

## COMPARING TEACHERS' AND TRAINEES' FEEDBACK ON STUDENT WRITING BY AN ENGLISH LEARNER

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Prior studies have found that TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) teachers basically focus on language issues when giving feedback on student text. It is well known that teacher knowledge develops with the accumulation of teaching experience. Yet we have little information about how teachers develop as regards reacting to student texts. This study, therefore, examined teachers' feedback on student text depending on teaching experience. It addressed two research questions: (1) How do teachers and trainees differ from each other in their feedback on an English learner's text? (2) Does their severity level of assessing the selected student text influence their feedback given to the student? Respectively, 59 pre-practicum trainees, 31 post-practicum trainees, and 32 teachers in China were engaged in the study. They were presented a descriptive text by an English learner. The text was examined closely by an expert panel beforehand. The panel agreed with the modest level of the student's writing ability due to numerous problems in all regards in the text. For question (1), participants were asked to respond to the strengths and weaknesses of the text: to identify problems, to give written feedback, and to make suggestions. Their responses were recoded into seven aspects: holistic, content, structure, style, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. As to question (2), the Many-Facet Rasch Measurement (MFRM) was used to elicit the samples' severity level based on their ratings of the same student text on a 5-point scale. Results showed that the three groups invariably highlighted grammatical issues when identifying the problems in the text. When giving positive feedback, pre-practicum trainees and teachers emphasized style but post-practicum trainees stressed content and structure. As to negative feedback, pre-practicum trainees focused on structure, while both post-practicum trainees and teachers underlined grammar. MANOVAs only found that pre-practicum trainees identified more problems regarding vocabulary ( $F=3.38, p<.05$ ) and tended to be more positive toward the overall quality of the text ( $F=3.55, p<.05$ ) than post-practicum trainees. Results regarding the effect of participants' severity level on their feedback indicated that severe (measure logits $>0$ ) respondents in pre- and post-practicum trainee groups only identified more vocabulary problems than those who were lenient (measure logits $<0$ ), and severe teachers only gave more suggestions about the structure of the text than lenient ones. It seems that respondents' severity level did not have an intensive influence on their written feedback. The findings suggest that the three groups' focus was similar on text features. They highlighted linguistic issues which are easier to judge and to respond to, but they seemed to neglect more advanced aspects such as conceptual problems. The findings might support language teachers' training and development in giving feedback on student writing.

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