

Individual Paper Session 1
Classroom SLA
Tuesday, July 4
10:00-10:30am

Written and oral corrective feedback on ESL student writing

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Debate about the value of providing corrective feedback on L2 writing has been prominent in recent years as a result of Truscott's (1996) claim that it is both ineffective and harmful and should therefore be abandoned. A growing body of empirical research is now investigating the agenda proposed by Ferris (1999, 2004).

Contributing to this research base, the study reported in this article investigated whether the type of feedback (direct, explicit written feedback and student-researcher five minute individual conferences; direct, explicit written feedback only; no corrective feedback) given to 53 adult migrant students on three types of error (prepositions, the past simple tense and the definite article) resulted in improved accuracy in new pieces of writing over a twelve week period.

The study found a significant effect for the combination of written and conference feedback on accuracy levels in the use of the past simple tense and the definite article in new pieces of writing but no overall effect on accuracy improvement for feedback types when the three error categories were considered as a single group.

Significant variations in accuracy across the four pieces of writing support earlier SLA discoveries that L2 learners, in the process of acquiring new linguistic forms, may perform them with accuracy on one occasion but fail to do so on other similar occasions.