Iranian English Teachers' Perception over Applying Different Feedbacks in Writing

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Abstract—This study aimed to inspect the written feedback practices as well as the Iranian teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards written feedback in their writing classes. In fact, it tried to investigate what type of feedback the teachers usually give more and whether their written feedback practices are in agreement with their beliefs or not. To this end, data were collected by means of questionnaires and 30 TOEFL/IELTS writing teachers' written feedback given to 300 students' essays in different language institutes of Tehran. Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses in this study showed that although most of these teachers were of the opinion that teachers must give feedback to the language (i.e., spelling, grammar, vocabulary, capitalization, and punctuation), organization (i.e., cohesion, coherence, and unity), and content of students' essays, most of their written feedbacks were given to the language of their students' essays. In other words, a discrepancy was found between their perceptions and practices. In addition, most of their written feedbacks were direct while the majority of them believed that teachers must give indirect feedback to their students' writings. This lack of agreement between what was believed and what actually happened indicates that teachers may not be completely aware of the feedback they give to their students' writings.

Index Terms—feedback, local errors, global errors, perception

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important issues in the domain of second language learning is improving the learners' writing ability. Most of the EFL learners find writing as the most difficult skill and much effort has been done to discover the best techniques and methods to teach second language writing. The ability to write effectively is also becoming increasingly important in the global communities, and thus writing instruction is taking an expanding role in both second and foreign language education (Weigle, 2002). One of the major factors that plays an important role in improving students' writing ability is the way teachers give corrective feedback to their students' writing.

Investigation of the effect of different types of feedback on learners' writing ability has been one of the major preoccupations of the researchers in L2 writing for long years. One of the issues in this regard was whether teacher's written feedback should focus on form, content, or both of them. In addition, there are a number of studies in which the effects of direct and indirect feedback have been considered (e.g. Chandler, 2003). Direct feedback happens when the teacher shows an error to the student and provides the correct form. In fact, it refers to the overt correction of errors, and the teacher is responsible for both error detection and error correction. On the contrary, indirect feedback occurs in situations where teacher shows that an error is made but does not provide a correction, thereby leaving the student to diagnose and correct it (Bitchener, 2008).

The effect of different types of corrective feedback on students' writings ability has been inspected by many researchers (e.g. Chandler, 2003; Fathman & Whalley, 1990, Ferris & Roberts, 2001). All of these studies point to the fact that the way teachers give feedback to their students' writing can have significant impact on their writing ability. Inspecting the teachers' beliefs about corrective feedback helps researchers to discover how aware teachers are of the feedback they give. Furthermore, it may help teachers to provide the type of feedback that plays a significant role in improving student writing. Montgomery and Baker (2007) found that although L2 writing teachers are aware of students' perceptions of written feedback and most of them try to give helpful feedback to their students, they may not be fully aware of how much feedback they give on local and global issues.

Since corrective feedback plays a remarkable role in many L2 writing classes, numerous L2 researches have been performed on the effectiveness of error correction in writing skill (e.g. Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984; Zamel, 1985). Truscott (1996) argued that all forms of error correction in L2 writing classes should be abandoned because correction is not only unhelpful but also harmful in the development of student writing ability. Ferris (1999; 2004) was the leading scholar who challenged Truscott's study. Ferris asserted that Truscott's study was premature and overly strong. Subsequently, the debate over the effectiveness of error correction generated a considerable number of studies on written feedback.

One of the controversial issues in the domain of error correction is utilizing direct or indirect feedbacks. Direct feedback occurs when the teacher identifies an error and provides the correct form. In other words, it refers to the overt correction of errors, and the teacher is responsible for both error detection and error correction. In contrast, by providing indirect feedback the teacher indicates that an error has been made but does not provide a correction, thereby leaving the student to diagnose and correct it (Bitchener, Young & Cameron, 2005). According to Ferris (1999), this can be done by means of an underline, circle, code, and/or recording of the number of errors in the margin. Ferris and Roberts (2001) believe indirect feedback is a very useful strategy to help students detect and correct their errors by themselves instead of playing a passive role in error correction.

