
Error Correction in the L2 Writing Classroom: What Do Students Think?

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Error correction research has focused mostly on teachers' strategies and their effects on student writing. Much less has been done to find out about students' beliefs and attitudes about teachers' feedback on errors. This study aimed to investigate L2 secondary students' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about error correction in the writing classroom. Data were obtained from a questionnaire and from follow-up interviews. The findings showed that most students wished their teachers to mark and correct errors for them and believed that error correction was primarily the teacher's responsibility. The article ends with some pedagogical implications that can be applied in L2 writing classrooms.

La recherche sur la correction d'erreurs a surtout porté sur les stratégies des enseignants et l'effet de celles-ci sur les travaux écrits par les élèves. Peu d'études se sont penchées sur les croyances et les attitudes des élèves quant à la rétroaction des enseignants. Ce projet visait à déterminer les perceptions, les croyances et les attitudes qu'ont les élèves L2 au secondaire quant à la correction d'erreurs pendant un cours de rédaction. Les données reposent sur un questionnaire et des entrevues. Les résultats indiquent que la plupart des élèves souhaiteraient que les enseignants notent et corrigent leurs erreurs pour eux car ils croient que la responsabilité pour la correction d'erreurs revient surtout à l'enseignant. La conclusion de l'article évoque quelques implications pédagogiques qui peuvent être mises en œuvre dans un cours de rédaction en L2.

Introduction

Error correction is often regarded as the most exhausting and time-consuming aspect of teachers' work (Ferris, 2002; Mantello, 1997). Almost two decades ago, Hairston (1986) warned that writing teachers should not be "composition slaves" (p. 117). Unfortunately, Hairston's advice does not seem to have been fully taken. The plain fact is that many teachers are still "slaving" over students' writing, and as a result error correction consumes a large proportion of their time.

Although more research that explores the topic of error correction has been conducted, this taxing issue has not been rendered any less controversial. The recent literature on error correction has witnessed an animated but inconclusive debate between Truscott (1996) and Ferris (1997, 2002) on whether teachers should correct errors in students' writing. Although

evidence exists to support the benefits of error correction in helping students improve accuracy in their writing (Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986), contrary evidence that casts doubt on the effectiveness of error correction (Hillocks, 1986; Knoblauch & Brannon, 1981) is not lacking. Despite the controversy about the issue of error correction, two factors remain clear. First, writing teachers seem to believe that responding to student errors is a vital part of their job (Ferris, 1995a). Second, students are eager to receive teachers' feedback on their writing and believe that they benefit from it (Leki, 1991; Radecki & Swales, 1988). Indeed, a hands-off approach to error correction may not work because students "attend to and appreciate their teachers pointing out their grammar problems" (Ferris, 1995a, p. 48).

Error Correction

How should writing teachers mark errors? Excessive attention to errors may prove frustrating for students and exhausting for teachers. When teachers treat errors comprehensively, the onus for error correction is inevitably on themselves, which makes students reliant on teachers. Also, when teachers zero in on students' errors in writing, there is less time for feedback on other perhaps more important aspects of writing such as content and coherence. Research has found that L2 writing teachers tend to pay more attention to formal correctness than to the discourse level of writing (Zamel, 1985), which may lead students to believe that formal accuracy is more important than the transmission of meaning, overall organization, and content development (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996). Feedback that focuses predominantly on linguistic form "can discourage writers altogether and can prevent them from making needed discourse-level changes, especially among L2 learners" (p. 146). It is unlikely that teachers' error feedback proves motivating for weak students whose writing is often heavily marked. Cardelle and Corno (1981) maintain that a balance between criticism and praise may be the best means to help students improve their writing. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz have rightly pointed out that teacher feedback that focuses primarily on grammar can deprive student writers of "the drive to improve their proficiency in general" (p. 290). An argument can, therefore, be made for selective error correction in which attention is given to specific error patterns rather than to all errors. Indeed, any effective feedback policy should take into account the students' psychoaffective reactions. In this respect, treating errors selectively is a better option than comprehensive error correction.

