



ADAMA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND LAW

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**ASSESSING THE PRACTICE OF EFL TEACHERS' WRITTEN
FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS' WRITTEN ACTIVITIES: THE CASE OF
GUDER PREPARATORY SCHOOL GRADE ELEVEN STUDENTS**

BY

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A Thesis Submitted to Adama Science and Technology University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

June, 2017

Adama, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I hereby affirm that my research work entitled “Assessing the Practice of EFL Teachers’ Written Feedback on Students’ Written Activities: The Case of Guder Preparatory School Grade Eleven Students”. A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier for any degree or diploma award at ASTU or any other university or institution.

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This is to certify that the above declaration by the candidate is true, the thesis embodies results of original work, and studies are carried out by the student himself to the best of my knowledge as advisor to the candidate.

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ACRONYMS

ASTU: refers to Adama science and Technology University

EFL: refers to English as foreign language

ELT: refers to English language teaching

EL: refers to English Language

ESL: refers to English as a second language

L1: refers to First Language

L2: refers to Second Language

ABSTRACT

This study principally focused on assessing the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written task. Besides, it investigates the techniques of feedback provision EFL teachers employ, the challenges EFL teachers face in the provision of written feedback on students' written activities and how far the feedback has helped students improve their writing skill. On the bases of these objectives, general and specific research questions were designed and employed. The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative designs to elucidate credible data from the subjects. Sixty-one grade eleven students and the available grade eleven EFL teachers were involved in the study. The instruments used for the collection of data were classroom observation, document review, questionnaire (students), and interview (teachers). The result of the study indicated that currently the EFL teachers at Guder preparatory school most commonly provide oral correction and written correction on the blackboard. Moreover, the finding indicated that the teachers used direct feedback and product-oriented approach which do not enhance student revision. Besides, greater attention was given to surface errors. As interview findings indicated large class size, copying from friends, illegibility of some students hand writing and the bulky content of text book were some of the contextual factors which hampered the implementation of effective written feedback. Finally, it was suggested that different strategies of written feedback should be used at every stages of writing process based on the types of errors and objectives of the writing lesson. Moreover, teacher written feedback strategies should be adapted so that they will address the writing weaknesses unique to each individual student and in a way they lead to successful revision in order to engage students' mind. To this end, workshops, seminars, and in-service trainings for EFL teachers are recommended.

Key Words:*correction, feedback, practice, teacher written feedback, written task,*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the study. The first section begins with brief theoretical and empirical description of feedback in general and teacher written feedback in particular. Statement of the problem section focuses on the main felt-gap. This takes to the objective of the study which addresses the research questions. Then it presents significance of the study which describes how the finding may help ELT stake holders and discusses scope of the study. Finally, the chapter presents limitation of the study and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is an important skill and a valuable part of any language course. Feedback is an important aspect of the teaching of this skill. According to Brookhart (2010), feedback is crucial aspect in the writing process and it plays a central role in learning writing skill. Feedback is also an important component of the formative assessment process. Formative assessment gives information to teachers and students about how students are doing in relation to classroom learning goals. As feedback is important component of formative assessment, there are three features assumed useful of feedback advantages. Firstly, through feedback, learners come to distinguish for themselves whether they are performing well or not (Mi, 2009; Littleton, 2011). Secondly, when they are not performing well, however, further feedback helps them take corrective action about their writing in order to improve it and reach an acceptable level of performance (Getchell, 2011). Thirdly, feedback is not only intended to help students to monitor their progress but also encourages them take another's view and adapt a message to it (Asiri, 1996). Another feature of feedback is that it serves as a good indication of how EFL students are progressing in learning the written language, and thus, assists problematic areas (Hino, 2006).

In addition feedback is helpful in encouraging students not to consider what they write as a final product and in helping them to write multiple drafts and to revise their writing several times in order to produce a much improved pieces of writing (Asiri , 1996 ; Russel&Spada , 2006). Just as the saying goes, learning writing is through writing.

According to Keh (1990) there are three types of feedback used as revision and they are: peer feedback, conferences as feedback, and teachers' comments as feedback. Surveys of students' feedback preferences indicate that L2 students prefer teacher written feedback to alternative forms such as oral and peer feedback (Saito, 1994; Zhang, 1995). Hyland and Hyland (2006) also see teacher written feedback as purely informational with its position as a medium for the teacher to channel responses and advices in assisting students' improvement. Moreover, Paulus (1999) stated that teacher written feedback promotes students' revisions not only in L1 but also in the context of L2 when the feedback given is more specific, idea-based and meaning-level in multiple drafts.

According to these scholars, written feedback is information or input provided by EFL teachers that causes changes in the learner's writing performance. In other words, it is a means of providing corrective information that can be used by the learners to modify their writing performance. Ferris (1997) also noted in her research that teacher written feedback has resulted in text improvement.

However, it has been observed that at Guder Preparatory School, where students are supposed to write different aspects of writing such as letter writing, descriptive writing, narrative writing, etc. the writing performance of students has declined from time to time. This problem may be caused by the ineffectiveness of teacher feedback i.e., by the way students' work is treated, or by the nature of the feedback students receive. Zamel (1985), who examined the nature of feedback provided by ESL teachers, found that; ESL teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescription impose abstract rules and standards, respond to the text as fixed and final products, and rarely make content specific comments, or offer specific strategies for revising the text (p.86).

Another factor which may contribute to the ineffectiveness of teacher feedback is the fact that teachers fill their students' papers with comments concerning both form and content which may frustrate the students and cause them to adopt some negative attitudes toward the writing process.

Moreover, students may become confused and may not know which of these comments deserve a higher priority (Zamel, 1985). Besides, Ashagre (2011) points out that teachers' feedback on

students' works appeared to be inconclusive. As a result of primary focus on errors, teachers inclined to provide correction oriented feedback on students' written works. The students therefore, may not be sufficiently benefited from the feedback unless the teachers modify their current feedback provision practice. Therefore, it is important to study the practice of teachers' written feedback on students' writing activities at Guder preparatory school.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Though theoretically well stated the process approach to writing is not sufficiently practiced in our context as the study by Yonas (1996) reveals. This in turn indicates that the feedback students get from the teacher on writing is not adequate to encourage them to practice writing. This may affect students' opportunity to improve their written work in at least three ways. First, after the mark is assigned, it is less likely that students would rewrite their work. Second, since the papers are returned after some delays, students cannot remember well what they have written. Thirdly, teachers' response to students' first drafts as if it were the final one may make students develop fear towards the skill.

These and similar situations result in the low writing performance of students (Tesfaye, 1995; Italo, 1999), as writing cannot be improved in single draft. Arguably, the poor quality of students' written work could be attributed to, among many others, the way students' written work is treated and the nature of the feedback students receive. For example, some teachers tend to assign students with writing tasks and they do not seem to give feedback that encourages students to rewrite their draft. What is well established is responding to the first draft written by the students just as final one (usually coming back with some feedback and marks assigned).

This goes with what Zamel (1985) criticizes teachers for responding to students' first draft as a final one. This and similar reactions to students' written tasks affect the writing performance of students. This seems to create not only problems on the students' current academic achievement, but also makes them incompetent in their future studies. On the other hand, as far as the present researcher knows, there are several local studies conducted on the feedback and related concepts in Ethiopian context, for example, Tesfaye (1995), Italo (1999), and Ashagre (2011), can be mentioned. Their studies focused either on feedback provision practice, the effectiveness of feedback, or the advantage of one feedback technique over the other. None of these studies tried

to look at the practice of Teacher Written Feedback in particular. This study therefore, basically differs from the above studies in that it focuses on assessing the practice of teachers' written feedback on students' writing task at Guder Preparatory School.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to address the following general and specific objectives during the course of investigation.

1.3.1 General Objective

The overall aim of this study was to:

- Assess the extent to which preparatory school EFL teachers practice written feedback on students' written activities.

Based on this main objective, the following specific objectives were set.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Identify the techniques of giving feedback EFL teachers employ on students' written tasks.
2. Investigate the challenges EFL teachers face in giving written feedback on students' written activities.
3. Review how far the feedback have helped students improve their writing skill

1.4 Research Questions

On the bases of the objectives, the following general and specific research questions were designed to frame the study.

1.4.1 General Research Question

1. How often were EFL teachers giving written feedback on students written tasks?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

1. Which technique of giving feedback did EFL teachers practice on students' written work?
2. What were the challenges faced by EFL teachers in giving written feedback on students' written activities?
3. How far have EFL teachers' feedback helped improve students' writing skill?

1.5 Significance of the Study

As stated earlier, this study was designed to assess the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written activities, considering that, feedback plays influential roles in the writing performance of students.

The finding of this study, therefore, is expected to demonstrate the problems that can be associated with the writing performance of preparatory school students and provide methodological insight and information to EFL teachers to practice written feedback appropriately in teaching writing. What is more, it could develop EFL teachers' and learners' awareness about the role of written feedback towards practicing the writing skill. Besides, the study is hoped to provide possible future researchers with some insights in to the area.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

A number of factors can influence the writing performance of students; however, this study was restricted to an assessment of the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written activities from the two most common types of feedbacks (written and oral feedback).

Moreover, time constraints limited the researcher to conduct the study at Guder preparatory school from which 2 grade eleven EFL teachers and 61 grade eleven students were selected as a sample. Hence, it could be difficult to draw generalization about the findings.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study had some limitations that might affect its validity and reliability. For example, a number of factors can influence the writing performance of students; however, the study restricted to assess the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written activities. Further, the study took its respondents only from one school due to constraints in terms of time. Besides, in responding to the questionnaire sample students reflected their own thought,

consequently, everyone in the study could remain unrepresented. Moreover, some students responded recklessly to the question in the questionnaire and may have even copied from their friends. In view of the limitations faced, it could be difficult to replicate or generalize the results of this particular study to other similar situations.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This term paper has five chapters that discuss the study which assesses The Practice of EFL Teachers' Written Feedback on the Students' Written Activities. To this end, Chapter One presents the background of the research and spells out what the research intends to achieve. Chapter Two provides review of literary works with respect to concepts and ideas included in the study. Therefore, attempts are made to include theories and concepts related to feedback, written feedback in particular and to review previously made research studies. Chapter Three discusses the research design, the sampling technique, the data collection instruments, the data collection procedure and the data analysis. Chapter Four is dedicated to the data analysis and the discussion of results. The last chapter, Chapter Five, presents a brief summary of the whole study, draws conclusion from the investigation carried out and provides recommendations to possibly show means to solve the problem raised.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Activity: has the same meaning with 'task', a piece of meaning focused work involving learners in comprehending, producing and/or interacting in the target language.

Correction: crossing out perceived errors and providing correct answer.

Practice: the actual application or use of methods as opposed to the theories relating to it.

Written feedback: any comments, questions or correction that written on students' assignments.

Writing performance: the ability students portray in using the skill of writing in producing texts.

