

Student and Teacher Beliefs about Written CF and the Effect those Beliefs Have on  
Uptake: A Multiple Case Study of Laos and Kuwait

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A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology  
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

2014

School of Language and Culture  
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## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Stephanie Rummel: S. Rummel  
Date: 4-12-2013

## **Acknowledgements**

The completion of this PhD thesis would not have been possible without the help and support of numerous people. Above all, I would like to thank my primary supervisor, Professor John Bitchener, for his unending patience, positive feedback and support. His supervising style got me through the rough patches and kept me motivated. Furthermore, I would like to thank my secondary supervisor, Dr. Anne Feryok. Her excellent advice and feedback provided me with the focus I needed to bring everything together, particularly with regards to social theories.

I would like to acknowledge the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) for approving this thesis (Ethics Application Number 10/209) and AUT for awarding me with a Vice-Chancellor's Doctoral Scholarship.

I would also like to thank the following participants: the staff and students at Vientiane College in Vientiane, Laos and the staff and students at the Gulf University of Science and Technology (GUST) Foundation Program in Kuwait. I thank all of you for your patience, cooperation and time. It was a pleasure working with all of you.

I would like to thank Robin Hankin and Jay Woods for their help with the statistical analysis. Thank you both for your time and effort. Thank you to Qi Guo for her assistance in processing and submitting this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, William and Darlene Rummel, for always stressing the importance of a good education. They instilled the dream of attaining a PhD in me at an early age. Most of all, I would like to thank my partner, Susan Blick, for her support during this long and sometimes stressful process. She allowed my dream to become a reality.

## **Abstract**

The effectiveness of various types of written corrective feedback (written CF) to improve second language writer' written accuracy is an issue that is currently receiving a lot of attention in the field of second language learning. The present study has continued with that focus by investigating whether beliefs about written CF vary between students in two contexts (an IEP in Laos and one in Kuwait), whether those students' beliefs differ from their teachers' and whether differences in beliefs seem to impact uptake and retention. The study also investigates whether there are any differences in the type of feedback that is most effective in the two contexts. By comparing two contexts and looking at beliefs about written CF, this study seeks to investigate the topic from a sociocognitive perspective, which is in contrast to the mostly cognitive focus of previous studies.

A multi-method approach to data collection was used, with data being collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and writing prompts. The combination of questionnaires and interviews was used to overcome the weakness of using a self-report questionnaire as the sole means of collecting data regarding students' beliefs about written CF. Regarding the writing prompts, the study employed a pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test, second delayed post-test design where feedback was given after the pre-test and the initial post-test. The groups were as follows: direct feedback, indirect feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and control. Students were placed into feedback groups according to their answers in the questionnaires and interviews, with some receiving their preferred type of feedback and others receiving another type of feedback.

Findings from the study revealed a number of differences in beliefs both among students (particularly Lao participants), between student groups and between students

and their teachers. Findings also indicated that the type of feedback that is most effective varied between Lao and Kuwaiti students and that beliefs about written CF seemed to impact uptake and retention in the Lao group but not the Kuwait group. The results of this study contribute to the understanding about which factors may impact written CF. Contributions to theory and research have been provided. Practical suggestions for pedagogy and future research have also been given.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### *1.1 Introduction*

Many teachers find it a challenge to help their English language learners (ELLs) improve the accuracy of their written work. As a teacher myself, this is a topic that has arisen again and again in discussions with colleagues, professional development sessions and conversations with the students themselves. Writing accurately in a second language is both cognitively challenging (Myles, 2002) and is considered important to students' development as language learners (Harklau, 2002; Williams, 2012). Recently, writing in a second language has been looked at as serving two purposes: to learn content and to learn the language. The present research focuses on the writing to learn a language dimension of L2 writing. In this dimension, writing is seen not only as a skill to be learned, but also as a vehicle for learning the structures and uses of the language (Manchon, 2011, 2012). Because output is produced by actively manipulating the forms, functions and concepts during the writing process, learners may need to process language more thoroughly than they do when practicing other skills such as listening or reading (Van Eerde & Hajer, 2008). Furthermore, Williams (2012) argued that writing requires a focus on form that is not present during spoken production. In addition, writing is much slower than speaking, allowing writers time to plan. As Kuiken and Vedder (2011) stated, during the writing process, the writer has the option to stop and retrieve their prior knowledge about a structure.

One strand of 'writing to learn a language' research has looked at how intervening in learners' linguistic processing by providing feedback affects the accuracy of learners' output. These are often labeled as feedback studies and have investigated how feedback impacts the learning of grammar and lexis (Manchon, 2011, p. 68). Even though most teachers and researchers agree that written corrective feedback (written CF) does affect learners' output and has an important role to play in L2 development

(for example Bitchener 2008, Bitchener, 2012; Ferris, 2002; Sheen, 2007), Truscott (1996, 1999) has argued that CF is ineffective and even harmful. This has led to a debate about if written CF actually works to improve learners' linguistic accuracy and in which instances it is effective.

In response to Truscott's argument, a number of researchers have conducted written CF studies with a control group and in a pre-test, post-test, delayed post test design. From these studies a growing body of research has emerged that suggests that written corrective feedback (written CF) can improve students accuracy in regards to rule-based grammatical structures (for example Bitchener 2009a, 2009b; Sheen, 2007); however, the type of written CF that is most effective and the way CF might be best administered has remained a contested issue. Furthermore, contextual and individual factors that impact students' engagement with and uptake of written CF have received limited investigation. Research that takes such factors into account is needed in order to help explain why what works for one student does not necessarily work for another.

### *1.2 The main theoretical concepts behind the study*

This section provides a brief overview of the central concepts in previous written CF studies and in this thesis. Because most of the written CF studies to date have been done from a cognitive perspective, I have started by introducing that. I then move on to introduce constructionist theory, as this theory can be used to explain why some differences in the way students use and retain feedback may occur. After that, I detail how the collection of data regarding written CF and accuracy development was operationalized.

The majority of the written CF studies that have been done have been based on cognitive frameworks. One cognitive framework employed in SLA theory was

developed by Gass (1988). She put forth apperceived (noticed) input, comprehended input, intake, integration and output as the stages of acquisition. The first stage of noticed input means that learners notice features of the input in relation to their existing L2 knowledge. This input may be either positive or negative, with the negative feedback often taking the form of CF. Noticing, or the awareness of a certain feature of the target language, shows that certain features of the input are salient for the students and can, thus, become intake (Gass, 1988). Depending on the saliency of the feature, it may or may not be comprehended. For comprehended input, the learner does the work to understand the target feature and mentally process it. If the input is comprehended it may lead to the third stage of acquisition, intake, which means that the noticed feature is taken into the learner's short-term memory. In the final stage of acquisition, integration, the feature may move from the learner's temporary memory to the long-term memory where it becomes part of the learner's implicit knowledge system by being 'integrated' (Gass, 1988).

The final aspect of many cognitive frameworks is output, or the language produced when learners test their language hypotheses. Output is manifested in the production of spoken or written L2 language. This is important for the current study because written CF is provided in the hopes that it will allow students to notice their errors and make adjustments that can be measured by their written production, or output. When errors are viewed through this cognitive framework, they are seen as a natural part of the second language acquisition process. Written CF is in turn seen as a form of input that can help students 'notice' differences between the language they are producing and the target structure.

However, existing cognitive frameworks have been criticized for not viewing language learners as social beings, and there was a call for SLA to become more socially situated (Firth & Wagner, 1997, Larsen-Freeman, 2007). The cognitive view



has been criticized for not taking more sociolinguistic factors (proficiency, gender, beliefs) into account and it has been argued that to investigate language acquisition you must look at the context in which the acquisition is taking place, along with social and individual factors. Firth and Wagner (1997) therefore suggested that the contextual and interactional determinations of language learning be more carefully considered.

In order to explain the contextual factors that may impact how students use and retain written CF, constructivist theory was used. At the core of constructivism is the idea that learners use their experiences to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning (Fosnot, 1996). Because of this core, the impact of the learners' contexts and past experiences on their present learning and beliefs cannot be ignored. Brooks and Brooks (1993) claimed that constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning that defines it as temporary, developmental, and socially and culturally mediated. Because of these traits, they argue it is non-objective. Furthermore, Driver (1989) and Osborne and Freyberg (1985) claimed that students' preconceptions that they bring with them were found to be relatively resistant to change, be based on their earlier educational experiences, and form a filter for later learning. Such factors would lead one to predict that learners who have had different prior educational experiences may have different beliefs about written CF which may in turn cause them to use and retain written CF differently. If this is the case, finding out as much as possible about learners' current and previous educational contexts could be very important in future written CF studies and such information could help explain why some learners show improved accuracy after they receive written CF and others don't.

I believe that both cognitive and social factors can impact students' use and uptake of any written CF provided on errors. Existing research has shown that written CF does seem to lead to the uptake of a number of grammatical features (for example Bitchener 2009a, 2009b; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a, 2010b; Sheen, 2007); however

differences among the students in the studies, and possible causes of those differences, have not been fully investigated. For this reason, this thesis looks at students in two contexts to investigate the extent to which their beliefs and the type of feedback that is most effective are similar or different.

Several existing studies have begun to investigate the impact of different contexts on CF. According to Dourish (2004) the context is the set of conditions in which a given activity happens. One of the earliest studies focused on oral CF and found students in different contexts showed different levels of uptake when different types of feedback (recasts and other) have been provided (Sheen, 2004). The four contexts were Canadian ESL, New Zealand ESL, Korean EFL, and Canadian French Immersion. The learner uptake from recasts was much higher in New Zealand and Korea (80%) than in either of the Canadian contexts (50%). The author suggested that the use of recasts was more effective in contexts that encourage a focus on form rather than a focus on meaning. If that is the case for oral CF, it may also be the case for written CF because some teaching approaches may have more of a focus on form than others.

A recent written CF study looked at the impact of individual factors such as beliefs on uptake. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) found that beliefs about written CF may affect uptake. Their findings suggest that how effective uptake is and which type of feedback is most effective depends on the complex interaction of affective factors with linguistic ones. However, the investigation of beliefs was not central to the study and more research is needed in order to determine if individual factors such as beliefs affect students' use and uptake of written CF.

This thesis has also investigated the impact of students' beliefs on the uptake and retention of written CF. Whether and how students' beliefs about the feedback they have been provided with affects how they use the feedback, and also if that affects

retention, have rarely been looked at. This study seeks to fill a gap in existing research by employing mixed methods data collection (questionnaires, interviews, and writing prompts) to investigate beliefs and their effect on students' uptake of written CF. This type of written CF research is needed to provide a fuller picture of why written CF works in some instances but not in others and has possible pedagogical and theoretical implications.

### *1.3 Aims of the present research*

The main purpose of the study reported in Chapter 5 of this thesis is to investigate both teacher and student beliefs about written CF in two different contexts, look at if the type of feedback that is most effective varies between the two groups of students and also if the beliefs students' hold impact their engagement with and uptake of the written CF provided.

The study was conducted in university preparatory language programs in two countries: Laos and Kuwait. Laos and Kuwait were picked as the focus of this study because both countries have programs that prepare students to study at English medium universities and also because little research exists on these two countries. The study involved a total of 72 students (42 from Laos and 30 from Kuwait). Students were advanced level English language learners who were all planning to study at universities where English is the language of instruction.

In contrast to other written CF research which has generally either looked at whether students improved after receiving written CF through the collection of writing samples, or student/teacher beliefs about written CF through surveys and interviews, the current study used multiple methods of data collection (writing samples, questionnaires, interviews) to conduct a triangulated investigation of beliefs about written CF and then look at if those beliefs impact the uptake of written CF. This was done in order to try to

provide a fuller picture regarding the effect of beliefs on students' engagement with and uptake of written CF.

Because the purpose of this study was to investigate whether written CF helped participants improve their accuracy, accuracy was measured by the percentage of correct uses of the targeted forms. This means that the impact of written CF on accuracy was determined by examining learners' accuracy rates on their pre-test, post-test, and 2 delayed post-tests to see if an increase in accuracy had occurred. The study also included a control group, which allowed me to see if any changes could have been a result of factors other than the written CF provided.

To collect student and teacher beliefs about written CF, participants were provided with a questionnaire and were also asked to take part in at least one interview (students at the beginning and end of the study, teachers near the end of the study). This study contributes to the field of SLA by adding to the understanding of the way students in two contexts use written CF and if their beliefs impact their engagement with and uptake of the feedback they receive. While a number of studies have investigated the impact of written CF on students' linguistic accuracy (refer to Bitchener 2009a, 2009b; Sheen, 2007), most of these have not explored the reasons why written CF seems to help some students but not others.

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

- 1a. What beliefs about written CF do language learners in Laos and Kuwait have and do those beliefs vary between the two groups and within each group?
- 1b. To what extent are native English speaking teachers' (American, South African, British) beliefs about written CF similar to or different from those of their students from Laos and Kuwait?

2. To what extent do different types of written CF facilitate the uptake and retention of certain targeted linguistic error categories in the written work of students from two different countries (Laos and Kuwait)?
3. To what extent do beliefs about written CF impact uptake and retention of the targeted linguistic features in the two contexts?

#### *1.4 Thesis outline*

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical and empirical data that form the basis for the current study. The theoretical arguments regarding the use of CF in language classrooms have been presented, along with a critical summary of existing CF empirical studies.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical and empirical evidence that use cognitive frameworks in order to demonstrate why it can be predicted that written CF will be effective.

Chapter 3 outlines theories and presents empirical evidence that support the prediction that social factors may play a mediating role in the use and effectiveness of written CF. The chapter concludes by presenting the gaps in the research and raising the research questions that are to be investigated in later chapters.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology of the current study. A multiple case study methodology was used and multiple data collection methods employed to provide a richer picture of the issues being investigated.

