

**Impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing
practice: a case of selected secondary schools in Dowa**

By

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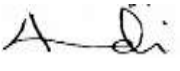
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November, 2025

DECLARATION

I, Atupele Mwamadi, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work that has not been previously submitted either in part or full, for the degree of any other university. Where materials published by any other persons is used, this has been appropriately acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their writing practice. In achieving this, the study addressed the following objectives; assess the type of feedback that teachers give learners on their English composition; examine learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive on their English composition; and assess the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice in English composition. The study used an exploratory mixed research design to deeply understand the topic at hand in phases; qualitative and quantitative. In qualitative phase the study used document analysis method to solicit information on the type of feedback learners get. In phase two, a questionnaire was administered to students succeeded by an interview with their teachers in order to triangulate the information from the questionnaire. Four (4) schools and forty (40) marked scripts were sampled using simple random sampling. Systematic sampling was used for sampling 144 students to fill the questionnaire forms and four (4) teachers were sampled purposively for interview. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data and logistic regression was used to analyse the quantitative data. The study found that learners in this study received undeveloped corrective feedback which was unfocused, direct and in other aspects indirect. The study also found that learners had a negative attitude towards feedback and receiving feedback as a whole which affected their writing practice. Based on these findings, this study argues that learners' negative attitude towards feedback is as a result of lack of motivation to practice writing, change of teachers and change of writing techniques/style. As such, this study recommends that apart from counselling learners on the role of English as a subject, teachers should create a conducive environment for teacher-students' interactions.

Key words: impact, feedback, attitude, writing practice, form four and social cognitive concepts

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA:	Continuous assessment
CEED:	Central East Education Division
CF:	Corrective Feedback
MANEB:	Malawi National Examinations Board
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MoEST:	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MSCE:	Malawi School Certificate of Education
MZUNIREC:	Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee
OBE:	Outcomes Based Education
PCAR:	Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform
SCT:	Social Cognitive Theory

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0. Chapter overview

This chapter introduces the study through a brief discussion of the feedback phenomenon and its practice over the years. The discussion extends to the relationship between feedback and writing and writing teaching and learning in Malawi. It further discusses the statement of the problem, major research objective, specific research objectives, justification of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, chapter layout, delimitations and limitations of the study. The chapter finishes by defining key terms of the study that helped the researcher in locating the literatures anchoring the study.

1.1. Background

English as an official language, is also a subject and a medium of instruction from primary school in Malawi. Writing skills are taught from standard 1 where pupils learn how to write words and the skill is developed further as we go higher the classes. According to Carr (2014), English composition plays a crucial role in education as it serves as a foundation for developing language proficiency and critical thinking skills. One significant aspect of the learning process involves providing feedback to students on their written work, allowing them to improve and refine their writing abilities (Weldy, et al. 2014). Effective feedback is a key component in fostering students' learning and enhancing their writing skills.

Making sure that the learners are writing error free compositions is the worry of every teacher of English as a second language or foreign language. Teachers would like to see their students' essays with good grammar, coherent and conveying meaning which they intend to. In a Malawian curriculum, this is a requirement for students who undergo writing lessons in

English as a subject. According to the curriculum, students should be able to plan what to write, describe things and people and develop a prose writing (MoEST, 2013). In accomplishing this goal, teachers embark on a feedback journey with their learners whereby they give comments on the learners' essays in form of written or verbal feedback then the learners make corrections by rewriting the same composition question or implement the corrections in the next assignment or examination. In order to achieve this, the type of feedback that learners receive, how the learners feel about this feedback and what these learners do with the feedback they receive from the teachers should be considered. These are some of the aspects that this study tackled as it unwrapped the impact of students' attitude towards feedback on writing practice.

Currently, Malawian secondary schools are using a new curriculum that sprouts from the Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform (PCAR). The new secondary school curriculum advocates for Outcome Based Education (OBE) that emphasises on what learners can do as the core purpose of learning. Nakkeeran and his colleagues defined OBE as an approach to education in which decisions about curricula are driven by outcomes which students must display at the end of the course (Nakkeeran et al., 2018). Ministry of Education (MoE) outlined ten guidelines for OBE which includes, among others, learner centred methodologies and continuous assessment (CA) (MoEST & MIE, 2012). The curriculum based on OBE allows students to actively participate through learner centred instruction that assesses the students' performance through the outcomes (Nakkeeran et al., 2018). As noted by Nakkeeran and colleagues, this curriculum requires that learners are assessed on an ongoing basis on various aspects which include skills, communication, values, reasoning and knowledge acquisition. In writing, continuous assessment is achieved by the use of feedback.

For Tehrani (2018), feedback practices in English composition are essential for students to comprehend their strengths and areas that need improvement. According to Brookhart (2017) feedback has the ability to improve learners' writing skills if done well. Brookhart stressed that the feedback must address the cognitive and motivation factors which, help the students understand where they are in their learning and what to do next (cognitive factor). This helps students develop a feeling that they have a control over their learning (motivation factor) (Brookhart, 2017). Brookhart argued that in many educational settings teachers give students feedback information on how their performance compares to the standard which tackles one aspect of the cognitive factors. However, this kind of feedback does not help the students to close the gap of knowledge when attending to such feedback. That is, it might be difficult for the students to understand such information. For example, a comment such as 'this essay is not sufficiently analytical' and especially if the learning goal had not been fully assimilated in the first place, may lead to students not attending to the feedback and in worst scenarios, students developed a negative attitude towards feedback (Bakla, 2020).

Black and Wiliam (1998) further explained on this communication issue when they talked about the links between how feedback message is received and the action that follows. They argued that students act upon feedback when they know the goal to be achieved, when they know how to make the corrections and when they have the confidence to do it. By exploring the kind of feedback students get after writing a composition and what they do with that feedback, this study sought to contribute to the enhancement of feedback mechanisms in English composition writing in Malawi. Through this study, insights were gained into the strengths and limitations of current feedback practices in Malawian educational settings, and recommendations were proposed to improve the feedback process for English composition

writing based on students' attitude towards it. Additionally, the findings of this research could have the ability to inform pedagogical practices and educational policies to improve feedback delivery and support student learning outcomes.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The process of learning to write is a continuous one and needs proper follow up. This kind of following up is what is called feedback practice. This is the process of giving feedback and getting students to write again in order to consider what they have been told in form of feedback. Johnson et al. (2019) agreed that feedback in form of written comments, error corrections, teacher-student conferences or peer discussions is a key aspect of teaching English as a foreign/second language writing programmes. However, despite receiving feedback, MANEB reports indicated that learners had persistent problems in mechanical errors which lead to the losing of marks in English composition (Malawi National Examinations Board, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023). This resulted in many students failing to attain their Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) and those who passed fairly struggled to get an entrance into public universities as English was one of requirements to gain entrance for various programmes. Sultana and Yoko (2021) suggested that learners' attitude towards feedback can affect the learners' uptake of the feedback. In Malawi, little is known about these learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive. This all goes back to the kind of feedback these learners receive and how it stimulates the learners to revise their work. It is for this reason that the researcher found it important to study the influence of learners' attitude on their writing practice.

1.3. Main and specific objectives

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1.3.1. Main objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of learners' attitude towards teacher feedback on the learners' English composition writing practice.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

The study specifically aimed to:

1. assess the type of feedback that teachers give learners on their English composition.
2. examine learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive on their English composition.
3. assess the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice in English composition.

1.4. Significance of the study

Writing is a very important skill not only to the students who are learning English as a foreign or second language but it is also necessary across educational subjects and in various settings like the home and the workplace. This means that, failure of learners in writing skills can affect their progress in personal, academic and professional areas. Therefore, it is a fundamental goal of education systems around the globe to equip students with the necessary writing skills. Nevertheless, research finding shows that every learner meets obstacles in the writing journey which is even accelerated when it is done in second or foreign language (Keller et al., 2020). In order to help learners in this journey, teachers provide various types of feedback to help learners know areas that need improvements in their written assignments.

In English, feedback is given in hand written, electronic, audio/verbal formats among others. Research done on the effects of feedback on students' writing performance has shown diverse findings. Fleckenstein and colleagues (2024) in their literature analysis noted that these findings were as a result of either diverse in the study groups who possess different characters or different conceptualizations of feedback resulting in different types of information presented to the students or even mediating factors like attitudes of the learners towards feedback. However, the scholars agreed on one thing, that the giving and receiving of feedback has an effect on writing skills whether negative or positive. This study explored the type of feedback learners receive and what they do with it in terms of writing practice to improve their writing skills. In doing so, the study, firstly, contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of feedback in English writing instruction especially in the context of Malawi. By revealing what learners do with the feedback and their attitude towards feedback, this study provides valuable insights into effective feedback that teachers can use in order to yield the best out of learners' engagement with the feedback.

This study's results could inform pedagogy development in teaching English composition writing. With the importance of feedback in learning process, teachers can design their feedback tactics better to suit the requirements and preferences of their learners as they have an understanding of the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback. In addition to that, teachers can be in a position to solve possible problems and maximise the advantages of integrating a variety of feedback into their instruction in composition writing lessons. This is so because the study focused on the preferences of learners on the various types of feedback they receive. In short, this study helps enhance teaching strategies targeted at improving students' writing abilities and has practical consequences for English writing instruction.

1.5. Theoretical framework

This study was informed by Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT). This theory emphasizes the dynamic and interactive relationship between behaviour, personal factors and environmental factors (Bandura, 2014). SCT assumes the concept of reciprocal determinism which states that personal, behavioural and environmental factors influence one another in a reciprocal fashion (Bandura, 2006). It suggests that these three components influence each other reciprocally in a continuous cycle. That is, behaviour which refers to the observable actions and responses, is influenced by both personal factors and environmental factors. Personal factors include an individual's cognitive processes, emotions, and personality traits. These internal factors can shape how a person behaves and interacts with the environment. Finally, environmental Factors is composed of external influences and stimuli that an individual encounter. These can include social interactions, physical surroundings, and cultural influences. Figure 1.1 below shows the relationship among these three.

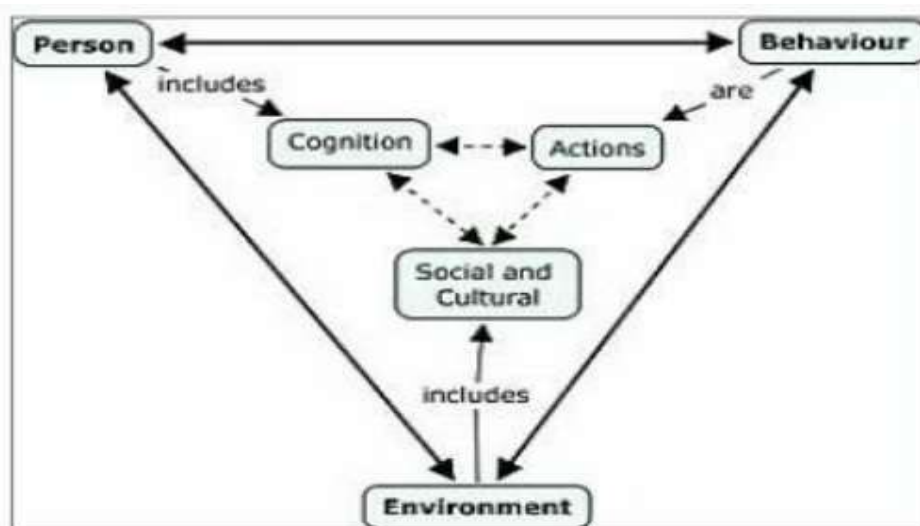


Figure 1.1. Triadic reciprocal relationship between behaviour, personal factors and environmental factors (source: Bandura, 2001, P. 29)

Bandura (2001) argues that instead of it being a simple case of cause and effect, behaviour can also determine an environment. As a result, the effects of behaviour and environment are reciprocal and interlinked. According to Bandura (2014), reciprocal determinism highlights the mutual influence between these three components. That is, behaviour can influence personal factors, which in turn can affect how one perceives and interacts with the environment. Similarly, environmental factors can shape personal factors and behaviour.

1.5.1. Criticism of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT).

The theory recognises that human behaviour is not just about environment and its effects on people but rather, an interplay of both the environment and mental processes which in turn influence behaviour (Bandura, 2014). This theory builds a gap between the behaviourists and social scientists as it brings together the environment and the mental aspect to explain human behaviour. That is, people are not victims of the environment but they choose and create their own responses to the environment. According to Bandura (2014), this means the individuals play a part of deciding, planning and avoiding the impact of the environment. However, this theory has been criticised for its obscurity in the extent to which each of these factors affect behaviour and amount of influence each factor has on the other. The principle of reciprocal determinism is loosely organised and critics argue that if behaviour causes changes in the person and the person causes changes in the behaviour and again environment causes changes in both behaviour and the person then what causes what becomes very confusing (Williams & Cervone, 1998).

Despite its weakness, this theory is applicable to this study because the study looks at the relationship among learners' attitude, feedback and writing practice. This study put into consideration other variables such as competence of the learner and outcome expectations in

determining the extent of this relationship as suggested by Williams and Cervone (1998). Form four students were the study participants. These participants have been exposed to feedback for more than three years in secondary school which means they are competent in utilising the feedback and with the expectation of passing the Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE), these participants have an extrinsic motivation to put into practice what they are told in form of feedback.

1.5.2. The use of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) in this study

Theories help shape a study. In this study, the theory of social cognitive informed the study from literature review, data collection to data analysis as discussed in the following paragraphs.

The study traced the application of this theory through the literature review. In this section, the study drew lines of correlation between feedback type and learners' attitude, feedback type and writing practice or writing performance then learners' attitude and writing practice and performance. In doing so, the study sought to find parallelism in the previous studies with this study in terms of application of this theory.

This study sought to explore the relationship between learners' attitude and the type of feedback they receive and their impact on the learners' writing practice. In a social cognitive theory, these factors influence each other and to get insights on each of them, one need to have data that covers both the personal and the environmental factor. This study used a questionnaire to collect data on the attitude of the learners and document analysis to collect data on the type of feedback that the learners receive. These two different instruments had

been used to get a deeper understanding of the factors before establishing their relationship in influencing writing practice.

In data analysis, this study sought to explain the relationship between feedback and learners' attitude and writing practice. In explaining this relationship, logistic regression test had been conducted. This test had been used to determine the influence of the relationship that feedback and learners' attitude on writing practice. This is so because in social cognitive theory these three factors influence each other in a bi-directional way. i.e. behaviour influence personal factors and environment, environment influences personal factor and behaviour etc. In doing so, this study enhanced the theory based on the findings.

1.6. Limitation/delimitation of the study

This study focused on the feedback practice that happens in English composition writing. The study's focus went down to the comments that teachers write on learner's composition scripts. The study was limited to teachers' written comments without putting into consideration the input that peers have towards their friends' composition. However, the result of this study remains valuable as they set a foundation on the type of feedback and learners' attitude towards feedback in Malawi. The areas of focus made it possible for the researcher to get the insights needed without focusing on peer feedback.

1.7. Definition of key words as used in this study

Feedback: this is helpful information or criticism that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance (Peter, 2013). As used in this study, feedback is anything that the teacher scribbles in red ink on the students' English composition in order to point out errors committed and how to improve them.

Feedback practice: refers to the process of providing constructive comments or evaluations to individuals regarding their performance, behaviour or outcomes, with the goal of improving future performance or achieving desired outcomes (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In this study, it is simply the act of giving and receiving feedback.

Writing practice: this is the intentional and systematic activities that writers engage in to develop and refine their writing skills, including planning, drafting, revising and editing (Graham & Perin, 2007). In this study, it refers to students' engagement with composition writing after or before receiving feedback either by writing, editing or revising their compositions.

NB: The word students and learners is used interchangeably in this study.

1.8. Layout of the thesis

This study has been presented in several chapters as follows:

Chapter One outlines the introduction of the study which includes issues surrounding the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice. Among others, the chapter highlighted; background to the study, the statement of the problem which includes research gap, general objective and specific research objectives, significance of the study, delimitation of the study as well as definitions of key terms.

Chapter Two is a review of both theoretical and empirical literature on the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice. This chapter exposes studies dealing with the type of feedback learners receive and their attitude towards the feedback. It also discusses on how the social cognitive theory can better explain the concept being discussed.

Chapter Three is a discussion of the process through which data was gathered and analysed in the study. The chapter reveals that the study used exploratory mixed methods approach in order to have a holistic understanding of the phenomenon. Issues of ethical consideration, credibility and trustworthiness of the study have also been discussed in this chapter. The study has also discussed how the data collected was analysed. The chapter exposes that the researcher used a thematic analysis for qualitative data and logistic regression for quantitative data.