Writing skills: abilities that help writers put their thoughts in to words in a meaningful form and to mentally interact with the message

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2. Introduction

This chapter discusses theoretical and practical issues related to feedback in general and teacher written feedback in particular. The discussion is in seven main parts. The first part presents definition of feedback. The next part deals with feedback in the teaching of EFL/ESL writing. The third part describes the roles of teacher in providing feedback on students writing. The fourth part deals with types of feedback in writing. The fifth section deals with techniques of providing feedback. The sixth part presents forms of feedback and the last part discusses issues in teacher written feedback and pedagogical implication.

2.1 Definition of Feedback

To explain the area of research it is important to clarify the definition of the term 'feedback'. Keh (1990) defines feedback as "input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision. In other words, it is the comments, questions, and suggestions a reader gives a writer to produce reader based prose as opposed to writer based prose" (p.294)

Freedman (1987) offers a broader definition. She states that feedback "includes all reactions to writing, formal or informal, written or oral, from teacher or peer, to a draft or final version" (p.5).

From the definitions given above, we can see that feedback can come in different forms, from different readers, and at different stages of the writing process with the intention of improving students' writing. In other words, it is information that is given to the learner about his/her performance of the learning task, usually with the objective of improving performance.

2. 2 Feedbacks in the Teaching of EFL/ESL Writing

The importance and effect of feedback in English as a second language or English as foreign language have been key issues in several studies in teaching writing (Paltridge, 2004; Reichelt, 1999). The large number of research studies focusing on different types of feedback and their impacts on students' writing is evidence that many scholars and researchers believe that feedback plays influential roles in the writing process. Feedback on student writing can make learning more effective, as noted by Cardelle and Corno (1981), the more feedback students receive of their performance, the better they understand what they need to do to correct their mistakes. The understanding of why they made mistakes and how to correct such mistakes helps students correct their mistake and increase their achievement (Kulhavy, 1977).

Student writers who receive feedback will have information about which part of their texts need to be corrected and improved. Carless (2006) confirms that students who receive feedback during the writing process have a clear sense of how well they are performing and what they need to do to improve. Feedback can also modify students' thinking or behavior toward their work and focus their attention on the purpose of writing. Furthermore, feedback can provide assessment on how well the students perform their work on their accomplishment of a given task (Schwartz & white,2000), as feedback is meant for helping student narrow or close the gap between their actual ability and the desired performance (Brookhart,2003).

According to Paulus (1999), in L2 writing, teacher written feedback plays an important part in coaching students' conventions of writing in a particular culture as well as L2 grammatical forms. Besides, Zhang (1995) found that ESL students place greater appreciation and higher consistency rate on teacher written feedback than other forms of feedback, such as peer feedback and oral feedback in writing. Sliver and Lee (2007) also confirmed in their study that teacher written feedback is crucial for ESL students' revision process as it helps to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses.

2.3 Role of Teacher in Providing Feedback on Student Writing

Keh (1990) and Hidgcock and Leftkowitz (1996) suggest at least four roles that writing teachers play while providing written feedback to students: as a reader or respondent, as a writing teacher or guide, as a grammarian and as an evaluator or judge.

First, teacher as a reader or as a respondent responded response to the content of the text, he may provide positive feedback such as: “you made a good point” or “I agree with you” without giving any suggestion or correction. Second, as a writing teacher or a guide, he may show his concern about certain points or confusing or illegal ideas in students’ texts. In this case, teacher still maintains his role as a reader by only asking for or expressing concerns and questions about certain points in the text without giving any correction. He may, however, refer students to strategies for revision such as choices of problem solving or providing a possible example. Third, as a grammarian teacher write comments or corrective feedback with reference to grammatical mistakes and relevant grammatical rules.

Teacher may provide a reason as to why a particular grammatical form is not correct or not suitable for a certain context such as choice of tense, use of article or preposition. In this case, teacher may also give elaborate explanation of grammatical rules to help students improve their text. Fourth, as an evaluator or judge, it is very common that many writing teachers may act only as an evaluator whose main role is to judge the quality of students’ writing as an end product of writing process (Arndt, 1992) and grade students’ writing based on their evaluation.

2.4 Types of Feedback in Writing

The types of feedback in writing are many. Feedback can be classified according to the following: the performer (provider) of feedback (teacher, peer, self and CALL); the time of feedback (delayed, and immediate feedback); the form of feedback (direct and indirect feedback); the method of performance of feedback (oral and written feedback); the concentration on a specific item in feedback (surface level and meaning level issues); the stage of process writing feedback and the effect of feedback (feedback in revising, editing stages). However, the present study is focusing on the teacher written feedback.

2.4.1 Teacher Written Feedback

Teachers’ written feedback is the most widely used form of feedback that students receive on their work. Different researchers (e.g. Danny and Randolph & Karen, 2010; Alena & Pica, 2010) have questioned the efficacy of this type of feedback. Teachers’ written feedback, however, is a complex area, and several studies have dealt with it from different angles. Some studies (Lalande, 1982; Chander, 2003), for example, have investigated the methods (e.g. direct

correction, the use of codes, etc.) teachers utilize to respond to their students' written work. Others (Ashwell, 2000; Alamis, 2010) have examined the types of feedback (i.e. form vs. content) teachers perceive as being more effective. However, the purpose of this study is to assess the practice of teachers' written feedback on students' written activities at preparatory schools.

2.4.1.1 Types of Teacher Written Feedback

Based on Park's (2006) review on teacher written feedback in L2 writing, there are three types of teacher written feedback that are commonly used in L2 writing classrooms. These are: form-focused feedback, content-based feedback and integrated feedback.

2.4.1.1.1 Form-focused Feedback

The case of form-focused feedback or feedback on students' grammar has received much attention since Truscott (1996) argued that grammar correction in L2 classrooms should be abandoned. Citing previous studies of grammar correction in L1 and L2 classrooms, he concluded that grammar correction is ineffective. However, this claim is challenged by Ferris (2004). According to Ferris, more studies should be conducted in order to see whether feedback on errors is helpful or not. This is because as research in this particular area is scarce.

2.4.1.1.2 Content-based Feedback

The second type of feedback that is content or meaning - based feedback deals with the quality of the content and organizational features in students' composition. In this type of feedback, teachers will comment parts of the composition that do not make sense without pointing out specific grammatical errors (Park, 2006). In a study by Alamis (2010) in the Philippines, it was found that students have high preference for feedback in the area of content/organization compared to vocabulary and language use/grammar.

2.4.1.1.3 Integrated Feedback

The third type of written feedback is integrative feedback. This type of feedback results from the combination of grammar correction with content-related feedback (Park, 2006). In a study by Ashwell (2000), four cases of feedback; form feedback only, content-based feedback only,

feedback combined with two types in a different order and two types of feedback simultaneously were studied. Findings from the study contradicted with Zamel's (1985) claim that content feedback should be given on earlier draft, followed by feedback on form on the following draft. Interestingly, the finding in his study also proved to contradict with Fathman and Whalley's (1990) and Ferris (1997) notion that giving integrative feedback can be harmful. Studies in this area are still expanding and are being conducted thus, leading to new discoveries. However, reviews and new findings can provide new insights that can be useful for teachers to seek for the best method of feedback to suit their context of teaching.

2.4.1.2 The Role of Teacher Written Feedback on Students' Writing Performance

Since writing is not a congenital ability (i.e. a learned behavior), the role of teachers in facilitating students to be good writers is needed. The anticipated authoritative role of teachers has inspired research on the role of teacher as a responder to students' writing (Brown, 2001). This has also spearheaded various studies in the attempt to emphasize the role of teacher as a responder. The role of teacher as responder is achievable through teacher written feedback. Written feedback is an on-going process. This means it should happen continuously throughout the process of teaching and writing in achieving the final product (Ravichandran, 2002).

What can be concluded from this is that teachers should provide feedback on students' drafts so that students will be able to make revisions and improvements in their writing. While there are other feedback providing strategies such as peer feedback, a study by Paulus (1999) on eleven ESL university students revealed that not only teacher feedback brought more influence in improving students' writing; it was also more favored by the students as compared to peer feedback. Similarly, Hyland (2003) found that students highly regard form-focused feedback from teachers and they believed that this kind of feedback would be helpful in noting their errors so that improvements can be made.

2.5 Techniques of Providing Feedback

There are several techniques of providing feedback on students' writing. However, the present study discusses indirect feedback, direct feedback, focused and unfocused feedback and written feedback with explicit corrective comments.

2.5.1 Indirect Feedback

Indirect feedback is a strategy of providing feedback commonly used by teachers to help students correct their errors by indicating an error without providing the correct form (Ferris&Roberts, 2001). Indirect feedback takes place when teachers only provide indication which in some way makes students aware that an error exists but they do not provide the students correction. In doing so teachers can provide general clues regarding the location and nature or type of an error by providing an underline, a circle, a code, a mark, or a highlight on the error, and ask the students to correct the error (Lee,2008;O’Sullivan&chambers,2006). Through indirect feedback, student are cognitively challenged to reflect upon the clues given by the teacher, who acts as a ‘reflective agent’ (Pollard, 1990) providing meaningful and appropriate guidance to students’ cognitive structuring skills arising from students’ prior experience. Students can then relate these clues to the context where an error exists, determine the area of the error, and correct the error based on their informed knowledge. Indeed, facilitating students with indirect feedback to discover the correct form can be very instructive to students (Lalande, 1982). It increases students’ engagement and attention to forms and allow to problem-solve which many researchers agree to be beneficial for long term learning improvement (Ferris, 2003a; Lalande, 1982).

Research on second language acquisition shows that indirect feedback is viewed as more preferable to direct feedback (Chandler, 2003, Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Sheen et al., 2009) because it engages students in the correction activity and helps them reflect to upon it (Ferris & Roberts, 2001) which may help students foster their long-term acquisition of the target language (O’Sullivan& Chambers, 2006) and make them engage in “ guided learning and problem solving” (Lalande, 1982) in correcting their errors.

In addition, many experts agree that indirect feedback has the most potential for helping students in developing their second language proficiency and meta-linguistic knowledge (Ferris &Hedgcock, 2005) and has more benefits than direct feedback on students’ (O’Sullivan & Chambers, 2006). When asked about their preference for corrective feedback, students also realize that they may learn more from indirect feedback (Ferris &Hedgcock, 2005; Ferris & Roberts, 2001).

Lalande's(1982) study which involved 60 German foreign language learners, compared two different treatments of error correction: direct correction in a traditional manner by providing correct forms to be incorporated by students into their written text, and indirect correction in form of “guided learning strategies” by providing students with systematic marking using an error correction code. Students were asked to interpret these codes, correct their mistakes, and rewrite the entire essay upon corrective feedback. Results of this study showed that students received indirect corrective feedback made significantly greater gains as compared to students who received direct corrective feedback from the teacher. Chandler's (2003) study involving 31 ESL university undergraduate students shows that indirect feedback with underlining students' error is a preferred alternative to direct correction in a multiple draft setting as indirect feedback engages them more cognitively during the process.