The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 5. The results are based on the use of both qualitative and quantitative data. Then a discussion of the results is presented in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7 summarizes the overall conclusions based on the findings of the study. Furthermore, it presents theoretical and practical implications from the study, addresses

the study's limitations, and outlines the issues that still need to be addressed in future studies.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review on Written CF and Cognitive Theory**

### *2.0 Introduction*

Teachers often struggle to find the best way to improve their students' writing. They may choose to do so through either positive input (the provision of well-formed sentences or structures) or negative input (information that is provided in response to incorrect language use). Many choose to provide the latter in the form of written CF (any explicit attempt to draw students' attention to an error), and spend hours correcting students' grammatical errors.

Despite the time and effort devoted to the provision of written CF, questions still remain as to whether, from a theoretical point of view, we should even expect written CF to have a positive impact on L2 learning and acquisition. In SLA literature, the words 'learning' and 'acquisition' are sometimes used interchangeably; however, the terms can also be used separately, with 'learning' referring to the process one goes through when learning a skill and with 'acquisition' referring to the ultimate goal of the 'learning' process, which is multi-competence (Bitchener, 2012). Multi-competence was defined by Cook (2011) as the knowledge of more than one grammar existing in the same mind. With this in mind the question is, when written CF is provided on an L2 error at a certain stage of the learning process, can it lead to the acquisition of grammatical knowledge about the targeted feature?

Despite the widespread use of written CF to improve students' linguistic accuracy the topic of whether to provide written CF has been controversial, with a number of researchers speaking out against the practice. The most wellknown opponent of the provision of written CF is Truscott (1996), who argued that written CF could not be expected to work for theoretical reasons (refer to section 2.2 and 2.6 for specific

arguments). However, according to Polio (2012) some approaches in SLA theory can be used to predict that written CF can facilitate L2 acquisition. The aim of this chapter of the literature review is to introduce the cognitive approaches that have something to say about the role of CF in the acquisition of a second language. The first section (section 2.1) will discuss the early role CF played in the field and the way errors have been viewed in cognitive theories. After that, the cognitive frameworks that can be used to predict that written CF will work will be outlined (section 2.2, 2.2.1.1, 2.3 and 2.4). Cognitive approaches which may help to explain individual differences in the way students use and retain written CF will also be introduced (section 2.5 and 2.6). Finally, the empirical evidence regarding both oral and written CF will be presented (section 2.8, 2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.8.3, 2.8.4, 2.8.5, and 2.8.5.1).

### *2.1 The history of the early field of SLA*

In order to understand the central role of corrective feedback in its discipline, one must first understand the origins of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as an academic field because the field's early origins are rooted in the study of student errors. SLA is the field of study that is composed of the research and theories that are used to explain how people learn a language that is not their mother tongue. The main goal of the field is "to characterize learners' underlying knowledge of the L2, i.e. to describe and explain their competence" (R. Ellis, 2008, p.6), or as mentioned above, their multi-competence.

The field emerged in the 1960s due to important developments in what was known about language learning. Prior to the emergence of SLA, language learning was seen in a primarily behaviorist view. Behaviorists (for example Brooks, 1960; Lado, 1964) believed that the errors students made were caused by the divergence of L2 patterns from previously conditioned L1 habits and that materials designed to help



learners “overcome the conditioned habits of their L1 while they were imitating the new patterns of the L2” (Larsen-Freemmann, 1991, p. 316) would be the most successful in leading to second language acquisition. This belief was brought into question as overgeneralization errors similar to those produced during first language acquisition were also found in second language learners (Dulay & Burt, 1974). As these errors could not be traced back to the L1, learners were then seen to be taking a more active role in forming and testing hypotheses about the target language thus creating the field of SLA (Larsen-Freeman, 1991). Due to these early roots, learner errors and how to correct them has remained a central theme in the discipline and research has helped us better understand cognitive influences on language learning.

After the end of the Behaviorist era and early in the field of SLA, Krashen (1985) introduced his Monitor Model which was made up of five hypotheses related to second language acquisition, all of which can be seen to have something to say about the potential of written CF when it comes to language learning (Bitchener, 2012). He made the distinction between acquired competence and learned competence in the first of his five hypotheses. Acquired competence was to be a system that developed naturally through the subconscious process that happens when learners use the language for communication. Learned competence on the other hand, was the system that resulted from paying conscious attention to the language so that the learner can understand the rules. Krashen claimed the adult language learners use their learned competence to monitor their output by focusing on form rather than meaning. Because error correction was seen as a way to help the learner arrive at the correct mental representation of the linguistic generalization (Krashen, 1985), it was seen as an important part of learned competence. However, he did not see a place for error correction in the development of acquired knowledge (refer to section 2.2.1 for more perspectives on the possibility of the conversion of one type of knowledge to the other).

As can be seen from these early theories of SLA, learner errors and the way correcting those errors helped develop learners' knowledge was central.

## *2.2. Implicit/Explicit knowledge*

When it comes to learning/acquisition, two types of knowledge have been identified: implicit and explicit. Implicit knowledge is the knowledge that can be used automatically and unconsciously by learners while explicit knowledge consists of the knowledge that learners have that only becomes available through conscious and controlled processing (DeKeyser, 1994). In other words, implicit knowledge does not need conscious recollection but explicit knowledge does. This does not mean, however, that someone cannot hold both implicit and explicit knowledge about a certain linguistic structure, as in the case of linguists who create explicit rules based on their implicit knowledge of a language (R. Ellis, 2008).

Because of the pace, implicit knowledge is usually drawn upon in oral contexts while explicit knowledge is more easily drawn upon in written contexts. DeKeyser (1995) claimed that explicit knowledge is utilized anytime a learner has been directed to pay attention to a specific grammatical form. For this reason, all CF provides a form of explicit knowledge. According to Polio (2012) some researchers have argued that written CF promotes only explicit knowledge, and as such, cannot lead to real L2 acquisition (they claimed it can only lead to "pseudolearning") (Lightbrown, 1985; Truscott, 1996); however, N. Ellis (2009) claimed that a number of factors, one being error correction, can focus learners' attention on certain features of language, which in turn impacts learning, which could indicate that CF may help acquisition. DeKeyser (2007) also argued the benefits of explicit knowledge, saying it allows the skill to be broken apart into smaller units (DeKeyser, 2007), and also that it helps ensure that wrong information does not become proceduralized.

There has also been a debate as to whether it is possible for explicit knowledge to become implicit, because if it can, the case for the development of explicit knowledge would be strengthened. The different positions regarding the ability of explicit knowledge to become implicit are described in the next section.

### *2.2.1 The possibility of explicit knowledge becoming implicit.*

The implicit/explicit distinction mirrors the acquisition/learning distinction of Krashen's Monitor Theory (Krashen, 1985). Although it is widely accepted that two types of knowledge exist, one aspect of the Monitor Theory has been highly controversial (DeKeyser, 1998). In what is now known as the non-interface position, Krashen insisted that as the two types of knowledge are in separate parts of the brain so 'learnt' knowledge cannot be converted to 'acquired' knowledge through practice or error correction, so when viewed from this position, written CF can only improve learners' explicit knowledge of a language. From this standpoint, written CF cannot actually facilitate L2 acquisition.

Contrary to the noninterface position of Krashen's Monitor Theory is the strong interface position (DeKeyser, 1998). In this view explicit knowledge in the form of, for example, metalinguistic rules can evolve into implicit knowledge through practice. This means that, though knowledge may start, for example, from a teacher's explanation that a student needs to consciously think about in order to use it correctly in the beginning, its use may become more automatic and unconscious over time. Implicit knowledge can also be analyzed for the development of explicit knowledge in the form of linguistic rules. In other words, it can be looked at to see if the learner can form explicit rules from forms he/she learned implicitly. In the view of the strong interface position, written CF can be a part of the learning process that eventually leads to implicit

knowledge. When students consciously practice or reproduce the grammatical feature they received feedback on, they may move closer to being able to use it automatically.

Similarly, another existing position is the weak interface position in which the possibility for explicit knowledge to become implicit is recognized, but limitations on how and when are put forth (N. Ellis, 2005). For example N. Ellis (2005) claimed that explicit knowledge of variational features such as the copula 'be' could be converted to implicit knowledge because memorization of the form over time could lead it to be used unconsciously. However, explicit knowledge of developmental features such as negation could only be converted if the learner were ready, which means that learners need to be at a certain stage in their language development to start to use the feature unconsciously. His theory allowed for explicit knowledge to facilitate implicit knowledge by allowing students to compare what they have noticed and their own language production, which clearly indicates a place for written CF in the process because it is a type of input that draws students attention to any gaps in their own language production and the target structure.

Regardless of if they agree explicit knowledge can become implicit, the noninterface, strong interface, and weak interface positions all agree explicit knowledge may help writers produce more accurate texts as long as they have time to draw on their explicit knowledge while writing (Polio, 2012). This is supported by Kuiken and Vedder (2011) who argued that writing is much slower than speaking, so the writer has the option to stop and retrieve prior knowledge about a structure during the writing process.

Because written CF can aid in the development of explicit knowledge, it can be predicted that it will improve linguistic accuracy if learners have time to utilize their explicit knowledge. The idea of implicit/explicit knowledge is important in a number of cognitive theories, with skill acquisition theory (section 2.3) and interaction theory

(section 2.4) being two of the ones with the most to say about the possible role of written CF.

### *2.3 Skill acquisition theory*

One theory in which implicit/explicit knowledge is central is skill acquisition theory, a general theory that can be applied to the development of all complex skills, not just the development of an L2. Anderson's (1983) Adaptive Control Theory (ACT) model of cognitive skill acquisition states that skill acquisition follows through the three stages: declarative knowledge (knowledge about the skill), proceduralization (the process through which knowledge becomes increasingly automatic) of knowledge and automatization (the ability to unconsciously access information) of procedural knowledge. To get from one stage to another, learners must practice the explicit knowledge in ways that make it more intuitive to use.

According to DeKeyser (2007), explicit knowledge plays an important role in the process as it allows the skill to be broken into smaller steps and practiced. CF can be used to provide explicit knowledge that helps the learner focus on areas that are problematic and help ensure that errors do not become proceduralized.

As for explicit knowledge becoming implicit, McLaughlin's (1987, 1990) skill acquisition model and Anderson's ACT model support the idea that explicit knowledge gained from instruction and CF (including written CF) can be converted to implicit knowledge. Just as the strong interface position is supported by learning theories, so are the other interface positions.

### *2.4 Interaction theories*

It has also been argued that the act of retrieving and using explicit knowledge may facilitate L2 development even if it does not have a direct effect (N. Ellis, 2011).

That idea is supported in several interaction theories, where it is believed that the explicit knowledge in input, which can be in the form of written CF, will push students to modify their output in future productions. The origins of the interaction approach are in oral interaction (Hatch, 1978; Long, 1981), though recently it has also been used to predict the usefulness of written CF in written CF studies (Polio, 2012). It focuses on the role of input, output and feedback during L2 interactions (Polio, 2012). Gass (1988) outlined apperceived (noticed) input, comprehended input, intake, integration and output as the stages of acquisition in her cognitive framework. The first stage of noticed input means that learners notice features of the input in relation to their existing L2 knowledge. This input may be either positive or negative, with the negative feedback often taking the form of CF. In other words, noticing, or the awareness of a certain feature of the target language, shows that certain features of the input are salient for the students and can, thus, become intake (Gass, 1988). Schmidt (1990) also argued that the potential for CF to be converted to intake, and therefore internalized, exists if the learner ‘attends’ to (or notices) the feedback. He added that the amount of attention a learner pays to feedback may be impacted by mediating cognitive, motivational and affective factors, and that this may affect other stages of information processing.

Depending on the saliency of the feature, it may or may not be comprehended. For comprehended input, the learner does the work to understand the target feature and mentally process it.

If the input is comprehended it may lead to the third stage of acquisition, intake, which means that the noticed feature is taken into the learner’s short-term memory (Ellis, 2008). In the final stage of acquisition, integration, the feature may move from the learner’s temporary memory to the long-term memory where it becomes part of the learner’s implicit knowledge system by being ‘integrated’ (Gass, 1988). In this stage, the amount of attention the learner paid to the original CF provided may impact the

extent to which the feature becomes a part of the learner's long-term memory, along with a number of other cognitive factors, such as the learner's proficiency level and their ability to attend to the CF provided, which has been explained in the limited processing capacity model of L2 acquisition (Robinson, 1995, 2003; VanPatten, 1996, 2004). Such factors may impact the uptake of CF and may help to explain why CF works in some instances but not in others.

The final aspect of this approach is output, or the language produced when learners test their language hypotheses. Output is manifested in the production of spoken or written L2 language. This is important for the current study because written CF is provided in the hopes that it will allow students to notice their errors and make adjustments that can be measured by their written production, or output.

According to Long's revised Interaction Hypothesis (1996), input aids in L2 acquisition when the input helps the learner notice certain linguistic forms from the input provided and the forms are within the learner's processing capability; in other words, if the learner is at a stage where he/she is ready to process the given form. This means if input in the form of CF is provided on a grammatical feature the learner is not yet capable of understanding, the CF will not be used.

Although most researchers working in an interaction framework have only considered oral CF, because the original model was based on modifications to conversation, researchers such as Qi and Lapkin (2001) and Sachs and Polio (2007) have borrowed certain concepts to investigate written CF though they haven't stated it explicitly. According to Polio (2012) written CF as a form of input can draw learners' attention to their errors. Furthermore, she argues that students should be more able to pay attention to form in writing because they have more time than in oral production. Williams (2012) also pointed out that the nature of writing allows there to be a greater opportunity for focus on form because it is slower than speaking. She also stated that

when negative feedback is provided, it leaves students with a permanent record that they can compare with later written productions, which means they don't have to solely rely on their long-term memory as they do with oral CF. Of all the cognitive approaches, this is the one where feedback is most often studied because it is a major component of the approach and, although not designed specifically for written CF, it has the most potential to support its potential (Polio, 2012).

Several factors, however, may impact the ability for the learner to convert the input into intake. One is the limit that may exist on the learner's ability to give the input the attention it needs to be processed, which has been discussed in section 2.5. The other is the developmental readiness of the learner, which has been discussed in section 2.6.

### *2.5 Limited processing capacity*

VanPatten (1990, 2004) argued that, when discussing how input becomes intake, it is not sufficient to speak of input in general terms when it comes to SLA.