Chapter Four presents the findings, analysis and discussion of the findings in relation to literature, study objectives and theory. The study has presented the data that was collected through oral interviews, documents analysis and questionnaire. The study has also presented several quotes gathered through interviews to allow the sources speak for themselves in support of the arguments being advanced.

Chapter Five is where an attempt has been made to summarize the findings of the study in relation to its objectives. The chapter has also drawn attention to certain areas where further studies can also be conducted by other scholars. Recommendations which might be of use in other areas to improve the teaching of English composition writing in schools have also been made.

1.9. Chapter summary

The need for feedback in a writing class cannot be over emphasized as it creates a room for the learners and the teachers to interact and work out on the mistakes learners make in their writing. This chapter has laid a foundation of the phenomenon. It has presented the objectives of the study, justification, significance, delimitations/limitations and definitions of key terms.

The theoretical framework that guided the thinking of the researcher has also been discussed.

Lastly, the chapter presented the thesis layout to map the way around the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Chapter overview

Feedback is one of the most important aspects in a writing class. With the coming of outcome based education, continuous assessment and learner centred methodologies, feedback has found its place not only in English as a subject but also across subjects taught in Malawian curriculum. This chapter discusses feedback as part of continuous assessment before diving into pools of literature about feedback, learners' attitude and writing practice.

2.1. Continuous assessment and feedback

With the introduction of outcome-based education in the secondary school curriculum, continuous assessment is one of the aspects that help in achieving it. Continuous assessment (CA) has been defined in several ways. Some have defined it as a regular way of students' evaluation which involves, collecting information and making observations about students' progress periodically to find out what the learners know, understand and can do with the aim of providing essential feedback to improve learners' learning ability (Acharya, 2023). MoEST and MIE (2012) defined it as a collection of tasks that evaluate students' learning outcomes according to the knowledge, comprehension and skills they have acquired in relation to the established success criteria and assessment standards. Acharya asserted that the term assessment is used to refer to all activities that are undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves and provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities (Acharya, 2023).

Based on these definitions of continuous assessment, feedback practice in writing fits right in as a way in which teachers use to assess the progress of their learners. Teachers get to know what their learners know and where they need improvement through giving feedback. In one way or the other, feedback shapes the instruction as teachers know the weakness of their learners. Not only are teachers benefiting from this process, but also learners have a great share of the benefit as teachers put to light what they need to work on in order to improve their performance. In writing, feedback bridges the gap between the teachers and the learners as it provides a medium through which teachers can become a part of learners' writing practice. Apart from improving teachers' instruction, feedback challenges the learners to see themselves in the eyes of another person (teacher) and work towards achieving what the teacher wants them to. Feedback practice in writing is essential to continuous assessment as it helps teachers to focus on the process of helping learners to improve their writing practice.

2.2. Types of feedback that teachers give learners

Teachers give learners various feedback in different forms. These include, written, oral and computer assisted. Computer assisted feedback in this case refers to feedback done on electronic version of composition as compared to feedback which is done on hard copy with red pens. With the coming of open distance learning and technology in Malawi, most colleges and universities are adopting computer assisted feedback. This feedback is not very far from written feedback; it is just done on different forms of copies. However, according to Kao and Reynolds (2024), in computer assisted feedback teachers write longer and detailed feedback because they are not limited by space as in hard copy written feedback. For the purpose of this study, this review will dwell much on written and oral feedback as it is commonly done in secondary schools in Malawi than computer assisted.

In written and oral forms of feedback, teachers give different types of feedback. Feedback can be facilitative i.e. not correcting the mistake, or it can be directive whereby the correct form is provided. In their study, Sultana and Yoko (2021) found out that students were receiving unclear, unspecific and undetailed feedback from their teachers. The students said that the feedback did not give them a direction as to how to make corrections and it was not immediate. In other words, the students received feedback that was obscure and required them to figure out for themselves what their mistake was and how to correct it. The feedback was facilitative in nature as it required students to figure out on their own what they have done wrong and how to correct it. However, the research showed that these students had a positive attitude towards feedback and that the students were motivated to write or revise their work because of this feedback. For tertiary students, this is not coming as a surprise mostly because at this level, the students can learn on their own through the use of books and this type of feedback can arouse their curiosity to read more as compared to secondary school students who might even lose interest in writing due to such feedback.

Sultana and Yoko (2021) also found out that although the feedback that students received was unclear and undetailed, it was constructive and effective in curbing students' writing challenges. This also contributed to the positive attitude that students had towards teacher feedback. Similarly, Srirakarn (2018) found out that the students from Rajamangala University of Technology Isan in Thailand also received feedback which was in form of confusing comments, stressful, and lacked timing. Just like in Sultana and Yoko's study, these students improved their writing skills with such kind of feedback. Apart from being university students, these students improved greatly especially because of corrective feedback that they received from teachers (Srirakarn, 2018). This is so because those that received the same kind of corrective feedback from peers also improved their performance. However,

these researchers failed to bring to light the actual feedback that these students received because they did not analyse marked scripts where feedback was given to the students. This means that they relied on the students' views on feedback to generalise the type of feedback they received. In contrast, this study first of all analysed scripts where teachers provide feedback to learners in order to identify the type of feedback these learners received before studying their attitude and the impact of the attitude.

The subject of feedback has received a substantial attention by the presence of huge number of research done in this field. However, these researchers have not reached a consensus of which type of feedback is better than the other. A number of researches have tried to prove that one type is better than the other but ended up being proven wrong by another set of sample. For this reason, recent scholars sought to find conditions that will make the type of feedback effective by incorporating computer assisted feedback to the type of feedback measured. For example, Kao and Reynolds (2024) used automated feedback on corrective feedback. However, these scholars ended up concluding that there is no significant difference between teacher feedback and computer assisted feedback although it helps in giving feedback quicker than teachers can do in large classes. The bottom line drawn by most of these scholars is that, feedback indeed impacts writing skills.

2.2.1. Types of feedback approaches

Feedback can be delivered in different forms and ways. These include oral, conferencing, electronic and written (Sultana & Yoko, 2021). Sultana and Yoko, describe these forms of feedback as follows; in oral feedback, the teacher sums up the mistakes that learners make when writing and turns them into a lesson. The teacher points out the common mistakes in class and how those mistakes can be avoided without focusing on an individual learner.

Conferencing is whereby the teacher spares time to meet with the learners one on one and discuss the mistakes that the learners made in their writing. Electronic feedback on the other hand, deals with the kind of feedback that the teacher gives electronically on soft copy of the writing. Lastly, written feedback are comments that the teacher puts on the students' script. These forms of feedback can also be given by a peer (peer feedback) or oneself (self-feedback/assessment). For the purpose of this study, written teacher feedback has been explored. The study investigated how the attitude of learners towards teacher written feedback affects their writing practice in English composition.

2.2.2. *Corrective feedback (CF)*

Corrective feedback (CF) has been defined as the type of feedback which indicates to the learner the incorrect use of target language (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). The sole purpose of corrective feedback is to help the learners know that they have committed an error in their writing. This kind of feedback can be provided in different ways. It can either be 1) focused feedback, which addresses specific types of errors at a time, or 2) unfocused feedback, which addresses all errors made in a script, or 3) direct/explicit feedback, which provides a corrected version of the incorrect form, or it can be 4) indirect/implicit feedback, which provides information about the incorrect form, such as location, nature, code, symbol, etc. (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2017). Nassaji and Kartachava argued that these types of feedback can be provided on a wide range of errors such as content-related, linguistic or pragmatic errors.

Based on what Nassaji and Kartachava suggested about corrective feedback, two things come out clearly that corrective feedback can either be facilitative or directive. Directive corrective feedback involves error correction. This include direct or explicit feedback whereby learners are given a correct version of what they got wrong. In doing so, the essays are marked at

linguistic level where grammatical aspects of the essay will be looked into. This means that in this category, errors are corrected either focused or unfocused. On the other hand, facilitative corrective feedback involves indirect or implicit feedback whereby the teachers comment on students' essays about what went wrong without actually correcting the error. In this type, the main focus is likely to be on content, pragmatic and linguistic errors. The comments can come in form of statements and questions aimed at engaging the learner in a conversation to stir them into revising their work. In either case, the learner is left to figure out on their own how to correct the errors. This study explored the type of written feedback that teachers give their students on their English compositions in Malawian secondary school setting.

2.3. Students' attitude towards various feedback type

Students' attitude towards feedback plays an important part in the students' uptake of the feedback. That is, the attitude of students towards feedback affects how the students use the feedback. In their study, Fleckenstein et al. (2024) noted that learners who received individual performance information acted on the feedback they received especially when they achieved low grades in the prior assignment. In other words, their motivation was to act on current feedback in order to avert the low grade they received in previous assignment. However, this does not give a clear direction on the impact of students' attitude towards feedback on the writing practice. Wu and Schunn (2020) asserted that for students to implement feedback they need to understand it and agree with it. They argued that students agree with feedback when they have confidence (trust) in the one giving it. In the process of explaining the relationship between feedback and writing practice, this study first of all determined students' attitude towards the feedback.

When looking at impact of feedback on learners writing in Turkey, Tehrani (2018) found out that students had a positive attitude towards teacher feedback as opposed to peer feedback. The reasons being that these students found that from the teachers they got useful points which helped them to learn from and they thought about it before they started writing again as they were motivated by this feedback. In agreement, Srirakarn (2018) found out that students felt comfortable receiving peer feedback than teacher feedback however, they were not confident about the correctness of the feedback they received from peers. In these two studies the researchers asked students' attitude and what feedback they received without looking at the actual papers that these students wrote and received feedback on. This is important because the attitude could have been asked based on what the learners were actually exposed to (as evidenced by the comments on the papers) in order to expose the kind of feedback they receive and how they react to such feedback. In the current study, the researcher first of all identified the type of feedback that learners received then test their attitude towards such feedback and how that attitude affected their writing practices.

In agreement with Tehrani (2018), Sultana and Yoko (2021) also found that most of the study sample (students from Bangladesh) had a positive attitude towards teacher feedback especially teacher-student conferences as they had time to discuss with the teachers their problems and solutions. Just like the study participants in Tehrani's (2018) and Srirakarn's (2018) studies, the students in Sultana and Yoko's (2021) study also expressed that teacher feedback motivates them to write better. On written feedback, most learners in the study expressed positive attitude towards it, saying it was specific and indicated mistakes on the paper which was easier for the students to understand their errors and resolve them. However, this study focused on tertiary level students just like Tehrani's (2018) and Srirakarn's (2018) studies. Most of the times, tertiary students are independent learners as they have been studying for more years than those in high school (secondary school in Malawian context).

The current study explored the impact of learners' attitude in writing practice at a secondary school level in Malawian schools.

When comparing teacher feedback and automated feedback in their study, Kao and Reynolds (2024) found out that the automated feedback outweighed the teacher feedback not only in the improvement of writing performance but also in terms of learners' trust. Learners in this study trusted the automated feedback than the teacher feedback. This confirms what Wu and Schunn (2020) asserted that confidence in the source leads to practice or implementation of the feedback. However, Bakla (2020) argued that while the novelty introduced by newer feedback modes has predominantly produced positive attitudes in learners and instructors, this has not always led to improvements in students' writing performance. In other words, automated feedback does not always lead to improvements in students' performance in writing. Kao and Reynolds (2024) noted that the automated feedback was effective at vocabulary and grammar level and not on content level feedback. This study therefore focused on the written feedback that teachers gave students in their writing and how the students' attitude towards this feedback affected their writing practice.

From the literature reviewed above, it is worth noting that learners' confidence and positive attitude towards the source of feedback and the feedback itself helps in enhancing writing practice. When learners have confidence and positive attitude towards the source of feedback, they are likely to implement such type of feedback. However, the literature is not clear on the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice. On top of that, there is need for further investigation on learners' attitude towards feedback in Malawi especially at secondary school level. In addition, the type of feedback that teachers give to the students also needs a thorough review in the same context. This study explored the impact of the

learners' attitude towards the type of feedback that they receive from teachers on their writing practice.

Apart from that, these researchers were using social cognitive theory of writing which emphasize on the presence of a teacher to help learners reach their zone of proximal development through scaffolding. This study, on the other hand, used social cognitive theory whereby it assessed the relationship between learners' attitude, feedback type and writing practice. The literature has revealed that there is influencing factors between feedback type and performance. That is, environment created by the teacher influences the behaviour or outcome in the learners. For example, Fageih (2015), Sritrakarn (2018), Kao and Reynolds (2024), Zahroh et al. (2020) confirmed that corrective feedback influences the learners' writing performance. Learners' attitude has also been found to influence learners' performance even when the feedback is not corrective. For example, Sultana and Yoko (2018) found out that even though the learners received feedback that was unclear and unspecific, they were able to improve in their writing performance. This means that there must be an influencing factor that made these learners to perform well even with unspecific feedback. In this case, it is the learners' attitude. However, there is little research on the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice. This study used social cognitive theory to reveal the reciprocal determinism relationship in feedback, learners' attitude and writing practice. In doing so, it helps to solve the mystery of having unspecific and unclear feedback which yielded positive results in terms of performance.

However, due to the limitations of the theory in explaining the extent to which environment, person and behaviour influence each other, this study took into consideration the learners' competence (education level) and expectations to pass examinations by the end of the year as

motivating factors in their attitude towards feedback. This means that the learners' attitude is also influenced by these factors apart from being influenced by the type of feedback learners receive from teacher. However, these factors were not measured as part of the study but were acknowledged to be present. In other words, they were regarded as intervening variables: variables with a potential effect on the dependent or independent variables.

2.4. Impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice

As noted, learners' confidence and positive attitude towards feedback can influence writing practice. However, the extent to which attitude influence writing practice has not been clearly identified. In their research, Zahroh et al. (2020) found that there was a correlation of 0.572 between students' attitude towards teachers' corrective feedback and their writing skills. This study did not go ahead to look for the impact of the students' attitude towards feedback on their writing practice but rather, just like many other studies on students' attitude towards feedback, it relates to the writing performance (Sultana & Yoko, 2021; Tehrani, 2018; Kao & Reynolds, 2024). The assumption is that writing performance is as a result of writing practice although these studies did not come out clearly on this relationship. This study focused on the learners' engagement with the feedback through writing (writing practice) and how this is affected by their attitude towards feedback.

In most of the literature reviewed, learners improved their writing performance based on the type of feedback they received and their attitude towards that feedback. This improvement was related to the positive attitude that learners had towards the type of feedback they received. For example, Sultana and Yoko (2021) found that learners' positive attitude towards feedback helped them to implement the feedback they received hence improving performance. That is, learners' positive attitude towards feedback had an impact on learners'

writing practice. In this study, although Sultana and Yoko (2021) found that the feedback that learners received was unclear and unspecific, the learners had a positive attitude towards it and in the end they improved in their writing performance. With Sritrakarn (2018), learners in his study received confusing and stressful comments which were corrective in nature. With this feedback, learners also improved their writing performance. This entails that, corrective feedback also helps learners to improve their writing practice as seen by change in their writing performance. However, in these studies, the researchers focused on the type of feedback and its impact on performance not writing practice. This study established the relationship between the learners' attitude towards feedback and their writing practice.

Just like Sritrakarn (2018), Alsolami and Elyas (2016) found out that corrective feedback influenced learners' uptake of feedback. In other words, learners improved in their writing practice because of corrective feedback. They found out that corrective feedback such as metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and recasts enhanced learners' uptake of the feedback. However, they did not look at the learners' attitude towards the type of feedback they received. Using video recordings, they managed to reveal the type of feedback teachers gave their learners during the class and how that affected their feedback uptake in the subsequent lessons. Similarly, Zahroh et al. (2020) found that corrective feedback helped to improve performance in writing. They also noted that there was a moderate correlation of students' attitude towards feedback and writing performance. In addition, Faeqih's (2015) study agrees that learners' attitude towards corrective feedback has an impact on their performance in writing skills. He found that learners' preference of corrective feedback enhanced their writing performance as they were able to show improvements in the subsequent writings. These studies however, like other studies reviewed, were done in a tertiary context. The current study looked at the feedback that learners get on their written English compositions

and how their attitude towards this feedback impacted their writing practice in the context of Malawian secondary school.

2.5. Chapter summary

This chapter has revealed that although teachers gave their learners unclear and undetailed feedback, the learners were able to improve and have a positive attitude towards such feedback. The studies revealed that this was due to the type of feedback and the learners' trust towards the teachers. Apart from that, the learners' level of education also contributed to their curiosity and their writing practice. However, apart from being conducted at tertiary level, the review had also brought to light that there was still a gap as these studies did not use the marked scripts of the students to find out the actual type of feedback they received. The studies just interviewed students to get their opinions on the feedback they received or tested a type of feedback on the students. This study therefore sought out to first of all assess the actual type of feedback from learners' marked scripts in Malawian secondary schools and the learners' attitude towards such feedback before assessing the impact of their attitude on writing practice.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0. Chapter overview

In this chapter, the methodology that was used to collect data for the study will be presented. The chapter will discuss related issues to methodology such as research approach, research design, study population, study site, sample size, sampling technique, data collection methods, data collection tools, credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, ethical considerations, and how the data will be interpreted and analysed.