It is important to note that, in study where students were required to make corrections, both direct feedback and indirect feedback with underlining of errors resulted in significant increase in accuracy and fluency in subsequent writing over the semester. An additional finding of Chandler's study is that if students did not revise their writing based on teacher feedback about their errors, getting their errors marked was comparable to receiving no feedback as their correctness did not increase. Similarly, the study conducted by Ferris (2006), involving 92 EFL students in the United States receiving several types of direct feedback and indirect feedback, shows that there was a strong relationship between teacher's indirect feedback and successful student revisions on the subsequent drafts of their essays.,

2.5.2 Direct Feedback

Another feedback strategy commonly used by teachers is direct feedback. Direct feedback is a strategy of providing the correct linguistic form (Ferris, 2006) or linguistic structure of the target language.

Direct feedback is usually given by teachers, upon noticing a grammatical mistake, by providing the correct answer or the expected response above or near the linguistic or grammatical error (Bitchener et al, 2005; Ferris, 2003a). Direct feedback may be done in various ways such as by striking out an incorrect or unnecessary word, phrase ,or morpheme; inserting a missing or expected word, phrase, or morpheme ;and by providing the correct linguistic form above or near

the erroneous form (Ellis, 2008; Ferris 2006) usually above it in the margin. Direct feedback has the advantage that it provides explicit information about the correct form (Ellis, 2008). Lee (2003) adds that direct feedback may be appropriate for beginner students or in situation where errors are 'untreatable' that are not susceptible to self-correction such as sentence structure and word choice, and when teachers want to direct students' attention to error patterns that require student correction.

Several studies employing the use of direct feedback on student errors have been conducted to determine its effect on student writing accuracy with variable results. Robb et al., (1986) conducted a study involving 134 Japanese EFL students using direct feedback and three types of indirect feedback strategies. Results of their study showed no significant differences across different types of feedback. But the result suggested that direct feedback was less time consuming on directing students' attention to the surface errors. The study conducted by Semke (1984) involving 141 university students of German as a foreign language in the United States using different feedback strategies (writing comments and questions rather than corrections, marking all errors and supplying the correct forms, combining positive comments and corrections, and indicating errors by means of a code and requiring students to find corrections and then rewrite the assignment) and found that student progress was increased by writing practices rather than by error correction. She also found that there was no significant difference among the treatment groups.

On the otherhand, Chandler (2003) reported the results of her study involving 31 EFL students on the effects of direct and indirect strategies on students' revision. She found that direct feedback was best for producing accurate revisions and was preferred by the students as it was the fastest and easiest for them to make revisions.

The recent study on the effects of direct corrective feedback involving 52 EFL students in New Zealand was conducted by Bitchener and Knock (2010) where they compared three different types of direct feedback (direct corrective feedback, written, and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback only) with a control group. They found that each treatment group outperformed the control group and there was no significant difference in effectiveness among the variations of direct feedback in the treatment groups.

2.5.3 Focused and Unfocused Feedback

Ideally, teacher feedback should address all aspects of texts such as content, ideas, organization, rhetorical structure, grammar, and mechanics. Ferris (2003b) notes that, teachers' priorities for students writing as well as feedback provision have changed over time from focusing mostly on sentence-level correction as reported in the 1980s (Zamel, 1985) to more aspects of student writing including ideas, organization, grammar, and mechanics in the 1990s (Ferris, 1995, 1997; Ferris, Pezón, Tade & Tinti, 1997; Hedcock & Lefkowitz, 1994). As teachers provide feedback on many aspects of students writing, there is a tendency for students writers to value feedback and pay attention to teachers feedback on all aspects of their writing (Ferris, 2002b, Hedcock & Lefkowitz, 1994). It is also suggested that teachers should provide feedback for students on a variety of writing problems and focus on specific issues depending on the need of individual students (Ferris, 2003b).

However, providing comprehensive or unfocused feedback on all errors on the students writing can be time consuming and exhaustive for both teachers and students because it corrects all of the errors in the students' work and can be considered extensive (Ellis, 2008).

Focused corrective feedback usually opts for certain specific errors to be while ignoring other errors (Ellis et al., 2008). For example, teachers may decide to focus on common grammatical errors made by ESL students such as articles, prepositions, and past tense verbs ignoring errors on adjectives adverbs. Highly focused corrective feedback (Ellis et al., 2008) usually focuses on a single error type or category (Bitchener & Knock, 2009). Such as the use of prepositions; while less focused corrective feedback may concentrate on more than one type of error but correction is still restricted to a limited number of error categories (Ellis et al., 2008) such as articles, prepositions, and past tense verbs.

Ellis et al., (2008) furthermore state that the theoretical ground for the efficacy of the focused corrective feedback to be higher than unfocused corrective feedback is more likely to direct students' attention to a single error or a limited number of error types and that the students are more likely to develop a clear understanding of the error and the correction needed (Ellis et al., 2008, p.356).

Several studies were conducted on focused and unfocused corrective feedback (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener&Knoch, 2009; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sheen et al., 2009). All of these studies show positive evidence of the effectiveness of focused corrective feedback over unfocused corrective feedback or no feedback. Bitchener's (2008) study examined the efficacy of focused written corrective feedback to 75 low intermediate EFL students in New Zealand. The study employed three types of written directive feedback and a no feedback treatment focusing on the use of indefinite article "a" and definite article "the". His study found that the accuracy of students in the group receiving written corrective feedback outperformed students who did not receive any feedback. His study yielded similar results with the study conducted by Sheen (2007) on the use of English articles by 91 adult ESL community college students in the United States with two treatment groups (direct correction only, direct meta-linguistic correction groups, and control group). The results of her study show that students in the treatment groups receiving focused corrective feedback perform better than the control group.

The study conducted by Bitchener and Knock (2009) found similar results. Their study investigated the use of indefinite and definite English articles by 52 ESL low intermediate students. It found that students in the group receiving focused corrective feedback outperformed the control group in all four posters.

Another study on the effectiveness of focused and unfocused corrective feedback was conducted by Ellis et al., (2008). They involved 49 EFL university students in Japan with two treatment groups (focused corrective feedback on articles only and unfocused corrective feedback on articles and other errors) and one control group with no feedback. Both groups received corrective feedback were equally effective. Results of their study were different compared to that of Sheen et al., (2009) who investigated the effect of focused and unfocused written correction on four grammatical items.

The study conducted by Sheen et al.,(2009) involved 80 adult ESL students in United States grouped in to focused , unfocused group, written practice group, and control group. All the treatment groups gained in grammatical accuracy over time and outperformed the control group with the focused group achieved the highest accuracy gain scores.

2.5.4 Written Feedback with Explicit Corrective Comments

When providing written corrective feedback, teachers need to be clear and concrete to assist students with revisions (Ferris, 2003a). Teachers must be clear about what students need to do, which parts of students' texts need correction or revision, and how to do it. As feedback is meant to help students understand that there is a problem in their text which requires their action to address the problem, teachers should provide clear and meaningful information in regards to the location of the error, type of error, and how to correct it or otherwise students may have trouble in understanding of teacher feedback and will not be able to fix the error properly. In other words, it is hypothesized that the more explicit the information given by teachers when providing feedback, the easier it would be for the students to follow teachers' suggestion to perform error correction and make revision for their works. Explicit corrective feedback, however, needs time and be provided with repetition until it can help students to notice the correct forms of the target language (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

Explicit corrective comment occurs when a teacher provides feedback to students by not only indicating an error exists but also providing explicit grammatical explanation or negative evidence in the form of corrective feedback (Sanz & Morgan-Short, 2004) or additional information that may be raise their meta-linguistic consciousness (Nagata & Swisher, 1993) such as providing an explanation of a grammatical rule or linguistic feature and examples of correct usage (Bitchener & Knock, 2009). Ellis et al., (2006) suggest that explicit corrective comments can take two forms: (a) explicit correction in which teacher response clearly indicates what is incorrect and provides the correct form, or (b) meta-linguistic feedback which explains grammatical or linguistic rules. Lyster and Ranta (1997) define meta-linguistic feedback as "comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the learner's utterance without explicitly providing the correct form"(p.47).

In general, meta-linguistic comments indicate that, error exist somewhere in student's text and provide grammatical rules related to the nature of the error or provide a definition of a word when it deals with lexical problems.

Thus, for the purpose of this discussion, feedback with explicit corrective comments may be defined as explicit corrective feedback indicating the location of an error accompanied with teacher's comments explaining grammatical rules or linguistic features related to the error with or without providing the correct form.

There is evidence that the explicitness of written feedback may play a role in the success of student revision (Goldstein, 2006). She states that students may not attempt to make revision when teacher feedback lacks clarity or, when they revise, they may revise it unsuccessfully. In their study, Conrad & Goldstein (1999) found that students often had difficulty to react to comments that did not explicitly state that a revision was needed. As a result, students either did not attempt to revise their text or, if they did, they revised it unsuccessfully. Similar findings are shown in the studies conducted by Ferris and Roberts (2001). In their study involving 72 university ESL students, Ferris and Roberts (2001) found that the clarity of teacher written feedback and the nature of errors to be corrected in students' text, helped students in revising their texts successfully. Students in two treatment groups receiving explicit feedback outperformed the students in the no-feedback group on self-editing tasks whilst there were no significant differences between the feedback groups with codes and no-codes.

The study conducted by Nagata and Swisher (1995) that involved 32 university students studying Japanese as a foreign language in the United States investigated the effectiveness of intelligent computer feedback accompanied with explicit corrective comments about the nature of students' errors in the form of meta-linguistic rules. The study found that feedback provision with meta-linguistic explanations was more effective in improving grammatical proficiency than traditional computer feedback. A similar study by Nagata (1997) involving 14 university students in a course of Japanese as Foreign Language employing computer feedback with meta-linguistic rules shows similar results. Students in the meta-linguistic feedback groups performed significantly better than those in translation feedback in terms of using complex grammatical structures.

The results also suggested that providing feedback with explicit corrective comments increased students' tendency to resort to meta-linguistic information in writing in the target language.

Another study investigating the effectiveness of providing explicit comments was conducted by Ellis et al., (2006). Their study involving 34 EFL students in New Zealand compared two types of corrective feedback (explicit feedback in the meta-linguistic explanation and implicit feedback in the form recast) with a control group receiving no-feedback. Results of their studies show that there was a clear advantage for the explicit feedback with meta-linguistic information and it also resulted in learning that generalized some grammatical forms not included in the treatment, which

suggests that learning took place. Finding of their study reinforce Bitchener et al.'s (2005) findings that the provision of full, explicit written corrective, with conference feedback was responsible for significantly greater accuracy in the use of some grammatical areas in a new piece of writing in an experiment involving 53 adult migrant learners.