Although most of the experimental studies on L2 written feedback have focused on the issue of error correction (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009a, 2009b; Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Ferris, 1999; Zamel, 1985), some descriptive studies have investigated teacher written feedback from the viewpoints of teachers and students. Most descriptive studies conducted in the domain of L2 written feedback have been predominantly designed to investigate student perceptions on teacher feedback.

Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) examined teachers' comments and 9 EFL university students' perceptions about corrective feedbacks in Brazil. The result of the study showed that although students expected comprehensive feedbacks, including grammar, mechanics, organization, and content, they perceived that teacher feedback focused on local aspects of their writings such as grammar and mechanics.

There are a number of studies which examine teachers' perception about written feedbacks. Ferris (2006) analyzed composition instructors' performances at university regarding feedback. She tried to investigate whether teachers give consistent and accurate feedback or not. In spite of the fact that all instructors had agreed to use the same marking system based on a standard error chart and give indirect feedbacks, their actual performances did not reflect it. They only used the standard marking system 40% of the time; for the rest, they either gave direct feedback, or showed errors without using the codes, or with using inaccurate codes. She also found that what she termed treatable errors (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement, articles, pronouns and spelling) received indirect feedbacks almost 59% of the time, while the untreatable errors (word choice, idioms, sentence structure) received direct corrections in over 65% of the cases. Ferris hypothesized that teachers gave direct feedbacks when they felt – intuitively – that their students would not be able to self- correct; a fact that was later proved in interviews after the instructional period. The result of the study illustrates that this lack of consistency on the part of the teachers is a problem, but it also shows that instructors can alter their error correction strategies, whether consciously or unconsciously, to their learners' needs and differing abilities.

Montgomery and Baker (2007) examined the written feedback practices of 15 ESL writing teachers who had been teaching L2 writing at the university level. In addition, they investigated teacher beliefs as well as student perceptions regarding teacher-written feedback. The teachers were required to complete a questionnaire to investigate their beliefs of the comments and feedbacks they gave to their learners' essays. Then, the feedback practices of each teacher were analyzed by calculating frequencies of feedback categories on multiple drafts of 12 compositions taken from six of their learners. They reported a large gap between teachers' perceptions about their written feedback and their actual performance. In fact, the result of the study indicated that the teachers gave more feedback on local aspects and less feedback on global aspects of student writing (on the first drafts). Surprisingly, this was not in harmony with their perceptions. In general, the comparison between teacher perceptions and student perceptions matched well, though students thought they were receiving more feedback than teachers perceived they were giving. Based on the findings, Montgomery and Baker concluded that L2 teachers often tend to pay more attention to students' needs than their beliefs about written feedback.

Lee (2004) examined teachers' perceptions and practices regarding error correction in writing by administering a questionnaire to more than 200 preservice and experienced teachers, and asking a subset of 59 practicing teachers to do the same error correction task immediately after responding to the questionnaire. The results of the study showed that more than 50% of the errors received direct feedback by the teachers, and the only correction strategy was the location of errors with error code (indirect). Teachers believed that it is their responsibility to correct, but nearly all of them argued that learners should learn to locate and correct their own errors. The results of the survey also illustrate that teachers had a tendency to mark errors comprehensively rather than selectively. Moreover, Lee found that almost half of the feedback given by teachers was inaccurate (wrong code or incorrect corrections). Teachers reported that it was sometimes a challenge for them to find the exact code for an error, making Lee conclude that teachers needed more training and practice with error correction.

Lee (2008a) investigated teacher feedback given by 26 Hong Kong secondary English teachers to 174 students on their written texts to see if the teachers followed the types of feedback recommended by literature as well as the principles suggested by the government for responding to student writing. Lee found that more traditional types of feedback were dominant: the teachers provided overwhelmingly more feedback on local issues (grammar and vocabulary) than global issues (content and organization); direct error correction was dominant over indirect methods; comprehensive feedback prevailed over selective feedback; teacher feedback focused generally on the weak aspects of student writing.

