Voicing Philippines and Indonesian Students' Needs of Automated Written Corrective Feedback in EFL Writing Classrooms

Rozanah Katrina Herda[1*]
(Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia)
Regine Aguilar Principe[2]
(Famy National Integrated High School, Philippines)
Arnel S. Travero[3]
(University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines-Claveria, Philippines)
Muhammad Fadhly Pratama Harahap[4]
(Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta, Indonesia)
Salma Viantika[5]
(Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta, Indonesia)
Mohammad Arif Hamidi[6]
(Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta, Indonesia)

*(katrinaherda@uny.ac.id)

ABSTRACT
In EFL writing classrooms, students learning L2 need correction or feedback for their writing. However, the teachers' limitation in time management becomes one of the reasons students cannot gain detailed feedback. In line with that, the growth of the digital platform in the 21st-century learning era brings a thought that corrective feedback for L2 writing can be accessed and gained through automated written corrective feedback (AWCF) to ease students' learning and improve their writing ability. This quantitative study aimed at revealing students' need for automated written corrective feedback. The participants of this study were 532 students from the Philippines and Indonesia. The questionnaire was used to collect data and analysed using the SPSS version 25 to know the percentage and descriptive statistics. The study's findings revealed that students from two states need technology tools to provide written corrective feedback to improve their writing proficiency in the L2 context while solving their problems of vocabulary and grammar limitations.

Furthermore, the feedback can grow their confidence to provide L2 writing. The findings of the student's needs can be used as the basis for creating ideal writing scenarios.

Keywords: Students' needs; automated written corrective feedback; and EFL writing.

INTRODUCTION

Writing in 21st-century learning is no longer a one-way journey that starts with the writer and eventually arrives at its destination, the reader. Instead, a significant portion of today's work has become an ongoing discourse that serves a specific goal and is not restricted by either time or space (Friedman, 2023; Hunston, 2022; Nelson & King, 2023). In this way, proficiency in writing allows students to express themselves more in-depth than what we often do on a day-to-day basis. It gives thought and ideas a framework to operate inside. Students in L2 writing classrooms are compelled to extend their imaginations to think about things from various perspectives and choose those thoughts from which we are confident our writing will benefit and come to life.

Meanwhile, writing in English effectively is crucial in the twenty-first century because it helps students succeed academically and professionally by developing their critical thinking, problem-solving, creative, collaborative, and communication skills. When there are impediments to communication, it is possible that the message cannot be understood, which renders written communication ineffective. There are occasions when obstacles can question the integrity of your message (Saeed & Al Qunayeer, 2023). This creates a barrier to your request, which you need to consider; otherwise, your request will be guaranteed a negative response.

However, writing skills should be taught through writing itself (drafting, writing, and revising), in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, with plenty of practice opportunities. Their writing assessment should also include comments and suggestions on how they might enhance their writing (Adiwijaya et al., 2019). Finding ideas was the most difficult challenge the students needed to overcome to succeed. Although it is widely understood that teacher feedback is precious, receiving it remains a challenge due to its scarcity. Because of the often-overwhelming workloads, high-class numbers, and time limits that teachers experience, it can be not easy to offer each student feedback that is both comprehensive and timely. According to Wulandari (2022), providing students with sufficient feedback can help them become better writers. This benefit extends to the quality of their final products and the writing process itself.

This lack of feedback can be damaging since it leaves students without vital insights into their development, which hinders their capacity to self-assess and change their learning tactics. Students are left without feedback when they are left without feedback. Particularly in education, the incorporation of automated feedback systems has been receiving a growing amount of attention as the digital era progresses. The rise of automated feedback solutions is not just a trend in technology; rather, it represents a significant shift in how we use these solutions. Technology-enhanced feedback, also known as automated feedback, is said to be immediate and automatic in the research conducted by González-Torres et al. (2022). This has been done as an alternative to the comments that individuals have supplied. This kind of feedback has a few positive aspects as well as a few negative aspects.