Their findings are supported by studies Bitchener (2008), Varnosfadrani and Basturkmen (2009), Bitchener and Knock (2010), and Rassaei and Moinzdeh (2011). The study by Bitchener (2008) which involved 75 EFL students found that written corrective feedback with explicit explanation of meta-linguistic rules improved students' grammatical accuracy in the immediate revised text as well as in the delayed post-treatment text. Similarly, the study by Varnosfadrani & Basturkmen (2009) involved 56 EFL students in Iran revealed that providing explicit corrective feedback with meta-linguistic information was more effective in raising grammatical awareness than implicit feedback resulting in a better performance on the target structures.

In the study involving 52 low-intermediate ESL students, Bitchener and Knock (2010) reported that all treatment groups receiving different strategies of direct feedback with explicit meta-linguistic comments outperformed the control group on all post-tests in terms of grammatical accuracy in using the target structures. Another study with similar findings of effectiveness of feedback with explicit corrective comments was conducted by Rassaei and Moizadeh (2011) involving 134 Iranian EFL students which found that corrective feedback with meta-linguistic explanations were effective in improving students' accuracy in using target structures in both immediate and delayed post-tests. In summary, several studies discussed above show that providing teacher corrective feedback with explicit comments was more advantageous than implicit or no corrective feedback.

2.6 Issues in Teacher Written Feedback and Pedagogical Implications

Although in general, most previous studies have proven that teacher written feedback has brought positive changes in students' writing and also motivation, feedback alone is inadequate in helping students to improve their writing. This is due to students' meta-cognitive knowledge inadequacy on the successful way to do revision based on the feedback given (Silver & Lee, 2007). Thus, it is the teacher's task to make the students understand the feedback given to them

so that students will be aware of the parts that need to be improved. In addition, Silver and Lee(2007) further maintained that low English proficiency and lack of appropriate strategies for providing explanation might not lead successful revision by the students despite providing feedback. Result from a case study by Hyland (1998) concurs with notion as it was found that one of the participants writing problem is related to the ineffective use of writing strategies and also low proficiency in English. Therefore, it is clear that improving students' writing performance should be beyond providing written feedback. Students need to incorporate their individualized strategies with the feedback provided by their teachers so that improvement in writing will occur (Paulus, 1999). Not only that, grammar instruction and also strategy training are also needed to help students improve in writing (Ferris, 2004).

Teachers should also be aware that the nature of their feedback also plays a role in the students' affective. A corrected draft with red ink all over paper may not be a good way of providing feedback as it might give a negative effect on the students' apprehension level (Ravichandran, 2002) while praises are good in leveling up students' enthusiasm in writing, it did not encourage students to make revisions on their second draft (Silver & Lee, 2007). Moreover, overly positive feedbacks also were found not to lead to any changes in students' drafts (Vardi, 2009). On the other hand, criticism as feedback leads to negative feeling from the students (Silver & Lee, 2007). Lastly, teachers should try to communicate their written feedbacks with their students as this will promote effective improvements and revision. As suggested by Bitchener et al., (2005), students will be able to make improvements on their writing if they are exposed to oral and corrective feedback frequently. In addition, teachers should demonstrate the feedback to the students to raise their awareness about the aspects that need to be improved.

This is maintained by Vardi (2009) that "global feedback was strongly related to change where it was augmented and supported by local feedback which modeled and made clear how and where the global feedback could be applied in text" (p.355).

In general, effectiveness or quality of feedback is mostly dependent on its quantity, clarity, depth, tone, focus, and timing. Students appreciate feedback that is detailed, task focused, provided soon after the performance and focus on students' strengths and areas of improvements (Carless, 2006; Weaver, 2006).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter presents discussions on the following points deemed useful for this study. First, it presents the research design used and the sampling technique adopted to obtain the study site, participants and samples. Next, it presents the research instruments and the data collection procedure. Finally, it discusses the method used for data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The aim of the study was to assess the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback to students' written activities. So, the research design used was descriptive survey .This is because the aim was to assess the state of teachers' written feedback and report the extent, type and techniques used. That is, the intention of the study was not to make test or manipulate what teachers were doing to bring new results.

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods to answer the research questions. Survey questionnaire, classroom observation, document review, and interview were

used to address the research questions. The use of mixed method research allows the researcher to use multiple approaches to answering the research questions (Creswell, 2003; Dorney, 2007).

3.2 Sampling Techniques

This section presents the population, the study site and participants of the study.

3.2.1 Population

The population of the study were grade 11 EFL teachers and students found in Guder preparatory school, Guder town, Toke Kutaye Woreda, west Oromia zone. In Guder preparatory school there were 303 students in grade 11 of which, 177 were male and 126 female. There were five sections of grade 11 students (11A- 11E). Each section had about 61 students.

3.2.2 Site of the Study

The site for the study was Guder Preparatory School which is found in Guder town, Toke Kutaye Woreda. The aim to conduct this study here was for two reasons. First, as the researcher works here, he would have ease of access to administer the research tools and to get permission for the study. Second, since the researcher has observed the problem in this school conducting the study at this school would help to provide solution to the problem.

Next, to get the grade level (Grade 11 or 12) for the study, Grade 11 was selected for two reasons. First, Grade 11 English Text Book has been observed to be highly task-oriented which engages learners to practice writing skill activities which are believed to be vehicles of preparing independent writers. Second, the researcher taught grade 11 English for three years. Hence, his experience would help him to investigate the real classroom practice.

3.2.3 Participants

Two EFL teachers who teach grade eleven English in the year 2009 E.C were the participants of the study. Both of these EFL teachers were taken for interview and for classroom observation data collection.

Moreover, sixty-one (61) Grade 11 students were participants of the study. In Grade 11 there were 303 students learning in five class rooms as of the 2009 Ethiopian academic year. Of the 303 students, 20% of them, that is 61 students were selected using random sampling. Regarding sample size, descriptive research typically uses larger samples, it is suggested that 10-20 percent of the accessible population could be selected as a sample (Singh, 2006). To do so, the names of all students were taken from the school record office and every fifth student was selected. The 61 samples were used to collect questionnaire data. However, to conduct document review, eight written texts produced on different topics and at different times were selected randomly.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

According to the mixed method research design of this study, quantitative and qualitative data were collected using classroom observation, document review, questionnaires, and interview. That means, quantitative data were collected using questionnaire, while qualitative data were gathered using classroom observation, document review and interview. The detail about each instrument is given next.

3.3.1 Questionnaires

The researcher selected questionnaire over the other tools, because it helps secure data from many participants within a limited time. As Best and Kahan (1989) and Sharama (2000) state questionnaire enables a researcher to collect data from large groups of individuals within a short period of time; and it is also easy to administer to a number of subjects in one place at a time. Equally important, it gives freedom to respondents to provide reliable and authentic data with optimum speed concerning subjects' attitudes opinions and feelings about written feedback.

Thus a set of questions (for students) were designed and administered, as a main data collecting tool, to collect data from the students (please refer to Appendix 1). The questioner items were developed based on the ideas from the review of literature and other studies questionnaires so that they could provide the needed data.

The questionnaire contains 34 questions divided into 5 main areas of focus as follows:

- background information of the respondents,
- items on writing lesson,

- items on writing activities,
- items on correction and feedback and,
- On benefits of correction and feedback to students.

Generally speaking, the students' questionnaire was intended to get information on the practice of teachers' written feedback on students' written task in writing lesson. Since the researcher felt that the students might not adequately understand and respond to the questions, the students' questionnaire was translated in to Afanoromo byafanoromo department teachers so as to enable the students fill the questionnaire appropriately (See Appendix 5). Then, the questionnaires were distributed among 61 grade 11 students by the researcher and his co-worker, and returned with 100% response rate.

3.3.2 Classroom Observation

The major aim of classroom observation is to collect data pertaining to the presentation of writing lesson, and the nature of EFL teachers' written feedback during the writing lesson in order to assess EFL teachers' actual performance during the writing lesson. Observation is an important instrument to get direct information about teachers and classroom events; it enabled the researcher to gather data that can be unwillingly missed, or to discover detailed data that participants may not feel free to talk to in the questionnaire or interview (Cohen et al., 2000). Thus, observational data are likely to be accurate as they avoid relying on what teachers and students tell us about their classroom performance through questionnaire or interview. Hence, observation was the major data collection tool in the study. To this end, the researcher prepared classroom observation checklist (See Appendix 2) in order to collect additional data and substantiate the results obtained through questionnaire and interview.

The checklist has seven items focusing on teachers' activities during the writing lesson, the source of the writing lesson, the type of writing activity, amount of writing activity in each period, the focus of writing task, the type of feedback given, and teachers' help and support during activity. Observation checklist was prepared on the bases of both related literature review and related studies.

As indicated under 3.2.3 above, two EFL teachers who teach grade 11 in the sampled school were taken and each teacher classes were observed four times: twice in the first semester and twice in second semester in morning and afternoon shifts. Thus the researcher carried out eight observations; and the observations were made by the researchers' co-workers without disturbing the teaching-learning process in any way.

3.3.3 Document Review

The major aim of employing document review was to gather information on aspects related to the nature of preparatory school EFL teachers' written feedback.

Accordingly, EFL teachers' written feedback given to eight written texts produced on different topics at different times (in the first and second semester) were examined to draw data on the practices. The use of documents as data gathering tools renders the advantages of being always available and being fact (Cohen et al., 2000). Document review technique is employed here as a major tool as it is believed that, it provides authentic and rich information when compared to other methods of data collection such as questionnaire and interview techniques (Dornyei, 2007).

The checklist for the document review was prepared to assess the material from which EFL teachers provide writing lesson, writing activity type, the focus of writing task, and the type of EFL teachers' written feedback/ correction. To prepare the checklist, both literature review and related studies were used. The document review was made on eight written texts written on different topics at different times (in first and second semester).

3.3.4 Interview

Interview was another tool that was used in this study. The major aim of conducting interview was to elicit data with regard to the frequency, the type, the technique and the focus of EFL teachers' written feedback. The data drawn from the interviews could further be used to supplement and triangulate information gathered from questionnaire, classroom observation and document review. Thus, semi-structured interview guide having eight questions were used for face to face data collection. Semi-structured interview technique is employed in order to help interviewees give critical and descriptive reflections on the issue (Creswell, 2003; Cohen et al.,

2005). The widely used interview technique in qualitative interviewing is the semi-structured interview with sufficiently open-ended schedules to make the contents gathered in order to undertake further probing on the issue (Cohen et al., 2005).

Interview was thus selected to be used as it could allow the researcher to make follow-up on unexpected data which may be gathered from documents, classroom observations or questionnaire and to obtain in-depth information about the practice of written feedback in the selected school. The items of the interview were prepared based on the questionnaire items, review of literature and similar studies and, two grade 11 EFL teachers were interviewed.

