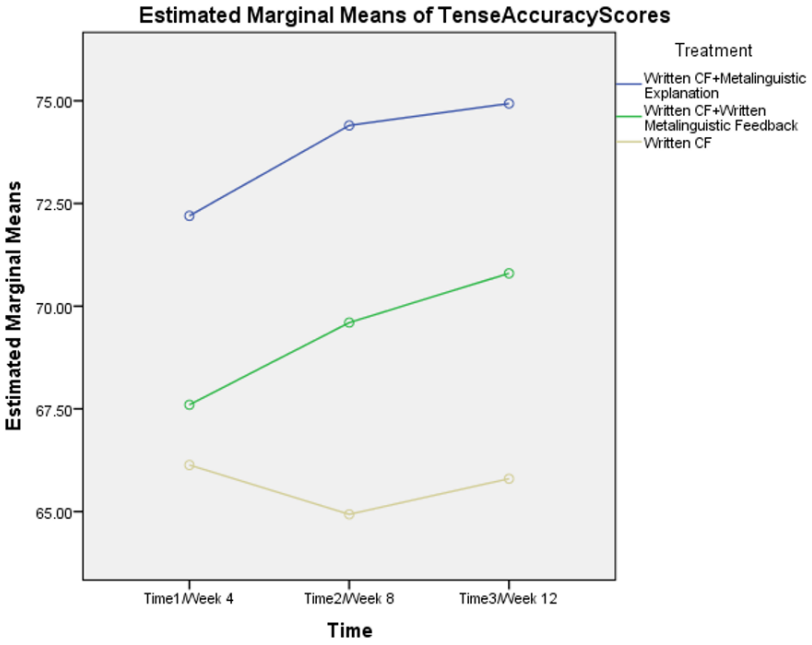
The Improvement of Accuracy Performance of the Use of English Nouns Among the Three Treatment Groups over 12-week Period



As shown in Figure 1, the two-way repeated ANOVA test results showed no significant differences in noun accuracy improvement across the three groups ($F(4, 126) = 0.32$, $p = .87$). However, the improvement patterns indicate that the participants who received additional oral metalinguistic feedback outperformed those in the other two groups. Their accuracy scores increased from Test 1 to Test 2 and showed clear improvement from Test 2 to Test 3.

Figure 2

The Improvement of Accuracy Performance of the Use of Tenses Among the Three Treatment Groups over 12-week Period

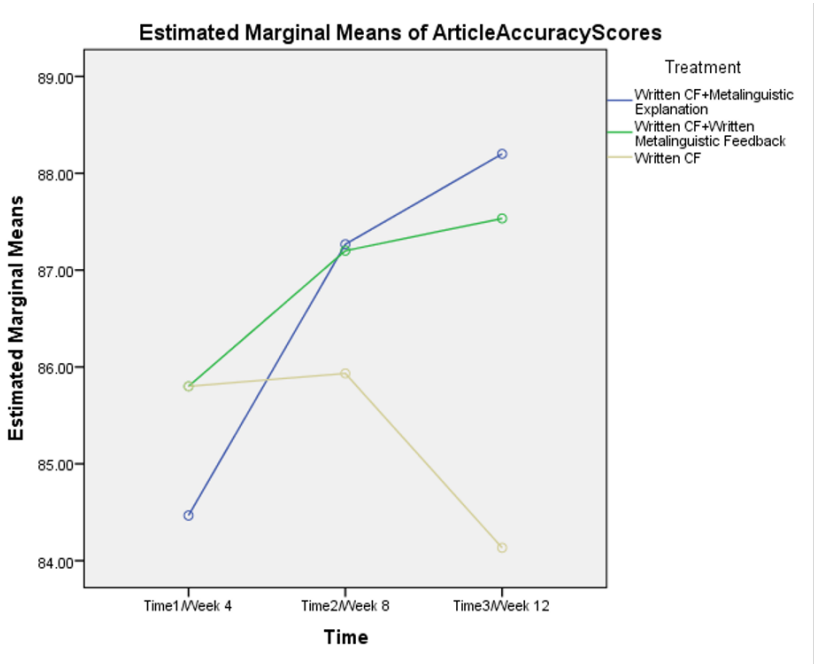


As shown in Figure 2, the two-way repeated ANOVA results reported a significant difference in the improvement of tense usage accuracy among the three types of feedback ($F(2, 126) = 3.51$, $p = .033$). This means participants who received different feedback strategies experienced varying improvements in tense usage accuracy. The groups receiving written direct CF combined with additional written or oral metalinguistic feedback performed significantly better than the group receiving written direct CF alone.

The finding indicates that metalinguistic feedback, when combined with direct CF, can improve verb-tense accuracy within a short period of four weeks. The ability of these feedback options to enhance the accuracy of verb usage is crucial for effective essay writing, as the correct use of verb forms and functions contributes to the overall clarity of an essay. This highlights the importance of providing additional metalinguistic feedback when students' errors involve verb forms or functions.