3.1. Research approach

This study used mixed methods research approach. This is an approach to inquiry involving collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Creswell, 2014). Creswell noted that it is a recently adopted methodology originating around the late 1980s and early 1990s based on work from individuals in different fields such as evaluation, education, management, sociology, and health sciences. Creswell also argued that the approach had gone through several periods of development including the formative stage, the philosophical debates, the procedural developments, and more recently reflective positions and expansion into different disciplines and into many countries throughout the world.

A mixed methods approach is commended for its flexibility in incorporating or mixing qualitative and quantitative data in order to come up with a new understanding of the subject matter. It gives room for the researcher to use both research approaches to complement each other and give out a complete understanding of the phenomenon depending on the

methodologies, type of data or results of the study (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015). In this study, the researcher adopted this approach to understand the phenomena better. This approach gave the researcher an opportunity to look at the type of feedback that learners receive in their English composition before looking at their attitude towards the feedback. This was important to understand how learners engaged with such kind of feedback. With its ability to have data complementing each other, the approach helped the researcher to use data from document analysis to inform the questionnaire. In so doing, the questionnaire focused on the real feedback that the learners received and not what the literature suggested.

Critics of mixed methods approach argued that it favours quantitative approach over qualitative approach. They pointed out that mixed methods approach seem to have a domination of quantitative approach and that it excludes stakeholders of the research such as participants (Collins et al., 2006). However, Creswell et al. (2006) argued against this by providing an example of a mixed method approach that has a qualitative approach as a driving agent of the study; the exploratory sequential model. This study resonated with mixed methods as it required a collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. It used a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone. The data collected from qualitative was complemented by the data collected from quantitative then triangulating with data collected from qualitative. Triangulation has been defined by Cohen et al. (2011) as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour. The study put consideration of each approach according to how it helped in achieving the study's objectives without favouring one type of approach over the other. All participants' inputs were valued and used as fit to achieve the objectives of the study.

3.2. Research design

This study used the exploratory sequential mixed methods design. The approach involves a two-phase project in which the researcher collects qualitative data in the first phase, analyses the results, and then uses the results to plan (or build onto) the second phase, quantitative (Creswell, 2014). This gave the researcher an opportunity to handle two different data sets which later informed each other. In other words, the exploratory design helped the researcher to fully understand feedback practice in secondary schools in Dowa. In this case, the qualitative data was used to establish the status quo of feedback given to the learners by their teachers. Then the quantitative data focused on the attitude that learners had towards feedback that they received. The interviews with the teachers followed to confirm if learners really did what they said they did with the feedback. Exploratory mixed method research design created an opportunity to the researcher to bring together results from two different data while complementing each other.

Griensven et al. (2014) noted that when using this design, one must expect to have difficulties especially when the study is time bound as collecting and analysing data of two different approaches may be time consuming. In addition, they emphasized that the researcher using this design must be well conversant with both qualitative and quantitative approach in order to handle data collected from both approaches. The current study first of all collected qualitative data in form of document analysis then from the data, a second phase of structured interviews followed before triangulating the data with a qualitative data collection. This was not time consuming as the data complemented each other even though it required the researcher to go to the research sites twice. The researcher was well versed in both qualitative and quantitative research design and was quite aware that data collected from either of the two had to be handled accordingly.

3.3. Research site

The study was conducted in Dowa district. Dowa is located in the central region of the country and in the Central Eastern Education Division (CEED). It has all types of schools that are found in Malawi i.e. community day secondary schools, day secondary schools, district secondary school and national secondary school. A sample from these schools was a representation of the school environments in Malawi.

3.4. Study population

Firstly, the study included all forty-one (41) secondary schools in Dowa district. Dowa has a variety of schools with a representation of secondary school environments in Malawi. It has both conventional and day secondary schools. The participants of this study consisted of all form 4 students learning in secondary schools in Dowa district. A population of 343 form 4 students from selected four schools in Dowa was used. These students were selected because as learners of an examination class, they are more serious with their studies and take teachers' feedback seriously. Apart from that, they have stayed in secondary school long enough to have made corrections based on teacher feedback in composition writing before. The study also had a population of all English teachers for form 4 in Dowa district. These teachers were selected because they are the ones who give the feedback and observe learners on their every progress in writing. They helped to confirm what learners said that they do with feedback. Finally, all marked scripts for English paper 1 Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) for Central East Education Division (CEED) mock were considered as part of this study's population. A population of 338 marked scripts from the four selected schools was used. The scripts for form four were chosen because in this class, it is where teachers try to mould learners who are coming from non-examination class (form 3) to an examination class (form 4). Teachers also make an effort to try to help learners to improve their writing skills

using feedback on their compositions in readiness for national examinations. These scripts provided the researcher with information on the type of feedback secondary school teachers give their students in English composition. These scripts were requested from the schools during holidays as teachers at secondary school level do not mark and hand over scripts to the students in the same term. This gave the researcher time to analyse the scripts before schools opened again where the research proceeded with the rest of data collection.

3.5. Study period

This study spanned from December 2024 to October 2025, a period of eleven months. Data collection was done in two phases. Phase one for qualitative and phase two for quantitative. The qualitative phase informed the quantitative phase whereby the results of the first phase were used to develop instruments for data collection in the second phase. From December 2024 to February 2025 was a preparatory stage for the research. Phase one spanned from March to May 2025 and phase two begun in June 2025 and ended in December 2025.

3.6. Sampling methods

This research used simple random sampling when selecting schools and documents (marked scripts). In this type of sampling, the members of a population have an equal chance of being selected and the selection of one member does not affect the selection of another (Cohen et al., 2018). The researcher wrote down all the names of schools in Dowa district on papers and dropped them in a jar. From there, the researcher selected four schools while shaking after each pick. The four schools were not only manageable but they were also enough to provide the needed information on feedback. When selecting documents (marked scripts), the researcher generated random numbers using excel, then randomly chose a starting point and chose numbers corresponding to number of scripts given until all the ten scripts were chosen

per school. Ten scripts per school was good number because the researcher reached a point of saturation on the type of feedback that learners received in these schools.

For selection of students, a systematic sampling was used. In this type of sampling technique, the researcher finds the frequency at which a member is selected. Since the researcher wanted to have a representation of males and females, the sample frame contained list of girls and another list of boys. From there the *nth* frequency was determined using the formula $f=N/sn$ (Cohen et al., 2018) where f is the frequency, N is the total number of population which in this case was the total number of girls and the total number of boys. Then sn is the required number of sample which was 18 in this case per sex. In doing this, the researcher ensured that an equal number of girls and boys were randomly sampled. Table 3.1 below shows the *nth* frequency of each school.

Table 3.1: *nth* Frequency used for selection of students in each school

School	Gender	Total population	<i>nth</i> Frequency
01	Girls	76	4
	Boys	89	4
02	Girls	30	1
	Boys	27	1
03	Girls	18	1
	Boys	19	1
04	Girls	39	2
	Boys	45	2

Teachers who teach English composition writing in form 4 were selected to participate in the study. Since most schools have only one teacher or two, purposive sampling was used to choose which teacher to be interviewed. According to Cohen et al. (2011), purposeful sampling involves the identification of key informants with specific knowledge about the topic being investigated. That is, knowledgeable people who have an in-depth knowledge about a particular issue, maybe by virtue of their professional experience are sampled to participate in the study. In case where there were two or more teachers of English in form four, the one teaching composition writing was sampled.

3.7. Sample size

Since this study used mixed method design, some samples were used for qualitative and others for quantitative. Firstly, it was done in four (4) schools. Four public secondary schools were enough to provide data needed for this study. These schools were all average performers during MSCE. The average highest points accumulated in 2024 MSCE was 18 with an average of 6 points for English. For qualitative sample, in document analysis, the study used forty (40) marked scripts for form 4 English paper 1 from the four schools, ten (10) from each school. Ten scripts provided enough data to know the type of feedback teachers give in a particular class. For the interviews, four (4) English teachers were interviewed, one (1) from each of the four schools. Table 3.2 shows details of these teachers. These teachers provided information about students' writing practice. One teacher a class in a school was enough to provide data about his or her students' writing practice, in some schools it was actually one teacher who taught English in form 4. As the questions came from what the learners said in the questionnaire, their teachers were the best people to validate this information. So, these interviews were mostly used for data triangulation.

Table 3.2 : Details of teachers who participated in this study

Teacher	School	Gender	Highest qualification	Years of service	Age range
A	01	Female	Bachelor of Education (Languages)	6	25-30
B	02	Male	Bachelor of Education (Languages)	8	25-30
C	03	Male	Diploma in Education (Languages)	5	35-40
D	04	Male	Bachelor of Education (Languages)	10	30-35

For quantitative data, a sample of 144 students responded to questionnaires. According to VanVoorhis and Morgan (2007), the general rule of thumb is to have no less than 50 participants for a correlation or regression test. Thirty-six (36) from 4 students were taken from each of the four schools to participate in responding to the questionnaire (a quarter of the whole sample). These students were aged between 16 and 25. They were the key participants in the study as it sought to examine the attitude of the learners towards feedback provided by the teachers. 144 students were enough to provide information on the attitude of learners towards feedback.

3.8. Data collection method

Exploratory mixed methods strategy employs two phases of data collection with the initial qualitative data collection succeeded by the second quantitative data collection (Cohen et al., 2018). As stated above, the study had two phases. The first phase dealt with qualitative data collected through document analysis. The results from the analysis informed the researcher when developing items in the questionnaire. According to Creswell (2014), the development of an instrument can proceed by using themes that group data codes into scales. This study used themes to group inputs for the questionnaire. From there, the researcher used interviews to collect qualitative data which was used to confirm the allegations in the quantitative data (questionnaire).

3.8.1. Document analysis

Document analysis is a systematic procedure where the research reviews or evaluates documents both printed and electronic (computer based and internet transmitted) material (Browne, 2009). Corbin and Strauss (2008) pointed out that this type of data collection method, like other analytical methods in qualitative research, requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. These documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's intervention (Browne, 2009). Marked scripts were regarded as documents to be analysed as a means of finding out how teachers give feedback to learners. The scripts were scrutinised and analysed, using a selection of techniques for qualitative content analysis described by Browne, 2009 and Corbin and Strauss, 2008:

- a. Document analysis involves skimming through (superficial examination), reading extensively (thorough examination), and interpretation. This iterative process combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis.
- b. Content analysis is whereby the information is organised into categories. This entails a first pass document review in which meaningful and relevant passages of text or other data are identified. Corbin and Strauss (2008) stressed that the researcher should demonstrate the capacity to identify pertinent information and to separate it from that which is not pertinent related to the central questions of the research. In this study, marked scripts were thoroughly skimmed and read through to identify feedback that teachers gave to their learners in form of strikes, comments, symbols or anything that teachers scribbled in red ink on the learners' English composition scripts.

3.8.2. Survey

Survey as a data collection method, is used to assess thoughts, opinions, feelings and attitudes (Kabir, 2016). It consists of a predetermined set of questions that is given to a sample. Surveys can be used to describe and compare attitudes of a population when there is a representative sample. This sample is one that is representative of the larger population of interest, one can describe the attitudes of the population from which the sample was drawn. Kabir (2016) stressed that a good sample selection is key as it allows one to generalize the findings from the sample to the population, which is the whole purpose of survey research. However, the aim of this survey was not to generalise findings but to solicit data on the attitude of learners towards feedback that they receive from their teachers. Although this was the case, the sample was objectively chosen so that each member of the population had a known non-zero chance of selection just as Kabir (2016) suggested.

Surveys have a setback of a low response rate, are unable to investigate issues to any great depth, require that the target group is literate and do not allow for any observation. As surveys are self-reported by participants, there is a possibility that responses may be biased particularly if the issues involved are sensitive or require some measure of disclosure on trust by the participant (Kabir, 2016). In this study, the learners were told that their names will not be recorded on the forms and that they should answer every question to the best of their ability. Since the researcher was there to administer the survey herself, response rate was high as learners submitted directly to the researcher on the same day.

3.8.3. Interview

Interview was mainly used to validate the information given by learners in the questionnaire. As noted by Knott and colleagues, interviews can be used as a follow up on quantitative data (Knott et al., 2022). Knott and others also assert that the researcher needs to have specific areas which need clarification from the respondent of the questionnaire. This study used interviews mainly to get to know from the teachers who taught these learners about their writing practice and the improvements that learners showed after receiving feedback. Knott and colleagues (2022) forewarned that when conducting an interview, the researcher has to be mindful of his or her body language and mannerism in order not to distract the respondent. Among others, they advised the researcher to be more probing in order to collect the intended data from the respondent. Being a teacher, the researcher of this study found no problems in interacting with fellow teachers to elicit information needed for this study.

3.9. Data collection tools

When collecting data in a research, protocols are used (Lodico et al., 2006). Lodico et al. (2006) states that protocols are generally designed to gather data that cannot be predicted in advance. This study, therefore, used interview protocols and documents review guide to collect data from participants for qualitative data. For quantitative data, questionnaires were used.

3.9.1. Documents review guide

The researcher used a document review guide which specified the documents to be reviewed such as marked scripts. Creswell (2013) states that documents are advantageous because the data obtained does not undergo the process of transcription but rather the researcher goes into direct interpretation and analysis of the obtained data. The researcher, therefore, used the document review guide to determine the type of feedback that teachers gave their learners. When collecting data from the documents, the researcher used colour highlighter for coding and categorisation. For theme identification, the researcher used concept mapping paper and pattern identification matrices. These matrices were sorted out during data analysis using folders. Since the major setback of collecting data in this way falls on data management and storage, the researcher set aside a hardcover exercise book for indexing, storing and organising data.

3.9.2. Interview protocols

The study also used interview protocols as instruments for data collection. Creswell (2013) defines an interview protocol as a form designed by the researcher that contains instructions for the process of the interview, the questions to be asked, and spaces to take notes of the responses from the interviewee. Lodico et al. (2006) extended this by stating that an interview

protocol should include a brief script where the researcher explains the purpose for the study to the interviewee and the preliminary questions to be used during interviews. This research used semi-structured interview to solicit data from teachers about their students' writing practice. This tool has been selected for its flexibility while laying out a guide for the researcher to follow (Kabir, 2016). This is whereby the research had an interview guide with a set of open ended questions and a list of topics allowing for her to be probing for more information about experiences of the teachers in giving feedback. Since notes alone could not give enough data as some information might be left out, the researcher accompanied the process of interviewing with a tape-recording using an audio recorder. Tape-recording helped the researcher to revisit the information which was not properly captured in the process of field notes taking.

3.9.3. Questionnaire

This study used a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The instrument had three sections: A, B and C. Section A asked questions on biographical information while section B, C and D asked questions on (1) students' attitude towards receiving feedback (2) students' preference on type of feedback given (3) what students do with the feedback they receive respectively. The items in the instrument were designed in four-point scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

3.10. Piloting

As recommended by Cohen et al. (2011), some of the data collection tools used in the research were tested in a pilot study. A pilot study is a small study conducted prior to a planned project to test aspects of the research design (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, the questionnaire was pilot-tested among form 4 learners at one of the secondary schools in

Dowa district. Lodico et al. (2006) advanced that the piloting of instruments helps researchers to; determine the duration of the questionnaire administration; ensure clarity of all questions and instructions; get rid of items which might not yield usable data; and establish the validity and reliability of the instruments. Pilot testing also helps to generate the dependability and trustworthiness of the research data to be collected thereafter. Apart from helping in knowing the duration of the questionnaire, the test helped the researcher of this study to remove duplicate items and reconstruct (clarify) items with difficult words. For example, item 25 had the word “incorporate” which invited clarification questions from the pilot study participants. The researcher changed the word to “use”.

3.11. Data management

Data is anything that is collected, observed or created for the purposes of analysis to produce original research results (Surkis & Read, 2015). It is the raw information that is to be processed. According to Surkis and Read (2015) data management refers to the process of handling of research data (collection, organisation, storage and documentation) during and after a research activity. They also argued that data management is important because if it is managed well, the data can be used by other researchers to test the validity of the original results or to reanalyse the original data in an entirely different way. Apart from that, the researcher can easily use the data. Bearing in mind the importance of data management, the researcher of this study organised data by use of a hard cover to record and group data. Data recorded in audios from the interviews was transcribed and put in word format (Microsoft word). After everything, all the data has been put in one form which is electronic by scanning hard copy data and put in PDF format. The data has been uploaded into google drive and will be made present on request.

