Students' beliefs towards written CF and their impact on writing accuracy in EFL class: A Pakistani EFL context

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Abstract
The effectiveness of different types of written CF to improve EFL learners’ writing accuracy has been an issue which has currently received a lot of attention in EFL field. The current study is the continuation of that focus by probing whether beliefs about written CF are varied between the university students of two different contexts. Whether differences of beliefs between two groups have impact on students’ uptake and retention. The study also investigated whether there are differences in the types of written CF that is the most useful and effective in two different contexts. By comparing students’ contexts and investigating beliefs about written CF, this study investigated the topic from cognitive perspective which is in contrast to the previous studies on cognitive perspective. Quantitative approach was used to collect data through five point Likert Scale questionnaire and writing prompts. Regarding writing prompts, the study used a pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test, second delayed post-test design where written CF was given after the pre-test and the initial post-test. The students were placed in two groups according to their preferred written CF: direct CF group, indirect CF group and third was control group, hence; given no written CF. Findings of the current study revealed that there were marginal differences in beliefs of both groups of the students (urban and rural). Findings also indicated that types of the written CF which is the most effective were different between urban and rural students. Besides, beliefs about written CF were found to have impact on uptake and retention on the rural students but not on the urban students. The results of this study contribute the understanding about which social factors may have more impact on written CF. The contribution to the theory and research have been provided. Practical suggestions for pedagogy and future research have also been given.

Keywords: EFL learners, mix-methods, uptake, retention, written CF, beliefs.

1. Introduction
The task for EFL teachers across the world to help their students in bringing improvement in their writing skill. Among teachers and students and in the sessions of professional development, accuracy in writing has been a topic of frequent debate (Rummel, 2014). Producing correct form of writing by foreign language students is a great challenge (Myles, 2002) and is given much importance in EFL context (Harklau, 2002; Williams, 2012). In the present era, writing in a foreign language is being looked at serving two major purposes: first learning content and second learning a language. Writing is not merely considered as a skill for learning a language but also vehicle to learn sentence structures and uses of foreign language (Martinez, 2018).

2. Literature Review
On a strand of writing to learn a foreign language, the present study is intended to find out how intervening in EFL students’ linguistic processing by providing corrective feedback affects the accuracy of their writing. This type of study is labelled as a feedback study in foreign language learning which investigates how different feedbacks affect the learning of grammar and lexis (Anderson,1985, p. 78). Some researchers and teachers do not agree that providing WCF is effective for students’ accuracy in writing or has any role to play in the accuracy of L2 writing (Berger,1990; Bitchener, &Knoch 2010a; Bitchener, 2008). However, some researchers favored direct feedback in teaching writing skills as direct feedback reduces the students’ confusion and helps in understanding what the errors mean. Bitchener&Knoch (2010) also called in question the effectiveness of providing
corrective feedback. They argued that direct feedback helps learners to cope with more complicated errors and resultantly they acquire immediate accuracy in their L2 production.

In response to arguments put against providing corrective feedback, researchers conducted research in which control group was included with pre-test, post-test and delayed post-tests (Bitchener, & Knoch, 2010b). These studies produced a growing body of research which suggested that providing WCF is very effective for improving EFL learners’ accuracy in writing; however, these studies only provide assumption to correct the limited linguistic categories because feedback provided to the students was focused, hence, does not defend Truscott’s claim (1996). However, which type of feedback is suited more to the EFL learners and which way WCF to be administered has been a contested issue till now. To make corrective feedback more effective for the students’ EFL writing, contextual and individual factors which may impact the language learners’ engagement with WCF need to be explored and this area in WCF has received a limited amount of attention in EFL research (Hassan, 2019). Besides, comprehensive WCF has to be applied to help students obtaining accuracy at larger amount of EFL writing (Truscott, 2007). Therefore, the present research is an endeavour to explore EFL students’ beliefs towards WCF to find which type of WCF they perceive for them to be more suited and then to investigate the impacts of comprehensive WCF on the subsequent revisions in writing to help them obtaining accuracy in a larger number of pieces of writing. The research which investigates such individual and contextual factors is much required to explore why one thing which is very effective for one group of students in EFL class, is not effective for others.