Whether teachers treat errors selectively or comprehensively, research has found that correcting errors does not necessarily help students to avoid making mistakes (Leki, 1991; Takala, 1984): for example, through teachers' arbitrariness and inconsistency in error correction (Allwright, 1975; Zamel, 1985). One important agenda in error correction research, therefore, is to look

into the factors that account for the effectiveness of error correction. It has been noted, for example, that feedback on intermediate drafts of students' writing is more effective in facilitating their writing development than comments on final drafts (Ferris, 1995a). Error correction is likely to be more effective if students are asked to revise their writing based on teachers' feedback; otherwise students might not take it seriously. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1996) suggest that feedback is more useful when offered at selected phases of the composing process and that "correction can only produce results if a revision phase is built into the instructional cycle" (p. 145).

Another issue pertinent to the pedagogical context in which error correction takes place is whether codes would help students correct errors. Research on error correction has demonstrated the popularity of error codes among writing teachers. The usefulness of marking codes has, however, been questioned by Ferris, Pezone, Tade, and Tinti (1997) and Ferris and Roberts (2001), who found that students' performance in error correction based on errors located by teachers was not significantly different when students were provided with codes (or symbols). Lee (1997) also cautions that teachers may in fact be overestimating students' ability to interpret marking codes and that teachers may be "using a wider range of metalinguistic terms than students could understand" (p. 471).

To date, research on error correction has predominantly focused on the teachers, for example, the strategies they use in providing error feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Robb et al., 1986) and whether in-class grammar instruction helps students improve writing (Ferris, 1995b; Lalande, 1982). Much less has been done to find out what students' beliefs and attitudes are about error feedback. Several studies have been conducted to investigate student preferences about, reactions to, and coping strategies for teacher feedback (Cohen, 1987, 1991; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Ferris, 1995c; Ferris et al., 1997; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994, 1996; Leki, 1991; Radecki & Swales, 1988). Overall, the research findings suggest that students wish teachers to correct errors for them. For example, Leki's investigation of ESL students' preferences about error correction in writing found that most ESL students in the study wished their teachers to correct errors for them. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz found that EFL college students tended to value teachers' comments and corrections on grammatical, lexical, and mechanical features more than those on content and style, whereas the opposite was true for ESL college students. In their study, both ESL and EFL students expressed moderate preference for the use of correction symbols, and both disliked the teachers using the red pen. In Saito's (1994) study, most ESL students considered teacher feedback most useful "when it focused precisely on grammatical errors" (p. 65). Similarly, Olajedo (1993) found that students preferred the teacher to be primarily responsible for correcting errors. Brown

(1998), however, cautions that students' preferences should neither be ignored nor put on a pedestal. Any mismatch between teachers' practices and students' preferences must be examined carefully because students' preferences are "not necessarily more effective for being preferred" (p. 253).

Research has also found that students' preferences and expectations are often affected by their language-learning experiences. The EFL students in Hedgcock and Lefkowitz's (1994) study reported that teachers' feedback was aimed largely at grammatical and lexical accuracy as opposed to fluency, idea generation, and rhetorical organization. Other studies have also found that ESL teachers tend to focus on the sentence level when responding to students' writing (Cohen, 1987; Zamel, 1985). It is not surprising, therefore, that students regard writing as primarily a language-practice exercise (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994). ESL writing teachers' inordinate focus on grammatical accuracy in their feedback may also have led students to believe that producing error-free writing is the most significant goal in learning to write. In the words of Leki (1991), students have a strong desire to "perfect their English" (p. 204). As a result, they wish teachers to point out and correct every error. However, error-free production is an unrealistic goal because "certain errors in writing may never disappear and that, therefore, enormous expenditures of effort to eliminate them may be pointless" (p. 204). Nevertheless, many students cling to the belief that "their corrections move them that much farther along the path to complete mastery of English" (p. 209). In reality, students' errors often resurface even after teacher error feedback.

