

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

This section presents a comprehensive theoretical basis for analysing students' perceptions of their teacher's written feedback. The theoretical framework is constructed by examining the written feedback theory Hattie and Clarke (2018) and the perception theory by Walgito (2010) as a foundation. To deepen the analysis, the framework is further developed by the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2017). Furthermore, the theory of psychosocial development by Erikson (1968) serves as the basis for selecting the participants' age groups, not as a theory that will directly analyse the findings.

1. Written Feedback

Feedback is defined as information provided by an agent regarding aspects of a person's performance or understanding. In the classroom context, the agent is typically the teacher, who provides comments, suggestions, or evaluations in response to students' work. Hattie and Clarke (2018) describe this phenomenon as the feedback paradox, which is one of the most powerful yet most variable influences on student achievement. The main aim is to bridge the gap between students' current performance and the learning objective to be achieved.

1.1 Types of Written Feedback

Feedback can essentially be categorised into three types: by the way it is delivered (oral feedback and written feedback), by its level of directness (direct feedback and indirect feedback), and by its primary purpose in the learning process (formative feedback and summative feedback). Here is a brief explanation of each type of feedback.

1) Oral Feedback and Written Feedback

The fundamental difference between these two types lies in how the feedback is conveyed to the students. Oral feedback is conveyed through verbal interaction, allowing for direct negotiation of meaning and clarification. Meanwhile, written

feedback, which is the focus of this study, is conveyed through comments, corrections, or annotations on students' written work.

The main difference between these two types of feedback lies in their scope and permanence. Written feedback is particularly suitable for tasks requiring detailed guidance, as it is permanent in the form of notes that students can review repeatedly. On the other hand, oral feedback is immediate and interactive, providing an opportunity for clarification and two-way dialogue. However, as it is verbal and temporary, students may not remember all the information the teacher conveys. Therefore, the choice between these two forms should be aligned to the learning context, the students' needs, and the nature of the task itself. When students ask for further clarification regarding the feedback that their teacher has already provided (whether oral or written feedback), the teacher should provide further feedback using oral feedback. According to Colombo et al. (2024), every time students have the opportunity to discuss written comments through face-to-face dialogue, verbal feedback is perceived as more positive than simply reviewing written comments.

Talking about written feedback, there is one classification that has been extensively studied, namely Written Corrective Feedback (WFC), and Dana Ferris is a master figure in this field. According to Ferris (2003), Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is a written response given by teachers to errors in students' writing, with the dual purpose of correcting the current draft and equipping students with the knowledge to avoid similar mistakes in the future. However, in the context of this study, the researcher did not focus on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF). Instead, in this study, the researcher provided feedback to students in the form of words of appreciation and encouragement alongside corrective feedback. Therefore, the type of feedback used was not Written Corrective Feedback, but written feedback in general.

2) Direct Feedback and Indirect Feedback

Based on the level of directness, feedback is delivered into two types: direct and indirect feedback. Direct feedback occurs when the teacher explicitly provides the correct linguistic form or feature. As summarised in a study cited by Bitchener and Storch (2016), direct feedback is often interpreted as the teacher rewriting the

correct answer or phrase alongside the student's mistake. Ferris and Hedgcock (2023) stated that students' mistakes can be clearly corrected through direct feedback. It makes direct feedback more suitable for writers who require clear guidance, such as beginner writers. Conversely, indirect feedback merely indicates that an error has occurred without providing a direct correction. According to Ferris (2003), direct feedback provides explicit corrections, while indirect feedback only indicates errors, prompting self-corrections. This can be done by underlining, circling the error, or placing a symbol. The difference between the two lies in their pedagogical objectives and the level of learner autonomy they aim to achieve. According to Bitchener and Storch (2016), direct feedback is considered highly effective for learners with a low level of proficiency as it provides clear and prompt guidance. Meanwhile, indirect feedback is more suitable for more proficient learners as it requires self-identification and self-correction, which fosters learner autonomy.

In this study, the teacher applies direct feedback with a focus on grammatical accuracy, accompanied by brief explanations. Furthermore, the feedback observed integrates corrective, appreciative, and motivational elements, such as comments like “thank you for trying” or “be confident, you can do it”. This aligns with Maslow (1943) hierarchy of needs, which highlights that students' academic growth is closely tied to their emotional well-being and sense of recognition. Thus, teacher feedback should address both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning.