Furthermore, he claimed that the "learning mechanisms that interact with input must be spelled out in some fashion" (VanPatten, 1990, p. 757). To do this, he proposed his model of input processing (IP), and in this model, attention played an important role.

He claimed that attention requires an effort and that humans have a limited capacity to handle stimuli, making attention a finite resource. In other words, there is a limit to the amount of information that can be processed at one time. Because of this, learners focus first on the more salient parts of the input. If this is the case, if the written CF provided to learners is greater than their capacity they may not be able to process it.

Furthermore, the capacity to handle stimuli may vary from learner to learner, allowing one student to process feedback provided while another cannot. This may explain the beneficial effects of written CF in some cases but not in others.



Robinson (1995, 2003) also argued that individual differences in memory and attentional capacity could affect the extent to which learners' noticed input, thus impacting acquisition. Another factor that may impact learners' capacity to process information is their proficiency level (Bitchener, 2008). This is because learners with lower levels of proficiency may not be able to handle and process input as efficiently as those with higher levels of proficiency. Learners' levels may also impact their developmental readiness for certain grammatical features, which may also impact the effectiveness of written CF.

## *2.6 Developmental readiness and written CF*

Learners' stages of development may also lead to differences in the way they use written CF. In his teachability hypothesis, Pienemann (1989) argued that if grammar instruction is to be effective, it must occur when the learner is at a stage in his interlanguage that is close to the point when it could be acquired naturally. Truscott (1996) argued that because of the issue of developmental readiness, written CF is not effective because teachers do not consider learners' developmental readiness when providing CF. However, Pienemann (1989) suggested that although some developmental sequences are fixed, others can benefit from instruction any time they are taught, thus meaning they could possibly benefit from CF at any time. This is similar to Krashen's  $i + 1$ , which claims that learners need to receive input that is one step ahead of their current stage of development to progress to the next stage of language acquisition. In his theory,  $i$  is "the acquirer's current competence, the last rule acquired along the natural order" and  $i + 1$  is "the next rule the acquirer is 'due to' acquire" (Krashen, 1985, p. 101). He claims that learners have an internal language processing mechanism (LAD) that does the acquiring for the learner as long as input containing  $i + 1$  is provided. Krashen argued that if input is too far ahead of the

learner's development, it cannot be effective, and also that good input needs to be in advance of the learners' current level to be useful (Krashen, 1985). In terms of written CF, if it is too far ahead of what learners already know, they may not be able to process it; however, if it is at an appropriate level, the learner's LAD may act upon the input, and assimilate it into its existing system.

Vygotsky also stated that: "the only good learning is that which is in advance of development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 89) and it is from that that his Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP), or the difference between what the learner is able to do alone and what he/she can do with help, was developed. However, unlike Krashen's  $i + 1$ , Vygotsky's ZPD, allows for not only what has been achieved by the learner, but also for what is in the course of being achieved with the help of others (Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, it is the process that students go through when learning is central to Vygotsky's theory (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994).

Although there is disagreement as to the commensurability of  $i + 1$  and ZDP (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998), both are based on the developmental stage of the learner and stress that it needs to be taken into account when providing instruction and CF to students. The challenge in this is that existing knowledge of acquisition sequences are fairly limited and some researchers argue that teachers often do not think about them when providing CF (Truscott, 1996). There is truth in his statement, but there has not been sufficient research to show that the practice of giving CF should be totally abandoned. However, differences in learners' abilities to understand and retain the information they receive from written CF may stem from differences in their stages of development. This may in turn lead to differences in effectiveness among students.

## *2.7 Summary of cognitive theories*

Because of our knowledge of the cognitive processes that underpin learning a language, it makes sense to believe that written CF can mediate these processes and help students improve their linguistic accuracy, at least on some grammatical structures. In order to determine if theoretical predictions regarding written CF are valid, a number of empirical studies looking at different issues regarding written CF have been carried out.

## *2.8 Introduction to empirical studies*

Initially, written CF studies were carried out by teachers and researchers who were interested in finding out if certain types of feedback or methods of delivery would be more likely to help their students acquire the language (Hendrickson, 1980) and this has continued to be the focus of more recent written CF studies, despite the addition of theoretical claims (Bitchener, 2012). Many of the earliest written CF studies were focused on investigating whether written CF could help students improve their revision and self-editing skills, and as such were more interested in accuracy than acquisition (Manchon, 2011).

Before looking at the empirical studies, a few terms need to be defined. In all written CF studies, CF has either been focused, meaning that CF is provided on a limited number of error categories, or unfocused, meaning that CF is provided on all of the learner's errors. Furthermore, there are different types of feedback. The main two types are direct (where the teacher actually provides the correct form to the learner) and indirect (where the teacher indicates where an error has occurred but leaves the learner to determine what the correction should be). Another form of feedback is meta-linguistic feedback, which provides an explanation and/or examples of accurate uses of linguistic forms.

The findings for these studies and the theoretical implications will be discussed in the following sections.

### *2.8.1 Early empirical studies*

Three early studies only looked at student revisions, not at new texts (Ashwell, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). The study by Ferris and Roberts (2001) looked at five categories of errors for ESL students at the Learning Skills Center at California State University. Students wrote an in-class essay and were then placed into three treatment groups and received coded error correction (for example: vf= verb form error), uncoded error correction (only an indication that an error had occurred was provided) or no error correction. Although they did not have to revise their essays, they were asked to spend 20 minutes self-editing the marked essays. It was evident from the results that the two groups that received error feedback were far better at correcting all errors except those pertaining to word choice. There were no significant differences between the coded and uncoded groups, however the coded group had slightly higher percentages in all categories except articles. Students were also better able to edit errors that fell into the treatable, or rule-based, category.

The study by Ashwell (2000) also looked at student's ability to revise texts after receiving written CF. He looked at the Japanese EFL students enrolled in writing courses he was teaching. Students were placed in four groups and received form-focused feedback, content-focused feedback, form- and content-focused feedback, or no feedback. Ashwell found that form-focused feedback allowed students to improve the accuracy of their writing in subsequent drafts. These were similar to findings from Fathman and Whalley (1990) that looked at ESL students in college composition classes. All students improved the content of their revised texts regardless of the type of feedback that was given; however, students who received feedback on grammar were

much more successful at improving their grammatical accuracy in their revisions than those who received feedback on content alone.

These studies sought to determine if written CF is effective as a tool to help students develop revision skills. It was, however, argued that looking at revisions was not a way to measure acquisition. Polio, Fleck and Leder (1998) and Truscott and Hsu (2008) this cannot simply be accepted as evidence of learning, which could only be proven by comparing new texts with earlier texts. Improvements in accuracy would need to be seen over time and in new pieces of writing to show that students have learned from the feedback. Furthermore, the need for a control group was identified in order to accurately determine if improvements were due to the provision of written CF, or if they had just occurred naturally over the course of the language being learnt (Truscott, 1996).

Of the studies that included control groups, two early studies found no advantage for students who received written CF; however, many other more recent studies have.

Regarding the two studies which found no improvement in linguistic accuracy after the provision of written CF, Kepner (1991) gave either communicative feedback or direct feedback to a group of Spanish students. The communicative feedback improved the content of students' writing and those students showed no difference in error count from the students who received direct correction of all their surface errors. The researcher also found that the fear of making mistakes led students to avoid certain structures thus negatively impacting the complexity of their writing. It must be noted, however, that even though students received error corrections, they were not asked to do anything with those corrections. The study also did not include a pre-test in its design.

Although both groups in their study showed improvement, Polio et al. (1998) saw no difference in progress between an experimental group of students who received

feedback on their written work and a control group that did not receive feedback. The study looked at 65 graduate and undergraduate ESL students. This study utilized both journal entries for treatment and then an in-class essay for the post-test. The control group wrote four journal entries a week over the course of seven weeks and received no feedback. The experimental group wrote two journal entries a week and revised one of those after doing grammar review with editing exercises and receiving feedback on both the entries and the exercises. Improvement was measured by looking at the differences in essays written at the beginning and the end of the semester. It is interesting to note that although no significant differences were found, researchers did not say that instruction time spent on editing and grammar exercises was useless. Instead they claimed that perhaps the treatment had not lasted long enough to produce conclusive results or that perhaps the classroom instruction that all students received over the course of the term rendered the extra practice of the experimental group ineffective. Their conclusion was that grammar correction is ineffective in the way it is done. It can be argued that the different contexts may have influenced the results as written CF may lead to explicit knowledge, which can only be accessed when the learner has time (Krashen, 1985; R. Ellis, 2008).

After the findings of these two studies, it was argued that the lack of support for written CF could have stemmed from flaws in design and analysis, or different design variables (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). This led to a call for studies to be designed more rigorously, leading to a number of well-designed studies. In all of these more recent studies, uptake was evidenced by improved accuracy in the post-tests and delayed post-tests, showing the learners had noticed the written CF and attended to the errors in new texts. Furthermore, because of learners' retained improvement on the delayed post-tests, a case can also be made for the retrieval of knowledge gained from written CF

from learners' long-term memory. Because the current study also employed a pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test design, it will add to existing findings.

### *2.8.2 Findings from recent written CF studies*

More recently a number of studies have included a pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test design to try to overcome some of the limitation of earlier studies (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Sheen, 2007; Sheen et al., 2009). Improved accuracy on post-tests and delayed-posts tests was found in all of these studies, which would seem to provide clear evidence up uptake. The results of these studies support that learners engaged in the information processing stages that have been put forth by interaction theorists.

Bitchener (2008), Bitchener & Knoch (2008) and Bitchener & Knoch (2010a) investigated low-intermediate students studying in language schools in New Zealand. The focus of these studies was the effect written CF has on students' use of definite and indefinite articles and learners were placed into either one of three feedback groups (direct focused correction, written & oral meta-linguistic input, direct focused correction & written meta-linguistic input, or direct error correction) or the control group. In all three cases the three feedback groups outperformed the control group on both their immediate post-tests and delayed post-tests.

Still looking at improved accuracy in article use for students studying in New Zealand, Bitchener and Knoch (2010b) investigated advanced learners, with students once again divided into one of three feedback groups (written meta-linguistic input, indirect focused circling, written or oral meta-linguistic input) or the control group. As before, the three treatment groups outperformed control group in the immediate post-test. Furthermore, both the written meta-linguistic input and written and oral meta-

linguistic input groups outperformed the indirect and control groups in the delayed post-test administered in week ten.

Sheen (2007) and Sheen et al. (2009) also looked at if written CF impacted learners' ability to accurately use definite and indefinite articles; however, the students in these two studies were intermediate level. In the first study (Sheen, 2007) students were placed in one of two feedback groups (direct feedback or direct feedback with meta-linguistic input) or the control group. Both treatment groups outperformed the control group on the immediate and delayed post-test. In the Sheen et al. (2009) study, students were either given direct focused feedback, direct unfocused feedback, writing practice, or placed in the control group. All three treatments groups outperformed the control group; however the direct focused feedback group outperformed the direct unfocused feedback group.

Because improved accuracy was seen in all of these recent studies, this shows that learners noticed the feedback and understood the difference between their own erroneous production and the target structure provided by the written CF. Furthermore, because all of these studies were longitudinal (they included at least one delayed post-test) they showed that learners were able to access the explicit knowledge they had gained from the CF, showing it had been integrated into their long-term memory and then used to produce more accurate output. Because of this, these findings support the information processing stages put forth by interactionists; however, most studies have focused on specific error categories so no claims regarding the wider role written CF may play in learning and development can be made at this time.

### *2.8.3 Findings from meta-analyses*

Due to the number of CF studies that have been conducted, several meta-analyses have been carried out to determine the overall effectiveness that has been



reported in CF studies (both oral and written). Russell and Spada (2006) conducted a meta-analysis examining the effectiveness of written CF studies between 1988 and 2003, and included studies investigating both oral and written CF. They found that the mean effect size of all treatments was 1.16 and that written CF had a larger effect size than oral CF, although both effect sizes were large. This was taken to show the effectiveness of CF; however, because of the limited number of studies that were included in the meta-analysis (15), the authors warned against making generalizations. Li (2010) also conducted a meta-analysis of existing written CF studies. The results from the 33 studies she included showed a medium overall effect for feedback that was maintained over time, the effect of implicit feedback was maintained more than explicit feedback, shorter treatments showed an effect size larger than that of longer treatments, and studies that took place in foreign language contexts showed a larger effect size than the ones in second language contexts.

Many of the studies that have been included looked at whether focused CF was more beneficial than unfocused CF, and also at the question of whether more explicit types of feedback were better able to facilitate language acquisition than less explicit types. The following sections (section 2.8.4, 2.8.5, and 2.8.5.1) will look at the findings regarding these questions more closely.

#### *2.8.4 Focused and unfocused written CF*

As stated before in Section 2.6, theory would suggest that learners must be developmentally ready for written CF to work (Krashen, 1985; Piennemann, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978). The problem is that the literature on the developmental sequence for learning English is limited, though textbooks may be able to provide some guidance because they often focus on grammatical structures that have been proven to be learnable at specific proficiency levels (Bitchener, 2012). However, it can be predicted

that if the feedback provided is not aligned with the learner's stage of development, it may not be effective. Most recent studies have focused on only a limited number of grammatical features (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a and 2010b; R. Ellis et. al, 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sheen et. al, 2009); however, two studies by van Beuningen et al. (2008, 2012) investigated the effects of comprehensive feedback on a wide-range of structures.

Of the previously mentioned studies, Bitchener (2008), Bitchener and Knoch (2008), Bitchener and Knoch (2010a, 2010ba) and Sheen (2007) all provided only focused written corrective feedback, and all of these studies provided feedback on learners' use of definite and indefinite articles. These studies all found positive evidence for the use of focused error correction.