Figure 3

The Improvement of Accuracy Performance of the Use of English Articles Among the Three Treatment Groups over 12-week Period



For English articles, as shown in Figure 3, the statistical results revealed no significant differential effect of the feedback strategies at the 0.05 level ($F(4, 126) = 0.57$, $p = .687$). This means that the improvement patterns were not significantly different among the three groups of participants. However, participants in the groups that received written direct CF combined with either written or oral metalinguistic feedback showed upward trends in accuracy, whereas those who received only written direct CF experienced a slight increase in Test 2, followed by a decline in Test 3. These findings suggest that both oral and written metalinguistic feedback have a significant impact on the overall accuracy of students' performance in focused error categories over 12 weeks. In other words, although written CF alone does not result in a significant improvement in accuracy, combining it with metalinguistic feedback (either written or oral) can consistently result in positive trends in article accuracy over time.

In conclusion, the inferential statistical analysis revealed a significant difference in overall accuracy performance among the three groups, each receiving different feedback strategies, when the three error categories (nouns, verb tenses, and articles) were analyzed collectively. Further analysis of the development of verb tenses accuracy across weeks 4, 8, and 12 revealed a significant difference

among the three feedback types. However, the statistical analyses for noun and article accuracy indicated no significant effects of the feedback strategies, although the participants who received additional oral or written metalinguistic feedback generally outperformed those who received written direct CF alone.

Discussion

The study highlights the importance of understanding the impact of different CF methods, in relation to various error types and classroom dynamics. Consistent with the findings of Azizi et al. (2014), Gholaminia et al. (2014), Hashemian & Farhang-Ju (2018), and Bozorgian & Yazdani (2021), the results of the study demonstrate that metalinguistic feedback can significantly improve the accuracy of student writing. This is evident from the overall accuracy of the two groups receiving additional metalinguistic CF, either written or oral, which far surpassed that of their peers who received only direct CF. These findings suggest that, to improve students' writing, direct written CF alone is not enough; writing instructors may choose the metalinguistic feedback method—written or oral—that best suits the needs of their specific classroom context.

From the author's perspective, oral metalinguistic CF promotes two-way communication between teachers and students, enabling teachers to address broader writing issues beyond grammatical accuracy. However, delivering oral metalinguistic CF through mini-lessons or one-on-one conferences can be time-consuming, particularly in large classes. Additionally, such interactions may cause discomfort for some students due to personality traits or learning style preferences. In contrast, written metalinguistic CF is less time-consuming and equally effective in improving students' accuracy. Therefore, it offers a practical alternative for teachers seeking to balance the competing priorities of providing effective feedback and ensuring efficient time management.

The findings also highlight that error types and the time frame for applying CF treatments are interrelated. The insignificant differences in the development of English noun and article accuracy among the three participants groups over four-week intervals suggest that the effectiveness of written and oral metalinguistic CF is not apparent within 12 weeks. However, both written and oral metalinguistic CF, when combined with direct CF, have proven effective in improving verb-tense accuracy within a four-week period. This difference may be explained by the treatability of errors. Verb-tense forms and functions are considered "treatable" as they adhere to rule-governed patterns and can be addressed with grammar rules or reference resources (Ferris, 1999). In contrast, errors involving English nouns and articles are more idiosyncratic and less treatable, hence, requiring a longer treatment period. Therefore, while metalinguistic CF combined with direct CF is effective for treatable errors in a short time, untreatable errors may require ongoing correction over a more extended period.

Additionally, issues with verb-tense and form, which are among the most common grammatical errors made by Thai students, often stem from first language interference in second or foreign language production (Kalra, 2016). For example, Thai lacks verb inflections for tense, person, and number, relying instead on time markers placed before or after the verb to indicate the timing of an action (Bennui, 2008). Therefore, when providing metalinguistic CF, teachers may incorporate features of the Thai language to clarify the rules of verb tense and form in English. It is important to note that the teacher's ability to choose effective CF methods among various feedback options to enhance the accuracy of verb usage is crucial for effective communication, particularly in writing, as the use of incorrect verb forms not only reduces clarity but also leads to miscommunication and confusion.

Conclusion and Implication

This study demonstrates that upper-intermediate L2 writers can improve the overall accuracy of their use of rule-based English linguistic features, namely nouns, verb tense forms and functions and articles, with the provision of metalinguistic CF (either written or oral) combined with direct CF over the period of 12 weeks. However, when the development of accuracy was measured separately for each grammatical category at four-week intervals, significant improvement of accuracy was observed only in verb tense forms, not in nouns or articles. These findings highlight the importance of tailoring feedback strategies to specific linguistic features, as different grammatical categories represent distinct domains of knowledge and require varying approaches and timeframes for improvement. For English writing instructors, practitioners, and other stakeholders, this research underscores the value of integrating metalinguistic CF with direct CF to address treatable errors effectively while recognizing the challenges posed by less treatable features.

Finally, future research should explore whether these findings are generalizable to L2 writers at different proficiency levels and whether they extend to other linguistic forms, providing further insights into effective corrective feedback practices for diverse learner populations. Moreover, the researchers suggest that, for a comprehensive understanding of the feedback types, further research should examine the efficiency of each CF strategy, along with the perspectives of both teachers and students on the use of CF in the classroom context. This approach would provide a more holistic view, moving beyond the sole evaluation of the effectiveness of CF types and their impact on writing accuracy.

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