Affect plays a role in shaping students' attitudes to error correction (Leki, 1991). Whereas some students focus mainly on the final score and resent the red markings that cover their writing, others believe that if teachers do not supply the red markings, they are not fulfilling their responsibility to help students learn effectively. Ferris (2003) has noted that "students themselves were frustrated by the lack of grammar feedback instruction" (p. 43). Although a number of writing researchers have questioned the value of teacher correction of some or all of student grammatical errors (Ferris, 2002; Lalande, 1982; Robb et al., 1986; Semke, 1984), such correction is important because without it students would not notice or work to correct their errors (Eskey, 1983). Error feedback helps students to focus on grammatical accuracy in writing and drives home the message that written accuracy is crucial to good writing (Cohen, 1975). Handled properly, error feedback could address individual needs and motivate students. However, it must also be noted that unfavorable teacher feedback could inhibit or short-circuit students' writing development (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996). It could be a source of frustration for students, debilitating and demotivating them at the same time.

Context

In Hong Kong, error correction in writing is a relatively unexplored area. Some local research suggests that English teachers in Hong Kong are primarily concerned with grammar and mechanics in evaluating students' writing. Lee's (2003) recent investigation into Hong Kong teachers' perspectives and practices regarding error feedback has shown that most teachers mark errors comprehensively and prefer error codes. Many teachers, however, are not satisfied with their own error correction practices and believe that they need help and guidance to tackle this time-consuming aspect of their work.

No research in Hong Kong has yet examined the students' perspective on error correction in the writing classroom. By ascertaining Hong Kong secondary students' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes toward error correction, this study not only fills a gap in local writing research, but also continues the earlier line of error correction research that focuses on students. This study differs from earlier research in two ways. First, it aims to find out what L2 students' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes are about error correction specifically rather than about overall teachers' feedback. Second, rather than examining tertiary ESL students in the United States, this study focuses on secondary students enrolled in local schools in Hong Kong. The research question that governed the present study was: What are students' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes regarding error correction in the writing classroom?

Before turning to the findings of the study, I provide brief information about the characteristics of the writing instruction received by secondary students in Hong Kong. The typical writing classroom in Hong Kong is dominated by the teaching of grammar and language, with less attention paid to the discourse features of writing (Lee, 1998). A primarily product-oriented approach is adopted wherein writing is treated as a one-off activity (Lee & Lee, 1996). Secondary students submit a composition every two or three weeks; teachers respond to their writing and return their compositions with corrections and comments; and students correct their errors by rewriting either the whole composition or those sentences that contain errors. Conferencing is seldom conducted in the classroom. It was hoped that such background information would shed light on the context in which students responded to the questions about their error feedback preferences in the questionnaire reported below.

The Study

A questionnaire was designed to discover students' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about error correction in writing. The questionnaire was piloted with a group of secondary students from four schools, who were also infor-

mally interviewed to ascertain whether certain questions might be ambiguous or difficult to answer. The questionnaire was revised based on the results of the pilot.

The final version of the questionnaire in both Chinese and English (see Appendix for English version) was administered to a total of 320 students from eight secondary schools through a contact teacher in each school. The students, aged between 12 and 18, were heterogeneous in terms of their English proficiency as they were from schools that belonged to Bands 1, 2, and 3 in Hong Kong (Band 1 is the top and Band 3 the lowest in terms of overall academic performance and English proficiency). Altogether, 165 students from forms 1-3, 79 from forms 4-5, and 76 from forms 6-7 participated (form 1 is equivalent to grade 7, and form 6 is equivalent to grade 12).

The questionnaire contains statements about teachers' error feedback practice and students' own beliefs and attitudes about error correction. Twenty-seven of the students took part in an individual follow-up interview in Cantonese in which they were invited to elaborate on some of the questionnaire statements. Following translation and transcription, the questionnaire data were summarized, categorized, and analyzed using SPSS.

Findings and Discussion

The questionnaire and interview data are combined and presented according to the subheadings below.