In contrast, several other studies investigated other error categories and found that written CF was not beneficial. Bitchener et al. (2005), Ferris (2006) and Lalande (1982) all found that the CF provided on lexical items and prepositions did not help improve learners' accuracy. The need to focus on a limited number of linguistic features has also been found with regards to written CF (Bitchener et al., 2005). In their 12 week study of 53 adult migrant ESL students, Bitchener et al. looked at the effects of various types of written CF on three types of error: prepositions, the simple past tense, and the definite article. The researchers found that when they looked at the results of written CF on the three types of error as a single group, no benefit was found. In contrast, when the error categories were considered separately, it was found that a combination of written feedback and conferencing helped learners significantly improve the accuracy of their use of the simple past tense and definite articles though their use of prepositions showed no improvements. This could show that learners were not yet at a stage where they could use the feedback they received to improve their use of prepositions. The differences in these findings may also have arisen due to different information

processing taking place when learners deal with rule-governed forms rather than idiosyncratic forms (Bitchener, 2012).

Interestingly, despite the arguments against unfocused feedback, a number of other studies have found unfocused corrective feedback to also be beneficial (R. Ellis et al., 2008; Van Beuningen et al. 2008, 2012). In fact, in their study of English articles, R. Ellis et al. (2008) found no difference in level of uptake between the focused and the unfocused feedback groups. The R. Ellis et al. study also found that both groups outperformed the control group. Furthermore, two studies have solely investigated the effectiveness of unfocused feedback (Van Beuningen et al., 2008, 2012). Both looked at the impact of written CF on high school learners of Dutch and either unfocused direct feedback, unfocused indirect feedback, or writing practice was provided, or learners were asked to do self-correction with no feedback. In Van Beuningen et al. (2008) short-term gains were found for both the direct and indirect feedback groups; however, only the direct feedback group maintained the gains in linguistic accuracy on the delayed post-test. The other two groups showed no improvement in linguistic accuracy. Similarly, in the Van Beuningen et al. (2012) study the direct and indirect feedback groups outperformed the other two groups on both revisions and the writing of new texts over a 4-week period. These three studies provide some evidence to support the idea that even unfocused written CF can be effective.

On the other hand, a study by Truscott and Hu (2008) found that their advanced learners only showed improvement when revising texts after being provided with unfocused feedback. These improvements were not evident when the students wrote new texts. Furthermore, Sheen et al.'s (2009) study found direct focused feedback to be more beneficial than direct unfocused feedback. However, the researchers admitted that the unfocused feedback provided was unsystematic, with some errors being corrected while others were not.

In light of limited capacity theory and what we know about developmental evidence, it has been predicted that focused written CF would be more beneficial than unfocused. However, due to the mixed results of the empirical studies that have been carried out, more research is needed. This thesis, however, will investigate only focused written CF and will not add to what is known about unfocused feedback.

#### *2.8.5 The efficacy of different types of written CF*

Besides investigating focused and unfocused feedback, written CF studies have looked at whether there are differences in efficacy when varying types of CF are used. The fact that there are different types of written CF, direct and indirect, has been touched on in previous sections of this review. Various forms of feedback fall into these two categories and, although all forms of written CF are considered explicit, vary in their degree of explicitness. In written CF, indirect feedback can be coded, uncoded or marginal. Coded feedback means that the location and type of error is indicated, while uncoded feedback means that only the location of the error is shown. Marginal feedback indicates neither type nor location but instead notes the number of errors made in the margins of the student's writing. Direct feedback, on the other hand, can take the form of providing the corrected form and/or providing metalinguistic explanation. For written metalinguistic explanation, the error is marked and students are asked to refer to the end of the page or paper where a grammar explanation and an example are given. It is, therefore, less explicit than direct correction.

Determining if one type of feedback is more beneficial in facilitating L2 development is of both theoretical and pedagogical importance. First of all regarding theory, if the degree of explicitness is found to be important, the theories that explain and predict L2 acquisition need to include such differences as conditions of L2 learning (Bitchener, 2012). Second, regarding pedagogy, any findings pertaining to one type of

feedback being more effective would be of interest to teachers, who want to provide their language learners with the most beneficial feedback possible.

A number of studies have been conducted to find out if one form of feedback is superior to another (Chandler, 2003; Lalande, 1982; Robb et al., 1986) and a number of researchers have made predictions as to which type of feedback is most effective. Supporters of indirect feedback argue that by allowing learners to critically engage with the feedback and form their own hypothesis, the feedback becomes more salient. Ferris (2003) claims that indirect feedback “increased student engagement and attention to forms and problems” (p.52) Those in support of direct feedback maintain that indirect feedback could be misunderstood and lead learners to form another false hypothesis, delaying the time when they get the correct answer. They claim that direct feedback gives learners immediate feedback on errors and provides them with adequate information to fix even more complex forms (Chandler, 2003). In order to determine the most effective feedback option, researchers have compared the effects of direct and indirect feedback, the effects of different indirect feedback options and the effects of various direct feedback options.

Although Ferris’ (2002) argument that the hypothesis testing encouraged by indirect feedback makes it more beneficial to students makes theoretical sense, empirical evidence to prove this remains inconclusive. Lalande (1982) found an advantage for the use of indirect feedback when looking at 60 intermediate level German FL students at Penn State. The students in the control group received traditional direct feedback and showed an increase in the number of errors they made from pretest to posttest. In contrast students in the experimental group had their essays marked with error correction codes and showed a decrease in errors from the pretest to the posttest. Another interesting outcome was that 86% of students in the experimental group responded positively to rewrite activities as opposed to 24% of the students in the

control group. Results from this study would seem to support the pedagogical suggestions put forth by Ferris.

In contrast, a study by Chandler (2003) found support for direct feedback. In her study, 36 high intermediate to advanced ESL students received four different types of teacher feedback in varying order. Three of the four types of feedback were considered indirect, and one was direct. All students revised the writings that they received feedback on and then wrote new pieces of writing. The researcher found that students receiving direct feedback outperformed the other groups on both revisions and later writings. She suggested this could be due to students immediately being able to internalize the correct form instead of having to wait for the confirmation of the hypotheses they make during indirect error correction.

The case for explicit feedback is also supported by findings in oral CF (Havranek, 2002). In a study of 207 English language learners in Germany, Havranek (2002) found that students responded better to explicit rejection of an error and explicit error correction than to the teacher simply recasting the learner's incorrect utterance. If students were asked to repeat the correct form after it had been provided, they were even more likely to use the form accurately in future utterances.

Two studies which investigated the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback options found no advantages between approaches (Robb, et al., 1986; Semke, 1984). In their 1986 article, Robb, Ross and Shortreed looked at the effects of direct, coded, uncoded, and marginal feedback on the narratives of 134 Japanese college students. Students were required to rewrite their compositions after receiving feedback. The researchers found no difference in the results and concluded that the results produced by direct feedback were not worth the amount of work instructors had to put into correcting students' surface errors and that other methods of error correction that required less time yielded the same results. Although students all improved over time, the lack of a

control group in this experiment brings into question if the same progress would have occurred if no feedback had been given.

In a study which produced similar findings, Semke (1984) gave four kinds of feedback to 141 first year German students at the University of Minnesota. The feedback types were written comments with no surface level error correction, direct feedback, positive comments and corrections and coded error correction. Results showed that error correction did not significantly improve student writing and that coded correction had the least influence of all. The researcher came to the conclusion that practice and only practice brings the improvement of writing accuracy, fluency, and general proficiency.

Besides comparing indirect and direct feedback options, a number of recent studies have compared different direct feedback options. Those studies will be outlined in the next section.

#### *2.8.5.1 Differences between direct feedback options*

As well as comparing indirect options, several studies have also compared different types of direct feedback. The following studies have investigated different feedback options and also included a control group and investigated the effects of written CF on a longitudinal basis (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a, 2010b; Sheen, 2007).

Sheen's (2007) study examined the effects of two types of CF on intermediate level adult ESL students' acquisition of articles. One group of students was given direct corrective feedback while the other group was given direct metalinguistic correction. She found that both groups of students receiving feedback outperformed the control group on the immediate posttests. Interestingly, the direct metalinguistic correction group outperformed the direct-only group in the delayed posttests. This also supports

the finding of her 2010 study of direct oral and written CF that found that the students who received either oral metalinguistic feedback or written metalinguistic feedback outperformed those who received recasts or direct feedback on both the immediate and delayed-post tests.

Besides these studies by Sheen, all of the previously mentioned studies by Bitchener and Bitchener and Knoch (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2010a, 2010b) looked at various direct feedback options. In all these studies, students were divided into four groups. One group received direct correction along with oral and written metalinguistic explanations. Another group received direct correction along with only a written metalinguistic explanation. The third group got only direct feedback while the fourth group was the control group and received no error correction. There was significant improvement in all three of the experimental groups after the feedback and that continued over time and no difference in the effectiveness of the three written CF options.

These studies focused solely on the acquisition of the English article system and show that focused written CF does help students improve accuracy in the use of articles. More research that focuses on other aspects of English grammar is needed to show the extent to which written CF is useful.

## *2.9 Summary of chapter 2*

As these studies show, findings regarding the most effective type of feedback have been varied. Ferris (2010) argues that direct feedback may be more effective when the researcher's goal is to determine the level of acquisition of a targeted feature; however, indirect feedback may be more effective in helping learners develop effective strategies for testing metalinguistic skills and tools to aid in the revision process. In other words, if written CF is being tested as an editing tool that will enable students to



correct their own writing in the long run, indirect feedback may be found to be more beneficial. However, if written CF is being tested as a language learning device, direct feedback may be shown to be more effective. This may be true and, as can be seen from these inconsistent results, more research investigating the effectiveness of different types of written CF is needed if we are to draw an informed conclusion. It is hoped that the current study will allow for added insight into this subject.

Bitchener (2012) claimed that future studies comparing the different feedback options need to be designed to include possible mediating variables. One variable that may impact the type of written CF that is most effective is the learners' proficiency levels. If learners do have a limited capacity to deal with the feedback provided, lower level learners may perform better after receiving direct feedback because this type of feedback could put less strain on their processing capabilities. More research is needed on students at different proficiency levels in order to determine if this is the case.

Besides proficiency levels, other individual and contextual factors may lead the type of feedback that is most effective to vary between individual learners and/or groups of learners. One such variable that requires investigation is beliefs. In order to determine if the beliefs of individuals vary from context to context and if this impacts the effectiveness of a given type of written CF, research needs to be conducted in different contexts and the results compared. The current study has sought to do this by investigating two groups of students from different contexts (IEPs in Laos and Kuwait) with similar proficiency levels in order to try to determine if their beliefs in any way impact their uptake and retention of written CF.

Considering the overall findings of the empirical studies, it seems that predictions as to the effectiveness of written CF that have been made in light of cognitive theories such as those which stem cognitive processing theories and skill acquisition theories have been proven to some extent. Though some of the theories

were developed for oral contexts, the idea that input, which may come in the form of CF, is integral to the process of language acquisition also fits the written context. The conclusion can be drawn that written CF is effective in improving the accurate use of some grammatical features (i.e. article use) in certain situations. However, questions still remain as to which type of feedback is most effective and if contextual and individual factors may mediate learner engagement with the written CF they are given.

Chapter 3 introduces the literature dealing with theories that have something to say about the role such factors play in language learning in general and written CF specifically, focusing on the role beliefs have been found to have on the process. It then goes on to present the findings of empirical studies that have sought to investigate the way beliefs impact language learning and learners' engagement with written CF.

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review of Social Factors Mediating the Use and Effectiveness of Written CF**

### *3.0 Introduction*

The chapter on cognitive theory outlined issues that may mediate learners' engagement with and uptake of written CF, along with their retention and long-term retrieval of a targeted grammar feature. While this thesis does look at the extent to which different types of written CF facilitate the acquisition of certain targeted linguistic errors, it also looks at factors that may impact engagement with the CF, along with uptake and retention. The main issue being investigated is if and how the beliefs of groups of learners from two specific educational contexts (Laos and Kuwait) affect whether written CF is taken up and retained, along with the extent to which learners and teachers' beliefs differ.

*Beliefs* has been a contentious term in the field of SLA. As for a definition of beliefs, Richardson (1996) defined them as "psychologically-held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are thought to be true" (p. 4). Wenden (1986) defined beliefs as "opinions which are based on experience and the opinions of respected others, which influence the way they [students] act" (p.5). However, Barcelos (2003) stressed the difficult nature of defining beliefs in the field of SLA because a number of different terms have been used to refer to beliefs depending on the agenda of different researchers, such as learner representations (Holec, 1987), learners' philosophy of language learning (Abraham & Vann, 1987) and folklinguistic theories of learning (Miller & Ginsberg, 1995), just to name a few. She went on to say that one thing all definitions of beliefs in SLA have in common is that they refer to the nature of language and language learning. For the purpose of this study, beliefs have been defined as the non-static opinions that students and teachers have formed based on previous

experiences and knowledge, which impact how they approach the act of language learning/teaching.

The topic of whether or not and how beliefs impact the effectiveness of written CF has been the focus of only limited investigation, meaning that this study could provide insight into an existing gap in the research. Because beliefs have been found to impact other areas of language learning such as proficiency level (Mori, 1999a, 1999b, Park, 1995), it is possible that a connection may be found between beliefs and the effectiveness of written CF, which would have several theoretical and pedagogical implications.

Because this is a comparative study, besides looking at beliefs, it also compares the beliefs and uptake and retention of written CF in the context of two different countries. It is important to understand what is meant by context in the case of the current research. Previously, context was often used very generally to mean the context of a given country. Furthermore, it was sometimes used when there was either a focus on form or a focus on content. In the case of the current study, context is very specific: an Intensive English Program in Laos and one in Kuwait, both aimed at preparing students for English medium universities and all students have the goal of improving their English ability to attend such a university. A very specific context was chosen because I was interested in investigating how previous educational experiences and current educational programs might affect beliefs and uptake and retention of written CF. By eliminating factors such as differing goals and proficiency levels, I hoped to better determine the factors that had shaped learners' beliefs about written CF. Because of this limited focus, when I refer to context, I am not referring to the context of Laos and Kuwait as a whole, but instead to the context of one IEP program in each of these countries. Although the wider context of the two countries has been referred to to explain possible differences between the two groups and among the students of a

particular group, the results of the current study cannot be generalized to other programs and schools in the two countries.