In general, the researcher used the four research tools (questionnaire, classroom observation, document review, and interview) for triangulation which was assumed to enhance credibility of data and alleviate subjectivity of the researcher's findings and to help him obtain sound result for the study.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection process took place according to the following sequential procedures. First, the researcher talked to the school principal to get permission to collect data. Then the aims and the objectives of study were introduced and the participants of the study were sampled as indicated in 3.2.3 above. After that discussion was made with the participants on how, when and where to collect the data. Based on the agreement, the researcher administered students' questionnaire which contains thirty-four questions categorized under five main areas. After administering the questionnaire, the researcher carried out four classroom observations (twice in the first semester and twice in the second semester) of each grade eleven EFL teachers' classes. Then the researcher collected eight written documents (written texts) produced on different topics at different times (first and second semester). Finally, a face-to-face interview was made with grade eleven EFL teachers.

3.5 Data Analysis

In this research project, first, the questionnaires, classroom observation checklist, document review checklist and interview questions were examined for completeness. Secondly, the completed data were edited to detect error and omission during data provision. Next, the data

obtained through the four tools were tallied quantitatively and qualitatively: close ended data were tallied against the option and converted in to percentage; open ended data were treated qualitatively. Then, the data from each research tool was analyzed separately as per the mixed method research design of the study. Finally, the results of data from each source were brought together and discussed thematically to obtain any possible logical conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and discussion. It included quantitative and qualitative data analysis and discussion.

4.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

This section provides the data analysis from the qualitative sources, such as: observation, document review and interview data on the basis of quantitative source (questionnaire data).

4.1.1 Data Obtained through Questionnaire

Using students' questionnaire responses about students' feeling towards writing skill, the use of materials for the writing lesson, how writing activities are provided, levels at which writing

provided in writing activities, teachers' technique for providing feedback/correction, and benefits of correction and feedback are calculated and presented.

4.1.1.1 Students' Feeling towards the Writing Skill

Table1: Students' Response on their Feeling towards Writing Skill

R/N	Item	Degree	F	%
1	Your interest to learn writing in English,	Very high	36	59
		High	23	38
		Undecided	-	-

		Low	2	3
		Very low	-	-
2	How “difficult or easy “do you think is learning writing in English?	Very difficult	7	11
		Difficult	39	64
		Undecided	-	-
		Easy	15	25
		Very easy	-	-
3	How necessary developing the writing skill is to you?	Very high	41	67
		High	20	33
		Undecided	-	-
		Low	-	-
		Very low	-	-

Table 1 above presents students’ responses on their feeling towards writing skill. It represents the data obtained in responses to 3 items (i.e. 1, 2 and 3) in the questionnaire. Item 1 was designed to see students’ interest to learn writing in English. As can be seen, above half(59%)of the respondents mentioned that their interest to learn writing in English is very high. However, Their English teachers argue that some students are reluctant to practice writing activities on their own rather than copying from others.

The second item seeks information on how students think learning in English. With regard to this, majority (64%) of the respondents replied that learning writing in English is difficult. This implies that the students have negative motivation which might affect the development of their writing skills. Concerning, the importance of developing writing skill (item 3), a significant number (57%) of students claimed that developing the writing skill is highly important for them.

Although the students were concerned with the necessity of developing the writing skill, their writing performance is below expectation.

4.1.1.2 The use of Materials for the Writing Lesson

Table 2: Students' Response on the use of Materials for the Writing Lesson

R.N	Item	Always		Often		Undecided		Rarely		Never		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Uses the student textbook to present the writing lesson,	50	82	8	13	-	-	3	5	-	-	61	100
2	Uses other materials to present the writing lesson,	1	2	2	3	-	-	50	82	8	13	61	100

Table 2 indicates students' responses on the source of materials for the writing lesson. Regarding the source of materials for the writing lesson (item 1), the largest number (82%) of the respondents noted that EFL teachers always use student's textbook and rarely make use of other supportive ELT materials such as: magazines, newspaper to present the writing lesson. This was also proved in observation (See 4.1.2.1, Table 7).

This may imply that still the EFL teachers are in tune with practicing teacher led (traditional) views of classroom activities.

4.1.1.3 How Writing Activities are provided

Table 3: Students' Response on How Writing Activities are Provided

R.N	Item	Always		Often		Undecided		Rarely		Never		Total	
	The English teacher gives Writing activities---	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	For classroom work	2	3	9	15	-	-	40	66	10	16	61	100
2	For home work	35	57	20	33	-	-	6	10	-	-	61	100
3	For individual work	4	7	6	10	3	5	36	59	12	20	61	100
4	For group work	36	59	19	31	3	5	3	5	-	-	61	100
5	In test and exams	15	25	35	57	2	3	9	15	-	-	61	100
6	In every exam	-	-	7	12	-	-	17	28	37	61	61	100

Table 3 shows result of responses of students on how writing activities are presented. As can be seen from the table above, majority (66%) of the students replied that classwork is rarely used in the actual writing lesson classroom. In contrast, above half (57%) of the respondents reported that writing activities are always given to them for home work. The data obtained through observation in classes of the teachers (Teacher A and B) and document review almost showed similar situation.

Regarding the frequency of individual work and group work (items 3 and 4) as shown in the table above, more than half (59%) of the students responded that their English teachers rarely provide writing activities for individual work. Further, above half (59%) of them described that writing activities are always given to them for group work, however, the data extracted from

document review indicated that English teachers provide writing activities for both individual and group work.

With regard to the frequency of writing activities in tests and exams (Item 5) a significant number (57%) of the respondents claimed that writing activities are often given in tests and exams. In line with this, it was proved that the English teachers used the sample texts used for document review in this study for grade justification (See Appendix 6). However, It is believed that a written text that has not been rewritten and used as a second draft does not improve the student's ability in writing.

Concerning, the frequency of writing activities in every exam (item 6), greater than half (61%) of the respondents reported that English teachers never provide writing activities in every exams.

4.1.1.4 Levels at which Writing Provided in the Writing Activities

Table 4: Students' Response on levels at which Writing provided in the Writing Activities

R.N	Item	Always		Often		Undecided		Rarely		Never		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	The English teacher gives writing activities---												
1	On grammar	9	15	46	75	-	-	6	10	-	-	61	100
2	On vocabulary	14	23	37	61	-	-	10	16	-	-	61	100
3	On content	16	26	39	64	-	-	6	10	-	-	61	100
4	On organizing ideas	16	26	33	54	-	-	12	20	-	-	61	100
5	On sentence level	-	-	47	77	-	-	14	23	-	-	61	100
6	On paragraph level	5	8	46	75	-	-	7	12	3	5	61	100

Table 4 presents students' responses on the levels at which writing provided in the writing activities. As illustrated in the table, majority of the respondents responded that English language teachers often provide writing tasks at grammar, vocabulary, sentence, paragraph, and content and idea organization levels. Further results of data from classroom observation and document review almost evidence the finding.

The classroom observation data and document review data showed that the teachers provided writing tasks at different level of writing such as grammar, vocabulary, etc.; however, the English teachers witnessed that they give more focus on surface level than meaning level issues during feedback provision.

Concerning this teacher A suggested, "I give more focus on providing correction for grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc. than idea generation, idea organization and content; for one thing that my students have vocabulary deficiency and lack interest to practice exercises given on idea generation and the like." Teacher B also said, "Most of the time I give more attention to grammar, vocabulary, and spelling, as they are the basic units of language without which one cannot communicate effectively; and give less focus to idea generation, content and idea organization."

From these teachers' reflection it is possible to suggest that they give less focus to meaning level issues when they provide correction/feedback. However, according to Alamis (2010) students have high preference for feedback in the area of content/idea organization compared to vocabulary and language use/grammar.

4.1.1.5 Teachers' Techniques for Providing Correction/Feedback

Table 5: Students' Response on Teachers' Techniques for Providing Correction/Feedback

R. N	Item	Always		Often		Undecided		Rarely		Never		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Writes on student notebook.	5	8	4	7	1	2	46	75	5	8	61	100
2	Writes on the blackboard.	19	31	38	62	-	-	4	7	-	-	61	100
3	Shows by underlining the mistake on student notebook.	-	-	10	16	-	-	45	74	6	10	61	100
4	Crosses out the mistakes on student notebooks.	-	-	5	8	-	-	40	66	16	26	61	100
5	Shows the mistake using symbols on student notebooks.	4	7	2	3	-	-	14	23	41	67	61	100
6	Shows students how to do it correctly.	12	20	41	67	-	-	8	13	-	-	61	100
7	Shows ways how to make drafts/outlines.	16	26	40	66	-	-	5	8	-	-	61	100
8	Collects students' exercise books to take them home.	1	2	5	8	-	-	16	26	39	64	61	100
9	Provides the feedback /correction orally/in speaking.	8	13	43	71	-	-	10	16	-	-	61	100

10	Encourages students even if they make mistakes.	19	31	37	61	-	-	5	8	-	-	61	100
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Table 5 above demonstrates students' responses on teachers' techniques for providing correction/feedback. As can be observed from the table, majority (75%) of the respondents confirmed that English teachers rarely write on students' notebook to provide correction/feedback for the writing tasks. On the other hand 62% of the students revealed that these teachers often write correction/feedback on the blackboard. Further, the result of observation evidences that the students' notebooks were seen only 4-5 times in the year 2009.

To support the result obtained using questionnaire the result from teachers' interview on the question "What are the techniques you will use to provide written feedback/correction?" proved that EFL teachers do not provided written feedback effectively. Teacher A said: "As my classes are large I usually write the correction on the blackboard and tell the students to take in to their notebooks. Because of the aforementioned reason I rarely give written feedback on students' notebooks. When I am giving this feedback, I show the mistake by underlining/circling." For the same question Teacher B said: "Mostly I give the correct form on the blackboard and rarely on students' exercise book."

Moreover, both teachers disclosed that the challenges like: large class size, copying from friends, illegibility of some students' hand writing, and bulkiness of the text book influenced them to provide feedback either orally or in writing on the blackboard. In response to the question, "Tell me about the problems you faced in providing feedback / correction and the ways you used to overcome them?" Teacher A said,

"Large class size, copying from friends and illegibility of some students' hand writing are the most common challenges. To overcome these problems, I am forced to provide oral feedback or write the correct answer on the blackboard."

In similar way, Teacher B answered, "Large class size, illegibility, vastness of the textbook and copying from friends are the major problems. To overcome these challenges, as I mentioned

above, I give either oral feedback or I write correction on the blackboard. Sometimes I also let my students to provide peer correction.”

The reflection of these teachers implies that the feedback was not provided individually to the students, besides; the teachers often used direct correction. However, a number of researchers think that indirect feedback is generally more appropriate and effective than direct feedback and brings more benefits to students' long-term writing development than direct feedback (Lalande, 1982; Frantzen, 1995; Ferris, 2002). Further, Truscott (1996) does not believe in the benefits of error correction and argued that this kind of feedback is harmful to students' fluency and their overall writing quality and should be abandoned. He suggests the teachers should adopt a 'correction-free approach'.