2.1 Problem Statement
In comparison to what happens in WCF studies, the relationship between theory and research studies is a common practice in any oral corrective feedback investigation for several years (Truscott, & Hsu, 2008). In the area of WCF and oral CF, earlier studies within both the sociocultural and interactionist perspectives, have established a series of constructs and involved in productive discussions allowing for more forceful, empirically-based investigations (Van-Beuningen, 2010). Predominantly, the concepts of uptake and noticing have attracted much attention in the area of oral CF research (VanBeuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012) as they could develop L2 learners’ abilities to reform their current knowledge and subsequent acquisition. Though, the correct use and understanding of L2 forms as Storch, & Wigglesworth, (2010) denote, do not specify that the features have been acquired; instead, he claims that it is essential to examine whether the learners are able to yield the correct forms on their subsequent writing. But, the research studies on WCF that have to examine these constructs to some extent, are still very limited. These investigations (e.g., Storch, 2010; Rummel, 2014; Saeed, 2019; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010), only probed the processing of the WCF, specially, uptake and noticing during text revisions focusing on certain linguistic features without taking into consideration the students’ beliefs towards WCF which provided a gap for the current study. Therefore, the present research first explored EFL students’ beliefs towards comprehensive WCF and then investigated the impacts of comprehensive WCF on the subsequent revisions in writing to help them obtaining accuracy in a larger number of pieces of writing. This allowed the researcher to observe the students’ accuracy in writing over the different period of time.

2.1 Objectives of the Current Study
The Research Objectives in the current study are to:

1. To investigate if the different types of comprehensive WCF facilitate EFL learners’ ability to improve accuracy in EFL writing of the students from two different areas in Pakistan.
2. To find out the impact of beliefs about comprehensive WCF on students’ uptake and retention of linguistic features in two different contexts.

3. Methods and research tools
The current was quantitative in nature and based on longitudinal designed. Two tools: five point Lickert scale questionnaire and writing prompts were adapted from Rummel (2014). As in the case of present study, the researcher used to move innovative process of students and teachers’ beliefs
towards written CF and the impact of those beliefs on students’ accuracy in writing skills at Khwaja Fareed university of Engineering & IT Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan.

3.1. Sampling
132 EFL adult learners coming urban and rural areas, were participants of this study who were enrolled for BS English program at Khwaja Fareed UEIT, Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan. The samples of the population were selected by using purposeful sampling technique for qualitative and quantitative data collection as recommended by Creswell (2015) that purposeful sampling technique is suitable for the investigations in seeking that the respondents have the same characteristics. He further contends that a scholar is required to perceive particular characteristics which are being sought.

3.2 Participants and Location of the Study
The participants in both stages of the present study were adult learners 132 (80 urban and 50 rural). They were all enrolled in four years BS English undergraduate program in Department of Social Sciences and Humanities at khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & IT Rahim Yar Khan located in southern of Punjab, Pakistan. Sheen (2007) suggested that a lot of activities relevant to WCF can be selected and integrated into composition and comprehension syllabus by the instructors in EFL class.

3.3 Data Analysis
For the data collected from writing prompts to compare accuracy rates, obligatory occasion analysis test was carried out. Besides, accuracy was also examined in percentage of the accurate uses of target linguistic forms. This implies that seven correct uses out of ten were considered as 70% accuracy in target linguistic form Schmidt. (2001). Repeated measures ANOVA test was conducted to investigate the similarities and discrepancies between and within the groups. This test was selected because Polio (2012) argues that repeated measures ANOVA is used to test the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable and it also identifies any interactional effects.

After determining the similarities and discrepancies within and between group, one-way ANOVA test was also performed to examine where exactly the differences and discrepancies occurred. It was done because Paulus (1999) described that one-way ANOVA is performed to measure the discrepancies between groups when there is one independent variable (e.g. written CF in the present study) along with three or more than three levels (e.g. in the present study: direct, indirect, metalinguistic and control). This test was considered suitable because each group in the present study had different groups and the study was aimed to investigate the differences between these groups.