3.12. Data analysis methods

In exploratory mixed method strategy, the researcher analyses the two databases separately and uses the findings from the initial qualitative database to build into quantitative measures (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the first phase of qualitative data was analysed using thematic content analysis. This involved an in-depth analysis of feedback given in selected secondary schools where document review guide was used to collect data. A detailed step by step process of this analysis has been outlined in section 3.12.1 below. The quantitative data was analysed using inferential statistics. In this case, statistical packages were used to tabulate and interpret data.

3.12.1. Qualitative data analysis

Since the data from marked scripts was so dense and rich, not all of the information was used. This means some data was sieved out in a process of focusing in on some of the data and disregarding other parts of it (Guest et al., 2012). The qualitative data was analysed using the thematic content analysis method. According to Creswell (2013), this method of data analysis is described as a way of analysing data by organizing it into categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features. As suggested by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), the researcher applied a hybrid process of deductive and inductive thematic analysis to interpret raw data from marked scripts. This entails that the researcher integrated data-driven codes emerging from the data and the literature based on the constructs of social cognitive theory. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argue that this is so to allow constructs of the theory to be integral to the process of deductive thematic analysis while allowing for the themes to emerge directly from the data using inductive coding. This means that the data from marked scripts was divided into text segments; label segments with codes; examine codes for overlap and redundancy and collapse these codes into broad themes. In this respect, the data was

narrowed down into few themes and any data which did not specifically provided any evidence for the themes was disregarded.

As advised by Lacey and Luff (2009), the researcher examined those themes that emerged during data analysis. The researcher concentrated on the major themes and minor themes and these were supported by short quotes from the marked scripts to give evidence. In the end, the researcher integrated the data-driven codes and literature-driven codes to make sense of the raw data gathered during research. The development of themes from the database and literature was followed by the representation of the findings. After representing the findings through visual display, the researcher reported the findings through a narrative discussion. From there, the quantitative data analysis proceeded with these findings feeding the questionnaire for data collection in quantitative phase.

3.12.2. Quantitative data analysis

This part of data analysis handled the data from questionnaire which, was fed from document analysis. The study analysed collected data using STATA Statistical Package. The researcher summarised students' attitude towards feedback using frequency tables and percentages. In the analysis, strongly agree (AS) and agree (A) were merged to mean the participants agreed with the statement. Strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D) were also merged to show that the participants disagreed the statement. The study finally used logistic regression to determine relationship between variables. This test is used to examine the relationship between a dichotomous dependent variable and dichotomous, interval and ratio independent variables (Walsh, 2016). According to Walsh, logistic regression uses maximum likelihood to generate the estimation value between 0.0 and 1.0 which indicates the probability of the outcome. It yields unbiased and efficient estimates of variables. Logistic regression was used

to determine the association between writing practice and learners' attitude towards feedback. The test also determined the association between writing practice and feedback type. It finally determined the association between feedback and learners' attitude. This was done in line with social cognitive theory's triadic reciprocal determinism among the variables (environment, person and behaviour which, in this study, are feedback, attitude and writing practice respectively). The study used statistical test of significance to determine the level of significance of association in order to assert social cognitive theory that there is indeed an influence circle among feedback (environment), attitude (person) and writing practice (behaviour).

This was followed by an interpretation of results. In data interpretation the researcher analyses the results from the data to answer the research questions/objectives or test hypothesis (Cohen et al., 2018). This means that the researcher let the data address the research objectives without putting in her personal experiences. In doing so, the researcher used interview quotes to explain why results have come out in that way. Interviews were transcribed and direct quotes were provided wherever it was needed to confirm or refute an idea speculated by participants answering questionnaire. The researcher made a review of the major findings and how the research objectives were achieved compared with the theory and literature.

Table 3.3 shows a matrix of study inclusion and exclusion criteria that was used to achieved each objective.

Table 3.3: Matrix of study inclusion and exclusion criteria

Objective	Data Collection Method	Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria
assess the type of feedback that teachers give learners on their English composition.	Document analysis	Included all English composition marked scripts at secondary school level. Excluded forms 1-3 and form 4 class exercises.
examine learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive on their English composition.	Questionnaire	Included all secondary school students. Excluded forms 1-3 students.
assess the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice in English composition	An analysis of data from documents and questionnaire by use of theory (social cognitive, triadic reciprocal determinism) and STATA (logistics regression) to determine the relationship between learners' attitude towards feedback and their writing practice.	There was data cleaning and sorting according to the objectives

3.12.3. Credibility and trustworthiness

The researcher employed triangulation to ensure that the findings of the study are trusted. This means that the researcher did not only depend on the data from one source rather that multiple sources were used. That is, the researcher triangulated data using interviews with

English teachers to confirm learners' writing practice. In addition, the researcher conducted a pilot testing study of the instruments to ensure that quality data was obtained for credibility of the findings. According to Fraenkel (2012), the quality of instruments used in a study is very important since the conclusions researchers draw are based on the information obtained using such instruments.

As suggested by Creswell (2013), the researcher used member checking and external auditing to establish the credibility of the results. In member checking, the researcher took back the interview transcriptions to the participants for them to confirm or disconfirm it. This also helped the researcher to revisit the database to find the missing information. Since document analysis requires that the researcher demonstrates objectivity (seeking to represent the research material fairly) and sensitivity (responding to even subtle cues to meaning) in the selection and analysis of data from documents (Browne, 2009), in this study the researcher stayed away from using personal experiences in the document analysis but rather enlisted only the data that the documents provided. The researcher also submitted the report to a hired expert in the field of research to review it and give feedback through a written communication. This helped the researcher to make some corrections in the report.

3.13. Ethical considerations

This study followed all the necessary ethical considerations such as confidentiality, seeking consent and avoidance of duplication as discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.13.1. Confidentiality

The researcher ensured that confidentiality in the study is seriously observed. She made sure to conceal the identities of all the participants as advised by Cohen et al. (2011). In all the

schools selected, the researcher ensured that she used codes for the participants in the sites where the data was collected. Identification codes known to the researcher were also assigned to the schools to avoid direct association to the participants and the institutions.

3.13.2. Consent

The researcher obtained informed consent from all participants in writing. Each participant received a letter outlining the aims of the study. As advanced by Creswell (2013), participants were allowed to exercise their right to refuse or accept to participate. This is in line with Cohen et al. (2011) who argued that the principle of informed consent arises from the subjects' right to freedom and self-determination. In this respect, participants were told on the importance of the data and that confidentiality would be maintained for them to make an informed decision whether to participate or not. After getting ethical clearance from MZUNIREC, the researcher also obtained a written consent from the Education Division to conduct scholarly research in various educational institutions targeted by the research. A consent was also obtained from the heads of the institutions to collect data in their various posts.

3.13.3. Avoidance of duplication

The researcher made an extensive research into the literature bearing in mind that a number of ethical considerations accompany the use of literature related to the concept under study (Creswell, 2013). An effort, therefore, was taken to ensure that the study is not a duplication of earlier studies done by other researchers. The researcher conducted a deep research into the literature to establish a gap. The researcher also properly acknowledged use of other sources.

3.14. Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the research methodology that was used to generate data for this study. It has been revealed that the study used a mixed methods approach to research. The weaknesses and strengths of the methodology taken in this study have been explained too. The researcher has justified the reasons behind any decision that was taken in the study. Issues of research approach, study setting, study population, sample size, sampling techniques, ethical considerations, credibility and trustworthiness, data collection methods and instruments, pilot study and data analysis and interpretation have also been discussed in this section.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. Chapter overview

This chapter carries the findings of the two phases of the study. The first phase of the study looked at document analysis of English composition marked scripts. The phase exposed the type of feedback teachers gave their learners on their compositions. The study looked at feedback that teachers wrote during mock examinations for MSCE students in selected schools in Dowa. In fact, it was Central East Education Division (CEED) mock. This mock examination was administered in the whole of CEED where 41 schools from Dowa sat for the same examinations. The second phase of the study involved the administration of questionnaire and interviews with the English composition teachers. This phase exposed the attitude that learners have towards the feedback that they received from their teachers on their English composition.

The study was guided by three objectives; a). to assess the type of feedback that teachers give learners on their English composition; b). to examine learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive on their English composition and c). to assess the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice in English composition.

4.1. Type of feedback students receive on their written composition

Students in selected schools in Dowa received a variety of feedback. The following paragraphs discuss these varieties.

4.1.1. Varieties of feedback received

4.1.1.1. Unfocused feedback

This is where the teachers gave feedback on all aspects of the composition without focusing on one aspect only. That is, the teachers checked all errors that learners made in the composition they wrote. This is unlike where the feedback is focused where the teacher focuses on one issue i.e. grammar, content etc. The unfocused feedback in this study has been made on two levels; linguistic/surface and content. The following is a discussion of these two levels as depicted in the marked scripts.

a. Linguistic/surface level

In this level, the focus is on linguistic errors to do with the word, sentence or the paragraph (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2017). In the feedback that teachers gave learners in this study, the main focus was on word form errors e.g. spellings, registers, omissions and expression. It also focused on sentence structure errors e.g. punctuation, word order. Most of the comments and symbols made were centering on the linguistic level. The following are examples.

i. word form errors e.g. spellings, registers, omissions and expression

Teachers made sure that they pointed out errors on word forms in learners' composition scripts. Figure 4.1. shows an extract of a marked script where the teacher gave feedback on spellings and omissions. In figure 4.2. the extract shows teacher's comment on expression. The teacher has used a symbol for omission, circled wrong words "chidrens", "is" and the abbreviation EXP for wrong expression "found of getting".

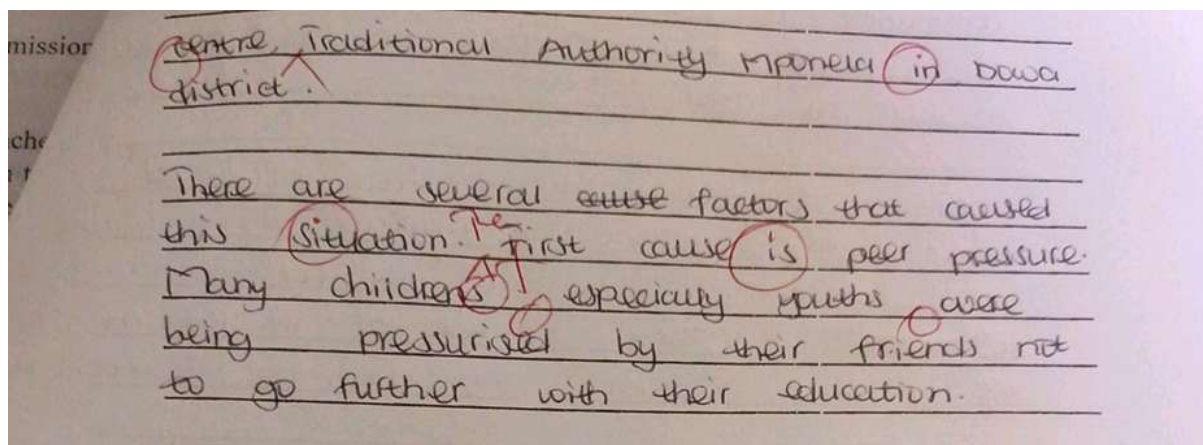


Figure 4.1: Teacher's feedback on omission and spelling errors

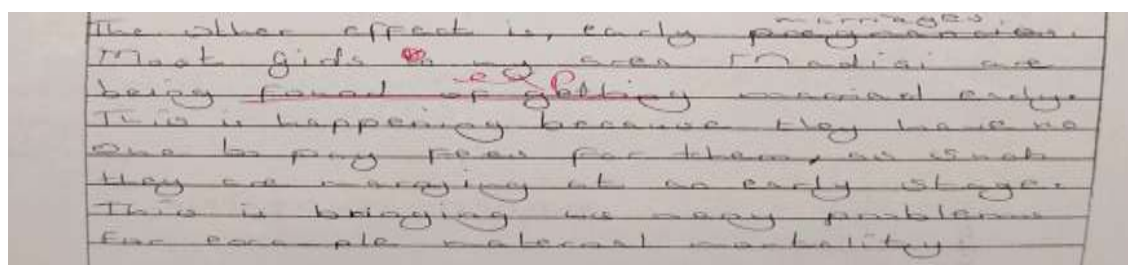


Figure 4.2: Teacher's feedback on expression

ii. sentence structure errors

Teachers in this study also made comments on sentence errors. Figure 4.3 and 4.4 show teacher's feedback on sentence construction. In figure 4.3 the teacher punctuated the sentence and filled in omitted words to make it into a complete sentence "Lastly, there is poverty." In figure 4.4, the teacher wrote a comment on sentence construction "Kindly Work on sentence construction otherwise this is not making sense"

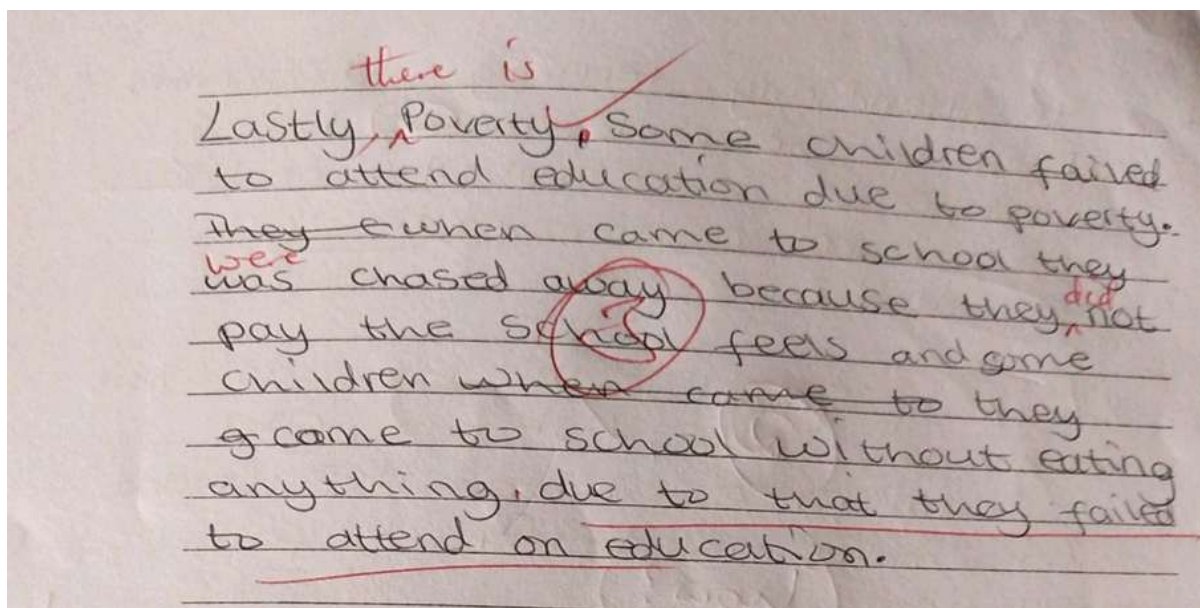


Figure 2.3: Teacher's feedback on sentence construction

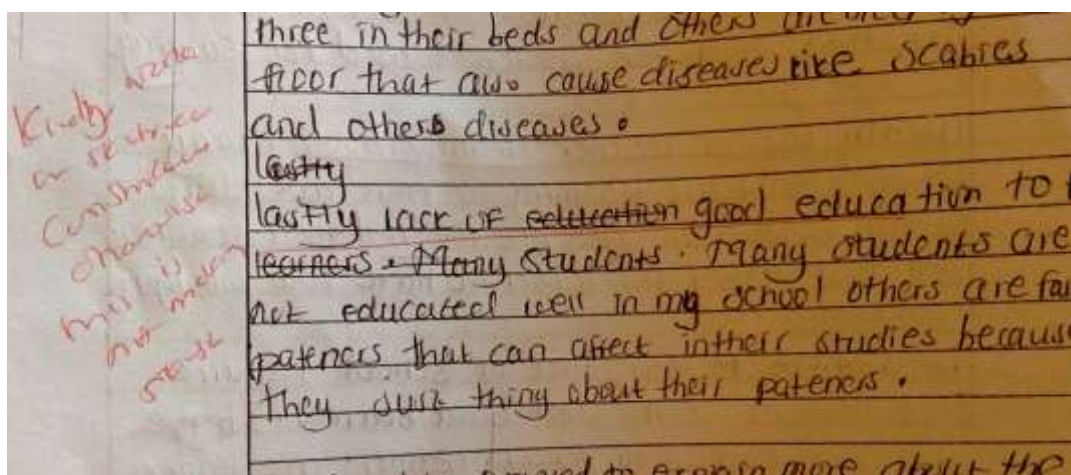


Figure 4.4: Teacher's comment on sentence construction

iii. paragraph structure comments

In this study, teachers also made comments on the structure of a paragraph from long paragraphs to one sentenced paragraphs. Figure 4.5 shows teacher's comment on paragraph construction. The teacher just put the whole paragraph in a one big open bracket and wrote "paragraph!" to show that there is something wrong with this paragraph.