With regard to the teachers' use of symbols and underlining errors to indicate the mistake (items 3 and 5) the greatest number (74%) of the students claimed their English teachers rarely show by underlining the mistake on students' notebooks and majority (67%) of the students revealed that when EFL teachers give correction/feedback they never use symbols on students' notebook. The result of document review also confirmed that the teachers rarely use underlining/circling and never use symbols to provide feedback. Further during the classroom observation there was no instance that showed where the teachers applied the strategies. However, using symbols to indicate the type of error and underlining errors gives students the opportunity to fix errors themselves. In line with this, Byrne (1988) claims using symbol is more effective than directly correcting the errors. As Corder (1981) maintains, “making a learner try to discover the right form could be often instructive to both learner and teacher” (p.66).

Concerning the teachers' use of cross in feedback provision (item 4) 66% of the students noted that the teachers rarely cross out mistakes made when providing correction/feedback. The data obtained from both class observation and document review support the finding. In line with this, the researcher has proved that in the observed classrooms students' English notebooks were seen only 4-5 times and there is no cross used. Further the feedback given for the sampled texts almost show similar situation.

According to most of the respondents English teachers often show students how to do it correctly and ways how to make drafts/outlines in their feedback/correction to students' drafts. In contrast, during observation it was proved that the teachers rarely provide correction/show how to do it correctly either by writing on the blackboard or orally. The result of document review data confirms the finding. However, there is no data from observation and document review for the later. Regarding this, Ellis (2008) claims that direct feedback has the advantage that it provides explicit information about the correct form. But a number of researchers think that indirect feedback is generally more appropriate and effective than direct feedback and brings more benefits to students' writing development than direct feedback (Lalande, 1982; Frantzen, 1995; Ferris, 2002).

As indicated in table 4.1.1.5, above half (64%) of the respondents noted their English teachers never collect students exercise books to take home for giving correction/feedback. Further what was observed in the observation session is collecting writing assignment papers for grading. This goes with what Zamel (1985) criticizes teachers for responding to students' first draft as a final one.

Regarding the medium of feedback/correction majority (71%) of the students revealed that their English teachers often provide correction/feedback in speaking. The result of interview data is almost consistent with the finding. It also proved that these teachers often give correction/feedback either orally or in writing on the blackboard.

In line with this, teacher A said that he provides feedback after every writing exercise often orally and sometimes in writing the correct form on the blackboard for it takes time to write the feedback/correction on every student's exercise book. This is because each section contains about 60 students.

Similarly, teacher B reported that he usually gives feedback for all the writing tasks; this is either by inviting students to tell the class or by himself and sometimes also by writing the correct form on the blackboard.

From this it is possible to suggest that the provision of written feedback, in particular on students' notebook is rarely practiced by English teachers in the sampled school.

However, Zhang (1995) found that ESL students place greater appreciation and higher consistency rate on teacher written feedback than other forms of feedback, such as peer feedback and oral feedback in writing. Silver & Lee (2007) also confirmed in their study that teacher written feedback is crucial for ESL students' revision process as it helps to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses. Other than helping in students' revision, teacher written feedback can help students to be better motivated in writing.

Concerning the last item of the above table, a significant number of students claimed that when the English teachers give feedback/correction they often encourage students. Similarly the finding of observation proved that these teachers encourage students by providing positive feedback in particular orally for their written tasks. Moreover, the teachers witnessed the finding in the interview.

For example, teacher A said: "I encourage my students by praising for whatever they tried, giving positive responses for their activities and valuing their written activities." However, Hyland (1998) maintained that feedback in the form of praise gives a false impression to students about their real writing ability and eventually would lead them to distrust such feedback

4.1.1.6 Benefits of Correction and Feedback to Students

Table 6: Students' Response on Benefits of Correction and Feedback

R. N	Items	Always		Often		Undecided		Rarely		Never		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	The feedback/Correction the English teacher gives helped me ---												
1	See what my mistakes were.	4	7	15	25	-	-	42	68	-	-	61	100
2	Improve my weak sides.	4	7	18	29	-	-	39	64	-	-	61	100
3	Encouraged me do better.	7	11	14	23	-	-	40	66	-	-	61	100

4	Not do mistakes again.	9	15	9	15	1	2	42	68	-	-	61	100
5	Study further.	-	-	14	23	-	-	43	70	-	-	61	100

Table 6 above presents the result of students' responses on the benefits of correction/feedback to students. As shown in the table, majority of the students revealed that they are not satisfied with the feedback/correction their English teachers' provided. To supplement the result obtained using questionnaire, teacher interviewees were asked, "How far have your feedback / correction helped improve students' writing skill?" Teacher A said, "The feedback I gave to my students did not bring much change on their writing skill performance. This is because most of the students have less interest for indirect feedback which enhances their revision."

Similarly, Teacher B said, "Some of my students are reluctant to practice writing exercises and do not care about feedback/correction. Consequently, the feedback/correction did not help them improve their writing skill as I expected. I think this is because some of my students are careless about feedback/correction."

This could probably be explained by the fact that neither of the teachers provides written feedback in a way students benefit from it. In line with this, Ashagre (2011) points out that teachers' feedback on students' works appeared to be inconclusive. As the primary focus on errors, teachers inclined to provide correction-oriented feedback on students' works. The students, therefore, may not be sufficiently benefited from the feedback unless the teachers modify their current feedback provision practice.

4.1.2 Data Obtained through Observation

The analysis and presentation of the data collected through classroom observation is presented below. To fulfill the purpose of observation, classes of two EFL teachers were observed. The data based on the requirement of the classroom checklist were collected. They are analyzed in tables. The observation was conducted by the researcher and his co-observer and the result of observed cases were added and presented in the following tables.

4.1.2.1 The Materials for the Writing Lesson

Table 7: Result of Observation about Materials for the Writing Lesson

R.N	Items	Teacher-1								Teacher-2							
		Presence of Item								Presence of Item							
	For the writing lesson the teacher used materials from ---	D1		D2		D3		D4		D1		D2		D3		D4	
		Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Students textbook,	x		x		x		x		x		x	x		x		
2	Other sources,		x		x		x		x		x	x			x		x

As can be observed from the table above, each EFL teachers were observed four times teaching writing: Formal Letter, Magazine Article, Argumentative Essay, etc. and each of them was seen using mostly materials from the text book. The result of questionnaire supports the finding. As can be speculated from what was observed, the EFL teachers were restricted to materials provided in the text book.

4.1.2.2 How Writing Activities are provided

1	Writes on the blackboard,	x		x		x			x	x		x		x			x
2	Writes on students' exercise books,	x			x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
3	Shows the mistake using symbols,		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x
4	Underlines the mistakes on exercise books,	x			x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
5	Shows ways how to correct mistakes,	x			x		x		x		x		x		x		x
6	Crosses out mistakes made,		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
7	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by writing,		x	x			x		x		x		x		x		x
8	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by speaking,	x			x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
9	Corrects all types of mistake at a time,		x	x		x			x		x		x	x		x	
10	Corrects only one type of mistake at a time,	x			x		x	x		x		x			x		x
11	Provides correction on content	x		x			x	x			x	x		x		x	

Table 10 above demonstrates the result of observation data on teachers' techniques for providing correction/feedback. As can be observed from the table, most of the time EFL teachers write on the blackboard and rarely write on students' notebook to provide correction/feedback for the writing tasks. For example, the students' notebooks were seen only 4-5 times in the year 2009. The data from the questionnaire also concurs with the observation data.

With regard to the teachers' use of symbols and underlining errors to indicate the mistake (items 3 and 4) English teachers were observed rarely showing by underlining the mistake on students' notebooks and rarely use symbols on students' notebook. The result of questionnaire also

confirmed that the teachers rarely use underling/circling and never use symbols to provide feedback.

With regard to item 4, as shown in the table above, the teachers rarely show how to correct mistakes. However, the result of questionnaire data revealed that the teachers often show how to do correctly and do drafts orally or in writing on the blackboard.

Concerning the teachers' use of cross in feedback provision (item 5) the teachers were observed that they rarely crossing out mistakes made when providing correction/feedback. The data obtained from questionnaire supports the finding. In line with this, the researcher has proved that in the observed classrooms students' English notebooks were seen only 4-5 times and there is no cross used. Further the feedback given for the sampled texts show similar situation. In provision of clues, it was observed that the teachers rarely provide clues on how to correct the mistakes and this was mostly in speaking. Moreover, the teachers were inclined to surface errors in their feedback provision.

4.1.2.5 Teachers' Support during the Activities

Table 11: Teachers' Support during the Activities

R.N	Items	Teacher-1								Teacher-2							
		Presence of Item								Presence of Item							
		D1		D2		D3		D4		D1		D2		D3		D4	
		Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Encourages students when they make mistakes,	x		x			x		x	x		x			x		x
2	Supports students while doing tasks,	x			x		x		x		x	x			x		x
3	Moves in class to help students		x		x		x	x		x			x		x	x	

As indicated above, the EFL teachers rarely support students during activities; this is because writing activities were rarely given to practice in the classroom rather they were often given to be done at home as homework (See Table 3 & Table 8).

4.1.3 Data Obtained through Document Review

The analysis and presentation of the data collected through document review is presented below. The checklist for the document review was prepared to assess the material from which EFL teachers provide writing lesson, writing activity type, the focus of writing task, and the type of EFL teachers' written feedback/ correction. To prepare the checklist, both literature review and related studies were used. The document review was made on eight written tasks written on different topics at different times.

4.1.3.1 The Materials for the Writing Lesson

Table 12: Result of Document Review about Materials for the Writing Lesson

R.N	Items	The presence of Item															
		Written Task															
	For the writing lesson the teacher used materials from ---	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
		Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Student's textbook	x		x			x	x		x		x		x		x	
2	Other sources		x		x		x		x		x	x			x		x

Table 12 above indicates document review data on the source of materials for the writing lesson. As can be observed from the data, EFL teachers always use student's textbook and rarely make use of other supportive ELT materials such as: magazines, newspaper to present the writing lesson. This was also proved with questionnaire and observation data.

As a result it is possible to say that the teachers are reluctant to use supportive ELT materials to supplement what is provided in the text book.

4.1.3.2 How Writing Activities are provided

Table 13: The Result of Document Review on How Writing Activities are Provided

R.N	Items	The presence of Item															
		Written Task															
		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Writing activity type	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Individual work	x			x		x	x		x		x			x		x
2	Group work		x	x		x			x		x		x	x		x	
3	Class work		x		x	x			x		x		x	x			x
4	Home work	x		x			x	x		x		x			x	x	
5	Test and exam	x			x	x		x			x	x			x	x	

Table 13 shows result of document review on how writing activities are presented. As can be seen from the table above, it was observed that writing activities were given for both individual work and group work; however, the data from questionnaire and observation indicated that English teachers provide writing activities rarely for individual work and always for group work.

It was also proved that classwork is rarely used in the actual writing lesson classroom. In contrast, writing activities are always given to them for home work. The data obtained through students' questionnaire and observation in classes of the teachers (Teacher A and B) almost showed similar situation.