The main theories used by this study to predict and explain how contextual factors (for example program ideologies, past experiences, beliefs of a group/individuals, etc.) may explain differences between two groups of students are outlined in sections 3.1 and 3.2. This is followed by the findings of empirical studies in sections 3.4 and 3.5 and 3.6 to 3.6.4.

### *3.1 Constructivism*

The main overarching theory underpinning this study is that of constructivism. At the core of constructivism is the idea that learners use their experiences to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning (Fosnot, 1996). Because of this core, the impact of the learners' contexts and past experiences on their present learning and beliefs cannot be ignored. Constructivism became popular after the Behaviorism movement in education. In Behaviorism it was thought that if the teacher provided the correct stimuli, students would learn and that learning could be measured through observations of student behaviors and teachers were led to believe that if learning was not occurring, they were responsible for restructuring the environment and deciding on the most appropriate way to promote the desired student behavior (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002).

In contrast to behaviorism, from a constructivist perspective students and teachers bring a variety of prior experiences, knowledge, and beliefs that they use in constructing new understandings in the classroom. According to Brooks and Brooks (1993):

Constructivism is not a theory about teaching...it is a theory about knowledge and learning... the theory defines knowledge as temporary, developmental,

socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non- objective. (p. vii).

Constructivists believe three things about students' preconceptions: they are relatively resistant to change, stem from their earlier educational experiences, and form a filter for later learning (Driver, 1989; Osborne & Freyberg, 1985). In order for learning to be successful, teachers must build on students existing beliefs and preconceptions.

Furthermore, according to Prawat (1992) constructivism takes the focus off of the teacher and puts the students' efforts to understand what is being taught at the center of the educational experience.

Roth (1994) identified three different distinct lines of research in the study of constructivist learning. The first is the cognitive approach, which features the "notion that learners respond to their sensory experience by building or constructing in their minds, schemas or cognitive structures which constitute the meaning and understanding of their world" (Saunders, 1992, p. 136). Constructivists who look at the theory from a cognitive perspective see individuals as creating knowledge by linking the new information they are presented with to their past experiences, thus creating a personal process for meaning making (Bruner, 1986; Novak, 1998; Piaget, 1966). Lambert et al. (1995) claimed that knowledge and beliefs are formed within the learner and that the activities learners do should cause them to access their experiences, knowledge and beliefs. Furthermore, Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) stated that previous educational experiences can have a great impact on learners' current preferences.

The second line of constructivist research Roth (1994) identified took what was known as a cultural approach, and came primarily from anthropologists and Vygotsky (1978). As opposed to the first line of research, which located cognition solely within the individual, constructivists who took a cultural approach saw cognition as located in the interplay of individuals and their culture, or the norms and activities of the society

they are living in.

The third line of research includes not only the individual and culture, but also an individual's physical context (Roth, 1994). In this framework, constructivist learning is considered situated (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wilson & Myers, 2000). Lave and Wenger (1991) claimed that authentic activity and interaction with objects within a given context are what promote constructivist learning. In other words, people create meaning through interactions with others and with objects in their environment.

In considering the multiple forms of constructivist learning, Bredo (1994) advocated a "more collaborative relationship between the formal and informal, the theoretical and practical, the universalistic and the particularistic. We can seek a well-functioning division of labor . . . rather than the dominance by one or the other or their total divorce" (p. 34). Upon examination of the three lines of constructivist research, one can see how they relate to each other. The first line of research sees knowledge as being constructed by past experiences, but as located as solely within an individual. While it is true that knowledge is constructed within an individual, most would agree that it is also affected by their culture and context. What we experience in the world around us greatly influences our personal creation of knowledge.

The constructionist view taken for the current study combines all three lines of research and posits that students' past educational experiences greatly impact their current beliefs about education and that because different contexts often provide different educational experiences, students may have varied beliefs about written CF. Barcelos (2000) claimed that: "everything that we experience takes up something from the past and modifies the quality of future experiences" (p. 16). In other words, the way we view everything that happens has been constructed by our past and these new experiences will also help to construct how we view our future experiences, showing a

strong connection between past and future experiences. Peng (2011) also claimed that beliefs are constantly fluctuating as they are influenced by significant others and affective factors such as feelings and emotions. With regards to written CF, researchers have also claimed that students have diverse feedback preferences that are based on factors such as prior education (Cumming & Riazi, 2000), future goals and the task they are presented with (Hedgecock & Lefkowitz, 1994). Because of this, it is predicted that the students in the current study may hold different beliefs from each other, and, as beliefs have been found to impact other areas of language learning (refer to section 3.6.1 for specific studies), that those beliefs may impact their use and retention of written CF.

Furthermore, because the native English-speaking teachers were from yet other contexts (Britain and America), they may also have formed different beliefs regarding written CF. In regards to differences in those beliefs, they may cause a conflict in the minds of some of the students, which may or may not lead to a change in their existing beliefs. Strike and Posner (1985) argued that in order to change what a person thinks he/she knows, there must first be a cognitive conflict that forces the learner to consider an alternative conceptual view. Of possible responses, Piaget (1975) classified them into three types: alpha (the ignoring of conflicting data, leaving existing theories/beliefs unchanged), beta (the partial modification of existing theories/beliefs) and gamma (core modification of the existing theory/belief). Navarro and Thornton (2011) also stressed the importance of “others” in learners’ decisions to incorporate new beliefs or in reinforcing old ones. Arndt (1993) argued a negotiated compromise is needed when there are differences between student and teacher beliefs. In constructivism teachers can create meaningful learning by considering students prior knowledge, by building on their existing beliefs, by negotiating an understanding when differences exist, and also by causing the cognitive conflict that is necessary for students to consider alternative beliefs.



When this is considered in the context of students' beliefs about written CF, teachers need to first understand what beliefs the students hold. If those beliefs are different from their own, they can explain their beliefs to the students and explain why they believe what they do. This may cause the cognitive conflict that is needed for students to look at their beliefs about written CF in a different way and may possibly cause them to alter their existing beliefs that stemmed from their previous educational experiences. According to Negueruela-Azarola (2011), beliefs can be changed by engaging learners in a process that allows their beliefs to emerge in "sense-making activity" (p. 360), which are concrete activities from which social ideas (in this case, beliefs) emerge. On the other hand, students may reject a teacher's belief and this could cause negative reactions and feelings in the classroom.

Because each group involved in the current study has had different past experiences regarding education in general and language learning specifically (refer to the results chapter for specific information regarding this issue), constructivism would lead us to predict that they would have differences in their current beliefs about written CF, which may cause conflict in the classroom and impact the way students engage with the written CF provided, along with their uptake of it. This could help to explain why written CF helps some students improve their linguistic accuracy, but not others. The differences may also cause issues relating to trust and teacher/student relationships, which could also impact the overall effectiveness of written CF (Goldstein, 2006). If this is the case, in order for learning to be successful, teachers should be aware of and build on students existing beliefs and preconceptions (Schulz, 2001).

### *3.2 Activity theory*

Another theory that may explain differences with regard to uptake and retention of written CF among individuals and/or groups of students is activity theory (Leontiev,

1978). Activity theory is considered a sub-theory of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and was developed by Leontiev (1978). According to activity theory, there are three levels in an activity: the social motives influencing beliefs and attitudes that are behind the activity, the actions brought about by learners' goals, and the conditions under which the activity is carried out. This can be used to explain why learners approach the same writing task differently and why some learners engage with the written CF provided while others do not.

For activity theorists, learners' motives can be understood through an understanding of their 'activity system', or the social system the learner is a part of (Engeström, 1993). Engestrom (2001) indicated that activity theory could be summarized through five principles. The first principle is that one activity system, which is seen in relation to other existing activity systems, is the prime unit of analysis. In other words the 'motives' of individuals or groups are viewed as independent but subordinate units of analysis that can only be fully understood when studied in perspective with the entire activity systems. In reference to L2 learners, learners have an activity system that is made up of a number of different identities (for example: student, daughter/son, Lao/Kuwaiti, future university student) and, depending on the identity the learner draws on during an activity, their approach to an activity may differ.

Engestrom's second principle is that activity systems are multi-voiced. Each activity creates different positions for participants and those participants in turn carry their own histories that affect how they approach a given task. Even the activity system is made up of different layers that are shaped by rules and conventions. Because of these different histories, students' experiences with the same task can differ.

The third principle is what Engestrom terms as 'historicity', or the fact that activity systems evolve over time. Their history needs to be considered in order to understand their problems and potentials. Depending on the past experiences of

learners and how these fit together, those experiences may influence the way learners approach a task. This means the way learners approach a task can change over time. When it comes to written CF, this also means that what students expect may change over time.

This leads to the fourth principle that the evolution may lead to contradictions, which are important catalysts for change and development. There are structural tensions both within and between activity systems. These come about when a new element is adopted by an activity system, causing a problem with the existing structure. This may cause conflict, but also bring about innovation. This could happen when a learner is exposed to a new way of learning or thinking about things.

The fifth principle recognizes the possibility for the activity systems to change through the ZPD. As earlier contradictions become more pronounced, some participants may question established norms, possibly even deviating from them. This can bring about the collective change of an existing activity system. Activity systems must therefore be seen as dynamic in nature. As learners are exposed to new ideas and ways of thinking, this may impact their own activity system, causing changes in the way they view or approach an activity.

Many of the principles of activity theory are similar to Vygotsky's model of mediated action, or what a learner can do with the help of an "expert"; however the difference is that the contextual framework is also taken into account. Different activity systems within a certain context constantly interact with each other, changing the systems themselves and the motives participants have when they carry out a particular activity. In a learning context this means that the initial motive of a learner starting a task may not be the same motive he/she possesses at the end of the task.

In the language classroom, different identities from an activity system may be in effect at the same time. The teacher and the students may also be working from

different activity systems and those systems may occasionally intersect to form new meanings (Engestrom, 2001). Each new teacher may bring a new activity system into the classroom, thus affecting the existing activity systems of the learners. For this reason, it is important to recognize that results in one situation may not be replicated in another.

This theory may be an important one to consider when investigating written CF. Differences in beliefs about written CF and/or goals for learning English may cause a certain learner to attend to the written CF (or not attend to it). Although the activity, writing, may be the same in different settings, the reasons a learner writes and why teachers assign writing tasks may be different because of the different layers that make up an individual's activity system. For example, you may have two students with the same goal, but different beliefs. If a student has the goal to write academic texts in a university setting but believes that the way to improve grammar is through memorizing correct sentences, he/she may prefer direct feedback. On the other hand, if a student has the same goal, but believes he/she will improve his/her grammar through thinking about the language and coming up with hypotheses and testing them out, he/she may prefer indirect feedback. In either case, the learner may fail to see the usefulness of a certain type of feedback because of what he/she believes. Furthermore, as stated in Engestrom's third principle, activity systems change over time and learners draw on different identities during different tasks, so the way a student approaches a writing task in one instance may be different from the way he/she approaches it in another instance.

All of these things may influence learners' uptake of written CF. The reason why a learner is writing may influence how he/she sees written CF. If there is a motive or goal that induces a focus on correct form, the learner may be more willing to use written CF and vice versa. Moreover, just because the learner focused on accuracy on one piece of writing, he/she may focus more on meaning on another piece of writing if

he/she deems meaning to be more important, which means that the learner may pay close attention to feedback in one instance but not another.

### *3.3 Conclusion to the theory sections*

The previous sections have outlined the social theories that may help explain why written CF is effective for some students but not for others. The next sections (3.4 and 3.5) will look at the empirical evidence regarding the impact of social and contextual differences on learners' responses to written CF. Some factors relating to pedagogical or social factors have been investigated in regards to the impact of context on both oral (Nicholas et al., 2001; Oliver & Mackey, 2003) and written CF (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008) studies; however, little has been done to investigate other factors such as beliefs and previous educational experiences that may impact on it, particularly with regards to written CF.

With regards to beliefs, a number of studies have evaluated teacher and learner beliefs without trying to determine if those beliefs actually had an effect on language learning. Of the limited studies that tried to determine if beliefs impact language learning, beliefs were found to impact language learning in general (Mori, 1999a, 1999b; Park, 1995) and written CF specifically (Mahfoodh & Pandian, 2011; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2003).

### *3.4 Contextual factors affecting oral CF*

The following studies have looked at aspects of the contextual environments in order to determine if those parts of the context impact oral CF. The context is the environment in which language learning occurs; however each of the following studies

focused on different aspects of the context: if the context focused on form or communication (pedagogical context), the distance between the L1 and the target language (linguistic context), increased levels of exposure to the language outside of class (social context), and teachers' beliefs and behaviors as shaped by their previous experiences. Although the studies in this section pertain to oral CF, the findings may be pertinent to written CF studies. Because there is often a focus on form or meaning, and distance from L1, exposure to the language, and teachers' beliefs and behaviors are also all present when a learner is producing written texts, if these factors impact oral CF, it can be predicted that they might affect written CF as well.

Oliver and Mackey (2003) found a significant difference in uptake depending on whether there was a focus on form or a focus on communication in the context in which the oral CF was given. When looking at five Australian teachers and their students, they found that feedback was more likely to be used during language focused communicative exchanges (63%) than during content focused exchanges (32%). This led them to argue that the interactional context of the exchange was an important factor that impacted the opportunities learners had to use the feedback they received. They also found that the use of feedback was most successful after it was given during explicit language-focused exchanges (85%). They felt that this was perhaps because, regardless of their beliefs regarding CF, learners knew they were expected to modify their non-target-like forms in this context because the teacher had made this explanation clear. Similarly, after reviewing existing studies on the effectiveness of recasts, Nicholas et al. (2001) suggested that either a focus on form or a focus on meaning might influence the effectiveness of certain types of oral corrective feedback. They came to this conclusion after noticing a significant difference in uptake between classes in which activities are focused mainly on practicing grammatical features and those in which activities focus predominately on expression and negotiation of meaning.

The arguments concerning the importance of context put forth by Oliver and Mackey (2003) and Nicholas et al. (2001), namely that issues such as a focus on either form or communication, paved the way for several studies on oral CF that seem to support the importance of context in regards to the overall effectiveness of oral CF. These findings could also inform written CF studies because the perceived focus on form or focus on meaning that are thought to affect oral CF may also impact written CF due to the nature of L2 writing. This is also the case in the current study, where participants may have either seen the writing prompt as a way to practice their grammar or a way to convey their ideas.