“The Power of Feedback” theory by Hattie and Clarke (2018) serves as the theoretical basis for written feedback in the data collection for this study. The theory says that feedback is very powerful: it can be the best or worst thing for student learning, depending on how it is delivered. Therefore, they categorise feedback into three levels: task level, process level, and self-regulation level.

a) Task Level

Task-level feedback is about right or wrong and focuses on specific tasks. This feedback is the most basic, and it is given directly. It guides students away from the question ‘Where am I going?’ in their minds. Example: “This is wrong, the correct answer is...”

b) Process Level

This feedback is about students' way of thinking or strategy. The main focus is on how to do the work. This feedback helps students resolve the conflict of 'How am I going?'. Example: "Try reading the sentence slowly before answering!" "Try this method to find the answer!"

c) Self-regulation Level

This feedback is at the highest level. It focuses on motivation and goal setting because it answers the question 'Where to next?', which serves as a guide for self-development. Example: "You already have a good vocabulary, let's focus on grammar!"

In this study, the teacher marked students' errors and gave the right answer as task-level feedback, then provided explanatory notes beneath their worksheets as process-level feedback. The teacher also offered words of appreciation in an effort to achieve the highest level of feedback, which is self-regulation feedback. Overall, these theoretical perspectives provide the foundation for this study's exploration of teacher-written feedback as not merely corrective but also supportive and motivational, an approach that fosters both linguistic improvement and learner confidence.

3) Formative Feedback and Summative Feedback

This third classification is based on the function and timing of feedback. Formative feedback is often associated with 'assessment for learning'. Formative feedback helps students identify their strengths and areas for development as part of an ongoing learning process. The aim is to provide feedback that can be used immediately to improve work before it is assessed in the final assessment. The essence of formative assessment is the feedback itself.

In contrast, summative feedback is an evaluation provided at the end of a learning period to measure what students have learnt. This feedback usually accompanies final marks and provides a comprehensive assessment of students' achievements. An example is comments on final exams, where the information often arrives too late to be used in revising the work.

The main difference is the timing. Formative assessment is carried out during the learning period for the purpose of improvement, whereas summative assessment takes place at the end of the learning process for reporting purposes. In this study, the feedback provided is formative feedback, which is given during the learning process.

1.2 History of Written Feedback

According to Hyland and Hyland (2019), the importance of written feedback in language learning began to emerge in the 1970s, alongside the rise of learner-centred and process-oriented approaches to teaching writing in the first language (L1) in North America. These approaches shifted the focus away from mechanical accuracy and towards the development of meaning, leading teachers to provide feedback during the writing process rather than on the final product itself.

Research into written feedback in second language (L2) writing has developed significantly over the last three decades. According to Hyland and Hyland (2019) this field was shaped by an early debate amongst academics questioning the value of grammatical correction. This debate involved Truscott (1996), who argued that corrective feedback was ineffective and even detrimental to students, and Ferris (1999), who countered this view with evidence that it is beneficial and should be used effectively.

While previous studies discussed the importance or unimportance of providing written feedback, recent studies emphasize the quality and format of feedback, as well as how students perceive and engage with it. For example, Lee (2017) points out that the formative and supportive approach adopted by teachers when providing feedback to students forms the foundation for successful writing instruction and students' development. To build this foundation, Zhang and Hyland (2018) suggest in their research that providing feedback only is not enough; what is more important than anything else is how students interact directly with that feedback in cognitive, affective, and conative terms. Furthermore, in their book, Hyland and Hyland (2019) present a typology of the characteristics of teachers' written feedback, which provides insights into the messages students take from the feedback they receive. Nevertheless, effective feedback requires a shared responsibility between teachers

and students, as Carless and Winstone (2020) describe it as a “partnership approach”. Overall, these recent studies emphasise the importance of understanding students’ perceptions and engagement with written feedback, moving beyond the traditional debate about whether feedback is effective to how it can be designed and delivered to maximise student learning.

2. Students’ Perception

The process of perception forms the basis of how humans understand the reality around them. Walgito (2010) defines perception as a set of activities that begin with capturing stimuli through the senses, which individuals then interpret to obtain meaning. This process underlines that perception is not merely a passive recording of what is captured by the eyes and ears, but rather an active construction in which the brain organises and assigns meaning to raw sensory information.