Besides, to find out the difference in the type of written CF that proved most effective in producing more linguistic accuracy in revision and writing new texts between two groups: urban and rural, a three-way mixed ANOVA test was applied to measure the between-participant variables like feedback types e.g. direct, indirect, metalinguistic, and control and location e.g. rural and urban while within-participant variables of time, e.g. Pre-test, Post-test, Delayed Post-tests.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 4.1
Comparison of Urban and Rural Students’ feedback preferences and beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Direct CF</th>
<th>Indirect CF</th>
<th>Metalinguistic CF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which type of written CF you believe will help you the most in future?</td>
<td>24(29.26%)</td>
<td>49(98%)</td>
<td>52(63.41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which type of written CF will you prefer to receive in future?</td>
<td>24(29.26%)</td>
<td>49(98%)</td>
<td>52(63.41%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1 Urban students’ results
To answer this question 2, Urban students’ errors in the targeted linguistic features were first of all identified and corrections were provided on their writing samples. Then written CF was provided to the students according to their preferred type of feedback (Direct feedback and indirect feedback). No written CF was provided to the control group and none of the students among urban students preferred to receive meta-linguistic CF. Hence, only two types of written CF were given to the students but no feedback was given to the control group. Accuracy in writing was calculated for both groups as percentage of correct usage e.g., if any student showed seven correct uses out of ten obligatory occasions, the accuracy rate would be considered 70%. Besides, descriptive statistics in the pre-test and three posts-tests for each group were calculated separately as mentioned in the table 4.10. The average errors for the urban students were recorded as 5.75 in the use of targeted linguistic forms on the pre-test. Tukey’s post-hoc test was performed which showed no significance difference between both groups of the students (direct CF and indirect CF) on the pre-test (p = .21). Therefore, a two-way repeated measure ANOVA test was run to observe the writing accuracy over the different periods of time and to examine statistically significant difference between two groups (direct CF and indirect CF). The appropriateness of the tests and their results were got checked by two experts from the Department of Mathematics in the university. The table 4.10 shows statistical results for the mean test scores of the two treatment groups and the control group.

Table 4.2
Descriptive statistical results for Mean scores of Urban students’ tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Post-Test Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Delayed Post-test 1 Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Delayed Post-test 2 Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83.20</td>
<td>9.40</td>
<td>86.10</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>95.43</td>
<td>9.23</td>
<td>96.44</td>
<td>9.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>82.27</td>
<td>13.30</td>
<td>89.63</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>93.77</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>96.20</td>
<td>12.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>91.73</td>
<td>93.56</td>
<td>90.37</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>91.89</td>
<td>9.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 4.10 shows the mean % for the four tests conducted over different periods of time. Mean scores reveals that although students in the control group appeared to be stronger at the very outset as compared to other two groups but with not so much significance difference and they showed their improvement slightly on the immediate post-test and this group also did not reveal any significant development in writing accuracy on the other two delayed post-tests. Whereas, both written CF groups (direct and indirect CF) showed an observable accuracy rate in writing on their immediate post-test and more significant improvement on their first delayed post-test. Although, there was a slight decline improvement observed in the indirect CF group on their 2nd delayed post-test yet both groups still revealed notable consistency in their improvement right from their pre-test. To further compare the experimental group and control groups’ scores in one pre-test, post-test and two delayed post-tests, a series ANOVAs were calculated. As one-way ANOVA revealed no significance difference between two groups F (3, 58.20) = .427, p = .76, a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was run. Scores of the test were inserted as the dependent variable of time and two written CF as independent variables. The following table 4.11 shows the results of the analysis.
Figure 4.1 urban students’ linguistic accuracy over different period of time

Table 4.3
Two-way ANOVA results for urban students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written CF</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time x Written CF</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.819</td>
<td>.141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 4.11 shows that there is no significant relationship between time and the types of written CF provided to the students. However, a significant difference has to be noted regarding time and when within the subjects, impacts are observed. Upon this, one-way ANOVAs were run which revealed that both written CF groups showed significant development in writing accuracy (direct written CF, p value= .00 and indirect written CF, p value = .05) over different period of time. Contrary to this, control group did not show such consistency on improvement in writing accuracy (p value= .74). In the figure 4.1, it is revealed that although the students who received direct written CF, they first showed a decline in writing accuracy in the immediate post-test which was insignificant at time 2 (post-test), yet they were able to show improvement in their writing accuracy at test 3 (first delayed post-test). Whereas, indirect CF group depicted consistency in showing significant increase in the accuracy at time 2 and they kept up improving significantly at time 3.