Since the type of feedback is believed to have invaluable effect on students writing, the findings of this study may help teachers move beyond their conventional roles and develop a new approach towards feedback in writing. In

addition, the present study may contribute to the development of L2 writing pedagogy and teacher training programs by clarifying the way L2 teachers provide their students with written feedback. In line with the aims of the study, the researcher presents the following research questions:

1. What types of errors receive more feedback from Iranian teachers?
2. What perceptions do Iranian teachers have of written feedback?
3. Are Iranian teachers' perceptions compatible with their real performance on written feedback?
4. Which type of feedback do Iranian teachers usually give: direct or indirect?

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

A. Participants

Thirty Iranian TOEFL /IELTS (13 males and 17 females) teachers from different institutes participated in this study. Some of them studied TEFL at Iranian universities and others have studied other majors but had teaching certificates. Most of them were highly experienced teachers. They were selected randomly from different institutes in order to ensure the representativeness the population of the TOEFL /IELTS teachers in Tehran. As Moore and McCabe (2006) have pointed out, random sampling eliminates bias by giving all individuals an equal chance to be chosen. This, in turn, can ultimately contribute to the validity of the study. In addition, the instructors who were asked to participate in the study were chosen based on their reputation, enthusiasm, and at least 5 year experience in teaching writing.

B. Instruments

A questionnaire was developed to uncover Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers' beliefs about corrective feedback. It was divided into two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consists of 12 statements, presenting some ideas regarding the necessities of giving corrective feedback, the focus of feedback, direct or indirect feedback, coded or uncoded feedback, feedback on language, content, and organization, and other cases. These statements were created based on the literature covering L2 writing feedback studies. For each statement, the participants were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed with it, using a scale of one to five, where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5, strong agreement. The numbers indicate the extent to which subjects agree with the statements (where 1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 10 open ended questions to get a general perspective on teachers' beliefs about corrective feedback in their writing classes. Indeed, a qualitative analysis was intended to be applied here in order to ascertain what type of perception the teachers held regarding written feedback. This analysis could, in turn, bolster the findings of the first part of the questionnaire. To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, it was piloted and checked prior to the actual administration. In fact, it was distributed among 10 teachers who were similar to the targeted group concerning such characteristics as enthusiasm, reputation, and 5-year experience of writing instruction. Having collected the related data and employed Cronbach's Alpha method, we found the reliability to be .68.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The first phase of the study was collecting TOEFL/IELTS teachers sample written feedback on their students' essays from different institutes in Tehran where the TOEFL/IELTS was taught. In the second phase, the teachers' written feedbacks were analyzed regarding the quantity of written feedback on local issues (i.e. spelling, grammar, and punctuation) and on global issues (i.e. content and organization). Then, the data was analyzed using SPSS and a quantitative report was presented on the extent to which the teachers' feedbacks were comprehensive in terms of language, organization, and content. Finally, to examine teachers' perception of written feedback, they were asked to complete a questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire were used to compare the teachers' ideas about written feedback and their actual performance.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question in this study was "what types of errors receive more feedback from Iranian teachers?". To find out which type of Iranian TOEFL/IELTS students' errors received more feedback from their teachers, 10 essays with written feedbacks from 30 teachers were collected. Hence, the total number of essays which were examined was 300. A total of 3542 feedbacks were identified, of which 3238 of them (91.42%) were feedbacks that addressed language (i.e., spelling, grammar, vocabulary, capitalization, and punctuation), 260 of them (7.34%) were feedbacks that focused on organization (i.e. cohesion, coherence, and unity), and 44 of them (1.24%) were feedbacks that were about the content of their students' essays. Table 4-1 presents the percentage and number of feedback types given to the students' errors.