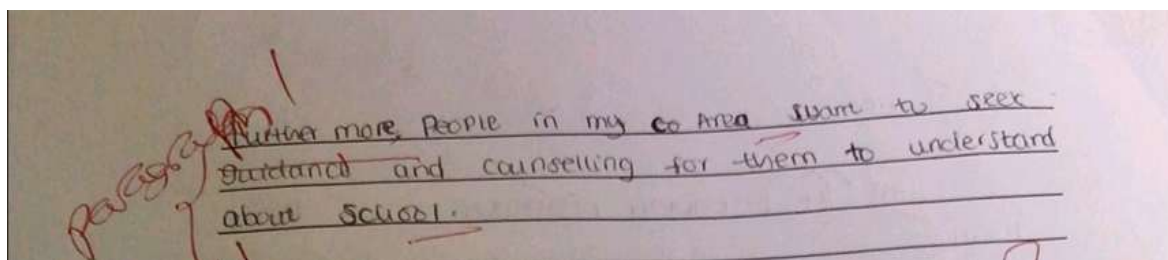


Figure 4.5: Teacher's comments on paragraph

b. Content level

On content level, the focus lies on the relationship between the composition and the question (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2017). The teachers made general comments at the end of the composition or on the sides of the composition. Mostly there was one or two statements to tell the students who got the question wrong that their answer was off point. For example, “be serious with practice and studies, you can do better”, “off point”, “You need to plan your work”, “too short”, “You did not understand the question”. Figure 4.6 shows an extract of a marked script where the teacher made a comment on the learners’ understanding of the question. In this case, the teacher said “Check the question. You did not understand the question”

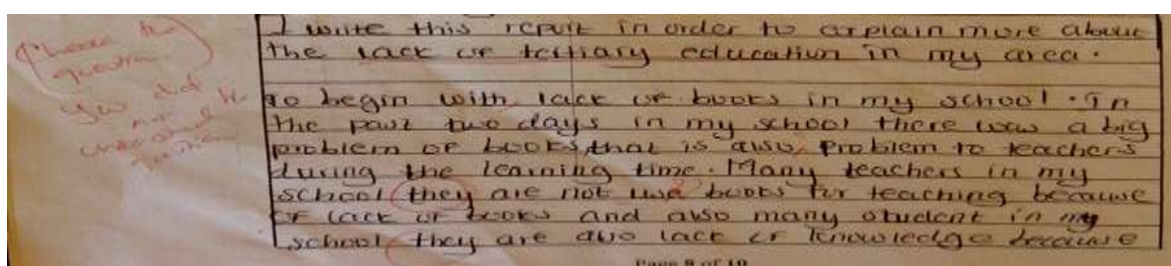


Figure 4.6: Teacher's comment on general content of the composition

4.1.1.2. Explicit/direct feedback

This is where the teachers made corrections on the errors that learners made. That is, the teachers gave a correct version of what the learners got wrong. The following are examples of the errors that the teachers corrected.

a. corrections on word form errors

Teachers in this study made corrections on learners' word form errors. For example, the teacher gave the correct word for a misspelt word "absenteeism" (A8¹) and inserted an omitted word "another" (A8²).

b. corrections on sentence structure errors

Teachers also gave correct version of sentences by adding more words or modifying the sentences with proper punctuations.

Examples:

- i. The teacher made corrections on a sentence by punctuating it. The teacher inserted a comma in the sentence "Despite all the challenges, people in my area ..." (A7³)
- ii. The teacher also made corrections on a sentence which did not start with a capital letter. The teacher corrected the sentence by capitalising the first word of the sentence "Failing to go and attend tertiary education is life in Lipili village." (B10⁴)

c. use of written explanations for the symbols used

Sometimes, teachers used symbols that were accompanied by explanations or the error that has been committed. For example, the teacher circled "children" and "they" then put a comment beside it saying "avoid repeating subjects. children/they" (D2⁵).

¹ School A, script 8

² School A, script 8

³ School A, script 7

⁴ School B, script 10

⁵ School D, script 2

4.1.1.3. Implicit/indirect feedback

This is where the teachers pointed out an error without correcting it. The teachers made sure that learners know where there was an error but they did not give the learners a correct version of the errors they committed. The following are the ways in which the teachers pointed out learners' errors.

a. use of symbols, circles, abbreviations and underlines

The teachers used symbols, circles, abbreviations and underlines without comments to explain the error students made.

Examples:

- i. Figure 4.7 shows an extract of marked script where the teacher used a question mark (?) to give feedback. The teacher has placed question marks inside a paragraph without saying what is wrong with the paragraph.

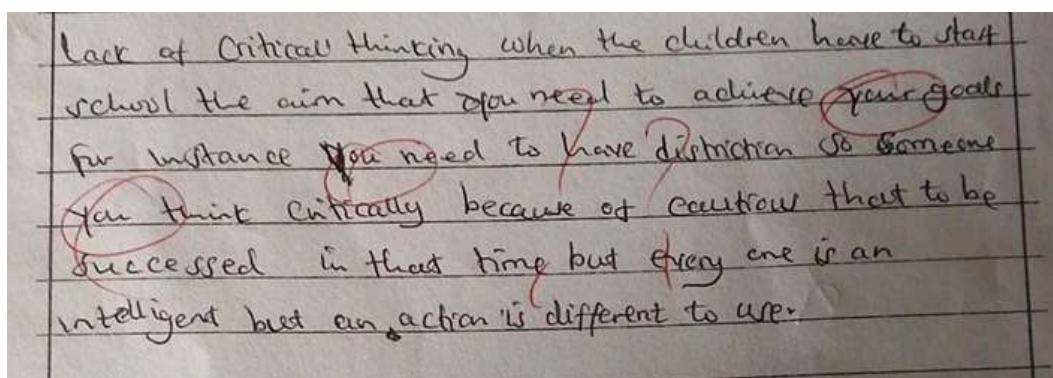


Figure 4.7: Teacher's use of question marks

- ii. Figure 4.8 shows an extract of marked script where the teacher used an omission symbol (^). The teacher used the symbol without putting the missing word in the sentence "sometimes they depends ^ other people to..."

part of in the brain to say
to make good decision on your own. Some
times they depends other people to
help him in different things because he/
she does not make good things without
others.

Figure 4.8: Teacher's use of omission symbol

- iii. In figures 4.9 and 4.10, the teacher used abbreviations. WW for wrong word “seating”, GR for ungrammatical construction “they starts”, EXP for wrong expression “seating” in figure 4.9 and SP for a wrong spelling of “counselling” in figure 4.10.

The effect of this issues is school drop out.
Most students drop off out school because
of poor performances due to that, they starts
drug and substance abuse because they see
just ~~see~~ ^{see} ~~seating~~ ^{exp} at home and some starts
prostitution and kept leading to sexually
transmitted infections and also ~~if~~ contracting
HIV and AIDS.

Figure 4.9: Teacher's use of abbreviations WW, EXP and GR

happy. We would like your support to help us by
putting opportunity to learn good communication
and counselling ~~sp~~ the parents who do not afford to
pay for the required things. Inadequate

Figure 4.10: Teacher's use of abbreviation SP

b. use of questions

Teachers in this study used questions to give feedback. Questions such as “where is the area?”, “how?”, “what situation?”, “what are you writing?” (D4, 6, 8, 10 respectively⁶) were used.

c. use of interjections

Teachers in this study also used interjections to give feedback on their composition. The teachers used interjections such as “location please!”, “punctuation!”, “not clear!” (C3, 5, 7 respectively⁷).

d. Use of statements/phrases

Teachers in this study also used statements/phrases to let learners know that they committed an error. The teachers used statements/phrases such as “poor way of writing an address”, “not clearly backed”, “poor ending” (A4, 8, 9⁸).

4.1.1.4. Emphasised marks and symbols

In the feedback given, teachers made an emphasis on some marks by putting more than one symbol or repeated the mark. For examples, using more than one question marks (????) and exclamations (!!!!) and circling words several times.

4.1.1.5. Marks

Teachers in this study also used marks to give feedback to the learners. They showed the learners how they had performed in the following ways.

⁶ School D, scripts 4, 6, 8 and 10

⁷ School C, scripts 3, 5 and 7

⁸ School A, scripts 4, 8 and 9

a. marks inside the composition

Teachers indicated how much marks the learners got in the parts of the composition. For example, the address, the points in each paragraph etc.

b. marks distribution on content, layout and grammar

Teachers also gave feedback by showing marks the learners accumulated for each category i.e. content, layout and mechanical error/grammar. Figure 4.11 shows a marked script of a composition where a teacher has indicated marks distribution of “layout = 5”, “content = 14” and “grammar = 5”.

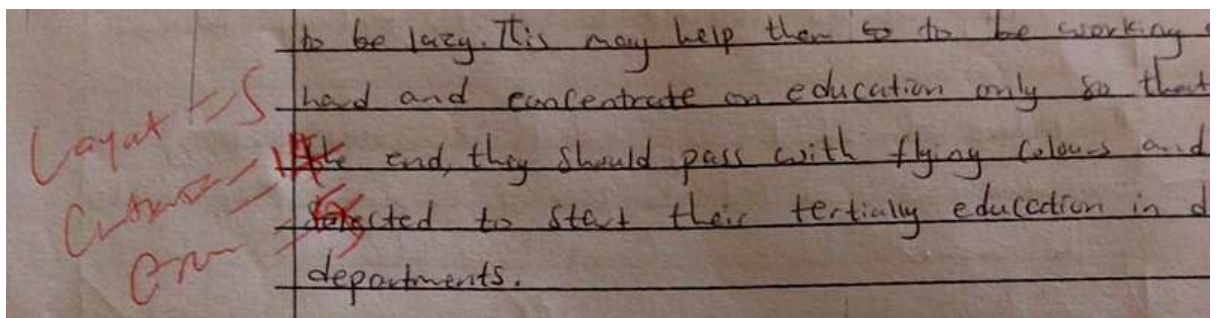


Figure 4.113: Teacher’s indication of marks distribution on a composition

c. Overall marks for the composition

This is the overall marks on top of the composition showing the marks a student got for the composition out of 40 marks.

4.1.2. Feedback development

Feedback is considered developed if it clearly outlines what the learner did well, areas that need improvement and how the learners will improve (Tehrani, 2018). The feedback that students received in this study was undeveloped. Most of the comments that teachers were

making on the scripts outlined mistakes that learners made. For example, the teachers were correcting the mistakes, circling or underlining wrong words or sentence constructions without telling the students that it is a wrong construction. In other words, teachers made corrections without explaining what the learner did wrong and they circled or underlined the mistakes that students made without explaining how the student can correct them. Teachers did this because they were chasing marking deadlines and they had large classes.

The teachers in this study mentioned that they had students ranging from 37 – 165. With the number of students' composition scripts to attend to and the marking deadlines to meet, teachers did not manage to write developed feedback on the students' composition scripts.

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) agreed with this when he said that, *"I give a detailed feedback in class when revising the composition because it takes a little time to mark um with the deadlines I, I am often chased by the deadlines. Yeah."*

To conclude, teachers in this study gave students corrective feedback that was unfocussed, implicit and explicit. The feedback focused on both content and linguistic/surface level of the composition. It was also undeveloped as it did not guide learners on how to make corrections of the errors they committed. This is similar feedback to that which Sultana and Yoko (2021) found. They found that students were receiving feedback which was obscure and not clear. The feedback did not guide the students on what to do or where they have made a mistake. Sritrakarn (2018) also found that students were receiving feedback that was stressful and confusing. Although we are not told the exact feedback that students recieved, the study points out that it was constructive and corrective feedback and the students improved their writing skills.

Unlike this feedback, this study had found that the feedback that students received was a combination of both obscure and clear feedback whereby in some instances the mistake was outlined and the students were given the correct version of what they did wrong. According to Sultana and Yoko (2021) and Sritrakarn (2018) studies, the type of the feedback did not matter much but the students' attitude towards this feedback played a vital role in helping the learners to improve their writing skills. This is so because these studies presented that the students received feedback which was 'not good' (unclear, confusing and obscure) but the students managed to improve their writing skills because of their positive attitude. According to Albert Bandura's reciprocal determinism theory, the 'person' is influenced by the environment which also affect the behaviour. That is, the feedback is as important as the attitude for there to be writing practice. In the next phase, the study looked at the students' attitude towards this type of feedback.

4.2. Students' attitude towards the feedback they receive in English composition writing

This is the second phase of the study where a questionnaire was administered to solicit learners' attitudes towards feedback they received. The objective was to examine learners' attitude towards the feedback they received on their English composition. In addressing this objective, the questionnaire sought to answer the questions a). Do students like to receive feedback? B). What is the students' attitude towards the type of feedback they receive? C). What do students do with the feedback they receive?

The questionnaire was administered to 144 form four students from four schools. In each school, 18 boys and 18 girls attended to the questionnaire making it a total of 36 students per school. Overall, 72 boys and 72 girls attended to the questionnaires. The final analysis took

into consideration a total of 140 questionnaires. Four (4) questionnaires were not used in the final analysis as they were deemed void. Students left other questions unanswered and others ticked more than one responses. 95% of the participants were aged 16-20 while 3% and 2% were aged 10-15 and 21-25 respectively. The questionnaire was composed of 25 statements to which learners stated their level of agreement using a four-points Likert scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). When participants ticked strongly agree (SA) and agree (A), the interpretation was that they agreed. Similarly, disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) entailed disagreement.

4.2.1. Attitude towards receiving feedback

Statements 3 - 7 of the questionnaire tackled the aspect of learners' attitude towards receiving feedback in general. Table 4.1 shows frequencies and percentages of students' level of agreement to the set of statements in this part.

Table 4.1: Attitude towards receiving feedback

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
3	I believe that feedback is essential for improving my learning	6	15	21	15	72	47	119	85	Disagree
4	Feedback helps me to identify areas of improvement	56	12	68	49	20	52	72	51	Disagree
5	Feedback is necessary for my academic improvement	48	15	63	45	41	36	77	55	Disagree
6	I prefer to be receiving feedback after I submit my work	41	18	59	42	20	61	81	58	Disagree
7	I like receiving feedback individually on my composition script	37	23	60	43	43	37	80	57	Disagree

In Table 4.1 above, learners disagreed with items 3 – 7 with 85%, 51%, 55%, 58% and 57% respectively. That is, they had disagreed that feedback was essential for improving their learning (item 3), that feedback helped them to identify areas of improvement (item 4) nor

helped them to improve their academic performance (item 5). They did not also agree that they liked receiving feedback after submitting their work (item 6). They did not like receiving feedback individually on their composition script (item7). This means that students in this study had a negative attitude towards receiving feedback. In other words, the teachers had to push the students to up take the feedback especially those who did not perform well.

For example, Teacher D (June 20, 2025) explained that he punished those who failed, *“Most of the times, I give more work to those who have failed in order um, to encourage them as part of punishment. Worse come to worst (sic), I give them none academic related punishments...”*

This means that learners were forced to work on the feedback for fear of punishment. However, they still did not like receiving feedback. Students in this study associated feedback with punishment. They knew that whenever feedback was coming, and they had failed, a punishment would come with it. This can be the reason why these students did not like to be receiving feedback.

Although these learners had been exposed to feedback for over three years, they still didn't know the essence of receiving feedback. Their disagreement to items 3 – 5 showed that they received feedback since it was written on their marked scripts but they did not value it. This also explained why there was a low turn up of students to ask for clarification and help on challenging areas from teachers.

Teacher C (June 7, 2025) lamented;

“Mm that’s very rare. There are very few students I can cite perhaps five or six. On average that’s per week will come and ask for some assistance. And those ones those five I think they have been doing that I think consistently from term one, term two, term three. But the rest they don’t usually come for assistance.”

Teacher B (June 6, 2025) added that, *“Ah, koma pa makomentsi nde samabwera. No one has ever come special for the comments. Mwina nkutheka manyazi kuti momwe ayikira makomentsimu ndekuti ndikapita ndikachita kuwoneka kuti ndine.”* (Ah, they don’t come for comments clarification. No one has ever come specifically for comments clarification. Maybe they are afraid of exposing themselves to me.)

The students’ dislike for feedback also manifested when they did not go to the teacher even after being called.