The results revealed that although, two written CF groups were witnessed to have decline in the accuracy rate which was not, in fact, significant from time 3 to time 4, yet they continued to significantly acquire a higher rate of writing accuracy than they showed at the very outset of the study. The control group which at the beginning, started with showing a higher rate of writing accuracy, did not show significant variation in writing accuracy over the total course of the research.
The table 4.4 shows the descriptive statistical results for Mean scores of Rural students’ tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Delayed Post-test 1 Mean</th>
<th>Delayed Post-test 2 Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>87.19</td>
<td>11.40</td>
<td>90.1110.89</td>
<td>99.41</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>99.11</td>
<td>99.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>87.17</td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>84.53</td>
<td>91.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>8.14</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94.19</td>
<td>8.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>88.03</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>86.17</td>
<td>87.13</td>
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<td>8.60</td>
<td>89.29</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 4.12 shows the mean % for the four tests conducted over different periods of time. Mean scores reveal that although students in the control group showed steady development at all the four tests and they showed a slight decline on the immediate post-test and this group also did not reveal any significant difference or development in obtaining writing accuracy on the other two delayed post-tests. Whereas, both written CF groups (direct and indirect CF) showed accuracy development differently. The indirect CF group revealed an observable decline in their immediate post-test and contrastively sudden increase in their 1st delayed post-test. At the end, another decrease in the delayed post-test was noted. However, direct CF group revealed an observable accuracy rate in writing between the pre-test and immediate post-test. In addition to this, rural students in the direct CF group also showed significant results in obtaining writing accuracy between the immediate post-test and 1st delayed post-test which remained constant on the 2nd delayed post-test. Although, there was a slight decline observed in the indirect CF group on their 2nd delayed post-test yet both groups still revealed notable differences in their improvement right from their pre-test.

To further compare the experimental group and control groups’ scores in one pre-test, post-test and two delayed post-tests, a series of ANOVAs were calculated. As one-way ANOVA revealed no significant difference between two groups F (3, 22.59) =.730, p=.73, hence; a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was applied. The Score of the test were inserted as the dependent variable of time and two written CF as independent variables. The following table 4.12 shows the results of the analysis and the figure 4.2 also shows accuracy development graph with comparison between two experimental and one control groups.

Figure 2 shows accuracy over the period of time
The above table 4.13 shows that there is a significant relationship between time and the types of written CF provided to the students. One-way ANOVAs computed also depicts that direct CF group shows statistically significant difference in terms of obtaining writing accuracy (direct CF p-value = has to be noted regarding time and when within the subjects, impacts are observed. Upon this, one-way ANOVAs were run which revealed that both written CF groups showed significant development in obtaining writing accuracy (direct written CF, p-value= .00) over different period of time. Contrary to this, indirect CF group and control group did not show such significant improvement in obtaining writing accuracy (Indirect CF, p-value= .66 and control group, p-value= .59). In the figure 4.2, it is also revealed that although the students who received direct written CF, they first showed a decline in writing accuracy in the immediate post-test which was insignificant at time 2 (post-test), yet they were able to show improvement in their writing accuracy at test 3 (first delayed post-test). Whereas, indirect CF and control groups depicted no significant increase in obtaining writing accuracy at time 2 and 3.

The results reveal that although, two written CF groups (indirect and control groups) are witnessed to have no significant accuracy rate from time 3 to time 4, yet direct CF group continued to significantly acquire a higher rate of writing accuracy than they showed at the very outset of the study.