- Comprehensive versus selective error feedback;
- Direct versus indirect correction;
- The use of correction codes;
- Students' perceived progress;
- Error correction: whose responsibility?

Where appropriate the interview data are cited verbatim.

Comprehensive Versus Selective Error Feedback (Q1-Q3)

Over half of the students (60.3%) indicated that their English teachers underlined or circled all their errors, and 33.1% said that their English teachers underlined or circled some of their errors. In other words, most of the teachers adopted comprehensive rather than selective error feedback. Of those students who received selective error feedback, slightly fewer than half (47.8%) indicated that their teachers told them the error types they selected for feedback before or after marking their compositions. When asked what they preferred, the majority of students (82.9%) said that they wished to receive comprehensive error feedback because they preferred their teachers to underline or circle all their errors. Only 14.9% said they preferred selective feedback.

The interview data shed further light on why students preferred comprehensive feedback. Some said they wished to know their mistakes,

whereas others believed that it was a good way to help them avoid making the same mistakes again. One student said, "When my teacher marks all my errors, I know what they are. If not, I don't know how to avoid the errors in the exam. I think it's good to correct all the errors."

Those who did not like selective error feedback thought that this was not a good way to learn. One student remarked, "I think I can't learn what type of mistakes I make and I can't learn well in this way." Two other students said, "My teacher just chooses to correct some mistakes because she is busy, but I don't know how to correct them, and I have to ask my classmates," and "If teachers only mark some of the mistakes, I will miss some mistakes and I don't know what they are. Then I can't learn."

On the other hand, those who liked selective feedback thought that it was more conducive to learning: "I like my teacher to mark some of my mistakes. If there're too many mistakes in a composition, it doesn't look good." Another student, in a similar vein, said, "If my teacher focuses on marking a certain type of mistake, such as tense, I think I can remember it better."

The above findings are consistent with existing research findings about ESL students' preferences (Leki, 1991). It is interesting to note that although selective marking is recommended in the English syllabus for secondary teachers in Hong Kong (Curriculum Development Council, 1999), few appear to practice it.

Direct Versus Indirect Correction (Q4-Q5)

The questionnaire results suggest that teachers used a mixture of direct (overt) and indirect feedback strategies. In direct (overt) correction, teachers point out and correct errors, whereas in indirect correction they simply indicate errors without correcting them; 39.1% of the students said that their teachers corrected all errors for them, and 47.6% said that their teachers corrected some errors. Regarding students' preference, 75.7% wished their teachers to correct all errors for them, whereas only 21.8% wished their teachers to correct some errors.

Students explained that they wished teachers to correct errors mainly because this would make life easier for the students. A typical attitude is illustrated as follows: "If my teacher corrects all my mistakes, I can do the correction easily, and I don't have to ask her." Another student said, "Sometimes I don't know why I made the errors. I think it's clearer if the teacher writes it down for me."

The results suggest that students are reliant on teachers. They wish to produce error-free writing and so are keen for teachers to correct all errors for them.

The Use of Correction Codes (Q6-Q8; Q10)

From the questionnaire, 91.2% of the students reported that their teachers used correction codes in marking their compositions. However, a number admitted that they did not always fully understand the codes. For example, 44.1% said they could follow and understand over three quarters of the codes when correcting errors in their compositions. About 40.6% said that they could follow about half to three quarters of the codes. When also asked if they could correct errors based on the codes, 35.5% said they could correct over three quarters of the errors, and 46.7% said they could correct half to three quarters of the errors. In Cohen and Cavalcanti's (1990) study, the students also remarked that they could not handle all the teachers' comments. In this study, although students could not cope with all the codes used by teachers, 76.3% expressed their preference for correction codes. This is consistent with the findings of the study by Radecki and Swales (1988), which found that students expressed approval for marking symbols. The result is interesting because it contradicts the earlier finding that shows that 75.7% wished their teachers to correct all errors. The results may suggest that students were of two minds. On the one hand, they wished to have their errors corrected by teachers. On the other hand, they believed that correction codes could help them correct errors more effectively. They might like both ideas intellectually, but in practice prefer teachers to correct their errors.