A study by Sheen (2004) looked at four different communicative classroom contexts (Canadian ESL, New Zealand ESL, Korean EFL, and Canadian French Immersion) to examine the differences in CF that occur in the three different countries. She compared the results of three existing studies with results from a study she conducted herself. She found that the context in which language instruction was occurring had a significant impact on what type of CF was given and to what degree that CF led to uptake. Recasts were the most common type of feedback given across all four contexts; however both the Canadian Immersion and the Canadian ESL setting used recasts at a lower rate (55%) than in New Zealand ESL (68%) and Korean EFL (83%). Interestingly, the learner uptake from recasts was much higher in New Zealand and Korea (80%) than in either of the Canadian contexts (50%). It also showed that the rate of repair from oral CF was lower in Canadian ESL (34%) than the other three settings. Furthermore, the New Zealand and Korean recasts were characterized by a focus on only one or two forms, partial reformulations of utterances, the stressing of the correct form in intonation and opportunity for uptake.

Lyster and Mori (2006) also looked at oral CF in different classroom contexts. When examining French Immersion and Japanese Immersion classrooms, they found

little difference in the type of CF given. However, they found the type of CF that elicited the highest number of repairs was different in the two contexts, with 62% of the effective CF following prompts in French Immersion and 61% following recasts in Japanese Immersion. The researchers believed these differences could stem from the distance between learners' L1 and the target language, added exposure to the language outside of class, and teachers' beliefs and behaviors as shaped by their cultural backgrounds, which would also be the case for the students.

Sheen's (2004) results supported Nickolas et al. (2002) and Oliver and Mackey's (2003) arguments, as they suggested that oral CF was more effective in contexts that encourage a focus on form rather than a focus on meaning. However, because Sheen compared studies conducted by four different researchers/groups of researchers, it is difficult to know if there were differences in the way the studies were conducted that could have led to the differences that resulted. In the current study, data were collected in exactly the same way using the same instruments in both Laos and Kuwait in the hope that the factors affecting the results of the two contexts could be more easily determined.

The studies by Sheen (2004) and Lyster and Mori (2006) seem to show that different types of context may play an important role in how learners use oral CF; however, the role it plays regarding written CF has only begun to be investigated. The role of previous educational experiences were investigated in a study by Bitchener and Knoch (2008) and differences found between learners in a number of other written CF studies may be explained by differences in aspects of the context they are studying in (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Nassaji and Swain, 2000). Details of those studies have been outlined in the following section (3.5).



### *3.5 Investigations into contextual factors and written CF*

Although most studies looking at the effect of context have focused on oral CF, several written CF studies have either investigated the effect of context directly or have had results that may be explained by the mediating effects of contextual factors such as previous educational experiences. For example, a study by Bitchener and Knoch (2008) looked at the effect of written CF on migrant and international students studying in New Zealand. The international students were studying in New Zealand for varying lengths of time before returning to their home countries, while the migrant students had permanently settled in New Zealand. It is generally believed that international students have had more formal exposure to the target language than migrant students, and it has been suggested that this may enable them to use written CF more effectively (Reid, 1998; Roberts, 1999). This study, however, found that although written CF positively impacted both groups of learners, there was no difference between the groups in the extent to which written CF improved accuracy. Bitchener and Knoch (2008) suggested that this may have been due to an overlap in membership to the two groups. In other words, migrant students may or may not have had formal exposure to the target language and international students may or may not have had more opportunities to use the language informally; however, as data supporting this hypothesis was not collected, it cannot be proven. The wide range of backgrounds of the participants may also have impacted the results, as prior educational experiences may have affected their current educational experiences. Further investigations are needed to find out whether students from one background are more successful at using written CF to improve their accuracy, and which factors (i.e. type of feedback, learner beliefs, etc.) may cause the degree of effectiveness to vary in different contexts.

Although the following studies did not investigate context directly, the results may indicate that previous educational experience and contexts may affect written CF.

A study by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) may further illustrate the need for more research into context. The researchers used three students from different cultures and found one student consistently needed more direct feedback than the other two students in order to get the correct answer. Aspects of the contexts from which the participants had come (i.e. feedback norms in their previous educational contexts) may have affected the type of CF that was most useful. Furthermore, a study by Nassaji and Swain (2000) also showed that direct feedback was more helpful to their Korean participant who showed improvement. Although the learners' contexts were not directly investigated, factors stemming from learners' previous educational contexts may have impacted the type of written CF that is most effective.

As can be seen from the studies mentioned in the previous section, existing evidence would lead us to believe that context impacts the uptake of oral CF; however, to date little research has focused on the effect of context on written CF. More research is needed to investigate contextual factors that may affect the effectiveness of written CF and one such factor that needs looked into is that of beliefs. Beliefs are thought to greatly affect language learning (Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Kern, 1995; McCargar, 1993), but few studies have actually investigated their impact. Furthermore, some researchers have predicted that differences in beliefs between teachers and students may also impact language learning (Leki, 1990; Schulz, 2001). Due to the nature of ESL/EFL, teachers are often in the classroom with students from a number of different countries. Different experiences may cause the belief systems in learners and teachers to be constructed differently. The following sections (3.6, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.3 and 3.6.4) outline the research about beliefs that has been done in the field.

### *3.6 Beliefs in the field of SLA*

Until recently, beliefs have also been seen to be static and separate from other aspects of behavior, but now researchers are beginning to see the more social constructivist side of language learning (McGroarty, 1998). Beliefs are now seen as being situated in the social context instead of in the individual (Woods, 2003). Dufva (2003) warned of the danger of analyzing beliefs without regard to both the social and cultural context in which they are occurring. As such, there has been a push for studies that look at how cultural and situational variables affect beliefs. For this reason, some of definitions of beliefs stress not only their cognitive, but also their social nature (Barcelos, 1995; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996).

Beliefs about second language acquisition have grown in interest to researchers since the mid 1980s when Horwitz (1987) and Wenden (1986) began their pioneering work on the subject. The focus of those first studies was to understand what learners and teachers believe, but the recent focus on beliefs has changed to how beliefs develop and are constructed (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011). A small number of studies have also investigated the impact of beliefs on language learning (for example, Mori 1999a, 1999b, and Tanaka & R. Ellis, 2003).

#### *3.6.1 Beliefs about language learning*

Some of the earliest and most well known studies of language learners' beliefs were conducted by Horwitz (1987, 1988) using her Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) in order to systematically collect student beliefs. This inventory looks at learner beliefs about the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the language learning process and communication. It consisted of a list of 34

items rated on a five point Likert scale allowing for a clear comparison of the findings of different studies. In a 1999 review, Horwitz compared the findings of a representative group of BALLI studies to determine the cultural and situational influences impacting learners' beliefs.

After comparing studies of American, Korean, Turkish, and Taiwanese language students, she found that although there were differences between the groups, there were also differences among learners from the same cultural background. As such, she stated that "a number of within-cultural group differences identified in the various American groups and the two groups of Korean and Turkish heritage learners may be more clearly attributable to differences in learning circumstances than cultural differences" (p. 554). She then went on to say that it seems premature to claim that beliefs about language learning vary between cultures.

One of the problems with comparing learners from different cultures is that 'culture' is often considered too broadly and learners who actually have constructed their knowledge and beliefs quite differently are often grouped together because of established geographic boundaries. To begin with, Horwitz looked at a study by Kunt (1997) in her review, which compared Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot pre-university English language learners in Northern Cyprus. Although it is true that both groups were Turkish nationals, one cannot be sure to what extent the groups have similarly constructed their current knowledge of and beliefs about language learning. Another problem with the comparisons made is that the study by Horwitz (1988) looked at the beliefs of American university students in their first semester of German, French or Spanish while the EFL students had been studying English since middle school (Horwitz, 1999). In order to be sure which differences arise from cultural factors and which are influenced by individual and situational differences, participants need to be chosen carefully. I would argue that we cannot simply classify participants from the

same country as having the same culture. We need to determine if they have had similar educational experiences along with if they have similar language levels, reasons for learning the language, and are in similar language programs in order to determine which contextual factors may account for any similarities or differences. For that reason, a focus on context that provides information about learners prior and current educational experiences will provide a clearer picture of the factors that impact language learning in general and written CF specifically.

The results of BALLI studies have also been questioned because they rely solely on information collected from surveys (Barcelos, 2003). When Sakui and Gaies (1999) used interviews in addition to a Likert-scale questionnaire, they found that learners have different interpretations of questionnaire items and may not be able to express their true beliefs through the options given to them on a questionnaire. Studies designed to look at beliefs should be properly triangulated (combining structured with less structured instruments like interview questions or journal entries) to overcome the possible limitations of questionnaires (Victori, 1999). For that reason, future studies need to employ triangulated research methods in order to ensure that the beliefs found truly represent the beliefs of the learners.

### *3.6.2 Comparison of beliefs about CF*

A number of studies on beliefs have specifically looked at CF and compared the beliefs held about CF (both oral and written) in more than one context (Schulz, 2001; Lennane, 2007). These studies, however, looked at context solely along country lines and did not look at the specific reasons why differences may have occurred in the two countries that were compared. For example, Schulz (2001) conducted one of the few studies that compared how students and teachers in two cultures felt about the role of written corrective feedback. A questionnaire was given to 607 FL students and 122 FL

teachers in Colombia. The same questionnaire was completed by 824 FL students and 92 teachers in the US. This study found agreement between the two groups of students and between the two groups of teachers. However, discrepancies were found between what teachers believed and what students believed in both groups, with a discrepancy rate that ranged from 15% to 60% on four of the five statements regarding error correction. The researcher concluded that such differences in belief systems might lead to problems in the classroom; however, as the research relies solely on what teachers and students reported further research is needed to determine if those beliefs influence learning.

In another study investigating contextual differences in tolerance of written errors, Sheory (1986) found non-native teachers from India to be less tolerant of learner written errors than their counterparts from the US. She also found that the beliefs about which errors should be given the most attention varied significantly between the two groups. In regards to oral CF, differences in the treatment of errors were found by Arva and Medgyes (2000) when examining the behavior of British and Hungarian EFL teachers. The researchers found that non-native teachers gave oral CF more often than native English teachers, which would support the constructivist idea that knowledge and beliefs are formed by past experiences. If the students in the current study have previously had experience with non-native English speaking teachers, it may affect the way they react to their current teachers feedback practices if they differ from what they experienced before.

This hypothesis is supported in Lennane's 2007 study of Canadian and Taiwanese ESL students and teachers. When comparing the beliefs of the two groups regarding oral CF, he found that although feedback preferences followed the same ranking order for all groups, the preference for recasts was much higher among the Taiwanese students. Compared with the students in Canada, Taiwanese students

expressed a lower level of preference for feedback in general. This may be explained by findings during post survey interviews that the majority of Taiwanese teachers preferred not to give oral CF in order to avoid embarrassing students by bringing attention to their mistakes. The cultural idea of losing face seemed to play a role in both the CF given by teachers and the feelings toward CF expressed by the students.

Besides specifically comparing beliefs in different contexts, some studies have compared the beliefs of students and teachers. One issue that students and teachers often differ on is the number of errors that should be corrected. Redeck and Swales (1988) found that students tended to fall into one of three categories when it came to the number of errors they believed should be corrected: receptors (students who felt very positively towards written CF and making revisions), semi-resistors (students who felt somewhat positively towards written CF and revisions), and resistors (students who were not positive at all towards written CF or revisions), with receptors and semi-resistors preferring all errors to be marked.

In a case study looking at student and teacher beliefs regarding written CF, Diab (2005) collected data from one university instructor and two of her international undergraduate students. Both of the students reported that they wanted all their errors corrected while the teacher reported that she believed she shouldn't correct all her students' errors. Furthermore, when Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) asked the same question of the 31 teachers and 33 students in their study, they found that 93.9% of the students reported that teachers should mark all errors while 45.2% said all errors should be marked. These findings are supported by a study from McCargar (1993) where, when presented with the statement "My teacher should correct all of my errors", teachers disagreed; however, all of the groups of students except the Japanese strongly agreed. His study of beliefs included 41 English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the US and 161 English language learners of varying proficiency levels from a number of

different countries and regions (Indonesia, China, Korea, Iran, Thailand, South America, the Middle East and Japan). He also found differences with regards to the type of written CF that should be provided. He found that teachers and Korean students mildly agreed with the statement “teachers should point out student errors without correcting them”, while all other groups strongly disagreed.

Teachers also often have been found to have more negative feelings toward feedback than their students. In Diab’s (2005) study, the teacher expressed doubt as to the efficacy of feedback, by stating that she didn’t believe students really benefited from grammar correction but that they needed to see the errors on their paper so that they would know where to start revising. She also referred to written CF as a type of “security blanket”. Furthermore, teachers in a study by Ferris et al. (1997) described providing feedback as frustrating and teachers in Hyland’s (1990) study reported it was tedious and unrewarding. However students have consistently reported positive feeling towards written CF (for example Diab, 2005; Hyland, 2000).

The way teachers and students view the function of the written CF has also been found to differ. Hyland’s (2000) study reported that the teachers treated students’ drafts as finished pieces that just needed fixing, while students felt that the feedback they received on the drafts enhanced their language learning. In this study, Hyland felt that because the teachers tried to control the feedback rigidly, individual student goals were not taken into account. Saito (1994) also recommended that teachers pay careful attention to students’ reactions to the feedback they have been given and attempt to find an appropriate way to overcome differences in beliefs between teachers and students, such as giving explanations as to why a certain type of feedback was provided. In fact, Plonsky and Mills (2006) found that explanations regarding chosen approaches to providing written CF resulted in a significant change in students’ beliefs about how



written CF should be provided and their new beliefs became more aligned with their teachers' practices.

