Written Corrective Feedback as Practiced by Instructors of Writing in English at Najran University

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Abstract

The present study aimed to address the extent to which faulty members and students at the department of English language at Najran University practice using the ways of written corrective feedback. The questionnaire, as the main study instrument was used to collect data while the descriptive analytical approach was used to analyze these collected data. Findings revealed that the direct way of correction, i.e., the identification of student's errors by underlining or circling and then telling them how to correct such errors without allowing them the chance to figure out what the corrections are, was the most practiced way of written corrective feedback. Using Arabic, as it was students' mother tongue, to show them their errors and then explain to them how to correct these errors was the second practiced way. Indirect correction like for example correcting student's errors through writing in the margin that there was an error without giving them the correct answer was the least used way, as indicated by faculty members. Nevertheless, correcting students' errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving them the correct answer was the least used way from students' viewpoint. Moreover, findings showed that both faculty members and students were in favor of the comprehensive not the selective way of correction.

Keywords: written corrective feedback, comprehensive corrective feedback, selective corrective feedback, writing skill, direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback

1. Introduction

Written corrective feedback is one of the most important aspects in education that teachers wherever should pay attention to (Corder, 1981). It is a common way to respond to students' committed errors while writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). When learning a language, corrective feedback, in general and the written one in particular is usually used to inform learners about the incorrect or improper use of the language they learn, i.e., target language (Lightbown & Spada, 1999) that can be measured by the number of the linguistic violations made in writing (Lim & Dass, 2014). Meanwhile, written corrective feedback can be direct or indirect (Ferris, 2003). To provide students with direct feedback or correction means that they should bear responsibility to re-edit their writing errors as a response to the explicit commentary they receive from teachers. Indirect witten corrective feedback, on the other hand sheds light on students' errors by underlining, circling or coding, for example (VF = wrong verb form). Hence, it is the learners' task to find out the correct answer for each error (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). However, direct written corrective feedback, which requires less effort on the part of the learner, can be more beneficial for students of low achievement levels who cannot categorize their errors and realize what type each error is (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). Besides, students' acquisition of the correct form lasts for a short time, i.e., it does not have a long-term impact (Ellis, 2008). Nevertheless, indirect written corrective feedback encourages learners to be engaged in hypothesis testing and makes acquisition of the correct form long-lasting (Lalande, 1982).

Apart from direct and indirect, written corrective feedback can be selective or comprehensive. Selective written corrective feedback means that the teacher chooses one type of error (e.g., articles) and correct all errors of this kind. Comprehensive written corrective feedback indicates that the teacher sheds light on different types of errors to be corrected in the same time in the learner's piece of writing (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). Despite the fact that selective feedback is unsystematic because it might confuse students and overburden them, it helps them to notice the error, be engaged in the process of hypothesis testing and to check how their accuracy in writing is improving (Sheen et al., 2009). Moreover, the choice of each way, i.e., comprehensive or selective is determined

by a set of factors such as, the teacher's experience and previous knowledge (Junqueira & Payant, 2015), contextual factors like the institutional guidelines (Alshahrani & Storch, 2014), the writing class approach whether process-oriented or not (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014), the teacher's beliefs and practices (Lee, 2009), and students' preferences (Lim & Dass, 2014). Henceforth, the present study aims to determine the ways of written corrective feedback that faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University use to improve their students' writing skills. In addition, it aims to investigate the perceptions of students at the department of English language regarding the ways of written corrective feedback their instructors use to help them improve their writing skills. Moreover, it seeks to find out the extent to which the selective and comprehensive ways of written corrective feedback are used from the viewpoint of instructors and students at the department of English language at Najran University.

2. Questions of the Study

The present study aims to answer these questions:

1) To what extent do faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University use the written corrective feedback ways to improve their students' writing skills?

2) To what extent do students at the department of English language believe that their instructors of writing in English at Najran University use the written corrective feedback ways to improve their writing skills?

3) To what extent do faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University use the selective or the comprehensive way to improve their students writing skills?