According to Walgito (2010), perception consists of three main aspects: Cognitive, Affective, and Conative. The three aspects were initially introduced by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960), and were developed by Walgito (2010) to the aspect of perspective. Because the study is quite old, the researcher chose Walgito (2010) as a more recent study that better fits the context of this research. The three aspects are as follows:

a) Cognitive Aspect

This aspect relates to the process of recognition and understanding, including the reception of information, the formation of opinions, expectations, ways of thinking and learning, past experiences, and individual beliefs in interpreting an object. Cognitive abilities enable humans to receive and process stimuli from their environment.

b) Affective Aspect

This aspect reflects a person’s emotional response to an object, including feelings of like or dislike, as well as subjective judgments based on emotional elements possessed by the individual.

c) Conative Aspect

This aspect manifests itself in the form of actions, behaviours, and motivations exhibited by a person when faced with a particular object or situation. Conative

abilities are related to the urge to act based on the results of cognitive and affective processing

On the other hand, Démuth (2013) said that from the interaction between stimulus and internal hypothesis, expectation, and knowledge of the observer, even motivation and emotion will be the final product of perception. For seventh-grade students who are in the process of identity exploration, the way they receive and understand teacher feedback is not just a process of receiving ordinary information, but also related to their need for recognition and validation from the teacher.

In summary, guided by the three-dimensional perception theory by Walgito (2010) this study comprehensively interprets students' responses to teacher feedback as both academic understanding and personal validation.

3. Self-Determination Theory

3.1 Introduction of Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Ryan and Deci (2017) is one of the most influential theories of human motivation in contemporary psychology. According to SDT, every individual has an inborn tendency to grow, integrate experiences, and direct themselves towards positive psychological development. This tendency does not occur automatically, but requires a supportive environmental context. In other words, the social environment can either facilitate or undermine the motivational potential inherent in human beings. Thus, SDT offers an evidence-based framework for understanding which factors promote motivation, engagement, and psychological well-being, and which factors hinder them.

The starting point of SDT is the belief that human beings fundamentally tend to psychological growth and integration, as well as towards learning, mastery, and connection with others. However, these proactive tendencies are not automatically acquired. Humans require supportive conditions to develop to their full potential. This means that the environment (including the educational environment) plays a crucial role in determining whether students' natural motivation will be maintained, enhanced, or conversely undermined. In the context of this study, SDT is relevant because it provides a framework for understanding how written feedback from teachers can either meet or disrupt students' basic psychological needs, which

ultimately shape their perceptions and motivation in learning English.

One of the central contributions of SDT is the assumption regarding Basic Psychological Needs (BPN). According to this theory, three universal needs must be met for individuals to grow and function optimally: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These needs are analogous to psychological nutrients that are essential for mental health and well-being. Meeting these three basic psychological needs fosters autonomous motivation, well-being, and healthy psychological functioning. Conversely, frustration of these three needs leads to a decline in well-being and is often associated with lower-quality, highly controlled forms of motivation. These three needs are not only essential for development and well-being, but they are also interrelated and influence one another in the context of educational practice, including in the provision of written feedback.

3.2 The Motivation Classification

Besides the three basic needs, the founder of SDT also classifies different types of motivation based on the degree of autonomy. From the perspective of SDT, motivation is not a single entity but exists on a continuum that reflects the extent to which a person's behaviour is driven by an authentic internal will (autonomous motivation) or by external pressures such as rewards and punishments (controlled motivation).

At the lowest level of this classification lies amotivation, a state in which individuals have absolutely no intention of acting or feel incapable of doing so. This then evolves into extrinsic motivation, which in its most controlled form involves studying solely to avoid punishment or receive a reward, without internalizing the value of the activity. At a higher level of autonomy on the extrinsic level of the continuum, individuals begin to identify and internalize the value of an activity, so that they engage in it because they consider it important or beneficial, rather than due to external pressure. The highest level on this continuum is intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is a motivation that arises from inside the individual because the activity itself brings joy, a sense of challenge, or a sense of meaning. In order from lowest to highest, the continuum level consists of amotivation (no intention and no regulation), controlled extrinsic motivation (external regulation, such as

reward and punishment), autonomous extrinsic motivation (self-identified regulation, recognizing the importance), and intrinsic motivation (the activity itself is enjoyable).