Teacher B (June 6, 2025) lamented;

“Makamaka kwa ana oti mwina sanachite bwino kapena kuti sakuchita bwino kuwaphunzitsa mwina sizikuthekabe amapezeka kuti they are always shy to come to me and kufunsa mwina kuti apa mwina zikuti bwanji. They just wait until mwina I call them. Amakhala ena mwina kusabwera, kumajomba. Mwina manyaziwo, they fail even to come.”

(The poor performers are always afraid to come for clarification and consultations. They wait to be called and asked. Sometimes, they don’t even come.)

Although learners did not like to go to the teachers for consultation, the teachers said that they encouraged them to do so. However, few of them showed up for help.

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) complained;

“Yes, they do come. And then we sit down and discuss and talk on the areas that they are trying to improve on. But then they are not many. They are the very same students. For example, if you try to be open to tell the class you can be writing your own things on your free time. In most cases what happens is the very same students are the ones that brings extra work. The others, it has to be class work. If it’s not class work, they will not do anything on their own.”

Apart from being afraid of punishment, these learners did not like to receive feedback because they did not like to practice the subject altogether. Most learners in this study were said to do English work only when the teacher had given them work to do. They undermined the subject as easy and straight forward as Teacher A (June 8, 2025) suggested, *“... Plus, another thing, ana ambiri sawerenga English amayiona kuti ndiyotani ndiyomveka ndiyophweka they wait for an exercise nde kuti mwina umapereka ntchito, ukawapatsa ntchito ana aja akalembe then abweretse Tuesday lija”* (In addition, most of the learners do not practice English, they think it is easy to understand and they wait for an exercise to practice it. So, I give them work to be submitting Tuesdays.)

Based on the forgoing arguments, learners in this study did not like to be receiving feedback because they associated it with punishments and they took the subject for granted. This is

shown when they did not go to the teacher to ask for help or clarifications even when they were called.

4.2.2. Attitude towards feedback type

Items 8 – 22 were statements about different types of feedback that learners receive. The following tables show their results.

4.2.2.1. Explicit/direct feedback

Explicit feedback covered statements 8-10 of the questionnaire. Table 4.2 shows learners' level of agreement towards these statements.

Table 4.2: Explicit/direct feedback

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
8	I prefer feedback that clearly states what I did correctly and incorrectly.	49	14	63	45	34	43	77	55	Disagree
9	I improve better if the teacher gives a correct version of the errors I make	45	18	63	45	30	47	77	55	Disagree
10	I take an extra step to avoid the mistake that the teacher corrected on my composition script	37	24	61	44	49	30	79	56	Disagree

In the table, with majority (55%, 55% and 56% on items 8 -10 respectively) of the students disagreeing, students had a negative attitude towards explicit/direct feedback. That is, they did not like receiving feedback that states what they did correctly and incorrectly (item 8). They felt like they did not improve better if the teacher gave a correct version of the errors they made (item 9). They also did not take an extra step to avoid the mistake that the teacher corrected on their composition script (item 10).

Learners in this study did not use the teachers' feedback. This had been shown when they were persistent in committing mechanical errors i.e. spellings, tense, grammar, expressional use etc. Their teachers had this to say.

Teacher A (June 8, 2025):

“Ana ambiri amavutika pa content and presentation of points. They have their points but on how they can present them to make them a good content ndichimene ndimawona kuti chimawavuta. Nkati kati mwa ma content ndekuti mukubwera ma issues a grammar mmene angapangire kuti zikhale coherent zimawavuta. Layout itha kukhala yabwinobwino address chanichani koma nkatikati mwa body ndimomwe zimakhala kuti zithu zikuwavuta”

(Most learners still have problems on content and presentation of points. Within the content comes the issues of grammar to make the composition coherent. For layout, they are good like writing of addresses and the like. It is the body that gives them problems.)

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) added that:

“Um, one common problem that I am meeting is short forms. Students you tell them to stop using short forms, next time you see them writing the very same things like ‘because’ they will write ‘b-c-o-z’ like that. So it’s quite a challenge. Spellings of course, we have students that have problems with spellings...”

In addition to that Teacher B (June 6, 2025) generalised that his students fell short on mechanical errors, *“Vuto lawo anawa kwambiri nde ndi kalembedwe especially ma mechanical errors.”* (There is a persistent problem in mechanical errors in some learners)

On the same, Teacher C (June 7, 2025) said that;

“However, we still have some problems in terms of especially punctuation. They don’t know how to use punctuations correctly. We still have some few who still have sentences beginning with a small letter. They don’t even know where to put a full stop; you have run on sentences which are simply joined by conjunction after conjunction and the whole paragraph has got just a single sentence and they call it a paragraph. So, they are still stuck in terms of such issues. But the basics are I would say there is an improvement”

From the teachers’ comments, learners did not improve even when the teachers gave them a correct version of their errors. On the marked scripts, explicit feedback was mostly seen on mechanical errors and paragraphing issues. For example, capitalization of the first letter of a sentence, spelling corrections, sentence punctuation, insertion of omissions etc. This showed that teachers really made corrections on some of the errors learners’ made but the learners did not improve. It all goes back to their lack of seriousness with English as a subject.

4.2.2.2. *Implicit/indirect feedback*

Implicit/indirect feedback covered statements 11-13 of the questionnaire. Table 4.3 shows learners' level of agreement towards these statements.

Table 4.3: *Implicit/indirect feedback*

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
11	I prefer feedback that give me guide on what I did wrong without making the correction	14	16	30	21	40	70	110	79	Disagree
12	I work better when the feedback points out the error for me to work on	27	28	55	39	36	49	85	61	Disagree
13	I learn better when I look for the correction myself	21	15	36	26	47	57	104	74	Disagree

Items in the table have not been agreed on by the students. The students did not agree that they preferred feedback that gave them guide on what they did wrong without making corrections (item 11, 79%) neither did they agree that they worked better when the feedback pointed out the error for them to work on (item 12, 61%). They also disagreed that they learnt better when they looked for the correction themselves (item 13, 74%). That is, learners had a negative attitude towards implicit/indirect feedback.

As noted by teachers' comments in section 4.2.1., most learners did not like going to the teachers for clarification on the feedback they received. In this section, learners had a negative attitude towards receiving feedback that would make them to go to their teachers. In this case, implicit feedback requires self-enquiry where the learner seek help either from the books or from friends or from the teacher. With their dislike for English studies and teacher consultations, it was not surprising that they did not like implicit feedback. Although this is the case, teachers' comments revealed that the students who came to ask for help and clarifications when they did not understand the feedback were the ones who showed improvement in English composition.

Students' dislike for teacher consultations made them to have a negative attitude towards implicit feedback in this study. This is one of the factors that made most of them to show little or no improvement in their composition writing although they had been receiving feedback for more than three years.

4.2.2.3. *Unfocused feedback*

Statements 14-16 of the questionnaire were about learners' attitude towards unfocused feedback. Table 4.4 shows learners' level of agreement towards these statements.

Table 4.4: Unfocused feedback

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
14	I prefer when feedback touches all aspects of the composition	40	46	86	61	33	21	54	39	Agree
15	Feedback that touches every aspect of composition helps me learn better	36	46	82	59	38	20	58	41	Agree
16	Receiving feedback on all aspects of a composition helps me learn well	32	46	78	56	40	22	62	44	Agree

In the table, students agreed to items 14 – 15 with 62%, 59% and 56% respectively. Thus, the students agreed that they prefer feedback that touches all aspects of the composition (item 14). They also agreed that feedback that touches every aspect of composition helped them learn better (item 15). Lastly, they agreed that receiving feedback on all aspects of a composition helped them learn well (item 16). This means that students in this study had a positive attitude towards unfocused feedback. This is due to their familiarity with the unfocused feedback.

Teachers agreed that they gave learners feedback which was unfocussed all the time depending on the errors students made. They did not have a specific writing task to tackle one

aspect of composition writing unless they were revising or it was a remedial lesson to cover what the learners did not do well.

Teacher A (June 20, 2025) had this to say;

“Thursday ndi remedial lesson ya English only amene unawayika kuti ali ndi mavuto akuti akuti abwere... during final touches pokonzekera mockyi ndimayesetsa kugwira apa ndi apo malingana ndi ma persistent problems awo aja”

(Thursdays are for remedial classes with students of the same category based on the errors they commit... During final touches in readiness for this mock exams, I would go and emphasize on a particular aspect at a time basing on most persistent error.)

Teacher C (June 7, 2025) added that, *“During class time following an exam or a writing assignment, I would tackle all the areas where learners did not do well.”*

The students were used to receiving feedback that tackled every aspect of the composition and not one at a time. Their familiarity to this type of feedback made them to have a positive attitude towards it. In addition, unfocussed feedback tackled various aspects and levels of the composition. This gave the learners a wide range of feedback of which, some might have liked.

4.2.2.4. Undeveloped feedback

Items 17 – 19 of the questionnaire were statements on undeveloped feedback. Table 4.5 shows learners’ level of agreement towards these statements.

Table 4.5: Undeveloped feedback

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
17	I prefer feedback that points out the mistake I committed without directing me how to improve	16	9	25	18	65	50	115	82	Disagree
18	I learn well when the feedback pushes me to seek for clarification from friends and the teacher	30	23	53	38	40	47	87	62	Disagree
19	I like feedback that outlines what I did wrong only in a composition	23	22	45	32	33	62	95	68	Disagree

In Table 4.5 above, students disagreed with items 17 – 19 with 82%, 62% and 68% respectively. In other words, the students did not agree that they preferred feedback that pointed out the mistakes they committed without directing them how to improve (item 17). They also disagreed that they learnt well when the feedback pushed them to seek for clarification from friends and the teacher (item 18). They did not agree that they liked feedback that outlined what they did wrong only in a composition (item 19). Students in this study had a negative attitude towards undeveloped feedback.

Just like implicit feedback, undeveloped feedback would require learners to do research on their own or consult teachers or friends. Learners in this study had a negative attitude towards

going to consult the teacher. This means any feedback that was pushing them to meet teachers, was a no for them.

4.2.2.5. Marks distribution on content, layout and grammar

Items 20 – 22 focussed on statements about students’ attitude towards marks distribution.

Table 4.6 shows learners’ level of agreement towards these statements.

Table 4.6: Marks distribution on content, layout and grammar

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
20	I like it when the teacher breaks down how I performed on content, layout and grammar	47	40	87	62	40	13	53	38	Agree
21	Knowing which aspect I am not performing better helps me to seek help on that aspect	35	44	79	56	44	17	61	44	Agree
22	I learn better when I know how I perform in different aspects of the composition	30	48	78	56	48	14	62	44	Agree

In Table 4.6, students agreed to items 20 – 22 with 62%, 56% and 56% respectively. This means that, they agreed that they liked it when the teacher broke down how they performed on content, layout and grammar (item 20). They also agreed that knowing which aspect they

were not performing better helped them to seek help on that aspect (item 21). However, the teachers had complained that not all the learners came for assistance when they faced challenges. Sometimes, it was the teachers who made an effort to follow up on those who were lagging behind. Learners agreed that they learnt better when they knew how they performed in different aspects of the composition (item 22). This shows that the students in this study had a positive attitude towards marks distribution.

When the teachers simply put an overall grade, learners came to ask for a breakdown of the overall marks they got for the composition as Teacher B (June 6, 2025) asserted,

“Because ndikakhala kuti sinnapange break marks, amapezeka kuti amandifunsa kuti apapa where did I fail? So, Chifukwa cha that inquisitive mind, ndimaona kuti akufunitsitsabe atadziwa momwe achitira on each aspect. I think amafuna adziwe kuti malikisiwo achokera pati.”

(The students ask a lot of questions when they see that there is nothing at the end of the composition. Because of that inquisitiveness, I think the students would like to know how they did in each aspect. I think they take it as the grade justification.)

Students in this study liked to know how they got the overall marks. They liked to have a break-down of the overall marks so that they could know which aspect got them more marks and which one did not.

4.2.3. A comparison of learners' attitude across feedback types

Table 4.7 shows the percentages of learners' attitude towards feedback type. In the table, unfocused feedback and marks distribution were the students' favourites. They had more preferences from the students hence, having positive attitude. However, the learners' preference of the feedback type did not directly translate into their writing practice. This is so because the learners did not incorporate the feedback they got from the teachers which made them to show little or no improvement in their subsequent writings.

Table 4.7: Percentages of learners' attitude towards feedback type

Feedback Type	Positive Attitude		Negative Attitude	
	Sum	Percentage	Sum	Percentage
Unfocused Feedback	83	63%	49	37%
Marks Distribution	78	60%	54	40%
Indirect Feedback	48	36%	84	64%
Direct Feedback	31	24%	101	76%

4.2.4. What the students do with the feedback they receive

Items 23 – 28 of the questionnaire were statements about what the students do with the feedback they received. Table 4.8 shows learners' level of agreement towards these statements

Table 4.8: What students do with the feedback you receive

Item no.	Item	SA	A	Total	%	D	SD	Total	%	Remarks
23	I feel excited when I receive feedback	38	15	53	38	31	56	87	62	Disagree
24	I make changes to my work based on the feedback I receive	47	14	61	44	54	25	79	56	Disagree
25	I use the feedback in my future English composition.	37	21	58	41	37	45	82	59	Disagree
26	I take time to reflect on the feedback I receive	42	41	83	59	37	20	57	41	Agree
27	I share the feedback I get from my teacher with friends to get more clarification	36	43	79	56	43	18	61	44	Agree
28	When I don't understand feedback, I ask the teacher for clarification	46	13	59	42	35	46	81	58	Disagree

In Table 4.8, students disagreed with items 23, 24, 25 and 28 with (62%, 56%, 59% and 58% respectively). That is, they disagreed that they felt excited when they received feedback (item 23). On their attitude, this study found that they had a negative attitude towards receiving feedback (items 3-7). It was not surprising to find that here, they said that they did not feel excited to receive feedback. Teachers said that they tried harder to make the students read and recognise the feedback they give them. For example;

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) said that,

“Of course they may look like threats but then we do tell them, of course I, I do tell them to um to think of maybe MANEB papers because this is an examination class. So I tell them if you do not do this, if you do this, the same way you are doing it you are not changing, it means looking at this paper, you cannot answer the paper correctly... So, when you mention MANEB exams, they become like encouraged they try to follow what you have been telling them.”

Teacher A (June 8, 2025) added that,

“Let’s say kuti munthu akakhala zoti wamulemba comment on the feedback nde mwina mmene ndimachitira ine ndamulemba mwana sanachite bwino pa chakutichakuti mmusi muja ndimayikamo topic alembenso. Nde topic ija akabwerezanso ma mistake omwe aja. So one of the punishment ndiyakuti ukampatsa topic ija anzake sanalandire topic imeneyoyo. Iye akupanga it’s a key yoti she is punished but on the same time she will be motivated kuti ndilembe mwina ndisinthe. Pena akakhala kuti ndi extreme nde timawagwiritsa ntchito, akolope atani, cholinga azikafunsanso kwa azinzawo.”

(Let us say that I have given a learner feedback to improve on a certain aspect, I also write a topic below the composition for the learner to write again. If the learner repeats the mistakes, one of the punishments is that they write again while their friends are not. This becomes part of motivation for them to change and adhere to the feedback. If the problem is still persistent, the learner is

given a mopping or any other work as a punishment so that the learner can consult friends on how to improve.)

Despite these efforts, there are still other errors which were persistent during the terminal examinations. For example, the teachers talked about mechanical errors and paragraphing (see evidence on section 4.2.2.1).

Students disagreed that they made changes to their work based on the feedback they received (item 24) and that they used the feedback in their future English composition (item 25). This was confirmed by the teachers who said they were amazed by the persistent errors that students made.

Teacher C said that, *“To some learners yes. Pamene ena ndi aja oti akamalemba they are impressing me. So, ndikamaonabe mmene akulembelamo pena ndikumasangala kuti awawa zimene ndinawapatsa zija anasintha. Pamene ambiriwa kuwalemba zomwezo zikuchitikabe.”* (Some learners are impressing when they write their compositions. I am happy to see that they are implementing what I tell them. However, most of them still write what you corrected them.)

The teachers blamed this on students’ background knowledge which they did not want to give up. One of the teachers said that it was hard to convince a learner that the way ‘teacher 1’ taught them was out of syllabus or does not align with MANEB requirements of that year.

Teacher A (June 8, 2025) had this to say,

“Ok, chimene nnapanga note ineyo kunoku mwana akakhala kuti wamva chinthu from primary school, amati aphunzitsi athu anatiwuza chonchi. Chimodzimodzi kuti akakhala kuti wamva ku secondary level like in form one, aphunzitsi athu anatiwuza chonchi. Nde iweyo when you are trying to come in, with a clarification knowing fully kuti chimene wamvacho mwina its not okay ndekuti amakhala ngati akutani, ali reluctant... Ana ambiri amalakwa chifukwa cha kukanika kupanga accept kuti ichichi sichimenechichi koma chikhale chonchi mmene anachimvera koyambako. First information imene anamva ndiyimene amayiona ngati its very important. Nde when you are trying to come in zimakhala ngati zikuvutirapo.”