Students' preference for correction codes was based mainly on the belief that codes would enable them to understand the types of errors they made. Also, the codes could facilitate error identification, as one student said, "If there's no marking code, I don't know what the errors are."

However, correction codes are not without problems. Some students remarked that they could not follow the codes because they did not know the grammar rules or were unclear about the grammar concepts involved: "I don't have clear concepts of the parts of speech. I know the codes, but I'm not clear about the grammar," and "For some codes, my teacher hasn't explained to me so I don't know how to use them."

Also, knowing the codes is one thing, but correcting errors quite another, as remarked by one student: "Sometimes I understand the codes but I don't know how to do correction." Another reason some students did not like correction codes is that they found them difficult to use: "It's troublesome and time wasting. If the teacher corrects it for me, I think it's easier for me to handle."

To some extent, students depend on the teacher for their interpretation of the codes. One student explained, "If the teacher is not around and classmates don't know either, I can't correct some of the errors."

Although a large number of students seemed to favor the use of codes, the data suggest that correction codes may not be as easy and straightforward as they appear. Some students commented that there were far too many correc-

tion codes for them to handle. One said, "For the codes I've learnt, I find it easier. But I haven't learnt some codes, so it's difficult." The difficulty associated with the use of error codes may in fact be an argument for selective error feedback, as providing error feedback on specific error patterns (e.g., those that have been previously taught in grammar instruction) could facilitate students' own error correction (Ferris, 2002).

Students' Perceived Progress (Q9 and Q11)

When asked in the questionnaire if they would make the same errors again after the teacher had corrected them, over half of the students (66.5%) answered in the affirmative. Overall, only 8.6% of the students thought they were making good progress in grammatical accuracy in writing, and 46.3% said they were making some progress.

Most of the students interviewed remarked that although teachers corrected errors for them, they would probably make the same errors again. One student said, "I cannot apply the rule in all situations." Several reasons were offered, for example, the topic and/or the context of the next composition would be different. Another reason offered by a student was related to vocabulary use: "Since there are many vocabulary items and their usage is not the same, I may make the same mistakes again." Also students may forget what they have learned:

I still make the same mistakes when I do the corrections. I just do it.

When I write the next composition, I don't pay attention to avoiding the mistakes. I simply forget. I don't have any tips for not making the same mistakes.

For similar reasons, one student doubted the effectiveness of teacher error feedback: "I still make a lot of mistakes. I think the error marking of compositions doesn't help much." The disadvantage of comprehensive error feedback was indirectly pointed out by one student: "I think I can't handle so many things. There're lots of things, lots of vocabulary items."

When a composition is full of errors and when students are marked comprehensively, error correction is overwhelming.

Error Correction: Whose responsibility? (Q12)

More than half of the students (54.8%) believed it was mainly the teacher's job to locate and correct errors. This result is not surprising: Radecki and Swales (1988) also found that students regarded error marking as a major responsibility of teachers.

In the interview, when asked to elaborate on the question about whether error correction was the teachers' or the students' responsibility, most said that it was the teachers' responsibility. The only student who believed that students should be responsible for correcting errors added that students would not like doing this: "I think students should have the responsibility to

learn how to locate and correct the mistakes, but I am too lazy. I don't like doing this." Two other students mentioned laziness as a reason teachers should correct errors for them. Reasons mentioned by the other students were mainly about teacher competence in error correction, as indicated in the comments below.

But I can't spot the problems so my teachers spot for me.

I think my teacher has a greater responsibility because she's the teacher.

It's more difficult for me to locate the errors.

I don't think I can locate the mistakes. The teacher's responsibility is greater. Since my proofreading is not good, I think teachers should locate the mistakes for me.

We make mistakes because we lack knowledge. It should be teachers who mark the mistakes for us.

When the teacher locates the errors, it's more accurate. When students locate the errors, they may not be able to spot them because they have limited knowledge.

We are not as knowledgeable as teachers, we can't spot the errors.