4.2 Discussion

Regardless of differences between two groups, the findings of the urban and the rural students in the university to some extent supported results presented in the earlier researches carried out by Bitchener and Knoch (2010) and Rummel and Bitchener (2015). Only difference in their study is that both used three types of feedback (direct, indirect and metalinguistic CF) in the experimental groups. These earlier researches also revealed the similar results in which three written CFs had positive impact on advanced level EFL learners in improving linguistic accuracy in using English articles. Similar to the urban and rural students in the present study, all thee feedback groups performed better than the control group in their immediate post-test. In Bitchener and Knoch’s (2010) study, metalinguistic input, written and oral metalinguistic input groups performed better than the indirect and control groups in their post-delayed tests that were conducted in week-10. Whereas, in the present study, there was no difference between two treatment groups (direct and indirect CF groups) on delayed post-tests. In addition to this, for the rural groups in the present study, only direct CF group outperformed in obtaining writing accuracy.

Although findings from the Rummel and Bitchener (2015) research and the urban and rural students’ groups in the present study all revealed different results regarding the type of written CF that is more useful, yet one written CF helped students and revealed significant developments in writing accuracy at least one in each group. The findings of these studies provide evidence that adult learners can improve their writing accuracy regarding particular types of linguistic features based on grammatical rules when these are given with some corrective feedback. However, the type of CF which is more effective for a diverse proficiency levels or contextual factors (Bitchener and Ferris, 2012) as revealed through variations observed between the urban and the rural groups in the current study.

The current study revealed that the impact of written CF can be lasting over the time, the results of this study also validate the findings of the other written CF studies carried out with longitudinal design which mainly focused on lower proficiency levels (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010, Rummel, 2014; sheen, 2007). The results of these studies depicted that the students who were given written CF
outperformed in obtaining writing accuracy of targeted linguistic features with rule-based items as compared to those who did not receive any treatment e.g., Sheen (2007) also found that higher secondary level students who received direct CF along with metalinguistic explanations performed significantly better than control group. Moreover, she also found the group who received metalinguistic CF and outperformed the direct CF group. Nonetheless, because Sheen’s (2007) research had combined direct and metalinguistic CF, so these results cannot be well compared with the findings of the present study as in the current study, types of corrective feedback were used in separate.

Bitchener (2008) investigated the impact of written CF types on lower higher secondary level students’ learning the English articles writing. His study revealed that all treatment groups (direct CF, written and oral metalinguistic CF; direct CF and written metalinguistic explanations & direct CF group only). The findings of his study further supported in Bitchener and Knoch’s (2010) study which continuously examined the impact of written CF on learning to write English articles. In all these studies, the students who were provided with written CF on writing showed better improvements as compared to the control group.

Most of the written CF studies probed writing accuracy in the use of English articles writing system (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Rummel, 2014; Sheen, 2007). Chandler (2003) investigated the use of prepositions and article along with past tense. His study revealed that written CF helped the students to significantly improve their writing accuracy in the use of targeted linguistic features with the only exception of use of prepositions. The present study not only supports the findings of the study carried out by Chandler (2003) regarding simple past tense but also the findings of the study conducted by Rummel and Bitchener (2015) which looked at also looked at present perfect tense along with simple past tense. By looking at simple present and past tenses, the present study adds to the existing research by including all the tenses and parts of speech like use of Adverb, Verb, Article, Adjectives, Pronouns so that comprehensive written CF could be provided to the EFL learners. Just like the previous studies carried out with providing corrective feedback on rule-based linguistic features, therefore; based on the results and evidence of this study, it cannot be ascertained whether written CF is useful for the university students for improving their linguistic accuracy on some more complex features. Hence, this area requires further investigations on the effects of written CF on treating complex linguistic features (idiomatic & item-based).

Findings of the present study also add up to an emerging trends of research which does not approve Truscott’ theory (1996) that says, written CF could only be useful for errors which include simple problems in L2 acquisition in relatively discrete items e.g., spelling, pronunciation etc. However, findings of this study ascertain the idea that written CF is very useful for EFL students in improving their certain targeted linguistic features in the present case present, past and future tenses with certain parts of speech. With regard to the different types of CF (direct CF & indirect CF), the urban students were found having differences in improving grammatical accuracy between both groups, however; only rural students in the direct CF group revealed significant accuracy in the use of present, past and future tenses as well as in the correct use of subject-verb agreement, pronouns, adverbs, articles etc. Both the urban and rural student groups reveal the effectiveness of direct written CF which can also be witnessed in the study carried out by Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) in which he involved adult university learners in Australia. They also found that although indirect CF proved useful yet, direct CF promoted a greater level of linguistics accuracy among learners. Similar findings were also revealed in Storch and Wigglesworth’s (2010) study in which 36 pairs of advanced level learners were involved. This study revealed that the learners were tended to memorize techniques of remembering corrective feedback. Hence, the learners were provided direct written CF which appeared to be more advantageous to the students in improving their linguistic accuracy. In the case of present study, many students who tended to receiving direct CF also told that they try to memorize their preferred written CF they receive from the teacher (RS4, RS12, RS13, RS19, RS20 & US11, US14, US15). To the university students who prefer to memorize direct CF for future use, it indicates that direct written CF may be more effective in improving EFL students’ writing accuracy.