Students can read, listen to, and observe authentic resources from the culture they are learning about that are exciting and up to date, thanks to the strategic use of technology. Students acquire valuable experience working with others as they interact in real-time with native speakers of the target language, either by video, audio, or text. Learning a language with the use of technology is referred to as "technology-enhanced language learning," and it involves displaying multimedia content on a computer as a way to supplement traditional methods of teaching a language. Additionally, language development is impacted by technology since it offers new ways to learn and adapt languages (Bahari, 2022). People can acquire new languages more quickly because of innovations like media language courses and more diverse multilingual media.

Thus, based on the abovementioned situation, the researchers aimed to conduct a study to reveal EFL Philippines and Indonesian students' need for automated written corrective feedback in L2 writing. This study has one research question: *What do The Philippines and Indonesian students need for automated written corrective feedback in L2 writing?* The research finding is expected to give positive and relevant insights for those interested in revealing the need for automated written corrective feedback in the Philippines and Indonesia.

METHOD
Design and Participants

In this quantitative study that presented numerical data, the researchers used a causal-comparative design to determine the cause or consequences of differences between or among groups of individuals (Fraenkel et al., 2022; Gay et al., 2012). The two groups were EFL students from the Philippines and Indonesia. In this case, the researchers observed a causal-comparative research's explorations of two groups' causes (independent variable) to reveal the comparison between them. Table 1 shows the design of the causal-comparative study.

Table 1. Causal-Comparative Design

Group	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
I	C_1	O
	The Philippines Students	Learning Needs of AWCF
II	C_2	O
	The Indonesian Students	Learning Needs of AWCF

The participants in this research were 532 secondary high school students, covering 250 students from the Philippines and 282 from Indonesia. At this point, the researchers used the random sampling technique to choose participants. It was a technique in which individuals from the two countries' populations had an equal and independent chance to be selected as participants. Thus, the participants' demographic data covering gender and age are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants Demographic Information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender					
Valid	Female	348	65.4	65.4	65.4
	Male	184	34.6	34.6	100.0
	Total	532	100.0	100.0	
Age					
	Above 20	162	30.5	30.5	30.8
	Under 20	368	69.2	69.2	100.0
	Total	532	100.0	100.0	
Country					
	Indonesia	282	52.8	52.8	53.0
	Philippines	250	47.0	47.0	100.0
	Total	532	100.0	100.0	

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

To collect the research data, the researchers used a closed-ended questionnaire of a Five-point Likert Scale consisting of five values (5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, and 1=strongly disagree) to gather information from respondents. Qquestionnaires sheets became a written collection of self-report questions to be answered by the students as research participants (Fraenkel et al., 2022; Gay et al., 2012). The researchers set 17 relevant questionnaire statements for four indicators reliably and validly, as the Likert Scale questionnaires were to measure the participants' behavior and perceptions (Radhakrishna, 2007; Sugiyono, 2009; Taherdoost, 2016; Zou et al., 2022), especially in the learning needs that wanted to be revealed. In this study, the questionnaire sheets were sent to the respondents online through Google Forms for effective and efficient time. In this case, the respondents' identity was protected by the researchers.

Table 3. A Questionnaire Items Classification

Indicator	Question Items Classification
Obstacles in writing activities	1, 2, 3, 4
Existing teaching and learning activities for writing	5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Necessities in writing activities	10, 11, 12, 13,14
Students' Wants of automatic written corrective feedback	15, 16, 17

As articulated earlier, in analyzing the data from the questionnaire, the researchers used SPSS version 25 to find the descriptive statistics data and the frequency of each response. Table 3 provides the way to interpret the questionnaire findings. The five-point Likert scale shows the behavior continuum from the most negative to the most positive response (Widoyoko, 2012), referring to the frequency of answers for each item. The interval data from the questionnaires were analyzed by counting the mean score (Sugiyono, 2012) that belonged to the descriptive statistics. Thus, the researchers interpreted the adjectival rating of each item using the mean scores, referring to Pimentel's (2010) five-point Likert Scale, as shown in Table 4. Respondents select the point on the scale that most accurately expresses their opinion. The scale usually spans from one extreme to the other. In this case, the respondents requested that they select the number corresponding to the degree to which they agree or disagree with a specific assertion.

There is a common practice of referring to the middle (3) as Neutral to denote a stance that includes neither agreement nor disagreement. This kind of scale is ordinal, meaning it does not presume that the distances between the points are consistent. The rating interpretation comprises five intervals: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree.