The results of these studies may lead us to predict that students from different contexts may hold different beliefs and that those beliefs may also differ from those of their teachers. Furthermore, teachers from different contexts and backgrounds may hold different beliefs from each other. However, the issue with all of the studies of beliefs mentioned in this section is that the prior educational experience of learners and their current educational contexts were not the focus, the focus was more on culture, meaning the culture of a country. In order to understand if the differences stemmed from the way learners' and teachers' beliefs had been constructed from past experiences, information about prior learning experience would need to be provided. Information about student levels, goals, etc. was also not provided which makes it difficult to assess whether any of those factors could have caused any differences that were noted. Furthermore, these studies did not go on to investigate whether any differences in beliefs actually impacted the uptake and retention of the CF. The studies in the next two sections (3.6.3 and 3.6.4) attempted to determine if beliefs actually affected language learning and written CF.

### *3.6.3 The impact of beliefs on language learning*

The studies mentioned previously all look at learners' beliefs, but they do not go on to determine if those beliefs impact language learning in any way. To date there have been few studies investigating the way beliefs affect language learning (R. Ellis, 2008). Mori (1999a) looked at the beliefs of university students at varying proficiency levels studying Japanese in the US. She looked at learners' beliefs about language learning and the relationship between beliefs and L2 achievement by using a belief questionnaire and a 72-item multiple choice Kanji compound test. She found that the

belief in innate ability and the need for single clear-cut answers were significantly correlated to lower achievement while learners who believed that L2 learning was easy showed higher levels of achievement. Another study by Mori (1999b) of students of Japanese at two state and two private universities in the USA showed similar findings. When students were given a questionnaire about beliefs and their progress was followed using their daily quizzes, achievement exams, proficiency tests and course achievement, modest but statistically significant correlations were found between learner beliefs, achievement, amount of instruction received and the perception of the course. She also found belief differences between novice and advanced learners.

Peacock (1999) also found a relationship between beliefs and proficiency levels in his study of 202 EFL students in Hong Kong. He looked for correlations between their answers on the BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) and their performance on a comprehensive proficiency test. He found that students holding beliefs such as “learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules” and “if you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on” had lower proficiency levels than those who did not hold such beliefs. As with the study by Peacock, Park (1995) also found positive correlations between certain language learning beliefs and L2 proficiency. In the study beliefs about self-efficacy and social interaction were connected with an improvement in L2 proficiency as measured by students TOEFL scores.

On the other hand, a study by Tanaka and R. Ellis (2003) examining the relationship between the beliefs of Japanese university students and their English proficiency as measured by the TOEFL found no relationship between beliefs and gains in proficiency. Students were studying abroad in a 15-week program in the USA and their English proficiency as measured by the TOEFL and their beliefs were taken from a questionnaire. Changes in beliefs were monitored through the administration of the

questionnaire both before and after the study abroad program and although they found changes in beliefs regarding confidence and self-efficacy, this did not affect students' performance on the TOEFL. The researchers mentioned that this could have been because such changes would be likely to affect speaking skills, not the skills focused on in the TOEFL exam. Due to the conflicting findings and limited research, it is difficult to determine the extent to which beliefs affect language learning.

More recently Zhong (2008) investigated the beliefs of one Chinese English language learner in New Zealand over a 10-week period. Data regarding both language proficiency (measured using the Oxford Placement Test, Nation's vocabulary test and two oral narratives) and beliefs were collected at the beginning and end of the study. This was done in order to investigate whether changes in proficiency were linked to changes in beliefs. The study showed that as the participant's proficiency increased, she became less certain of the value rote learning provided. Her belief about the importance of "using English" also broadened from simply practicing words and communicating in contrived situations to communicating in real life situations. She also came to see corrections as being less important.

The studies by Mori (1999a, 1999b), Park (1995) and Tanaka and R. Ellis (2003) show that beliefs may either directly or indirectly affect language learning. Furthermore, the study by Zhong (2008) indicated that as proficiency increases, beliefs can change, including beliefs about the need for corrective feedback. Wenden (1986) and Ferris (2003) claimed that because of the negative impact differences in beliefs between teachers and students may have on learning, teachers need to be aware of student beliefs and provide students with opportunities that raise students' awareness of their own beliefs and help them understand why they hold them.

Previously mentioned studies have also shown that culture may also play a role in shaping beliefs about language learning and CF (Lennane, 2007; Sheory, 1986). The

next section deals specifically with the limited number of studies that have specifically investigated the way beliefs about written CF may impact uptake. If learner beliefs do indeed impact their use of written CF, teachers need to be aware of that fact and take it into account when responding to student writing. In order to provide the most appropriate feedback to learners, the gaps in this area of research need to be filled.

#### *3.6.4 The impact of beliefs on written CF*

To date there have been very few studies that investigated whether beliefs about written CF actually impact the way students use or retain the feedback they receive. In a study of two students studying in a French immersion program in Canada, Swain and Lapkin (2003) had students work together to create a text in a jigsaw activity. The students were then provided with reformulations and their interaction was audio-recorded, with the students then separately rewriting their original text. The researchers found that one of the students rejected a reformulation because it was in contrast to an existing rule they knew and already believed to be correct. Mahfoodh and Pandian (2011) reported a similar finding when one of the students in their written CF study rejected a teachers' reformulation because she believed that it changed the meaning she had intended to convey. Furthermore, in their small-scale study looking at pairs of students working together to use the written CF they received, Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) found that the beliefs held by students regarding written CF might affect uptake. Data were collected over three sessions. In the first session the participants worked in pairs to compose a text, after which either direct or indirect feedback was provided. In the next session the two learners received their texts back with the feedback and worked to reformulate the text. During this session, participants were audio-recorded so that their pair-talk could be analyzed. In session three the participants were given the same prompt as the first session and asked to individually compose a text to see if they had

retained the feedback provided. Their findings suggest that there is a complex interaction of both affective and linguistic factors that influence how effective uptake is and which type of feedback is most effective. They conducted a similar study with 36 pairs of students (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2012) and also found that affective and linguistic factors impacted uptake. The two studies (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010, 2012) were, however, not specifically about the effect of beliefs on written CF, they were about the effects of collaborative writing and the processing of feedback. It is through the audio-recordings that findings about beliefs and affective factors emerged. Further research focusing specifically on beliefs is needed in order to provide a fuller picture.

Hyland (2010) pointed out that written CF can only be useful to learners if they are “willing and motivated to engage with it” (p. 177). If students don’t believe that the feedback is correct or useful, they may be unwilling to engage with it. In all four studies (Mahfoodh & Pandian, 2011; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010, 2012; Swain & Lapkin, 2003), that seems to be the case. However, three of these studies were small-scale (Mahfoodh & Pandian, 2011; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2003) and all either had students rewrite a text they had already written or used the same prompt on both occasions, so more research is needed in order to determine if individual factors such as beliefs affect students’ use and uptake of written CF on new texts.

Because of the limited number of studies that have been carried out, more research is needed. Furthermore, a greater variety of methodologies need to be used to investigate the topic in order to provide a fuller picture of the impact of beliefs on written CF. The current research sought to shed more light on the topic by carrying out a multiple case study in two contexts, Laos and Kuwait. By investigating this topic, it was hoped that the effect of learners’ beliefs on their engagement with and uptake of

written CF would be determined, perhaps leading researchers and teachers to re-think the one-size-fits-all policy to providing feedback.

### *3.7 Research aims and questions*

In light of the fact that existing research has only begun to investigate the impact of context of written CF, I have conducted a study in two contexts (Laos and Kuwait) that examined the extent to which learners' beliefs about written CF were similar or different in the two contexts. It then examined if those beliefs may have had an effect on the way students then used the written CF they received. Another important aspect it investigated was whether teachers hold different beliefs than their students, as this may cause conflict with some learners and affect the way they use the written CF.

All students were advanced level and planning to use their English to study at universities that conduct their courses in English. By asking the questions "why do they learn" and "what do they learn", it was clear that students should be in similar programs and have similar goals, because the answers to these questions would be similar (in this case all the students were learning academic English in order to get into English medium universities). Having learners who were in similar programs with similar goals and proficiency levels limited the number of factors that could cause any similarities or differences between the two contexts. Furthermore, data were collected in the same order and at the same time of day to eliminate those outside factors.

My hope is that by possibly identifying factors that lead to variation between learners in Intensive English programs in two different countries, Laos and Kuwait, I can begin to provide language teachers with new insights into the different needs of different learners. Because the students came from two very different contexts, certain aspects of the context (such as previous educational experiences) and their own

individual differences may have impacted the way they respond to the activity, and that may help to explain why written CF works in some instances and not in others.

In order to fulfill the aims of this research data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and writing prompts, and the following research questions guided the research:

1a. What beliefs about written CF do language learners in Laos and Kuwait have and do those beliefs vary between the two groups and within each group?

1b. To what extent are native English speaking teachers' (American, South African, British) beliefs about written CF similar to or different from those of their students from Laos and Kuwait?

2. To what extent do different types of written CF facilitate the uptake and retention of certain targeted linguistic error categories in the written work of students from two different countries (Laos and Kuwait)?

3. To what extent do beliefs about written CF impact uptake and retention of the targeted linguistic features in the two contexts?

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

### *4.0 Introduction*

This chapter introduces the quantitative and qualitative research methods that form the basis of my study (section 4.1 and 4.2). The reasons why these methods were considered appropriate have also been included, along with why triangulation was chosen as the approach to combine multiple methods and data sources (section 4.3). This is followed by my data collection procedures (section 4.4, 4.4.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3). An explanation of how data were analyzed follows (section 4.4.4), along with an overview of ethical considerations (section 4.5), trustworthiness (section 4.6) and changes to the study that resulted from the testing of my instruments (section 4.7). The chapter concludes with section 4.8.

### *4.1 Methodological approach*

The methodology for this study takes the form of a case study. In order to understand a case study, one must first understand what is meant by a case. According to Stake (1995), a case is unique, one among others. Furthermore, a case is one specific thing that is related to something in general and it is subject to evaluation because there is a practical interest connected to it (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). Gerring (2004) defined a case study as “in intensive study of a single unit with an aim to generalize across a larger set of units” (p. 341). According to Stake (2005) a case study “optimizes understanding by pursuing scholarly research questions” (p.443) and gains its credibility through the continuous triangulation of descriptions and interpretations. There are two key approaches that can be used to guide case study methodology. The first was proposed by Stake (1995) and the second by Yin (2003). Both are based on a constructivist paradigm, meaning that they are built on the premise that there is a social



construction of reality (Searle, 1995). In a constructivist framework, knowledge is seen as “temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, nonobjective” (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; pg. vii). If this view is taken, research into what happens in the classroom needs to reflect the dynamic nature of knowledge. It is also important to note that the focus of a case study is not predominantly on the individual, but is instead on the issue, with the case (individual/s) used to better understand the issue (Creswell et al., 2007). This is important for the current study because the cases are being used to investigate the issue of written CF.

Yin (2003) argued that a case study design should be considered when: (1) the study seeks to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions; (2) you cannot manipulate the behavior of participants in the study; (3) you want to cover contextual conditions because they are relevant to the phenomenon being studied; and (4) the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clear. Stake (2005) stated that a case study approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of a phenomenon.

Three variations of case studies exist: (1) the single instrumental case study (the researcher selects one bounded case to investigate the issue); (2) the multiple-case study (the researcher replicates the research in multiple settings); and (3) the intrinsic case study (the focus is on the case itself because it is unique) (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003).

Because I investigated the issue of written CF in university preparation programs in the two contexts of a program in Laos and a program in Kuwait, and I wanted to see how beliefs about written CF affect uptake in those two contexts, I chose to use a multiple case study approach. This was considered an appropriate choice because, according to Yin (2003), “You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly

pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (p. 13). Furthermore, Yin (2003) claimed that a multiple case study allows the exploration of differences within and between cases, with the goal being to replicate findings across cases. In order to draw comparisons, cases need to be chosen carefully to allow the researcher to predict similar results across cases, or contrasting results based on theory (Yin, 2003). For this reason conditions in both contexts of my study were carefully replicated and cases were chosen carefully according to participants’ future goals and English levels. Another advantage of using a multiple case study is that the evidence created is considered to be robust and reliable because it provides insight into a phenomenon in more than one context (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

One common problem with case studies is that the researcher tries to answer a research question that is too broad (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To avoid this, Ying (2003) and Stake (1995) have suggested placing boundaries on a case, such as binding your case (1) by time and place (Cresswell, 2009); (2) time and activity (Stake, 1995); (3) and definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The boundaries show what will and will not be in the scope of the research. For the current studies, my boundaries included using only upper-intermediate level English language learners and their teachers in a university preparation program in one school in each country (Laos and Kuwait) over a seven week period and investigating only their beliefs about and use/uptake of written CF. Furthermore, only the teachers who were teaching the students in the study were given the questionnaire and interviewed, because I was interested specifically in how these teachers’ beliefs may affect their students uptake and retention of written CF.

#### *4.2 The mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches*

Because this study is a case study, mixed methods were chosen to investigate the topic of written CF in depth. A mixed methods approach to data collection refers to the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the same study. Traditionally a distinction between qualitative and quantitative research approaches has been made. According to Dornyei (2007) quantitative research results in numerical data which is analyzed by statistical software, whereas qualitative research normally results in non-numerical data which is analyzed by non-statistical methods. Recently there has been a research trend to combine both qualitative and quantitative research and this has come to be known as mixed methods research because it “involves different combinations of qualitative and quantitative research either at the data collection or at the analysis levels” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 24). The research approaches that are suitable for different studies vary according to the research questions being asked so a researcher needs to bear that in mind. This means that research methods should be chosen to provide the best opportunity to gain useful answers to the research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In other words, one should not just mix methods in order to mix methods, but should instead choose the best methods to provide valid answers to the existing research questions.

Cowger and Menon (2001) put forth the advantages of integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches as being an increase in the validity of research findings and a chance to harness the strengths of each approach. In addition, Reid (1994) argued for the use of both methods, as the strength of each tends to be the weakness of the other. This means that the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods can lead to a stronger study with more reliable data.