4) To what extent do students at the department of English language at Najran University believe that their instructors of writing in English at Najran University use the selective or the comprehensive way to improve their writing skills?

3. Review of Related Literature

Studies investigating written corrective feedback have revealed a number of methodological limitations. Amongst these limitations was the application of different types of feedback on students' piece of writing rendering it impossible to identify which type of feedback was more effective (Qiandi & Brown, 2015). Moreover, it is difficult to generalize the findings of any study whose main concern is how to correct one type not all types of students' errors because they do not account for the functional use of each one (Al Jarrah, 2016). Despite these findings, agreement between most studies can be claimed regarding the categorization of written corrective feedback into direct and indirect. Ferris and Hedgcock (2014), for example believe that direct feedback is more helpful for students of low levels in the target language. Sheen (2007), on the other hand, revealed that learners who received meta-linguistic explanation in addition to direct feedback had better performance than the other groups. Suzuki et al. (2019) concluded that students who received indirect corrective feedback with metalinguistic explanation outperformed the group who received direct corrective feedback with metalinguistic explanation. Van Beuningen et al. (2012) showed that direct correction is better used to correct students' grammatical errors, while indirect correction is better used with non-grammatical errors. Lim and Dass (2014) proved students' preference for the direct correction. Types of errors to be corrected were not so clear, but half of participants regarded correction of punctuation as useless. Shintani and Ellis (2013) found that the direct corrective feedback had no effect on the accurate use of the target feature while metalinguistic explanation leads to accuracy in a new piece of writing, however, this was only effective for a short-term and not on a delayed two weeks period. Nevertheless, Bitchener (2012) concluded no concrete evidence to show that direct correction is more or less helpful for low-level students.

One more fact that one can be noticed about researchers in this field is their agreement on the division of the written corrective feedback ways into comprehensive and selective also known as focused and unfocused (Lee, 2018). For instance, David and Chiu (2015) found that parametric tests have demonstrated that students provided with focused and unfocused indirect written corrective feedback have better performance than peers do in the control groups in the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test. Nevertheless, ways of written corrective feedback depend upon a set of factors like teacher's experience, contextual factors … etc. In addition, Hyland and Anan (2006) concluded that teachers' previous experience might affect the way they mark students' papers. English-speaking teachers were found more selective and corrected fewer errors than non-English-speaking teachers who were seen stricter and more judgmental in correcting the students' texts. Junqueira and Payant (2015) revealed that less experienced teachers have more sufferings in responding to students' texts. Alshahrani and Storch (2014) assured that restrictions of the educational authority, i. e., forcing teachers to use a specific way of written corrective feedback regardless the outcomes of such decision affect much teachers' practice of

correction. Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) mentioned that it is preferable to correct directly students' errors if they do not have the chance to rewrite them soon. Grammatical errors are to be corrected later on. Lee (2009) found a contradiction between teachers. In other words, most attention was paid to accuracy in students' writing while content and ideas were believed to be given more attention. Due to beliefs and practices, most teachers were in favor of selective correction in the time they seemed to correct students' writing comprehensively.

Students' preferences influence the way teachers choose to correct their learners' errors. Zhu (2010) found that most students wanted their errors to be corrected comprehensively. Mahfood and Pandian (2011) concluded that students like their teachers to correct all of their errors. That is they preferred the comprehensive way of corrective feedback. However, grammatical errors were the most important. Hamouda (2011) indicated that teachers practice indirect and selective feedback whilst students preferred direct and comprehensive kind of correction. Ye Han (2019) adds that learners' and contextual factors play a significant role in the way of correcting students' errors although they might be in the same classroom and doing the same writing task. Nevertheless, Lee (2018) mentions that teachers' worries about the stakeholders' viewpoints might drive them to give the priority to one type of correction and neglect the other.