Table 4. Adjectival Rating Interpretation

Interval	Adjectival Rating
1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree
1.80 – 2.59	Disagree
2.60 – 3.39	Neutral
3.40 – 4.19	Agree
4.20 and above	Strongly Agree

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides two parts, namely, results and discussion. The result is linked to the research question, *"What are the Philippines and Indonesian students' needs in writing classrooms using automated written corrective feedback?"*

RESULTS

Students Need of Automated Written Corrective Feedback

Statement Number Three: My biggest problem with my writing skills is the lack of grammar and structure.

Table 5. Frequency of Statement Number Three

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	14	2.6
	2	53	10.0
	3	138	25.9
	4	209	39.3
	5	118	22.2
	Total	532	100.0

The mean score for this statement is 3.68, and it is interpreted as Agree. There were 209 (39.3%) participants agreed and 118 (22.2%) participants chose to agree with the statement strongly. Based on the frequency of statement number three, the participants admitted that the main problem in their writing was the lack of grammar and structure.

Statement Number 12: I need space to understand my writing limitations through technology tools.

Table 6. Frequency of Statement Number Twelve

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	8	1.5
	2	14	2.6
	3	154	28.9
	4	246	46.2
	5	110	20.7
	Total		

46.2% agreed that they needed space to understand writing limitations through technology. The mean score is 3.82 and indicated 'Agree'. The percentage of students who chose 'agree' and 'strongly agree' was higher than those who decided on negative and neutral statements. The percentage of the result above indicated students admitted they need technology tools to overcome their limitations.

Statement Number 13: I need a tool such as automated written corrective feedback to enhance my writing competence.

Table 7. Frequency of Statement Number Thirteen

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	10	1.9
	2	31	5.8
	3	161	30.3
	4	219	41.2
	5	111	20.9
	Total	532	100.0

The mean score of this section is 3.73 and categorized as 'Agree'. It means most students from two states showed the same needs linked to the automated written corrective feedback. In line with the findings, students from the Philippines and Indonesia needed automated written corrective feedback to support their writing proficiency.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings above, some pivotal points will be discussed in this section. The study's findings were based on students' needs in L2 writing classrooms comprising their obstacles, needs, wants as learning, and target learning. The lifelong learning age requires students to be able to produce written expressions or discourse in the L2 context since creativity and communication belong to the 4Cs of 21st-century learning. Students' vocabulary is still limited and becomes one of the obstacles in the writing classrooms. Students cannot produce appropriate and relevant information if they do not have ample word collection. In this point, vocabulary plays a vital role in students' writing success since students can grasp L2 meaning or context (Hardiyanti & Herda, 2023) and produce writing correctly.

In line with that, both EFL students in Indonesia and the Philippines agreed that vocabulary is important for their writing. The same perspectives represented the same situation that English is the second language. Unlike other skills, writing shows a higher demand for students' linguistic knowledge due to the complexity of varying genre conventions (Lin, 2023). Therefore, vocabulary is much needed because it becomes the foundation or basis of writing (Rashid, 2022). Students who master ample vocabulary can explore their metacognitive knowledge to produce sentences for written discourse.

It is not only vocabulary that affects students' dilemmas in writing but also their limitation of grammar. On this point, Kumayas and Lengkoan (2023) argued that good English grammar mastery could guarantee students' ability to master skills such as writing and speaking.

However, the teachers' method or strategy in writing classrooms should improve students' awareness and performance in grammar knowledge (Aniuranti et al., 2022; Vickers & Ene, 2006) to avoid students' misconceptions of writing errors. In line with the abovementioned statement, writing errors sometimes comprise morphological and syntactical aspects (Sprouse, 2007). In this case, teachers as learning facilitators should be aware that writing is a complex grammar-related process, which is also tricky, especially for non-English native speakers. This context happened in Indonesia and the Philippines.

The next point in this section deals with students' need for space to understand writing limitations through technology tools. Students need a tool to help them improve their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary mastery through technology-enhanced language learning in writing classrooms. This pedagogical era brings new perspectives that students and teachers should collaborate to integrate technology tools to help students improve writing, not only the concept but also the practice. The main purpose of this study involved EFL students from two states to voice their needs on the automated written corrective feedback. In this point, the tools of corrective feedback for students' learning should cover features that support students to overcome their writing problems.