With regard to the frequency of writing activities in tests and exams, it was observed that writing activities are often given in tests and exams. In line with this, it was proved that the English teachers used the sample texts used for document review in this study for grade justification (See

Appendix 6).This may imply that the students have less opportunity to get help from their teachers during the writing process.

4.1.3.3 Levels at which Writing Activities are provided

Table 14: Levels at which Writing Activities are Provided

R.N	Items	The presence of Item															
		Written Task															
		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Activity given for writing is on ---	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Grammar	x			x	x		x		x		x			x	x	
2	Vocabulary		x	x		x			x	x		x		x		x	
3	Content	x		x		x		x			x		x	x		x	
4	Sentence level	x		x			x	x		x		x			x	x	
5	Paragraph level		x		x	x		x			x		x		x	x	
6	Idea generation	x		x		x			x	x			x	x		x	
7	Idea organization	x		x			x	x		x		x		x		x	
8	Making note	x			x	x			x		x		x		x		x
9	Making outline		x		x		x		x		x	x		x			x

As illustrated in the table above, the document analysis proved that English language teachers provide writing tasks at grammar, vocabulary, content, sentence, paragraph, idea generation and idea organization level. Further results of data from questionnaire and classroom observation

almost evidence the finding. However, the English teachers witnessed that they give more focus on surface level than meaning level issues during feedback provision.

4.1.3.4 Teachers' Technique for Providing Feedback/Correction

Table 15: Teachers' Technique for Providing Feedback/Correction

R.N	Items	The presence of Item															
		Written Task															
	Types of correction/feedback given	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
		Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
1	Shows the mistakes using symbols		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
2	Underline the mistakes	x			x		x		x	x			x	x		x	
3	Shows how to correct mistakes		x	x		x			x		x		x		x		x
4	Crosses out mistakes made		x	x		x			x		x	x			x		x
5	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by writing		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
6	Provides correction	x			x		x		x	x			x	x			x
7	Corrects all mistakes at a time		x	x			x	x			x	x		x		x	
8	Corrects only one type of mistake at a time	x			x	x			x		x		x		x		x
9	Provides correction on content		x	x			x	x			x	x			x	x	

10	Provides correction on surface	x			x	x			x	x			x	x			x
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Table 15 above provides the result of data analysis on teachers' techniques for providing correction/feedback. As can be understood from the table, students' mistakes were rarely shown by underlining the mistake on students' written texts and symbols were not used on students' written texts (See appendix 6). The result of questionnaire and observation also confirmed that the teachers rarely use underling/circling and never use symbols to provide feedback.

With regard to item 3, as shown in the table above, it was proved that the teachers sometimes show how to correct mistakes.

Concerning the teachers' use of cross in feedback provision (item 4) the feedbacks given on the sample written texts proved that EFL teachers rarely crossing out mistakes made when providing correction/feedback. The data obtained from questionnaire supports the finding.

In provision of clues, the document analyzed showed that the teachers never provide clues on how to correct the mistakes. Moreover the data has seen revealing that EFL teachers rarely provide correction, however, questionnaire and observation data indicated that the teachers often provide correction.

This may signals that the EFL teachers often used direct feedback provision technique for both 'treatable' grammatical errors and 'untreatable' errors. This seems to contradict Ferris's (2002, 2006) suggestion that different types of feedback should be given to different types of errors, distinguishing between 'treatable' errors and 'untreatable' errors (indirect feedback on treatable errors and direct feedback on untreatable errors).

Furthermore, it is possible to realize that EFL teachers mostly work with feedback/correction when the assignments are finished (i.e. on the product). This implies that students do not have the opportunity to do a second draft and learn from the feedback.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5. Introduction

This chapter attempts to cover the whole activities carried out during the study. First, it presents a brief summary of the activities carried out during the research. Next, in the conclusion section, the major findings of the study are provided in line with the research questions. Finally, based on the findings of the study, possible recommendations are forwarded for implementation by concerned bodies.

5.1 Summary

As it has been revealed in various parts of this paper, the purpose of the study was to assess the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written task at Guder Preparatory School, Grade Eleven Students in particular. In order to conduct this research, Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Objectives, Research Questions, Significance of the Study, its Delimitations and Limitations were stated. Moreover, related review literature and related studies were also consulted and included in the study.

Based on objectives, the research questions, the related review literature and related studies, the research design was determined and mixed method research design was used. Based on the research design the study site and population were identified. From the study site and population, the grade level and the respondents as the source of data were sampled using purposive and simple random sampling techniques.

To this end, Guder Preparatory School and grade eleventh was sampled by using purposive sampling. However, the sources of data were sixty-one grade eleven students and two grade eleven EFL teachers who were selected in simple random sampling and purposive sampling respectively. The students were used to provide questionnaire data while the teachers were used for interview. To gather data, close-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interview guide, document review checklist and observation checklist were prepared and used to address the research questions. To this effect, four classroom observations were made while each EFL teacher was teaching and document review was carried out on thirty students' written texts; the questionnaire was administered among sixty-one students and returned with 100% response rate and the interview was carried out with two EFL teachers.

Finally, the data obtained through observation, document review, questionnaire and interview were cleaned and prepared for analysis. The data from the four instruments were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics such as, tables, frequency, percentage and statements. Then the results of data from each source were brought together and discussed thematically on the bases of the research questions designed. The overall results of the data analysis have been given in the next section.

5.2 Conclusion

This study was carried out with the major aim of assessing the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks in Guder Preparatory School, Toke Kutaye Woreda, West Shoa Zone, Oromia Region. To this end, four research tools: classroom observation, document review, questionnaire and interview were employed. To realize the aim of the study, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics. The result of data analysis showed the following findings with respect to the extent to which EFL teachers provide written feedback on students' written task, the techniques EFL teachers employ to

provide written feedback, the challenges faced by EFL teachers in giving written feedback on students' written task and how far EFL teachers' written feedback helped improve students' writing skill.

To begin with, concerning the extent to which EFL teachers provide written feedback on students' written activities, the finding of the study revealed that EFL teachers often provided feedback on the blackboard and/or orally; and they rarely gave written feedback on students' notebooks/drafts. This might not provide information to teachers that can be used to shape their teaching, know individual student's strengths/weaknesses and provide the necessary remedy. Besides, the written feedback provided on the students' written texts seem to provide students with no information helpful to write the draft.

Second, based on the result of the findings of the study, it was possible to confirm that the EFL teachers often used direct feedback provision technique for both 'treatable' grammatical errors (i.e., errors in structure which are rule- bounded and thus can be self-corrected by students) and 'untreatable' errors (i.e. errors that can be difficult to self-correct because the structure has no specific rules). This seems to contradict Ferris's (2002, 2006) suggestion that different types of feedback should be given to different types of errors, distinguishing between 'treatable' errors and 'untreatable' errors (indirect feedback on treatable errors and direct feedback on untreatable errors).

Furthermore, it is possible to realize that EFL teachers mostly work with feedback/correction when the assignments are finished (i.e. on the product). This implies that students do not have the opportunity to do a second draft and learn from the feedback. In order the students to implement the feedback the students need to save it for the next assignment to know the strength and do not make the same mistakes. In consequence it is quite surprising that the teachers claim that they do not notice the expected improvements in their students' writing skills. Thus as the researcher sees it, the unnoticed improvements could be explained by the way the feedback process is carried out involving no process writing.

Similarly, as the results indicated, EFL teachers were inclined to provide corrective feedback on local issues (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc.) than global issues (content, idea generation, idea organization, etc.). However, Alamis (2010) confirmed that students have high preference

for feedback on the area of content/organization compared to vocabulary and language use/grammar.

Moreover, as the EFL teachers' interview result tends to indicate, large class size, copying from friends, illegibility of some students' hand writing and bulky contents of the text book were some of the contextual factors hampered the implementation of effective written feedback.

Finally, the findings of the present study clearly indicated that the written feedback given did not bring much change on the students' writing skill performance. From this, it is possible to conclude that, there was a misfit between the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback and the aim of written feedback, for the aim of written feedback is enabling the learners to monitor their own performance and to correct themselves.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are forwarded:

- This study found that EFL teachers provide written feedback in accordance with their beliefs. The implication that may be drawn from this is that EFL teachers should be able to adapt their written feedback strategies so that they will address the writing weaknesses unique to each individual student.
- Using one technique of feedback provision for different types of errors (e.g. treatable errors and untreatable errors) is less likely to improve the students' writing performance. Hence, EFL teachers should use different techniques of feedback at every stages of the writing process, especially during the revising and editing phases based on the type of error and the objective of the writing lesson.
- The researcher also recommends that written feedback should be given in a way it leads to successful revision in order to engage students' mind.
- What is more, EFL teachers need training in teaching writing, especially on feedback strategies, therefore, the ministry of education and other concerned bodies (e.g. the school) should organize successive workshops, seminars, and in- service trainings so that

EFL teachers can get the opportunity to share experiences on how to provide effective written feedback and how to cope with the problems encountering in written feedback provision.

- Finally, due to time constraints, the researcher of this study was limited to one preparatory school from which two EFL teachers and sixty-one grade 11th students were participated as subject of the study. It would have been ideal to conduct classroom observation, document review, interview and questionnaire on a wider scope of participants regarding the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback to students' written task. This limitation of the present study suggests that future research could investigate a large group of participants in order to increase the possibility of producing a more generalized result.

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Appendix 1

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I: - Aims and Instructions of the Questionnaire

Dear students, this questionnaire are designed for the purpose of educational research for post graduate study at Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU), School of Social Scienceand Humanities, Department of English. Its main aim is to assessing the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks at Guder Secondary School. Therefore, your genuine responses to the entire questions are extremely valuable for the study.

The questionnaire has **FOUR** pages, which are composed of instructions and different questions under **3 (three)** parts. **Part One** deals with the purposes of the study and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. **Part Two**, which has **5 (five)** questions, is meant to obtain background information on respondents. Next, **Part Three**, which is consists of **various sub sections and** questions, is designed to obtain data for the study by assessing the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks to learn the English language, in general.

So, you are politely requested to read all questions carefully and to respond honestly to provide the required information. You can provide your answer by making an “**X**” or “**√**” mark in the boxes given in front of the choices. Finally, the producer of the questionnaire likes to disclose that she/he is greatly indebted to all people, who will take part in providing information to the study by filling out the questionnaire. Moreover, the help received will be greatly acknowledged in the paper.

Thank You!

Part II: - Respondents Background Information

Direction: - The following items are prepared to get some information about you, respondents. So, please provide your answer by making an “X” or “√” mark in one the boxes given in front of the choices.

2.1 Your interest to learn writing in English?

A. Very high [] B. High [] C. Undecided [] D. Low [] E. Very Low []

2.2 How “difficult or easy” do you think is learning writing in English?

A. Very difficult [] B. Difficult [] C. Undecided [] D. Easy [] E. Very Easy []

2. How necessary developing the writing skill is to you?

A. Very high [] B. High [] C. Undecided [] D. Low [] E. Very Low []

Part III: - Items on Classroom Teaching and Learning of the Writing Skill

Direction: - The following questions are about the teaching and learning of the writing skill during the classroom English lesson. So, please indicate your answer by making an “X” or a “√” mark only in one of the boxes given in front of the choices.