As it is evident from the findings of the previous studies, some recent researches also ascertain that proving direct CF is more effective to bring linguistic accuracy on grammatical features among
university EFL learners, although there is still no proper consensus on which type of CF would be the most effective. Some investigations on social factors which might have impact on the type of CF that is the most useful for diverse range of students, is very much required to elaborate variations within and outside the groups and to present complete picture of intricate interaction of social and cognitive factors on EFL learners’ use of written CF.

4.2.1 Theoretical and pedagogical implications

The findings of the current study have significant pedagogical implications. Krutikova, (2017, 5) mentioned that to ensure learners’ beliefs don’t interfere with L2 learning, they are required to first improve their understanding of L2 acquisition and what establishes sound progress; second, they need to make aware that there are various ways of achieving mastery over L2 learning to which diverse strategies can be applied; third, they need to comprehend that a key factor for language learners’ success is the self-discovery method which helps them in the best possible ways to learn a language. Regarding written CF, it implies that EFL teachers need to be eager to utilize various written CF techniques to make sure that the learners can find out technique which is very helpful for them to achieve their linguistic accuracy. EFL teachers also need to be more clear in providing explanations as to why they should provide CF in certain ways. Making it more explicit to the learners, there require more than one techniques to provide written CF. Besides, there might be a particular philosophy or a goal behind the selection of CF that a teacher can make.

The findings of this study also have implications regarding information processing opinions of cognition. It reveals that in some ways at least, beliefs may have impact on the way the learners process their information. Any negative reaction in students’ minds may cause refusal to be engaged with written CF (Rummel, 2014; Rummel and Bitchener, 2015), which is a first necessary process involved in the processing of information. Therefore, EFL learners should first consider or pay attention to type of the CF to be effective for them. The amount of focus applied to the written CF might determine to what extent it becomes uptake and retention. Bitchener and Ferris (2012) claim that motivation of an individual and affective factors could have impact on the amount of the attention that learners pay to written CF. If the learners have negative reactions towards the type of feedback they receive, they only take feedback into account superficially. This may have impact the extent to which it can become uptake and retention to be used in revision or producing new writings. It may also imply that if a learner believes a written CF to be ineffective or he refuses to get engaged with that type of feedback because he believes it is not effective, the next step where he has to process the information to improve his understanding, may be hindered. His negative feelings may prevent language learner from paying attention to the written CF quite sufficiently to become a part of his short-term memory.

As the evident from the results of the present study, it can be seen that beliefs may have impact on some students’ uptake and retention of written CF. Future investigations need to be carried out to consider mediating factors like beliefs so that it may be helpful for the researchers as well as the EFL teachers to understand the reason why written CF is effective in some cases but not in others. Exploring the factors which may hinder the usefulness and effectiveness of written CF for language learners, EFL teachers can adopt strategies to provide a tailored written CF that can fulfill the various needs of L2 learners.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that there were differences in terms of preferences towards written CF between the two groups of university students about the type of feedback that was more effective in achieving linguistic accuracy of the set grammatical features (tenses: present, past and future, subject-verb agreement, use of articles, adjective, adverb, relative pronoun). These differences within and outside the groups could emerge due to different contextual backgrounds, varied educational experiences and differences of beliefs regarding the effectiveness of different types of written CF. The results of the present study also reveal that taking contextual factors into consideration in the teaching of English would be very useful in written CF studies.
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[26] *Second Language Acquisition, 32*(2), 335-349.