(What I have noted is that students cling on to information they got from primary school or lower classes of secondary school even if it is wrong. When you try to correct that error it becomes a problem. Most students fail because they do not accept the changes that we make if it does not agree to their first information as they see it to be most important.)

The students also disagreed that when they did not understand feedback, they asked the teacher for clarification (Item 28). Students in this study did not like conferencing with the teachers. Teacher B (June 6, 2025) said that the learners did not even come when they were called. He said it could be maybe because they were ashamed of their grades and the comments that the teacher made.

“Makamaka kwa ana oti mwina sanachite bwino kapena kuti sakuchita bwino kuwaphunzitsa mwina sizikuthekabe amapezeka kuti they are always shy to come to me and kufunsa mwina kuti apa mwina zikuti bwanji. They just wait

until mwina I call them. Amakhala ena mwina kusabwera, kumajomba. Mwina manyaziwo, they fail even to come.”

(The poor performers are always afraid to come for clarification and consultations. They wait to be called and asked. Sometimes, they don't even come.)

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) added that even for the learners to work on their own and bring to the teacher was also a problem. It was only a few students who took an initiative to talk to the teacher and ask for their support.

“Yes, they do come. And then we sit down and discuss and talk on the areas that they are trying to improve on. But then they are not many. They are the very same students. For example, if you try to be open to tell the class you can be writing your own things on your free time. In most cases what happens is the very same students are the ones that brings extra work. The others, it has to be class work. If it's not class work, they will not do anything on their own”

Teacher C (June 7, 2025) added that,

“Apart from the homework and assignments that I give them, few of them write their own compositions and then they bring them for marking. Or sometimes they come and ask for questions then I give them the questions after writing they bring the compositions for marking. And then I give them feedback. However, it is only those who perform above average who take an extra mile to write.”

Students agreed that they took time to reflect on the feedback they receive (item 26) and that they shared the feedback they got from their teacher with friends to get more clarification (item 27). Teachers were not sure whether or not learners reflect on the feedback they got.

Teacher A (June 8, 2025) said,

“mmm on that, I cannot say yes or no. koma ena mwa iwo say kuti they would reflect because you see an improvement ukalankhula eti. Ena amakhala kuti akupangabe zomwezo which says kuti mwina satani sapanga reflect on what you have told them.”

(Mm on that, I cannot say yes or no. But I can say that some of the students do reflect on the feedback because you see an improvement. Others are still committing the same errors which shows that they do not reflect on what you have told them.)

Teacher D (June 20, 2025) added that,

“Mmm on this one, I can’t be too sure. But then because it depends on the type of compositions that they are dealing with. A few compositions, I noted that they change. For example, report. On the format and all that, I noted that after feedback there was a change. But on the other type of composition um... it’s not always to see a change”

The teachers’ unsureness entailed that they did not really know their students. They could say about their learners in general but not individual problems of the students. This was not a surprise as all the teachers interviewed in this study had taught the class only while the students were already in form four (one-year experience with the learners). With the change

of teachers, it meant that learners did not have a bond with these teachers to put their trust in them. This also explained why the learners did not feel comfortable to talk to the teachers about their problems rather they chose to discuss with friends who, from the teachers' comments, did not help them to incorporate feedback in their subsequent writings. Most of the teachers agreed that they put learners in groups for English discussions and that would be where they found time to discuss with friends for clarification. For example, Teacher C (June 7, 2025) said that, "... *In addition to that, I also give them text books containing some stuff which I feel is necessary and advise them to work in groups. And then they submit the work after working in those groups...*"

From Table 4.8, it has been revealed that when learners in this study received feedback, they reflected and discussed with friends about the feedback. They did not like going to the teacher for clarification neither did they incorporate the changes in the feedback.

To sum up, students in this study show that they had a negative attitude towards most feedback types that they received. This is unlike the students in Sultana and Yoko (2021) who had a positive attitude towards the feedback they received. In the study, the students explained that the feedback challenged them to engage with the feedback as it was constructive. Srirakarn (2018) found that students in his study received feedback that was confusing but the students had a positive attitude because it was corrective. The feedback that students received in this study was also corrective, however, the students still had a negative attitude towards it. According to this study, the students did not like to be engaging with the teacher and they gave up when they failed several times. Teacher B (June 6, 2025) in section 4.4.1 stated that the poor performers were always shy to approach the teacher for consultations or clarifications.

Apart from being shy, teachers in this study also suggested that learners' background also contributed to their inability to uptake feedback. In section 4.2.4., Teacher A (June 8, 2025) suggested that students were affected by background information that they got from previous classes or what their senior friends and family had told them. It was difficult for them to accept the changes that had been made by their current teachers. This was so because English syllabus does not provide a standardised stand on the technicality of the compositions. For example, the syllabus does not say whether or not the addresses for a letter to be punctuated.

Teachers get most information from 'examiners' or 'markers' (those who go for MANEB marking) during In-service trainings (INSETs) organised by schools or divisions. This kind of information sometimes differ from one examiner to another and from one year to another. For example, one handout titled Malosa Secondary School Language INSET pointed out that the date for a report is written "11th September, 2023" (Maloachepe, 2023, P. 5) while another handout titled 2024 English Mega CPD said the date for report is written "Date: 14th May, 2022" (ATEM NED, 2024, P. 35). These INSETs were done in two different years, 2023 and 2024 respectively. Worse still, the core textbooks say something contrary to what is marked on the ground. Excel and Succeed, through a sample provided, says the date for a business letter can be written as "23/01/2017" (Kadyoma, 2017, P. 111) while MANEB's examination syllabus clearly states that candidates loses marks for putting slashes or dashes on the date in business letter (MANEB, 2020). The changes and differences might seem subtle, but they have an impact on the trust that learners have on their teachers. These changes remove the trust that students have on their teachers and on the feedback they receive. According to Tehrani (2018), students' trust also contribute to how students perceived the feedback they received. In his study, students developed a positive attitude

towards teacher feedback than peer feedback because they trusted the teacher than their peers although their feedback were the same.

According to Bandura's SCT, reciprocal determinism, the person affects the environment and behaviour. In this case, the learners' trust towards the feedback translates into their attitude towards the feedback itself. That is, when the learners trust the teachers, they have a positive attitude towards the feedback they receive from them. The person is also being shown by curiosity and familiarity. In this study, the students had a positive attitude towards unfocussed feedback and marks distribution because of their curiosity and familiarity to the feedback. Although learners were not implementing what they had been told, Sultana and Yoko (2021) suggested that with repetition and learners' curiosity, students in his study engaged with the feedback. However, Wu and Schunn (2020) found that students' improvement also depended on their understanding of the feedback. That is, for the person to react to the environment, they need to understand it. In this study, most students did not make time to find the teacher for clarification and consultation. This had resulted into their failure to incorporate the feedback they were used to since they did not understand it.

4.3. The impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on writing practice in English composition

This objective aimed at finding out the effect of learner's attitude towards the feedback they receive on their English composition writing practice. Here is a display of results that were drawn by using logistic regression test to find the likelihood of the student's attitude towards feedback affecting their writing practice.

4.3.1. The likelihood of the students' attitude towards feedback affecting their writing practice

Using the results from the questionnaire, learners' attitude towards feedback was found by summarising attitudes for each feedback type. First of all, the Likert scale points were converted into positive and negative by combining strongly agree with agree and strongly disagree with disagree respectively. Each feedback type had three questions, when the two items were positive, the type was said to be positive for that learner. Since there were five types of feedback, three positives meant that the learner has a positive attitude towards feedback. On writing practice, items 24 and 25 were used whereby when a student had positives for both it meant they write and both negatives meant they do not write. Those who had one positive and the other negative were disregarded.

4.3.1.1. Writing Practice and Attitude

Logistic regression analysis was used to test the relationship and also strength of the relationship between the dependent variable "writing practice" and the independent variable "Attitude". The results showed that there is a significant relationship between attitude and practice due to the P-value being <0.001 (at 95% confidence level) which means the relationship is unlikely to occur by chance.

The Coefficient value came out positive (1.81) which means as attitude changes from negative to positive the log-odds of writing practice increase by 1.81 units. The analysis also showed odds ratio 6.13 which indicates that individuals with a positive attitude are 6.13 times more likely to engage in writing practice as compared to those who have a negative attitude.

The results suggest that having a positive attitude towards feedback is strongly associated with writing practice.

4.3.1.2. *Writing practice and feedback type*

1. Writing Practice and unfocused Feedback

The results of the logistic regression on writing practice against direct feedback showed that there was a significant association between the two variables with a P-value of <0.001 at 95% confidence level.

The coefficient value of 2.36 means that as the attitude towards direct feedback changes from negative to positive the log-odds of writing practice increases by 2.36 units. The analysis also showed odds ratio 10.6 which indicates that individuals with a positive attitude towards unfocused feedback are 10.6 times more likely to engage in writing practice as compared to those who have a negative attitude towards direct feedback.

2. Writing Practice and Marks Distribution

The results of the logistic regression on writing practice against Marks distribution showed that there was a significant association between the two variables with a P-value of 0.02 at a confidence level of 95%.

The coefficient value was 1.57 which shows a positive relationship between the attitude towards marks distribution and writing practice hence a change from negative to positive attitude towards marks distribution will lead to an increase in the log-odds of writing practice by 1.57 units. The analysis also showed odds ratio 4.82 which indicates that individuals with

a positive attitude towards marks distribution are 4.82 times more likely to engage in writing practice as compared to those who have a negative attitude towards marks distribution.

3. Writing Practice vs indirect and direct feedback

The logistic regression analysis revealed no significant relationship between indirect and direct feedback the teachers give learners on their composition due to the P-value being greater than 0.05 at 95% confidence level, indicating that the relationship between indirect and direct feedback against writing practice is not statistically significant. This suggests that indirect and direct feedback provided by teachers may not be a determining factor in learners' writing practice.

The results here, suggest that the unfocused feedback method has a stronger correlation with writing practice as compared to the other feedback methods with an odds ratio of 10.6 seconded by marks distribution method with an odds ratio of 4.82. In other words, students' positive attitude towards feedback type help them to engage in writing practice. In this case, unfocused and marks distribution were the preferences of the students in this study. However, students in this study did not engage in writing practice even when they preferred unfocused feedback. There are two reasons which this study has found, the students did not want to interact with their teachers to get help where they were having challenges and the students were not motivated to write on their own. This entails that learners' negative attitude towards feedback negatively affected their uptake of the feedback. They failed to engage with the feedback as they did not understand it and they did not practice on their own.

In summary, this study has found that learners' attitude towards feedback influences their writing practice. In other words, when the attitude is negative, the learners' writing practice is

affected negatively and vice versa. This is in line with previous studies which found that learners' positive attitude towards feedback made them to improve their writing performance (Sultana & Yoko, 2021; Tehrani, 2018; Zahroh et al., 2020). The writing practice translates into high performance in composition writing. According to Brookhart (2017), students interact with teachers' feedback when they write. This means that for feedback to materialise, the students need to engage into writing practice. This is where they write again to incorporate the changes that their teachers told them. In doing so, the learners improve their writing performance.

According to Bandura's SCT, reciprocal determinism, the person also affects the behaviour. In this case, the person is the learners' attitude towards feedback and the behaviour is their writing practice. Their attitude helps them to decide to write again or not. This study has found that there is a strong relationship between the two variables, attitude and writing practice.

In this study, Albert Bandura's SCT, reciprocal determinism, plays a role in the feedback giving and receiving. According to Bandura, (2014) it is not just a cause and effect type of relationship but rather, the factors influence each other. In this case, the learners' attitude is affected by their writing practice as well as the feedback they receive. Similarly, the feedback they receive is influenced by their writing practice and attitude. Finally, their writing practice is affected by the feedback and their attitude. In short, there is a reciprocal determinism among feedback, attitude and writing practice. The diagram below summaries the relationship.

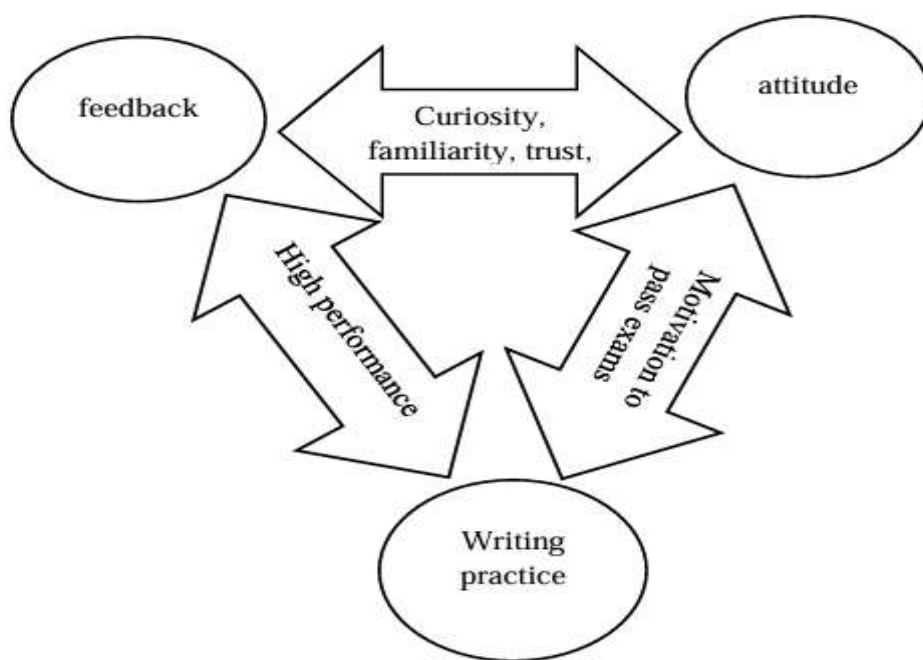


Figure 4.12: Summary of reciprocal determinism of feedback, attitude and writing practice

In Figure 4.12, the relationship among feedback, attitude and writing practice has been summarised. This study has revealed that the reciprocal determinism in feedback practice is actually starting with students receiving feedback. When they receive feedback, students act on it if they have a positive attitude towards the feedback. The study has found that for the students to have a positive attitude there are other mediating factors. Just like Kao and Reynolds (2024), this study found that students' trust towards the one giving the feedback affect their attitude. Similar to Sultana and Yoko (2021), this study also found that students' curiosity and familiarity to the feedback also affect their attitude. Lastly, the students understanding of the feedback also affect their attitude just like what Wu and Schunn (2020) found in their study. When the students have a positive attitude, they act on the feedback through writing practice. The ability of the learners' attitude to affect writing practice is also affected by their motivation to pass examinations. Most learners in this study lacked

motivation which made them to not write even when they had a positive attitude towards unfocused feedback. The writing practice translates into high performance in English composition writing which in return increases the students' need for more feedback and their positive attitude towards the feedback practice itself.

In short, figure 4.12 says that feedback affect attitude when the learner trusts the source, understands the feedback and is curious and familiar with the feedback. The learners' positive attitude translates into writing practice when the learners are motivated to pass examinations or are serious about the subject (English). The writing practice calls for more feedback when it is yielding fruits i.e. the learners are performing well in their subsequent writings.

4.4. Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a discussion and analysis of the research findings basing on the research objectives indicated in chapter one. The discussion and analysis has been done in relation to the social cognitive theory which roofed the study. It has first assessed the type of feedback that teachers give their learners in English composition writing. It then analysed learners' attitude towards the feedback they receive in English composition. The study also assessed the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice. The next chapter is the conclusion which summarizes the main findings of the study as well as recommendations on what should be done to improve feedback giving and receiving in English composition writing in secondary schools in Malawi. Areas calling for further research have also been presented in the chapter.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Chapter overview

This chapter has summarised the main findings of the study in relation to the research objectives. It has centred on the feedback practices that happen when teachers are teaching English composition writing. It has also highlighted some of the critical areas calling for further research in relation to the teaching of English in schools in Malawi. The chapter has eventually made some recommendations on what should be done to make sure effective feedback practices are used to help learners engage into English composition writing practice English in Malawi.

5.1. Summary of major findings

This study revealed that teachers in selected schools in Dowa gave corrective feedback to their learners on their English composition scripts. The feedback was unfocused as it tackled several areas at once. It was also direct when it gave learners the correct version of what they got wrong. The teachers scribbled symbols and abbreviations without any explanation of the students' mistake on the script to indirectly point out the students' mistake. They also gave feedback by emphasizing symbols. Apart from that, the teachers showed the students the distribution of their overall marks into performances on grammar, content and layout.