TABLE 4-1
TEACHERS' WRITTEN FEEDBACK FOCUS

Focus	Percentage and number of feedback types
Language	91.42% (3238)
Organization	7.34% (260)
Content	1.24% (44)
Total	100% (3542)

The findings reveal that Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers placed great emphasis on the language of students' essays. In fact, teachers were concerned with the grammatical accuracy and mechanical errors which comprised spelling, punctuation and capitalization mistakes. Statistically speaking, the teachers paid less attention to the organization of students' writings. Surprisingly, the teachers did not take the content of students' essays seriously, and the number of feedbacks that they gave to their students' writings in this regard was not considerable.

This is in harmony with the study conducted by Lee (2009) who reported that although the teachers in his study believed that there is more to good writing than accuracy, they paid more attention to language form. The results of his study showed that of the 5,353 feedback points identified, teachers focused inordinately on language form in their response to student writing, with 94.1 percent of the teacher feedback addressing form (3.8 per cent on content, 0.4 percent on organizational issues, and 1.7 percent on other aspects such as general comments on student writing).

In addition, this form-focused written feedback practice in the present study replicates the findings reported in Zamel's (1985) and Lee's (2008) studies, in spite of the differences in the nature and background of their participants, instructional contexts, etc. In fact, as teachers' feedback focus somehow reflects the types and extent of students' errors, an emphasis on language-related issues is possibly due to the substantial number of grammatical mistakes students made in their writing. However, care must be exercised not to ignore the organization and content of students' essays.

Moreover, research examining actual teacher feedback has shown that some teachers focus more on local issues such as grammar and mechanics than on global issues such as content and organization (Ferris, 2006).In fact, such a focus may misrepresent both the importance of these issues and the importance teachers place on them. For instance, Chapin and Terdal (1990) found that 64% of teachers' comments were on local issues. One of the major consequences of this issue was that since teachers focused on these local issues, students focused on local issues in their revisions. In other words, students did not pay attention to the organization and content of their writings in their revisions.

The second question in this study was "what perceptions do Iranian teachers have of written feedback?", In order to come to a clear understanding of the teachers' perceptions of written feedback, the data which was collected from 30 teacher questionnaire was analyzed based on the teachers' perception about some concepts in feedbacks, such as the necessity of giving written feedback, selectivity vs. comprehensiveness of written feedback, written feedback on organization and content, direct vs. indirect feedback, coded vs. uncoded feedback, and written feedback vs. oral feedback. In the necessity of giving written feedback, the teacher questionnaire data showed that 100% of the teachers were of the opinion that teachers should give feedback to their students. In the selectivity vs. comprehensiveness of written feedback, 76.66% of the teachers believed that teachers should mark students' errors comprehensively while the rest (23.33 %) said they had better do so selectively. About written feedback on organization and content 29 teachers (96.66%) believed that teachers of writing should give feedback to the organization (i.e., coherence, cohesion, and unity) of their students' essays. In fact, they believed that their purpose in essay writing is not just sentence production, and students should learn how to write essays which have coherence, cohesion, and unity. In addition, 23 (76.66%) of the teachers said that teachers should give feedback to the content of students' writings.

The next issue was the teachers' direct vs. indirect feedback. The questionnaire findings showed that 23 of the teachers (76.66%) believed that writing instructors must give indirect feedback to their students' writings. 5 of them (16.66%) favored direct feedback, and 2 (6.66%) of these teachers had no idea about this issue. Table 4-2 shows teachers' perception of direct and indirect feedback.

TABLE 4-2
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS: ERROR CORRECTION STRATEGIES (DIRECT VS. INDIRECT)

Teachers' perceptions of their error correction strategies	Percentage and number of teachers
Direct error feedback	16.66% (5)
Indirect error feedback	76.66% (23)
No idea	6.66% (2)
Total	100% (30)

The findings in the table 4-2 revealed that most of the teachers (76.66%) support the idea of giving indirect feedback in writing classes.

Teachers' preference for using direct or indirect feedback has been the focus of a number of studies among which Lee's study (2004) can be mentioned. In contrast to the present study, the teachers in Lee's study (2004) preferred direct to indirect feedback. However, the teachers stated that they used various error correction strategies according to students' abilities and the complexity of errors.