In the context of education and research, understanding the difference between controlled motivation and autonomous motivation is crucial. Controlling feedback (such as harsh criticism, pressure, or simply right or wrong judgments without explanation) tends to lead students toward controlled motivation or even amotivation. Conversely, feedback that supports autonomy, provides informative and specific explanations, and is accompanied by appreciation for students' efforts can strengthen autonomous motivation. Good feedback can enhance feelings of competence while maintaining feelings of autonomy, thereby fostering the internalization of the value of learning.

3.3 The Three Basic Psychological Needs

According to Ryan and Deci (2017), in the Self-Determination Theory, there is a sub-theme called Basic Psychological Needs. The core of the Basic Psychological Needs (BPN) theory is the belief that every human being has three universal psychological needs, namely Competence, Autonomy, and Relatedness. Both the fulfilment of these needs and the frustration of them have significant consequences for students' motivation, engagement, and well-being. The following is a detailed explanation of each of these needs.

a) Competence

According to Ryan and Deci (2017), the need for competence is the need to feel effective and capable of interacting with one's environment. Competence refers to a sense of effectiveness and mastery. This need is satisfied when a person can engage competently in activities and has the opportunity to use and develop their skills and abilities. When this need goes unmet, a person may experience feelings of ineffectiveness, failure, or helplessness.

In English language learning, students' competence needs are met when the feedback provided by teachers is informative and constructive. Feedback that not only highlights mistakes but also explains why they are wrong and how to correct them will help students feel more capable and confident as they master the material.

Such feedback also needs to be delivered clearly and immediately understood. The development of competence is also reinforced by a supportive environment, where students are given challenges appropriate to their ability level and receive recognition for their efforts. Conversely, feedback that merely states ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ without explanation can trigger feelings of incompetence and reduce motivation.

b) Autonomy

The need for autonomy is centred on the experience of choice, a sense of initiative, and inner approval of one’s own actions (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Autonomy reflects the feeling of being the agent of our own actions, the sense that we have control over ourselves, and acting in accordance with our personal values, rather than under external pressure.

Autonomy is an experience of volition and willingness. When these needs are met, a person experiences integrity, in which their actions, thoughts, and feelings become authentic. Conversely, when frustrated, a person will feel under pressure and often experience inner conflict, such as feeling compelled to do something they do not want to do.

In the context of education and written feedback, the need for autonomy is closely linked to how teachers deliver feedback. Teachers who support autonomy avoid a controlling or judgmental style of communication and explain why improvements are needed. A relaxed, friendly tone (for example, using phrases such as ‘this sentence could be better if...’) will make students feel valued and not pressured, making them more open to criticism. On the other hand, feedback that consists solely of commands or general criticism (such as ‘wrong!’) can undermine students’ autonomy and trigger defensive reactions or even avoidance behaviour. However, providing autonomy does not mean leaving students without guidance. Teachers still provide guidance and set expectations, but in a way that is non-controlling and supports the process of internalising their learning values.

c) Relatedness

The need for Relatedness is the need to feel connected, cared for, and to be a meaningful part of one’s social environment (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Relatedness

is a sense of closeness, bond, and care. This need is fulfilled when one is connected to and feels valued by others. Conversely, when this need is unmet, a person will feel isolated, excluded, and lonely.

In the context of this study, the need for relatedness can be met through written feedback that conveys appreciation, words of encouragement, and a sense of care from the teacher. Feedback that praises the effort made (such as ‘well done!’ or ‘thank you for trying’) will make students feel valued and noticed. This sense of being valued will boost their motivation and engagement in learning, particularly during early adolescence (ages 12-18), when social validation from authority figures such as teachers becomes particularly important. Sincere appreciation fosters positive emotional bonds. Conversely, a lack of appreciation or feedback that is cold, impersonal, and focuses solely on mistakes can undermine the need for connection, which may ultimately weaken students’ motivation.

4. Psychosocial Development

Psychosocial Development is a theory of human development developed by Erikson (1968). Psycho refers to the mental aspects of an individual, social refers to relationships with other people or the environment, and development refers to the process of development throughout life. Thus, Psychosocial Development explains how a person develops mentally and relates to other people throughout life.

According to Erikson (1968), positive or negative outcomes of development depend on the success in overcoming crises.