Interestingly, another reason offered was a practical one. Some students thought it was simply the teacher's job to correct errors, perhaps because they are paid to do it: "Because my teacher is responsible for marking." From the students' perspective, the person who can best do the job should do it, and so teachers should correct errors for students. Oladejo (1993) reported that most students regard grammar errors as best corrected by the teacher. Of course, teachers are more competent than students when it comes to error correction, but the students' argument is flimsy. From a pedagogical point of view, those needing the most practice in error correction should do it, meaning the students.

Implications and Conclusions

Before drawing any conclusions it is important to note the limitations of the study. First, reports of the teachers' error correction practice are based solely on students' perceptions, which might not be entirely reliable. Also, the participants in the study were drawn from only eight secondary schools, so the results cannot be generalized.

Nevertheless, several conclusions can be drawn based on the findings of the study, which could be applicable in similar L2 contexts, including both school and EAP contexts. First, the study has demonstrated that a huge gap between teachers' practices and student preferences in error correction does not exist. For example, although teachers tend to mark errors comprehensively, students also tend to prefer teachers to mark errors comprehensively. Similarly, although a significant number of teachers (about 40%) correct all errors (i.e., provide corrections) for students, students also prefer teachers to

correct all their errors. In both cases there is a tendency for students to ask more of teachers, as a greater percentage of students prefer teachers to mark errors comprehensively and to correct them directly.

Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) maintain that "learners' expectations and preferences may derive from previous instructional experiences, experiences that may not necessarily be beneficial for the development of writing" (p. 173). If, for example, throughout students' language-learning experience English teachers have marked errors comprehensively and made the corrections for students, students may believe that this is the correct procedure. To help students develop a more self-reliant attitude toward error correction, it is important first to change teachers' attitudes and practices. Otherwise, students are unlikely to change their expectations, as learners' expectations are often shaped by teachers' practices. In this study, students seemed to hold a mistaken belief that writing must be entirely error-free, shown by their eagerness for teachers to fix all their errors. This may be a result of teachers' comprehensive error feedback practice. Thus teachers must rethink their existing error feedback practices and readjust their priorities. It is important to raise teachers' awareness of the possible side effects of treating errors comprehensively and correcting all errors for students, for example, frustration and burnout (Ferris, 2002). More important, it is crucial for teachers to spell out the aim of error feedback explicitly at the beginning of the writing class (i.e., to help students become more independent in editing their own work and correcting errors) and to articulate the issue of student responsibility in error correction.

Interestingly, this study has found that 76.3% of the students prefer teachers to use error codes, although they also wish teachers to correct errors for them. Such a finding could again be ascribed to the effect of teacher practice on student perception. Because a large majority of teachers (91.2%) use error codes in giving feedback, students may think that coded correction is useful. Saito (1994) argues that teachers should pay heed to their students' beliefs about instructional methods and try to resolve differences in opinion appropriately if there are any. In error correction, teachers should pay careful attention to the problems students encounter in handling error codes (e.g., they do not always understand teachers' error codes and are not always able to use them to correct errors). It is important for teachers to think of ways to use codes more effectively, and perhaps more sparingly. To make the codes easier to interpret for students, for example, teachers might consider reducing the number of codes used in their error feedback and concentrate on specific error patterns. It would also be beneficial if error feedback could be directly linked to grammar instruction in order to ensure that students are familiar with the grammar concepts associated with the codes.

In the study, students did not believe that they were making a great deal of progress despite teachers' error feedback. It is important for teachers to

take note of cited problems such as the perception that comprehensive feedback is too much for students to handle (students may easily forget). Students' comments also suggest that treatment of errors should go beyond error correction and focus on skills such as remedial grammar work, editing training, peer- and self-editing, the use of error logs, and so forth. Another important point to note is that when error feedback is given to terminal drafts, as in the present study, there is little incentive for students to do any more than rewrite the piece or put it aside. In order to enhance the effectiveness of error correction, writing teachers should consider adopting a process approach and ask students to correct their errors in intermediate drafts.