The teachers' opinions about coded vs. uncoded feedback was that 16 of the teachers (53.33%) favored coded feedback, and one of them (3.33%) believed that teachers must provide their students with uncoded feedback. In addition, 13 of them (43.33%) had no idea about this issue. Table 4-3 shows teachers' opinion about coded and uncoded feedback.

TABLE 4-3
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS: INDIRECT CORRECTION STRATEGIES (CODED VS. UNCODED)

Teachers' perceptions of their indirect correction strategies	Percentage and number of teachers
Coded error feedback	53.33% (16)
Uncoded error feedback	3.33% (1)
No idea	43.33% (13)
Total	100% (23)

Finally, the teachers' opinions about written feedback and oral feedback was that 13 of the teachers (43.33%) favored written feedback, while five of them (16.66%) were of the opinion that conferencing is better than written feedback. In addition, 12 of them (40%) stated that it is better to use both of them in writing classes. Table 4-4 shows teachers' ideas about oral and written feedback.

TABLE 4-4
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS: ERROR CORRECTION STRATEGIES (ORAL VS. WRITTEN)

Teachers' perceptions of error correction strategies	Percentage and number of teachers
Oral feedback (conferencing)	16.66% (5)
Written feedback	43.33% (13)
Both of them	40% (12)
Total	100% (30)

The third research question inspected this issue whether Iranian teachers' perceptions were compatible with their real performance on written feedback or not? This study inspected the harmony between teachers' perceptions and their real performance on written feedback, regarding selectivity or comprehensiveness of error feedback, written feedback on organization and content, direct vs. indirect feedback, and coded vs. uncoded feedback. Regarding selectivity or comprehensiveness of error feedback, there is a harmony between teachers' beliefs and their practice. Regarding the written feedback on organization and content, 3238 of teachers' feedbacks (91.42%) were on language (i.e. spelling, grammar, vocabulary, capitalization, and punctuation), 260of them (7.34%) on organization (i.e., cohesion, coherence, and unity), and 44(1.24%) were feedbacks related to the content of students' essays. The analysis indicates that although Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers were of the opinion that teachers of writing must give written feedback to the organization and content of students' writings as well as the language of them, the number of feedbacks they gave to the organization and content of their students' essays is few. In other words, there is a mismatch between teachers' perceptions and their actual performance in this area. Figure 4-1 shows the number of feedbacks teachers gave to the language, organization, and content of students' essays.
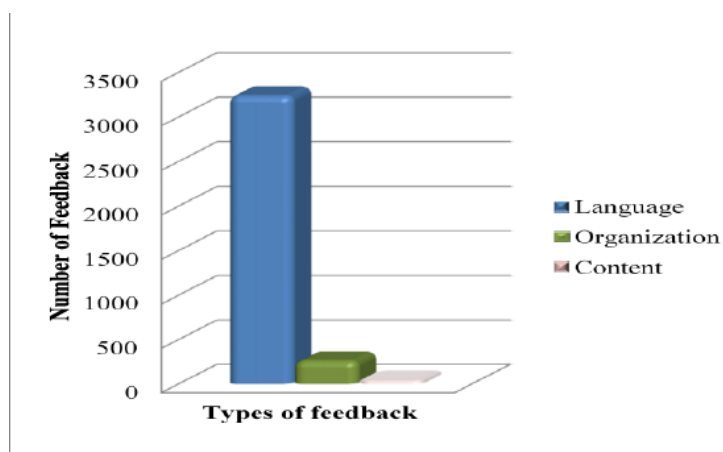

Figure 4-1: The Number of Feedbacks Teachers Gave to the Language, Organization, and Content of Students' Essays.