In brief, studies conducted in the field of written corrective feedback have shown the importance of such practice in enhancing students' writing skills, more specifically second or foreign language learners. Therefore, the present study aims to uncover the most practiced ways of written corrective feedback from the viewpoint of both English language instructors and students at the department of English language at Najran University.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

Participants of the study involved (10) female faculty members among which were (2) professors and (8) instructors in addition to (40) female students whose levels in writing skill were very good (N = 7), good (N = 16), fair (N = 9) and poor (N = 8). Both groups belonged to the department of English language at Najran University and were chosen purposefully. Participant faculty members were all teachers who had taught or were teaching "Writing (1), Writing (2), Writing (3), or Writing (4)" courses. Participant students were selected out of those students who have studied the first three writing courses and were enrolled in "Writing (4)" course during the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019.

4.2 Study Instrument

A two version-questionnaire was developed and used as a main instrument to gather data. Each version consisted of eight items, i.e., the ways of written corrective feedback. The faculty members' version aimed to determine to what extent they use each of these eight ways to correct their students' errors in writing. The main objective of students' version was to determine their perceptions regarding the extent to which their writing instructors use each of the eight ways when correcting their errors. The first seven ways were adapted from Ellis (2008) and Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) typology while, the use of Arabic was added by the researcher as it is the native language of the learners. Five responses were attached to each item in both questionnaire versions. Responses were "always (100), normally (80%), Sometimes (50%), occasionally (30%) and Never (00%)". Before starting data analysis, these responses were replaced by (5, 4, 3, 2, and 1) respectively.

4.3 Reliability of the Questionnaires

The use of Cronbach Alpha to calculate the questionnaire's reliability coefficient revealed that this coefficient was (0.801) for faculty members' version and (0.799) for students' version. These values, of course indicate that both versions were reliable and results would be trustful.

4.4 Validity of the Questionnaires

To validate the questionnaire's content, it was presented to a jury of four colleagues who were all Ph.D. holders. Among these arbitrators, there were two colleagues in the department of English language and two colleagues in the department of curriculum and instruction at Najran University. Modifications they stressed were highly appreciated and taken into account while writing the final versions of the questionnaire.

4.5 Data Analysis

Inductive analysis was used to analyze the collected data that were coded through identification of codes related to research questions. The codes were then categorized in a descending order and arranged thematically to give meaning to the data. The coded data were further analyzed using (SPSS) statistical program to augment the qualitative analysis. Later on, data were then presented descriptively with the aid of tables.

5. Results

5.1 Findings Related to the First Question

To answer the first question that stated "*To what extent do faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University use the written corrective feedback ways to improve their students' writing skills?*" Percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for all participants' responses. Results are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1. Perceptions of faculty members regarding their use of the written corrective feedback ways in correcting students' errors in writing

No	Ways of written corrective feedback. (N= 10)	Frequency and Percentage of Use Always: 5; Normally: 4; Sometimes:3; Occasionally: 2; Never: 1									
		5	%	4	%	3	%	2	%	1	%
1	I identify the students' errors by underlining or circling and then telling them how to correct their errors. The student does not have to figure out what the corrections are. (Direct correction)	3	30	4	40	1	10	2	20	0	0
2	I identify the students' errors by underlining or circling without giving them the correct answer. The student has to figure out the corrections themselves. (Indirect correction)	0	0	2	20	1	10	4	40	3	70
3	I Correct the students' errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there is an error without giving them the correct answer. (Indirect correction)	0	0	0	0	1	10	1	10	8	80
4	I Correct the students' errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving the student the correct answer. (Indirect correction)	1	10	2	20	0	0	1	10	6	60
5	I correct the students' errors by coding the error in the margin and asking them to find the error themselves. (Indirect correction)	0	0	0	0	5	50	0	0	5	50
6	I write a number above the students' error and describe it at the bottom of the paper. (Indirect correction)	1	10	0	0	2	20	3	30	4	40
7	I use Arabic to show the students their errors and explain the errors to them.	2	20	0	0	2	10	2	20	5	50