The study suggests that slightly over half of the students consider error correction the teacher's responsibility. The long-term goal of error feedback, however, should be to reduce students' reliance on teachers and to equip them with editing strategies to improve the accuracy of their writing. Teachers must openly discuss with students their error feedback policy, explain the rationale, and make sure that students shoulder responsibility for error correction.

In conclusion, the crux of the issue is not who should correct errors, but rather why and how teachers should correct errors. However, the fact that errors have historically been marked in great detail may have made the idea of error correction daunting. If teachers focused not only on errors, but also on content and rhetorical organization in giving feedback, students might pay less attention to errors. And if the focus of error correction were on specific error patterns, error correction might be made more manageable and less frustrating for students. Future research should continue to look into the student factor in error correction (e.g., what exactly they do with teachers' error feedback and the relationship between students' attitudes to error correction and their language proficiency), as well as the contextual factors that account for students' progress in error correction. By focusing on the students (apart from teachers) and the pedagogical context, richer information may be gathered to help us answer the many questions about error correction.

Acknowledgment

Funding for the investigation reported in this article was provided by a direct grant from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

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Appendix: Marking of English Compositions

This questionnaire aims to find out your views about how English compositions should be marked. Please answer the questions with reference to how your present English teacher marks your compositions in this academic year. All your answers will be treated confidentially.

Form level _____

Please circle the appropriate answers.

1. Which of the following is true?
 - A. My English teacher underlines / circles all my errors.
 - B. My English teacher underlines / circles some of my errors.
 - C. My English teacher does not underline / circle any of my errors.
 - D. I have no idea about the above.

If your answer to Question 1 is 'B', answer Question 2. If your answer is 'A', 'C' or 'D', go to Question 3.

2. Before/ After marking your compositions, does your teacher tell you what error types (e.g. verbs, prepositions, spelling) he/she has selected to mark?
 - A. Yes

- B. No
- 3. Which of the following do you like best?
 - A. My English teacher underlines/circles all of my errors.
 - B. My English teacher underlines/circles some of my errors.
 - C. My English teacher does not underline/circle any of my errors.
- 4. Which of the following is true?
 - A. My English teacher corrects all errors for me.
 - B. My English teacher corrects some errors for me.
 - C. My English teacher does not correct any error for me.
 - D. I have no idea about the above.
- 5. Which of the following do you like best?
 - A. My English teacher corrects all errors for me.
 - B. My English teacher corrects some errors for me.
 - C. My English teacher does not correct any error me.
- 6. Does your English teacher use a correction code in marking your compositions (i.e. using symbols like V, Adj, Voc, Sp, etc.)?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

If your answer to Question 6 is 'Yes', answer Question 7 and 8. If your answer is 'No,' go to Question 9.

- 7. What percentage of your English teacher's marking symbols (e.g. V, Adj, Voc, Sp) are you able to follow and understand when you are correcting errors in your compositions?
 - A. 76-100%
 - B. 51-75%
 - C. 26-50%
 - D. 0-25%
- 8. What percentage of errors are you able to correct with the help of your English teacher's marking symbols (e.g. V, Adj, Voc, Sp) ?
 - A. 76-100%
 - B. 51-75%
 - C. 26-50%
 - D. 0-25%
- 9. After your teacher has corrected the errors in your compositions, do you think you will make the same errors again?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
- 10. Do you want your English teacher to use a correction code (i.e. using symbols like V, Adj, Voc, Sp, etc.) in marking your compositions?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
- 11. Which of the following is true?
 - A. In this academic year, I am making good progress in grammatical accuracy in writing.
 - B. In this academic year, I am making some progress in grammatical accuracy in writing.

- C. In this academic year, I am making little progress in grammatical accuracy in writing.
 - D. In this academic year, I am making no progress in grammatical accuracy in writing.
12. Which of the following do you agree with?
- A. It is mainly the teacher's job to locate and correct errors for students.
 - B. It is mainly the students' job to locate and correct their own errors.