In order to come to a clear understanding of the feedbacks teachers gave to the language, organization, and content of students' essays, another figure is presented to show the feedbacks teachers gave to 300 essays of the students. Figure 4-2 shows the feedbacks given to these essays.
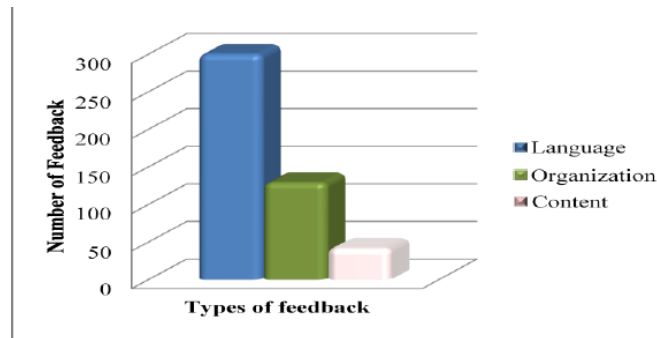
Figure 4-2. Feedbacks Teachers Gave to the Language, Organization, and Content of Students' Essays

In fact, this language-focused written feedback practice replicates the findings reported in Montgomery and Baker (2007). The major insight of their study was that teachers generally gave a substantial amount of local feedback and relatively little global feedback throughout the drafts of the compositions. In other words, the teachers in their study did not pay attention to the organization and content of students' writings. According to Montgomery and Baker (2007), perhaps the most problematic consequence of this finding is that the emphasis on local issues of grammar and mechanics on all drafts may suggest to students that they should prioritize local errors. Interestingly, although the teachers make attempt to teach their students that they must write an essay which is well-organized and has a rich content, they may unknowingly be strengthening the very belief that everything centers around language by giving feedback just to the language of students essays.

Regarding direct vs. indirect feedback, although 23 of the teachers (76.66%) were of the opinion that teachers must give indirect feedback to students' writings and stated the benefits of giving indirect feedback in the open-ended responses, only 167 (4.71%) of the feedbacks were given indirectly. Feedback analysis shows that almost all teachers are in a habit of giving direct feedback to their students' essays. In fact, the results demonstrate that teachers' error feedbacks are not congruent with their beliefs. Figure 4-3 shows the percentage of direct and indirect feedback given by the teachers.
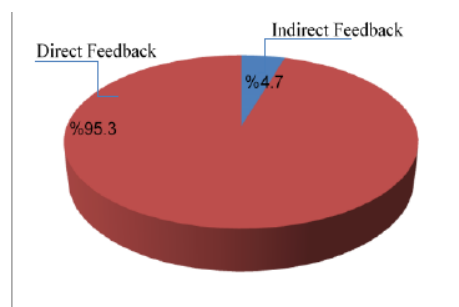

Figure 4-3. The Percentage of Direct and Indirect Feedback Given by Teachers.

The practice of giving direct feedback in this study replicates the findings reported by Lee (2004). Like the present study, most of the teachers' feedbacks in Lee's study were direct. In fact, most of the teachers in Lee's study did not give indirect feedback to their students' essays and could not involve their students in problem-solving tasks that required higher-order thinking. However, the teachers in Lee's study stated that they used various error correction strategies according to students' abilities and the complexity of errors.

In addition, the discrepancy that was shown between the teachers' ideas and their actual performances in the present study replicates the discrepancy reported by Lee (2009). The feedback analysis in his study showed that about 70 per cent of the feedback was direct, i.e. teachers indicate and correct errors for students. However, the questionnaire data in Lee's study suggested that 96 percent of the teachers believed that students should learn to locate and correct errors. The results indicated that teachers' error feedback is not congruent with their beliefs.

Regarding coded vs. uncoded feedback, none of the teachers' written feedback was coded, and all of them used uncoded feedbacks. All in all, this is not in complete harmony with the perceptions teachers stated in the questionnaire.

The fourth research question was "which type of feedback do Iranian teachers usually give: direct or indirect?", the analysis of the sample written feedback of Iranians TOEFL/IELTS teachers was indicative of the fact that most of them are in the habit of giving direct feedback. Table 4-5 shows the type and percentage of their written feedback.