Table 1 reflects the numbers and percentages of faculty members regarding the frequent use of the various written corrective feedback. It shows that 70% of participant teachers always or normally identified their students' errors by underlining or circling and telling them how to correct them without allowing them the chance to figure out what the corrections are. Whereas, 30% of them sometimes and occasionally did so. In accordance with the second way of written corrective feedback, results showed that 20% of respondents claimed that they normally identified students' errors by underlining or circling without giving them the correct answer and so they have to figure out the corrections themselves. Moreover, 50% of respondents believed that they sometimes and occasionally did so compared with 30% who confessed that they never underlined or circled students' errors and asked them to correct them themselves. Answers of participants to the third way of correction, revealed that none of them always or normally corrected students' errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there was an error without giving him the correct answer. On the opposite, 20% of them stated that they sometimes or occasionally did so. Nevertheless, 80% of them never used this way to give students feedback about their writing errors.

Table 1 also shows that 30% of respondents always or normally corrected students' errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving the student the correct answer. While 10% of them occasionally corrected students' errors in this way. 60% of them never used this way to correct their students' errors. Responses of participant faculty members to the fifth way show that 50% of respondents sometimes corrected students' errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving them the correct answer. However, 50% of them mentioned that they did not use this way to correct students' errors. With regard to the sixth way of correction, 10% of participants always wrote a number above each error and described it at the bottom of the paper. In addition, 50% of them sometimes or occasionally did so. Proportion of faculty members who did not use this correction way was 40%. Responses of faculty members to the use of Arabic to correct students' errors indicated that 20% of them always used this way of correction in comparison with 30% who sometimes or occasionally used such way. Besides, 50% of participants stated that they never used Arabic as a way of giving corrective feedback to students.

To determine the ways of written corrective feedback that participant faculty members mostly use, mean scores and standard deviations of their responses were extracted. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2. Mean scores and standard deviations of participants' responses in accordance with the most practiced ways of written corrective feedback

N	Ways of written corrective feedback	M.	Rank
1	I identify the students' errors by underlining or circling and then telling them how to correct their errors. The student does not have to figure out what the corrections are. (Direct correction)	3.8	1
2	I identify the students' errors by underlining or circling without giving them the correct answer. The student has to figure out the corrections themselves. (Indirect correction)	2.2	3
3	I Correct the students' errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there is an error without giving them the correct answer. (Indirect correction).	1.3	7
4	I Correct the students' errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving the student the correct answer (Indirect correction).	2.0	4
5	I correct the students' errors by coding the error in the margin and asking them to find the error themselves. (Indirect correction).	2.0	5
6	I write a number above the students' error and describe it at the bottom of the paper. (Indirect correction).	2.1	6
7	I use Arabic to show the students their errors and explain the errors to them.	2.5	2

Table 2 indicates that the written corrective feedback ways that faculty members often used to correct their students' errors in writing was the first way (M = 3.8). That is, most of faculty members preferred to underline or circle the errors committed by students and then explain to them how they should correct each one without allowing them the chance to figure out what the corrections are. In the second place, teachers preferred to use students' mother tongue, Arabic in this place to show students their errors and to explain those errors to them (M = 2.5). The least preferable and used way of correction was the third way (M = 1.3) that required faculty members to indirectly correct students' errors by writing in the margin that there was an error without providing them with the correct answer.

5.2 Findings Related to the Second Question

To answer the second question that stated, "*To what extent do students at the department of English language believe that their instructors of writing in English at Najran University use the written corrective feedback ways to improve their writing skills?*" Percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of all participants' responses. Results are shown in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3. *Pe*rceptions of students regarding their instructors' use of the written corrective feedback ways in correcting their errors in writing