The study had also revealed that learners in this study had a negative attitude towards receiving feedback in general. Mostly, it was the teacher's responsibility to make them engage with the feedback. The study exposed that most learners in this study did not take English, as a subject, seriously to work on it on their own. The learners did not have time to

practice English composition writing without the involvement of the teacher. They worked on compositions mostly when the teacher gave them something to work on as individuals or in groups. Most learners who did not perform well were afraid to go to the teachers to ask for help on their composition writing. They liked discussing the feedback with their peers and not going to consult the teachers on issues concerning their performance in English composition writing. The teachers confirmed that most learners did not implement what the teachers told them in form of feedback. In return, most of the students failed to perform well in English composition. Although they had a negative attitude towards receiving feedback, learners in this study liked the fact that the feedback they received was unfocused and that the teachers showed the distribution of their marks. This was so because of their curiosity and familiarity.

This study has also established that learners' attitude towards feedback impacts their writing practice. Using logistic regression analysis, the study has established that the relationship that exist between attitude and writing practice is strong. Which means learners with positive attitude are more likely to engage in writing practice than those with a negative attitude. This in return helps the learners to improve in their English composition writing performance.

5.2. Conclusion

Learners in this study received corrective feedback which was not developed and was unfocused. The learners had a negative attitude towards the feedback they received. This made the students to fail to implement what they were told by their teachers in form of feedback despite receiving feedback for more than three years. Based on these findings, this study argues that feedback practice helps in the improvement of learners' English composition writing when learners have a positive attitude towards the feedback as well as

the writing practice. This can be realised when the learners trust their teachers, understand the feedback and are curious and familiar with the feedback they receive. In essence, when learners have a positive attitude towards feedback, they will be able to engage in writing practice and eventually improve in their English composition writing performance.

5.3. Recommendations

This study has confirmed that learners' attitude towards feedback affect their writing practice. It also found that learners have a positive attitude towards feedback when they trust the teacher, understand the feedback and are curious and familiar with the feedback. Although these findings cannot be generalised to all the schools in Malawi, the lessons learnt can help to improve the feedback practice in Malawi through the following recommendations in order to help learners develop a positive attitude towards feedback.

5.3.1. *Consistency of teachers*

For learners to develop a trusting relationship with their teachers, they have to know them well. This study suggests that a teacher who teach students in form one should be the one to take them through to form four. With the issues of postings, schools do not have a choice sometimes. The division should consider a minimum of four years for a teacher to stay at a school before being posted away. This way, teacher will develop a bond with the learners and will get to know the learners better in such a way that the teacher will be able to help them according to their weak areas when giving them feedback.

5.3.2. *Harmonisation of English syllabus with teaching and learning materials and*

MANEB

In order to avoid confusing the learners with different information from different sources, this study recommends that there should be a harmony among the syllabus, learning and teaching materials and what MANEB should follow when marking. In other words, since MANEB is an examination body, it should not dictate what to be taught but it should examine what the syllabus puts forward. The syllabus on the other hand should not leave gaps for teachers to look for outside sources in order to comprehend the syllabus. Lastly, the core texts which also help in translating the syllabus should be thoroughly scrutinised to make sure they are in line with the current syllabus. This harmony will not only help learners to trust the teachers but it will also help them to master English as a subject and as a language.

5.3.3. *Increased practice time for English composition writing*

To increase learners' contact with English writing practice and feedback, this study suggests that teachers should use every opportunity to engage the learners in writing activities. Since most schools have a large number of students in a class, teachers should use other modes of teaching like group work, peer marking etc. However, once in a while, teachers must be able to assess the students as individuals in order to meet the individual student's needs.

5.4. *Areas for further study*

This study focused on secondary school feedback practice in Malawi whereby written feedback and conferencing were majorly tackled. However, there is still a gap in literature on the following aspects.

- a. The impact of online/ computer assisted feedback on learners' performance at university level

- b. A comparison on peer feedback versus teacher feedback in English composition writing
- c. Factors affecting learners' failure in English composition writing

These areas will help in understanding and improving feedback practice in Malawi.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Mzunirec letter of approval to conduct research



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
Luwinga
Mzuzu 2
MALAWI
TEL: 01 320 722
FAX: 01 320 648

MZUZU UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (MZUNIREC)

Ref No: MZUNIREC/DOR/25/23

27/03/2025

Atupele Mwamadi,
Mzuzu University,
P/Bag 201,
Luwinga,
Mzuzu 2.

Email: makalaniatu@gmail.com

Dear Atupele,

**RESEARCH ETHICS AND REGULATORY APPROVAL AND PERMIT FOR
PROTOCOL REF NO. MZUNIREC/DOR/25/23 : IMPACT OF LEARNERS'
ATTITUDE TOWARDS FEEDBACK ON THEIR ENGLISH COMPOSITION
WRITING PRACTICE : A CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN DOWA**

Having satisfied all the relevant ethical and regulatory requirements, I am pleased to inform you that the above referred research protocol has officially been approved. You are now permitted to proceed with its implementation. Should there be any amendments to the approved protocol in the course of implementing it, you shall be required to seek approval of such amendments before implementation of the same.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of issuance of this approval. If the study goes beyond one year, an annual approval for continuation shall be required to be sought from the Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) in a format that is available at the Secretariat. Once the study is finalised, you are required to furnish the Committee with a final report of the study.

The Committee reserves the right to carry out compliance inspection of this approved protocol at any time as may be deemed by it. As such, you are expected to properly maintain all study documents including consent forms.

Wishing you a successful implementation of your study.

Yours Sincerely,



Faith Mwangonde
Ethics Administrator
FOR:MZUNIREC CHAIRPERSON



Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee
Directorate of Research
Mzuzu University
P/Bag 201
Luwinga
Mzuzu 2
Email: mzunirec@mzuni.ac.mw
Cell: +265 (0) 99 8384804/

Appendix 2: Letter of introduction from education foundation department



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

**Department of Teaching, Learning and
Curriculum Studies**

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
Luwingu
Mzuzu 2
MALAWI

Tel: (265) 01 320 575/722
Fax: (265) 01 320 568
mdolo.mm@mzuni.ac.mw

31st March 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION MS ATUPELE MWAMADI

Ms Atupele Mwamadi is a registered Master of Education (Teacher Education) Program student at Mzuzu University. She has been cleared by the Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) to collect data for the research study she is conducting as a requirement for the program.

Kindly assist her accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Margaret M. Mdolo
Program Coordinator

*Appendix 3: A letter of request to conduct research in Central East Educational Division
(CEED)*

01 April, 2025

FROM: Atupele Mwamadi MEDTE1123, Mzuzu University, Private Bag 201,
Luwingu, Mzuzu

TO: The Education Division Manager, Post Office Box 322, Kasungu

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN CENTRAL EAST
EDUCATION DIVISION (CEED)**

I am writing to request for the permission to collect data from various secondary schools within the division.

I am a Master of Education (Teacher Education) student at Mzuzu University. I would like to conduct a research in the division titled; The Impact of Learners' Attitude towards Feedback on Their English Composition Writing: A Case of Selected Schools in Dowa.

In this study I will interact with English teachers and form four students through oral interviews and questionnaires. I will also interact with marked scripts for paper 1 English, especially composition part. This study will not only help to discover the type of feedback that teachers give their learners but will also help teachers to give learners feedback that arouse their writing practice.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,



ATUPELE MWAMADI (RESEACHER)

KANIRA
with a letter of
Authority to
conduct research
in the division
2025/04/01
The Edn

Appendix 4: Letter of introduction from Central East Education Division (CEED)

Tel (265) 01253611/612 - 01253612
Fax(265)01253227



CENTRAL EAST EDUCATION
DIVISION, PRIVATE BAG 233,
KASUNGU

DATE: 2nd APRIL, 2024

All correspondence to be addressed to
The Education Division Manager

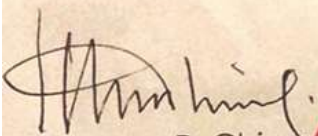
TO: The Head teacher,
All Public Secondary Schools in Dowa

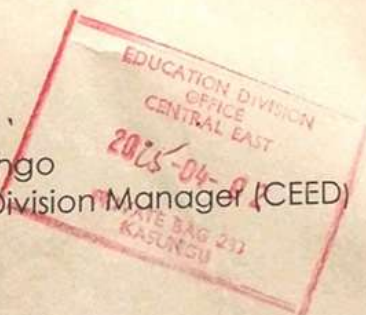
WAIVER TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

The bearer of this letter, Atupele Mwamadi is a Masters of Education Student studying Masters of Education at Mzuzu University. She is doing research on impact of learners attitude towards feedback on English composition writing ,targeting English teachers and form four students at Secondary School level in Malawi: a case of selected secondary schools in Dowa District and your school is among the selected schools.

I therefore, write to request your office to assist her in any matters pertaining to the above issue.

Your assistance rendered will be greatly appreciated.


Mervyn P. Chirongo
For: Education Division Manager (CEED)



Appendix 5: A letter of request to conduct pilot study at a school

DATE: _____

FROM: Atupele Mwamadi (0992129696/makalaniatu@gmail.com), Mzuzu University, Private Bag 201, Luwinga, Mzuzu.

TO: The Headteacher, _____ Secondary School.

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A PILOT STUDY AT THIS SCHOOL

I am writing to request for a permission to pilot my data collection instruments at this school.

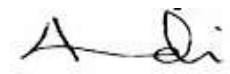
I am a Master of Education (Teacher Education) student at Mzuzu University. I would like to conduct a research titled; the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their writing practice: a case of selected schools in Dowa.

A questionnaire will be administered to form four students at this institution to help the researcher make corrections wherever necessary in readiness for the main data correction. This is very important because it will give the researcher to collect data which is trustworthy and relevant to the study.

The data collected at this institution will solely be used for the purpose of this research, no names of participants, or the school will appear in the final writing of the results.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Atupele'.

Atupele Mwamadi (0992129696)

Appendix 6: A letter of request to conduct research at the research sites (schools)

DATE: _____

FROM: Atupele Mwamadi (0992129696/makalaniatu@gmail.com), Mzuzu University, Private Bag 201, Luwinga, Mzuzu.

TO: The Headteacher, _____ Secondary School.

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT THIS SCHOOL

I am writing to request for a permission to collect data from this school.

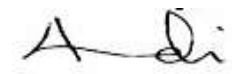
I am a Master of Education (Teacher Education) student at Mzuzu University. I would like to conduct a research titled; the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their writing practice: a case of selected schools in Dowa.

In this study I will interact with English language teachers and form four students. The study will be done in two phases; the first phase will be for document analysis which will require English paper one marked scripts. The second phase will be for interviews with English teachers and a questionnaire administration to form four students.

The data collected at this institution will solely be used for the purpose of this research, no names of participants, or the school will appear in the final writing of the results.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Atupele'.

Atupele Mwamadi (0992129696)

Appendix 7: Consent form to the interviewees (teachers)



Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC)

Informed Consent Form for Research in Teacher Education

Introduction

I am **Atupele Mwamadi** from **Mzuzu University**. I am doing research on **impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice**. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher.

Purpose of the research

This research aims to **investigate the impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice**.

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve your participation in a group discussion and/or individual interview.

Participant Selection

You are being invited to take part in this research **because you are teaching English composition in form 4.**

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. If you choose not to participate nothing will change. You may skip any question and move on to the next question.

Duration

The research takes place for a period of 30 minutes.

Risks

You do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion/interview/survey if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.)

Reimbursements

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research.

Sharing the Results

The knowledge that we get from this research will be shared with you and your community before it is made widely available to the public. Following, we will publish the results so other interested

people may learn from the research.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact: Ms. **ATUPELE MWAMADI (0992129696/makalaniatu@gmail.com)**.

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find out more about the Committee, contact **Mr. Wanangwa Msowoya, Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) Administrator, Mzuzu University, P/Bag 201, Luwingu, Mzuzu 2, Phone: 099 5 48 32 93 or email: mzunirec@mzuni.ac.mw**

Do you have any questions?

Part II: Certificate of Consent

*I have been invited to participate in research about **impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice.***

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Print Name of Participant _____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

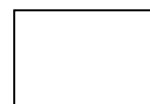
Day/month/year

If illiterate ⁹

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Print name of witness _____

Thumb print of participant



Signature of witness _____

Date _____

Day/month/year

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands the research project. I confirm the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has

⁹ A literate witness must sign (if possible, this person should be selected by the participant and should have no connection to the research team). Participants who are illiterate should include their thumb print as well.

been given freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____

Date _____

Day/month/year

Appendix 8: Document analysis form (marked scripts)

SN	TYPE OF FEEDBACK	EXAMPLES
1	Corrective	
	focused	
	unfocused	
	Explicit/ direct	
	Implicit/ indirect	
2	Others emerging from data	

Appendix 9: Questionnaire Form

TITLE: IMPACT OF LEARNERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS FEEDBACK ON THEIR ENGLISH COMPOSITION WRITING PRACTICE	
Note: The questionnaire will be administered to form 4 learners	
Questionnaire ID	
Date of interview	
School ID	

Consent

I am Atupele Mwamadi, an Education Masters student at Mzuzu University. I am conducting a study on impact of learners' attitude towards feedback on their English composition writing practice. The information being collected will help to establish your attitude towards type of feedback that you receive. The responses you provide will be kept confidential and will be used for the purposes of this study only.

May I continue with the survey?

☐ Yes

☐ No

(If no, thank you for your time. Please hand over the script to the researcher or your teacher.)

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

(following questions ask about biographic information, tick the option that describes you)

1. How old are you?

☐ 10-15

☐ 16-20

☐ 21-25

2. What is your sex?

☐ Male

☐ Female

SECTION B: ATTITUDE TOWARDS RECEIVING FEEDBACK

(The following are statements about how you feel about receiving feedback from the teacher.

Respond to the statements by ticking your level of agreement)

3. I believe that feedback is essential for improving my learning.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

4. Feedback helps me to identify areas of improvement.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

5. Feedback is necessary for my academic improvement.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

6. I prefer to be receiving feedback after I submit my work.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

7. I like receiving feedback individually on my composition script.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

SECTION C: ATTITUDE TOWARDS FEEDBACK TYPE

(the following are statements shows how you feel about feedback type you receive. Respond to the statements by ticking your level of agreement)

a. Explicit/direct feedback

8. I prefer feedback that clearly states what I did correctly and incorrectly?

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

9. I improve better if the teacher gives a correct version of the errors I make.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

10. I take an extra step to avoid the mistake that the teacher corrected on my composition script.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

b. Implicit/indirect feedback

11. I prefer feedback that give me guide on what I did wrong without making the correction.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

12. I work better when the feedback points out the error for me to work on.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

13. I learn better when I look for the correction myself.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

c. Unfocused feedback

14. I prefer when feedback touches all aspects of the composition.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

15. Feedback that touches every aspect of composition helps me learn better.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

16. Receiving feedback on all aspects of a composition helps me learn well.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

d. undeveloped feedback

17. I prefer feedback that points out the mistake I committed without directing me how to improve.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

18. I learn well when the feedback pushes me to seek for clarification from friends and the teacher.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

19. I like feedback that outlines what I did wrong only in a composition.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

e. Marks distribution on content, layout and grammar

20. I like it when the teacher breaks down how I performed on content, layout and grammar.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

21. Knowing which aspect I am not performing helps me to seek help on that aspect.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

22. I learn better when I know how I perform in different aspects of the composition.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

SECTION D: WHAT YOU DO WITH THE FEEDBACK YOU RECEIVE

(In the following statements, tick your level of agreement on how you respond to feedback)

23. I feel excited when I receiving feedback.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

24. I make changes to my work based on the feedback I receive.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

25. I use the feedback in my future English composition.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

26. I take time to reflect on the feedback I receive.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

27. I share the feedback I get from my teacher with friends to get more clarification.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

28. When I don't understand feedback, I ask the teacher for clarification.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix 10: Interview guide for teachers

1. How many students do you have in your class?
2. How long have you been teaching the learners that are now in form 4?
3. Do you think students like to receive feedback? Their attitude.
4. Apart from writing comments on the composition, how else do you give your students feedback?
5. Do you think students take time to reflect on the feedback that you give?
6. Do you think learners incorporate the feedback in their subsequent composition?
7. Do students come to you on their own to ask for clarification after you give them feedback?
8. What do you do to make sure learners are serious about the feedback you give?
9. Is there any particular problem that is persistent in English composition writing in your learners? How do you plan to deal with it?
10. So far, on a scale of 1 – 10 how can you rate the learners' improvement from the time you took over the class. With 1 being no improvement and 10 being great improvement.