A study by Barrot (2023) revealed that automated written corrective feedback allows students to improve their writing proficiency since it provides an adaptive metalinguistic explanation and engages students to practice self-directed learning. Another previous study by Guo et al. (2021) investigated the effectiveness of automated written corrective feedback in L2 writing. They used *Grammarly* to gain feedback for their L2 writing. Students at Grammarly assisted novice writers in fixing their mistakes and errors in producing text. In this case, students in 21st-century learning ideally take the chance of the growth of technology to be more critical and aware of coherence, clarity, and cohesion.

The goal of coherence is to make everything flow naturally. The reader can observe that everything is coherently placed, related, and consistently relevant to the essay's core idea (Toba & Noor, 2019). On the other hand, the movement of sentences and paragraphs from one to the next is an important aspect of cohesion. It combines previously acquired knowledge with newly acquired data (Crossley, 2020). When students are writing academic essays, particularly those that pertain to the humanities, we put a lot of effort into fostering cohesiveness structurally since we know that this will help the reader understand our ideas better.

The Philippines and Indonesian students needed to be confident in writing English sentences. Their vocabulary and grammar mastery limit does not mean they cannot have writing confidence. In line with that, one of the elements of boosting students' confidence is getting corrections from the written corrective feedback tool. The automated feedback from the tool can improve their understanding of the syntactical pattern. Suzuki et al. (2019) stated that direct written correction feedback with metalinguistic explanation can spread effects, including the nature of the target grammatical structure. All writing instruction should be based on students' needs, where the authentic material for a meaningful context (Herda et al., 2022) must be accompanied by automated written corrective feedback.

Additionally, all actions needed in writing classrooms must align with teachers' aim to make students aware of their proficiency. Integrating technology as corrective feedback tools can make students more enthusiastic about learning. Technology integration in writing courses necessitates careful preparation and consideration of the unique requirements and objectives of the students. When utilized wisely, technology may improve writing education, open new creative opportunities, and prepare students for the twenty-first century's digital demands (Zou & Xie, 2019). In this way, writing classrooms can be more effective and comfortable if students have ample insights and motivation (Asrifan et al., 2023; Maulani et al., 2022). Adaptive learning technologies provide focused writing tasks and assistance to address writing skills, customizing writing education to meet the needs of each unique learner.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that EFL students from Indonesia and the Philippines faced a similar situation. Vocabulary and grammar became the obstacles to why they could not produce L2 text easily. Therefore, they had the same needs by having automated written corrective feedback to guide them in making their writing clear, comprising correctness clarity. The study revealed that students need to be accompanied by technology in this lifelong learning era to make them more confident and competent in producing L2 writing. The teachers can arrange and facilitate a situation to help students practice writing based on fulfilling their learning needs. However, the researchers expect that further study can be focused on designing and implementing automated written corrective feedback in two broad categories for students from Indonesia and the Philippines.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire Sheet for Need Analysis

No.	Statement	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Writing skill is difficult for students whose first language (L1) is not English.					
2	Writing in English is challenging for me.					
3	My biggest problem with my writing skills is the lack of grammar and structure.					
4	I always do a monotonous writing style every time my teacher asks me.					
5	Vocabulary plays an important role in my writing success.					
6	My teacher gives me additional time when I have writing tasks in the classroom.					
7	I used to open google translate to produce sentences.					
8	My teacher gives detailed written feedback when I have writing errors.					
9	The way my teacher scores my writing is accompanied by coherent comments/feedback.					
10	I need to be confident in writing sentences, paragraphs, and even texts without translation machines.					
11	I need to train myself to be confident in writing.					
12	I need space to understand my writing limitation through technology tools.					
13	I need a tool such as automated written corrective feedback to enhance my writing competence.					
14	I need to be facilitated to receive automated written corrective feedback.					
15	I have ever operated one of the automated written corrective feedback tools during my writing activities.					
16	I believe the written online feedback benefits my writing progress.					
17	I can also learn how to produce better writing by getting corrections from the written corrective feedback tool.					