No	Ways of written corrective feedback. (N= 40)	Frequency and Percentage of Use Always: 5; Normally: 4; Sometimes: 3; Occasionally: 2; Never: 1									
		5	%	4	%	3	%	2	%	1	%
1	My instructor identifies my errors by underlining or circling and then telling me how to correct them. I do not have to figure out what the corrections are. (Direct correction).	25	62	6	15	5	13	2	5	2	5
2	My instructor identifies my errors by underlining or circling without giving me the correct answer. I have to figure out the corrections myself. (Indirect correction).	9	23	9	23	9	22	1	2	12	30
3	My instructor corrects my errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there is an error without giving me the correct answer. (Indirect correction).	5	13	5	13	10	24	6	15	14	35
4	My instructor corrects my errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving me the correct answer. (Indirect correction).	2	5	5	13	11	27	8	20	14	35
5	My instructor corrects my errors by coding the error in the margin and asking me to find the error myself. (Indirect correction).	7	19	5	13	10	24	8	20	10	24
6	My instructor writes a number above each of my errors and describes it at the bottom of my paper. (Indirect correction).	8	20	8	21	8	20	6	14	10	25
7	My instructor uses Arabic to show me my errors and explain them to me.	17	43	2	5	9	22	4	10	2	20

Table 3 reflects the numbers and percentages of students' responses regarding the frequent use of the various written corrective feedback by their instructors. It shows that 77% of participant students believed that, their teachers always or normally identified their errors by underlining or circling and then telling them how to correct these errors without allowing them the chance to figure out what the corrections are. Whereas, 18% of them thought that their teachers sometimes or occasionally corrected their errors in this way. A very little proportion 5% did not agree that their teachers informed them about their errors and then told how to correct such errors. In accordance with the second way of written corrective feedback, results show that 46% of respondents claimed that their teachers always or normally underlined or circled their errors without giving them the correct answer leaving them the task to figure out the corrections themselves. Moreover, 24% of respondents believed that their teachers sometimes and occasionally did so. On the opposite, 30% of them mentioned that their teachers never underlined or circled their errors and then asked them to correct them themselves. Answers of participants to the third way of correction revealed the agreement of 26% of students on the fact that their teachers always or normally corrected their errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there was an error without telling them the correct answer. On the opposite, 39% of them stated that their teachers sometimes or occasionally did so. Nevertheless, 35% of them thought that teachers never gave them feedback about their writing errors in this way.

Results in Table 3 also reveals that 18% of students believed that their instructors always or normally corrected their errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving them the correct answer. While 47% of them mentioned that instructors sometimes or occasionally used this way to correct their errors. On the opposite, 35% of them claimed that instructors never used this way to correct their errors. Responses of participant students to the fifth way show that 32% of them thought that their instructors always or normally corrected their errors by coding the exact error in their writings without giving them the correct answer. However, 44% of them mentioned that instructors did not use this way to correct their errors in comparison with 24% who asserted that instructors sometimes corrected their errors using this way. In accordance with the sixth way of correction, 41% of the participants stated that their writing instructors always or normally wrote a number above each error they committed and described it at the bottom of their papers. In addition, 34% of them mentioned that instructors sometimes or occasionally did so to correct committed errors whereas, 25% of them said that instructors never used this way of correction to show them their errors. To understand whether instructors used students' mother tongue, i. e., Arabic to show them their errors and then explain how to correct them, 48% of participant students asserted that instructors of writing always or normally did so. Nevertheless, 32% of students said that instructors sometimes or occasionally used Arabic to explain students' errors compared with 20% of students who mentioned that their instructors never used Arabic when giving them feedback about their errors.

To understand students' perceptions regarding the way(s) faculty members mostly use to correct their writing errors, mean scores and standard deviations of participant students' responses were extracted. Results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean scores and standard deviations of participant students' responses in accordance with the most frequent ways of written corrective feedback faculty members use

N	Ways of written corrective feedback	M.	Rank
1	My instructor identifies my errors by underlining or circling and then telling me how to correct them. I do not have to figure out what the corrections are. (Direct correction)	4.25	1
2	My instructor identifies my errors by underlining or circling without giving me the correct answer. I have to figure out the corrections myself. (Indirect correction)	3.05	4
3	My instructor corrects my errors indirectly through writing in the margin that there is an error without giving me the correct answer. (Indirect correction).	2.52	6
4	My instructor corrects my errors by coding the exact error in the text without giving me the correct answer. (Indirect correction).	2.32	7
5	My instructor corrects my errors by coding the error in the margin and asking me to find the error myself. (Indirect correction).	2.78	5
6	My instructor writes a number above each of my errors and describes it at the bottom of my paper. (Indirect correction).	3.45	2
7	My instructor uses Arabic to show me my errors and explain them to me.	3.25	3