3.1 Items on Writing Lesson

R.N		Always	Often	Undecided	Rarely	Never
1.1	1. The English teacher					
1.2	Uses the student textbook to present the writing lesson,					
	Uses other materials to present the writing lesson,					

3.2 Items on Writing Activities

R.N	2. The English teacher gives writing activities	Always	Often	Undecided	Rarely	Never
2.1	For classroom work,					
2.2	For homework					
2.3	So that students can use what they learned,					
2.4	For individual work,					
2.5	For group work,					
2.6	In test and exams,					
2.7	In every exam,					
2.8	On grammar,					
2.9	On vocabulary					
2.10	On content					
2.11	On organizing ideas,					
2.12	On sentence level,					
2.13	On paragraph level					

3.3 Items on Correction and Feedback

R.N	3. When the English teacher gives correction/feedback, she/he	Always	Often	Undecided	Rarely	Never
3.1	Writes on student notebook,					
3.2	Writes on the blackboard,					
3.3	Shows by underlining the mistake on student notebook,					
3.4	Crosses out the mistakes on student notebooks,					
3.5	Shows the mistake using symbols on student notebooks,					
3.6	Shows students how to do it correctly,					
3.7	Shows ways how to make drafts/outlines,					
3.8	Collects students exercise books to take them home					
3.9	Provides the feedback/ correction orally/speaking,					
3.10	Encourages students even if they make mistakes,					

3.4 Items on Benefits of Correction and Feedback to Students

R.N	4. The feedback/correction the English gives helped me.....	Always	Often	Undecided	Rarely	Never
4.1	See what my mistakes were,					
4.2	Improve my weak sides,					
4.3	Encouraged me do better,					
4.4	Not do mistakes again,					
4.5	Study further,					

THE END

THANKYOU!!

Appendix 2

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

School: - _____ Academic Year: - _____

Semester: - _____ Grade Level: - _____ Section: - _____ Shift: - _____

Chapter: - _____ Topic: - _____ Page: - _____

Period: - _____ Duration: - _____ minutes, Date of Observation: - _____

Class Teacher (Code): - _____ Observer: - _____

R.N	Detail of Classroom Observation Items	Presence of Item		Remark
		Yes	No	
1.	For the writing lesson, the teacher used materials from....			
1.1	Students textbook,			
1.2	Other sources,			
2.	On writing activity type....			
2.1	Individual work,			
2.2	Group work,			
2.3	Classroom work,			
2.4	Homework,			
2.5	Tests and Exams			
3.	On amount of writing activity each period....			
3.1	Once only,			

	3.2	More than once,			
4.	Activity given for writing task is on				
	4.1	Grammar,			
	4.2	Spelling,			
	4.3	Punctuation,			
	4.4	Sentence level,			
	4.5	Paragraph level,			
	4.6	Idea organization,			
	4.7	Idea generation,			
	4.8	Making outlines,			
	4.9	Making note			
5.	On types of feedback/ correction given....				
	5.1	Writing on the blackboard,			
	5.2	Writing students exercise books,			
	5.3	Asking other students to provide orally,			
	5.4	Shows the mistake using symbols,			
	5.5	Underlines the mistakes on exercise books,			
	5.6	Shows ways how to correct mistakes,			
	5.7	Crosses out mistakes made,			
	5.8	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by writing,			

	5.9	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by speaking,			
	5.10	Corrects all types of mistake at a time,			
	5.11	Corrects only on one type of mistake at a time,			
	5.12	Provides correction on content			
6.	On help and support during activity, the teacher ...				
	6.1	Encourages students when they make mistakes,			
	6.2	Supports students while doing tasks,			
	6.3	Moves in class to help students,			

Appendix 3

DOCUMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

School-----Date-----

Semester-----

Academic year-----

Chapter-----

Grade level-----

Topic:----- Subject teacher-----

R.N	Detail of document review items		Presence of item		
			Yes	No	Remark
1	For the writing lesson, the teacher used materials from---				
	1.1	Student's textbook			
	1.2	Other sources			
2	Writing activity type---				
	2.1	Individual work			
	2.2	Group work			
	2.3	Class work			
	2.4	Home work			
	2.5	Test and exam			
3	Activity given for writing is on---				
	3.1	Grammar			
	3.2	Spelling			
	3.3	Punctuation			
	3.4	Sentence level			
	3.5	Paragraph level			
	3.6	Idea generation			
	3.7	Idea organization			
	3.8	Making note			

	3.9	Making outline			
4	Types of feedback/Correction given				
	4.1	Shows the mistakes using symbols			
	4.2	Underline the mistakes			
	4.3	Shows how to correct mistakes			
	4.4	Crosses out mistakes made			
	4.5	Provides clues on areas of mistakes by writing			
	4.6	Provides correction			
	4.7	Corrects all mistakes at a time			
	4.8	Corrects only one type of mistake at a time			
	4.9	Provides correction on content			
	4.10	Provides correction on surface			

Appendix 4

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Teacher Interview Agreement Form on Students' Written feedback Use

Dear interviewee, this form is prepared to get your informed consent thereby to take part and provide data to the interview prepared for educational study for post graduate program at ASTU, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of English. The aim of this face-to-face interview is to assess the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks at Guder Secondary School.

Therefore, your genuine responses to the entire interview are extremely valuable. So, when you are taking part in this interview session, you will be asked questions on the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks in EFL classes in the school.

The information you provide will be kept confidential and you won't be identified. You are also free to withdraw from the interview any time without any penalty. If you have any enquiry about the study and the procedures of providing data (answering questions), you are at liberty to ask the researcher at any time. You can also contact ASTU for any information on the study.

I understand that the data collected will be used to examine the practice of EFL teachers' written feedback on students' written tasks in EFL lessons. So, I consent that the data is going to be used in this manner only and I also saw the researcher sign to use the data for the purpose indicated.

If you wish to take part in this study please put your name and sign below.

Name _____, Sign _____, Date _____.

I, the researcher, consent to use the interview data as described above.

Name _____, Sign _____, Date _____.

TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear teacher, welcome to this face-to-face interview session!

1. Please tell me how often you will provide feedback to students' written works?

2. Tell me also about your students' interest towards your correction/feedback?

3. Please tell me about the amount of attention you give to when you provide correction / feedback to students' works?

3.1 Grammar / vocabulary / punctuation / spelling?

3.2 Idea generation, idea organization?

4. What are the techniques you will use to provide written feedback/correction?

5. What techniques do you use to give students oral feedback/correction?

6. Now tell me about the problems you faced in providing feedback / correction and the ways you used to overcome them?

6.1 Problems you faced?

6.2 The ways/means you used to overcome them?

7. Tell me about the most common ways you will use to encourage students?

8. How far have your feedback / correction helped improve students' writing skill?

I have finished my questions. Let me give you the chance if you have any comments or questions about the interview.

Thank you!

Appendix 5

GaaffiiBarattootaaf

A. Waa'eeOdeeffannooBarattootaGaaffiiDeebsanii

Gaaffileenkanattiaananwaa'eehirmaattotaodeeffannoomuraasaargachuufkanqophaa'anidha.
Kanaafuudeebikeessansaanduqafilannookennamanfuuldurattikennamankeessamallattoo'x'
gochuundeebisaa.

1. FedhiinafaanIngliziibarreesuubarachuufqabdu,

A. Daraanolaanaa [] B. Olaanaa [] C. Hinmurtoofne []

D. Gadaanaa [] D. Daraangadaanaa []

2. AfaanIngliziibarreesuubarachuunhagamulfaatayookkiinsalphatajetteeyaadda?

A. Daraanulfaata [] B. Niulfaata [] C. Hinmurtoofne []

B. Ni salphata [] D. Daraansalphata []

3. Dandeettii barreessuudagaagfachuunhagamsiifbarbaachisa?

A. Daraanolaanaa [] B. Olaanaa [] C. Hinmurtoofne [] D. Gadaanaa [] E. Daraangadaanaa []

DandeettiiBarreesuuAfaanIngliziiBarachuu fi barsiisurratti

Deebbiikeegabateefilannoofuuldurattikennamankeessaakandhugaata'ekeessatti 'x'
gochuunagarsiisi.

1. BarannooBarreessuurratti

T/L	BarssisaanafaanInglizii---	Yeroo mara	Yerooh eddu	Hinmu rtaofne	Turetu re	Gonku maa
1	Barannoobarreessuudhiyeessuufkitaababarataattigar gaarama					
2	Barannoobarreessuudhiyeessuufmeeshaaleebiraattig argaarama					

2. Dalagabarreessuurratti

T/L	BarsiisaanafaanIngliziidalagabarreessuu kankennuu---	Yeroo mara	Yerooh eddu	Hinmu rtaofne	Turetu re	Gonku maa
1	Hoj-dareefi					
2	Hoj-maneeffi					
3	Hojiidhuunfaatiifi					
4	Hojiigareetiifi					
5	Batalee fi qormaatakeessatti					
6	Qormaatahundumaakeessatti					
7	Seer-lugarratti					
8	Jecharratti					
9	Qabiyyeerratti					

10	Yaadagurmeessuurratti					
11	Sadarkaahimaatti					
12	Sadarkaakeeyyataatti					

3.Sirressuu fi Duub-deebiiKennuurratti

T/ L	BarsiisaanafaanIngliziisirreeffama/duub-deebii yookennu---	Yerooma a	Yerooha du	Hinnurto ofne	Tureeture e	Gonkuma a
1	Baruleebarataarrattibarreessa					
2	Gabateegurraacharrattibarreessa					
3	Baruleebarataarrattidogoggorajalasaruun Agarsiisa					
4	Baruleebarataarratti 'x' godha					
5	Mallattoottigargaarameebaruleebarataarratti dogoggoraagarsiisa					
6	Barattoonniakkaataaittiinsirreessaniijjetan Agarsiisa					

7	Karaaittigumee(draft) hojjetanagarsiisa					
8	Baruleebarattootaamanattifudheeilaaluufwalitti qaba					
9	Sirreeffama/duub-deebii faaniffaakenna					
10	Barattoonniyoodogoggoranilleenijajjabeessa					

3. Bu'aaSirreeffamni/Duub-deebiinBarattootaafArgamsiise

T/L	Duub-deebiin/SirreeffamnibarsiisaanafaanInglizii kennu---nagargaara.	Yeroomara	Yerooheddu	Tureeturee	Hinmurtoofne	Gonkumaa
1	Wantandogoggoreilaaluuf					
2	Hanqinakoofooyyessuuf					
3	Akkancaalattihojjedhunajajjabeessuuf					
4	Akkanlamuuhindogoggorreef					
5	Fageesseeakkanqo'adhuuf					

Appendix 6

EFL Teachers' Written Feedback Given to the Written Texts Produced by the Students

(See the next pages)