- a) Infancy (0–1-year-old), trust vs. mistrust phase.
- b) Early childhood (toddlers, 1-3 years old) autonomy vs. shame and doubt phase.
- c) Preschool (play age, 3-5 years old), initiative vs. guilt phase.
- d) School age (5-12 years old), industry vs inferiority phase.
- e) Adolescence (12-18 years old), identity vs. role confusion phase.
- f) Young adulthood (18-40 years old), intimacy vs. isolation phase.
- g) Middle adulthood (40-65 years old), generativity vs. stagnation phase
- h) Late adulthood (64+ years old), integrity vs. despair phase.

This theory is the reason why the subjects chosen were junior high school students in seventh grade. According to this theory, junior high school students are in phase 5 (Identity vs. Role Confusion Phase). He explains that at this age, the main question that often arises is “Who am I?” they tend to be very sensitive to the judgment of others and need recognition from authority figures (example: teacher).

Branje (2021) emphasises that the school environment and teacher-student interactions are the primary contexts in which teenagers negotiate their identities. So, feedback from teachers has a big impact on their self-concept. Erikson (1968) emphasises that for adolescents, recognition from a teacher is crucial in the process of identity formation. In this context, the feedback given by teachers on students’ academic performance is not only assessed as a correction of assignments, but also as a validation of the identity they are seeking.

Based on Erikson's (1968) theory, the Identity vs. Role Confusion phase in adolescents served as the primary basis for selecting seventh-grade students as participants. In this context, teacher feedback plays a dual role: as academic correction and identity validation. This study uses this theoretical framework as a lens to analyse how students at this age perceive teacher feedback.

B. Study of Relevant Research

Numerous studies have explored students’ perceptions of teachers’ written feedback. For instance, both Nguyen et al. (2021) and Casoli (2023) share a similar focus on examining English majors’ views toward written feedback through questionnaires and qualitative approaches. Both studies reveal that students value balanced feedback addressing linguistic, content, organizational, and affective aspects. However, their differences lie in the focus and context. Nguyen et al. (2021) conducted a study in Vietnam with 97 students, highlighting the gap between teachers’ grammar-oriented feedback and students’ expectations for more comprehensive responses, while Casoli (2023) conducted a study in Argentina with 30 students, examining differences between first-year and final-year students that reflect their growing academic maturity.

In a different context, Pankow et al. (2024) investigated middle school students’ perceptions of written and face-to-face feedback in two English language

arts classes in the United States. Involving 37 participants, the study compared two modes of feedback: written comments only and a combination of written comments with face-to-face conferencing. The results indicated that most students preferred the combined approach because it gave a clearer explanation and stronger motivation to improve. Although the study was conducted in an English-speaking context, it still offers valuable insights into how younger learners respond to feedback interactions, which can be relevant to EFL junior high school settings such as Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Gray et al. (2022) examined students' expectations of feedback during their transition from school to university. The survey was conducted before they received any instruction, revealing a notable mismatch between their previous experiences of feedback and their expectations in higher education. This finding underscores the importance of managing students' expectations early and designing realistic feedback practices that help them adapt to new learning environments.

Furthermore, Gan et al. (2021) investigate how lecturers' feedback practices influence students' motivation and satisfaction. Interestingly, the study found that while lecturers' feedback had a strong effect on motivation, students' own engagement with feedback more directly predicted their learning outcomes. This emphasizes the critical role of active student participation in interpreting and applying feedback to improve performance.

From the Indonesian context, Fitriyah et al. (2023) focus on alignment between teachers' practices of providing written corrective feedback and students' expectations in English writing courses. The research participants consisted of two lecturers and 30 fourth-semester students at an Islamic university in Indonesia. explored the alignment between lecturers' written feedback practices and students' expectations in English writing courses. The study involved two lecturers and 30 fourth-semester students through open-ended questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings revealed a mismatch between teachers' feedback approaches and students' preferences. While the lecturers mostly provided indirect feedback, such as underlining or adding question marks, to stimulate students' critical thinking. These findings highlight the importance of

building feedback literacy not only for teachers but also for students, so that they can be more actively involved in the feedback process.

Overall, the reviewed studies demonstrate that students' perceptions of written feedback are shaped by various factors, including linguistic focus, academic level, prior experience, and the form of feedback delivery. However, there remains a rarity of research that focuses on junior high school students, particularly within Indonesian EFL settings. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate how students at junior high school in Tasikmalaya perceive their teacher's written feedback in the English classroom.