Table 4 reveals that the most frequent way students thought that instructors mostly if not always used to correct their errors (M = 4.25) was underlining or circling their committed errors and then explaining to them how they

could correct each error. The second way students believed that instructions mostly used (M = 3.45) was writing a number above each error and describing it at the bottom of the paper. The use of students' mother tongue, i. e., Arabic to show students their errors and to explain them to them (M = 3.25) was in the third rank from students' viewpoint. The least frequent way instructors used to correct students writing errors (M = 2.32) was the way of coding the exact errors in the text without giving them the correct answers.

5.3 Findings Related to the Third Question

To answer the third question that stated, "*To what extent do faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University use the selective or the comprehensive way to improve their students writing skills*?" Percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of all participants' responses. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Perceptions of faculty members regarding the use of the selective or the comprehensive way of correcting students' errors in writing

N	The use of the selective or the comprehensive way (N=10)	Frequency and Percentage of Use Always: 5; Normally: 4; Sometimes: 3; Occasionally: 2; Never: 1									
		5	%	4	%	3	%	2	%	1	%
1	I prefer to use the comprehensive way to correct all of my students' errors. (Comprehensive)	6	60	3	30	0	0	1	10	0	0
2	I prefer to use the selective way to correct some of my students' errors. (Selective)	0	0	1	10	3	30	3	30	3	30

Results in Table 5 show that most of respondent faculty members were in favor of using the comprehensive way in correcting their students' errors in writing. Responses of about 60% of respondents indicated that they always corrected their students' errors comprehensively. In addition, nearly 30% of them show that they normally did so. Nevertheless, none of the respondents mentioned that they never used the comprehensive way of correcting students' errors. With regard to the preference of using the selective way of correction, frequencies of faculty members' responses showed that about 30% of them did not use such way in correction. Another 30% of respondents indicated that they occasionally corrected students' errors selectively. Meanwhile, 30% of them stated that they sometimes used it while only 10% normally used this way to correct some of students' errors in writing.

5.4 Findings Related to the Fourth Question

To answer the fourth question stating "*To what extent do students at the department of English language at Najran University believe that their instructors of writing in English at Najran University use the selective or the comprehensive way to improve their writing skills?*" Percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of all participants' responses. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Perceptions of students regarding the use of their instructors of the selective or the comprehensive way of correcting their errors in writing

N	The use of the selective or the comprehensive way (N=40)	Frequency and Percentage of Use Always: 5; Normally: 4; Sometimes: 3; Occasionally: 2; Never: 1									
		5	%	4	%	3	%	2	%	1	%
1	My instructor uses the comprehensive way to correct all of my errors. (Comprehensive Correction)	25	63	6	15	5	12	2	5	2	5
2	My instructor uses the selective way to correct some of my errors. (Selective correction)	9	23	9	23	9	22	1	2	12	30

Frequencies of participant students, as shown in Table 5 reveal that most of them believed that their teachers used the comprehensive way when correcting their writing errors. Responses of about 63% of them indicate that their instructors always corrected their errors comprehensively. In addition, nearly 15% of them showed that instructors normally did so. Nevertheless, about 17% of respondents stated that their instructors sometimes and occasionally used the comprehensive way to correct them. Whilst, only about 5% of them agreed that their errors were comprehensively corrected. When asked about their instructors' use of the selective way, frequencies of their responses revealed that about 30% of them agreed on their instructors' use of way in correction. Another 24%

indicated that instructors occasionally and sometimes corrected their errors selectively. Meanwhile, 23% of them mentioned that instructors normally used this way in comparison with another 23% who stated that instructors always corrected them selectively.