TABLE 4-5
FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: DIRECT VS. INDIRECT

Teachers' error correction strategies	Percentage and number of feedbacks
Direct error feedback	95.28% (3375)
Indirect error feedback	4.71% (167)
Total	100% (3542)

The practice of giving direct feedback in this study replicates the findings reported by Lee (2004). Like the present study, most of the teachers' feedbacks in Lee's study (2004) were direct. In fact, most of the teachers in this study did not give indirect feedback to their students' essays and could not involve their students in problem-solving tasks that require higher-order thinking.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The first area of investigation in the present study was the examination of Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers' written feedback in order to see what types of their students' errors receives more feedback. The present study showed that the teachers gave more feedbacks to the language (i.e., spelling, grammar, vocabulary, capitalization, and punctuation) of students' writings. In fact, the number of feedbacks they gave to the organization (i.e., cohesion, coherence, and unity), and content of their students' essays was very few.

The second area of investigation in the present study was the investigation of Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers' perceptions of written feedback. The analysis of the 30 questionnaires answered by the teachers showed that all of them were of the opinion that teachers should give written feedback to their students' writings. They maintained that giving feedback can help the students to recognize their errors and mistakes and decrease the number of errors in their writings. In fact, they stated that perceiving written feedback from their teachers improves students' writing ability in the long run.

In addition, regarding the selectivity or comprehensiveness of written feedbacks, the present study showed that most of the teachers preferred comprehensive to selective error feedback.

Another investigation of teachers' perception was related to their ideas about giving feedback to the organization (i.e., coherence, cohesion, and unity) and content of students' essays. The results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of teachers (96.66%) argued that teachers must give feedback to the organization (i.e., coherence, cohesion, and unity) of their students' essays. Moreover, the teachers' perception of direct and indirect feedback was investigated. The findings of the study showed that most of the teachers (76.66%) support giving indirect feedback to students' essays.

Teachers' perception of coded and uncoded feedback was another area to be examined in the present study. The analysis of questionnaire findings showed that most of the teachers (53.33%) preferred coded feedback. In addition, regarding the tendency to use conferencing (oral feedback) and written feedback, the results of the study showed that most of the teachers (43.33%) favored written feedback.

The third area of investigation in the present study was to examine whether there was a harmony between Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers' perceptions of written feedback and their actual performances. In order to examine this issue, teachers' actual performance of giving written feedback was compared with their perceptions of it. Surprisingly, in most cases, there was not harmony between teachers' ideas and their actual performances.

Regarding selectivity or comprehensiveness of error feedback, there was a harmony between teachers' perceptions and their performances. In fact, the teachers who believed that teachers should give selective written feedback to their students' essays provided error feedback selectively. In addition, the teachers who held the view that teachers should give comprehensive written feedback to their students' essays showed they gave a remarkable number of feedbacks to their students' essays despite the fact that the number of feedbacks they gave to the organization and content of the essays was not comprehensive at all.

The comparison between teachers' ideas and their practice about giving feedback to the organization and content of students' essays showed that despite the fact that Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers believed that they should give written feedback to the organization and content of students' writings as well as the language of them, the number of feedbacks they gave to the organization and content of their students' essays was few. In fact, there was a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their actual performance in this area.

With respect to the congruence between the Iranian TOEFL/IELTS teachers' perception and their actual performance with regard to giving direct or indirect written feedback, the analysis of their written feedback showed that although the majority of teachers believed that teachers should give indirect feedback to the students' essays, feedback analysis demonstrated that almost all teachers were in a habit of giving direct feedback to their students' essays. In fact, the results indicated that teachers' error feedbacks were not congruent with their beliefs. Regarding the coded and uncoded feedback, although most of the teachers believed coded feedbacks must be used in the teachers' feedbacks, none of the teachers' written feedback was coded, and all of them were uncoded. Therefore, this is not also compatible with the perceptions teachers stated in the questionnaire.

The fourth area of investigation in the present study was to examine which type of feedback Iranians TOEFL/IELTS teachers usually give: Direct or indirect? In order to answer this question, the sample written feedbacks of these teachers were analyzed. The analysis of the sample written feedback indicated that most of them are in a habit of giving direct feedback.

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