6. Discussion

Analysis of data of the current study regarding the use of written corrective feedback by faculty members at Najran University ways to correct students' errors in writing have revealed some interesting results. The first of these results is related to the first two questions. Responses of faculty members and students have asserted a very high level of congruence between their perceptions with regard to the way by which faculty members identify their students' errors in writing. Data analysis showed that most faculty members always or normally identified their students' errors by underlining or circling and then telling them how to correct the errors without allowing them the opportunity to figure out what the corrections are. Students' responses, on the other hand support their teachers' views regarding the use of this way. A high proportion of them declared that their teachers always or normally used one of the direct corrective feedback ways when correcting their errors in writing. In the second place, there was an agreement between both parties regarding the task of correcting students' errors after being identified by their faculty members. Responses of faculty members indicated that they mostly underlined or circled students' errors leaving them the task to figure out the corrections themselves. Nevertheless, students' responses revealed that their instructors used to write a number above each error describing it at the bottom of the page and asking them to find the correct forms by themselves. It is true that such way is indirect but it does not help students be creative in their thinking or be good problem solvers. Students themselves have to be trained to look for the corrections and check their fitness in the pieces of writings they produce while rewriting them later on. What teachers did was the most critical role in the identification of errors. Searching for the errors was their responsibility while students' role was to find the appropriate and correct forms. One possible explanation of this result is to claim that faculty members at the department of English language at Najran University were fully aware of their students' capabilities and levels of writing mastery skills and so they were more capable to select and use the most appropriate way of written corrective feedback, as they believe, fit their interests and desires. Students' awareness of their potentials in English and the writing skill particularly could support the belief of their instructors regarding the choice of the corrective feedback. In other words, it could be argued that faculty members' viewpoint regarding their students' fair or weak writing mastery skills in addition to students' recognition of their levels could have encouraged the use of such ways of written corrective feedback. This conclusion is, to a far extent, consistent with the findings of Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) in relation to the belief that direct correction is better used with weak students. It also corroborates what Lim and Dass (2014) have concluded regarding students' preferences for the direct correction. Moreover, it asserts what Lee (2018) mentioned about stakeholders' viewpoints that drive teachers to give priority to one type of correction and neglect the other.

The second result of the current study is related to the third and fourth questions. Responses of most faculty members and students indicate that the comprehensive way of written corrective feedback is mostly used to correct errors in writing. To explain this result, it can be claimed that the fair levels of students in writing prohibits them from detecting all their errors, and so they desire their teachers to shed light on all errors and show them how to correct them. Instructors, on the opposite feel their students' needs and try to satisfy them by using the corrective way that they think is better fit their levels. This result emphasizes what Zhu (2010) and Mahfood and Pandian (2011) concluded regarding students' desire to have their errors corrected comprehensively.

7. Conclusion

Written corrective feedback is one of the most important aspects by which instructors can improve their students writing. Using various corrective feedback ways and forms can open widely students' eyes on the types of errors they often commit when writing short or long texts. Besides, teachers can gain a clear image about their students' areas of shortage, deficiency and weakness whilst students themselves can understand the barriers or obstacles that hinder their mastery of the writing skill. Moreover, teachers' use of any corrective feedback way, whatever it is, should not only account for students' mastery levels and desires and so helping them to identify these errors by explanation or the use of their mother tongue. By using corrective feedback ways teachers can make students independent or dependent learners. Independent learners look for the errors and corrections in the same time and do not wait others to show them their errors and tell them how to correct them. Dependent learners wait their teachers to circle or underline the errors, or write them in the margin. In brief, faculty members' use of the written corrective ways have simply proved that students at the department of English language at Najran University were dependent learners of fair, if not weak, writing levels. The use of such ways will not be helpful

to produce independent learners because identification of errors is the most critical phase in the provision of corrective feedback. The use of direct and comprehensive ways of correction means that teachers are responsible for the whole correction process. Instead, the use of indirect and selective ways to correct students' errors will inevitably lead learners to be responsible for their learners, i. e. makes learning learner centered.

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