Because the constructivist paradigm forms the basis for case studies and constructivism values the idea that people have multiple realities, multiple methods of

data collection were chosen to explore the differing foci of the research questions in this study. The use of multiple methods is recommended in constructivist research as it leads to a more reliable and diverse construction of the diverse realities people hold (Golafshani, 2003). The added dimension of looking at the influence of context made mixing methods particularly relevant to this study. Mason (2006) presented the case for mixing methods by pointing out that “social experience and lived realities are multi-dimensional and that our understandings are impoverished and may be inadequate if we view these phenomena only along a single dimension” (p. 10). Alasuutari (1995) stated:

One has to be able to change the viewpoint, lens and focal distance as freely as possible, not to gather data that consists of observations made through a single methodological lens (p. 42).

He goes on to give the example of a researcher who uses a survey, stating that the survey only shows which predetermined answers to predetermined questions an individual prefers, without necessarily showing what the participant actually believes.

In order to choose the most effective data collection methods for my research, all relevant characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative research were considered. Traditional quantitative research is generally considered to focus on deduction, confirmation, theory/hypothesis testing, explanation, prediction, standardized data collection and statistical analysis while traditional qualitative research focuses on induction, discovery, exploration, theory/hypothesis generation, the researcher as the primary “instrument” of data collection, and qualitative analysis (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The strengths and weaknesses of both types of data were also taken into account in order to decide how best to combine the two approaches and collect multiple data types using a number of different methods, thus bringing out the strengths and limiting the weaknesses of each approach. The quantitative approach provides precise, quantitative numerical data (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004);

however, it cannot provide a full picture of the issue being investigated. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, provides a richer picture of the topic being investigated, but the findings are produced without any means of quantification (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and they are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). For that reason, a mix of both quantitative and qualitative data collection measures was used.

Because of my desire to investigate both beliefs about written CF and use of written CF, three methods were employed to collect the relevant data: the qualitative method of semi-structured interviews and the quantitative methods of questionnaires and writing samples. All data were collected at the two locations by the researcher. The questionnaires and interviews were used to explore participants' beliefs about written CF and the extent to which context may affect those beliefs. The semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth and rich detail about students' beliefs about written CF while the questionnaire provided a way to systematically measure and compare those beliefs. Furthermore, these methods were chosen because they allow the researcher to meet with the participants and collect data on more than one occasion and monitor any changes in beliefs that may occur. This is important for the topic of beliefs about written CF because researchers have indicated the difficulty of studying beliefs due to their dynamic nature (Barcelos, 2003; Dufva et al. 1996). This dynamicity is demonstrated in a study by Dufva et al. (1996) when participants admitted in the final interview that the questionnaire and group discussion they took part in during an early stage of the study had impacted their beliefs because they had become aware of certain issues that they had failed to consider before. With this in mind, the current study was designed to collect data at multiple stages using multiple methods to allow participants the opportunity to express any changes regarding their beliefs about written CF.

Besides looking at beliefs, I also investigated how those beliefs affect learners' feelings towards and use of written CF by collecting writing samples and providing feedback on them, which also provided an opportunity for statistical analysis.

Throughout the processes I continued to assess learners' beliefs about written CF in the hope of gaining a fuller understanding of the entire process. Because few studies have investigated how beliefs impact language learning (R. Ellis, 2008) and only one small-scale study looked specifically at their relationship to written CF, it is believed that the findings resulting from this study will provide new insight to existing knowledge.

This study differs significantly from previous written CF studies, which either only looked at beliefs about written CF through questionnaires (McCargar, 1993; Schulz, 1996, 2001) or only looked at improvement in linguistic accuracy through monitoring changes in the number of errors made by collecting writing samples (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Sheen, 2007; Van Beuningen, et al. 2008, 2012). Unlike previous studies, the current study has combined questionnaires with semi-structured interviews to gain richer insight into both student and teachers' beliefs about written CF rather than just one or the other. It has also used the detail provided regarding beliefs to investigate whether receiving the type of feedback a student believes to be most beneficial helps that student to develop a greater degree of linguistic accuracy regarding the targeted forms. Furthermore, although Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) explored the effect of beliefs (among several other things) on written CF, the study did not focus specifically on beliefs and involved only eight learners (four pairs) and data were collected through writing samples and audio-recorded pair talk. Though this may have allowed for a freer conversation, it could not provide specific information about beliefs about written CF that multiple personal interviews of students and teachers used in the current study would allow.

Mixing methods can yield rich results; however, the approach must be used with caution and certain considerations need to be made. Researchers must be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative research (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The use of quantitative research by qualitative researchers may seem overly time-consuming and difficult without proper training. In the same way a quantitative researcher who uses qualitative research simply to state that he is mixing methods may simply throw in a few open ended questions without considering the theological purpose of including them (Hesse-Biber, 2010). To avoid this in my own study, I carefully considered my research questions and the relevant cognitive and social theories that underpinned my study before selecting the quantitative and qualitative methods that I felt would provide me with the most robust results because, as Mason (2006) argued, the research questions being asked should drive the choice of methods.

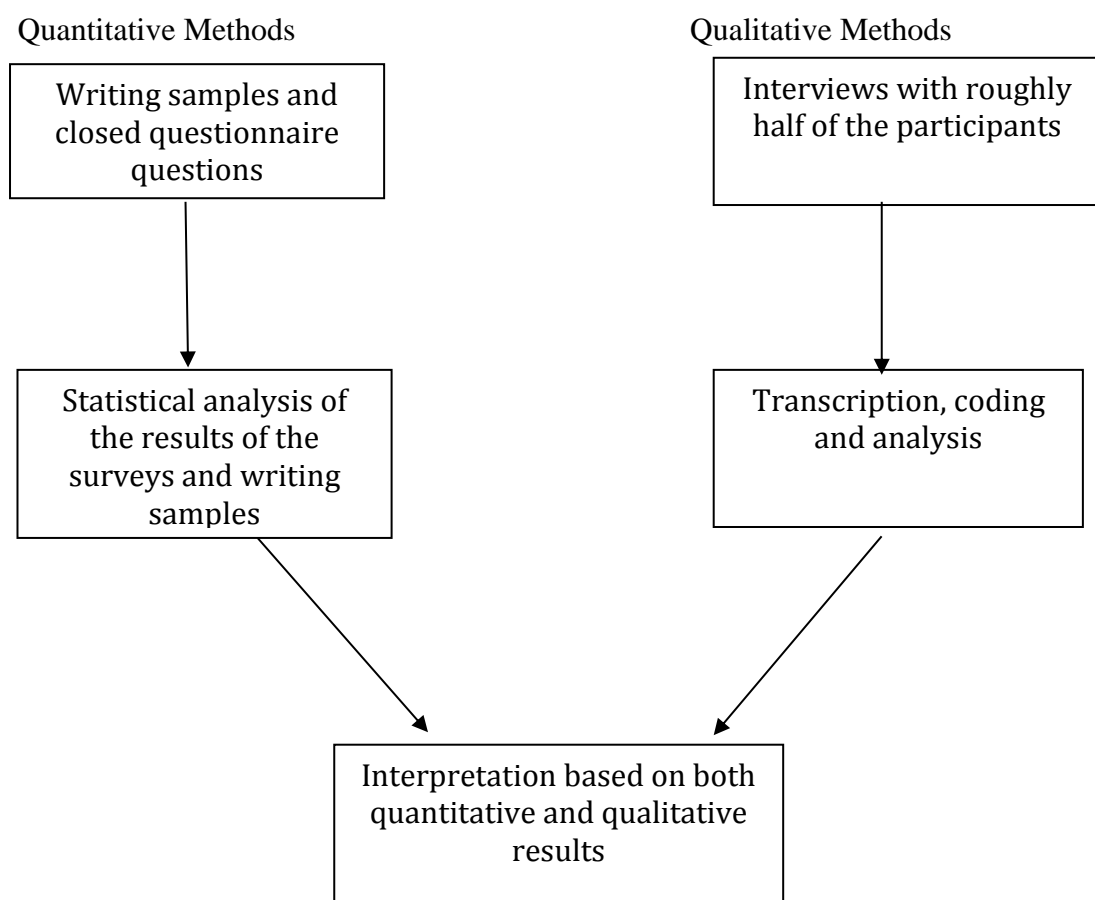
#### *4.3 Triangulation*

One concern about using questionnaires to measure beliefs and attitudes is that they do not usually provide a complete picture and it is easy to produce unreliable and superficial data (Gass & Mackey, 2005). For that reason, Victori (1999) recommended triangulation, or “the use of multiple, independent methods in obtaining data in a single investigation” (Gass & Mackey, 2005, p.181) to overcome this potential shortcoming. Denzin (1978) outlined four types of triangulation: data triangulation (the use of various data sources); investigator triangulation (the use of more than one researcher in the research process); theoretical triangulation; and methodological triangulation (the use of multiple methods).

In the current study, both data and methodological triangulation were used (refer to table 4.1). Data triangulation was achieved through the collection of data regarding beliefs from both students and teachers. This was done in order to collect data about a

single phenomenon (beliefs about written CF) from sources that might have different viewpoints. Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) argued that the use of multiple data sources is a hallmark of case study research, and that this also enhances data credibility. Methodological triangulation was used through the combination of both quantitative (questionnaires and writing samples) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) data collection methods. For example, to increase the credibility of the current study, I included semi-structured interviews at the beginning and end of my study in my research design. By asking follow-up questions to the answers from participants' questionnaires, I hoped to gain richer data about the true nature of their beliefs. It also allowed me to cross-validate the findings of the study as a whole (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009).

**Table 4.1 Triangulation of Study Design**





The use of data and methodological triangulation should provide a more accurate and valid estimate of qualitative results for a particular theme (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006) and it is believed that is what it has done in the current research.

Participants in this study represent a purposive sample, meaning that they were selected very carefully by the researcher (Gass & Mackey, 2005). All participants were either advanced level EFL students planning to study at an English medium school, or their teachers. This was done in order to eliminate the influence of possible variables such as learner levels and goals on the study. Because the purpose of the study was to investigate contextual influences, I felt this was a suitable choice.

The current study was also longitudinal (refer to table 4.2). Menard (2002) defined a longitudinal study to be an investigation in which data are collected for two or more time periods; the subjects are the same or comparable; and the analysis involves a comparison of data between periods. Due to the dynamic nature of beliefs, and the need to determine if written CF helps improve student writing over time, a longitudinal study was deemed to be most appropriate. A longitudinal design was also chosen in order for the researcher to measure both the students' uptake and their retention of the targeted grammar forms. Uptake refers to the ability for students to accurately modify output after they receive input (in this instance in the form of written CF) on targeted forms. Furthermore, if the students continue to accurately use the targeted form over time, this can be seen as evidence of retention.

Questionnaires were administered and the initial interview was conducted before any written CF was given. Four writing samples were then collected over a seven-week period (at one, two, four and seven weeks respectively). A short follow up interview was conducted in week six to investigate if there had been any changes in beliefs about written CF.

**Table 4.2 Schedule for Data Collection**

	Questionnaires	Interviews	Writing Samples
Week 1	X	X	X
Week 2			X
Week 3			
Week 4			X
Week 5			
Week 6		X	
Week 7	X		X

#### *4.4 Data collection procedures*

Data were collected by the researcher from two different sources (students and teachers) and using three different methods (questionnaires, interviews, and writing samples). The following sections present information on: (1) who the participants of the study were and where it took place (section 4.4.1); (2) what research instruments were utilized to collect data (section 4.4.2); and (3) how the data was analysed (section 4.4.3).

##### *4.4.1 Participants and location*

There were two phases for the main data collection of this study. The first one took place in Vientiane, Laos. The second phase happened directly after the first stage in Kuwait City, Kuwait. The process of data collection was the same in both locations.

The participants in both phases of the research were adult learners (Laos n=42; Kuwait n=30) enrolled in intensive English programs in their respective countries and all were studying English for Academic Purposes. The Lao students were attending in order to prepare to study in English medium universities outside of their country. The Kuwaiti students were studying in preparation to attend an English medium university either in Kuwait or abroad. The Lao students (22 males, 20 females) were between the ages of 23 and 27, whereas the Kuwaiti students (20 female, ten male) were slightly younger being 21 to 24 years of age. The Lao participants came from a number of

regions of Laos, mostly from the capital, Vientiane, and smaller cities in the south of the country. Furthermore, they had all received AUSAID or NZAID scholarships. All the Kuwait students came from Kuwait City, a very small geographic area. All of the participating students had studied English for six to ten years before entering their current programs and were classified as being at an advanced level and had IELTS scores of at least 5.5.

Because of the possible impact past educational experiences may have on students' beliefs, it is important to understand the broader contexts of the two countries. In general, Laos is a poor country and that could be seen in the limited resources and technology available to students at the school. Because Vientiane is the only city in the country to have a number of schools with teachers from countries other than Laos and the schools there have more resources, it could be that the students from Vientiane would have different prior educational experiences to those from other parts of the country. Kuwait, on the other hand, is an oil-rich country and the school in question was well resourced. It's also much smaller than Laos and the students in the current study had similar educational backgrounds, having studied a standardized curriculum at government schools in Kuwait City.

The Lao students' program was six hours a day and the program in Kuwait was five hours a day. During their classes, both groups studied academic reading, writing, listening and speaking. There was also a strong grammar focus in both programs. Many of the materials used had been developed in-house, so no set published course books were used.

Besides the student participants, their teachers (Laos  $n=3$ ; Kuwait  $n=2$ ) were also asked to fill out a survey and take part in a semi-structured interview. This was done in order to determine the extent to which student and teacher beliefs differed. Of participating teachers, three were from the United States, one was from the UK, and

another was from South Africa. All teachers had been teaching English for Academic Purposes for at least six years and had spent from two to six years in their current programs.

#### *4.4.2 Research instruments and design*

Data for this study were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and writing prompts. Students were first surveyed and interviewed, and then assigned to one of four groups according to the type of feedback they claimed to believe would help them improve the most (some students got their preferred type of feedback while others did not). Group one received direct error correction with the correct form of the verb provided above the error. Group two received indirect feedback with the error underlined and the error code provided. Group three received a metalinguistic explanation, with the error underlined and a grammar explanation along with examples provided at the end of the paper. Group four was the control group and received no feedback. At the end of the study all students were given a very short survey with closed-item questions and also took part in a short exit interview. Refer to figure 4.3 for an overview of the research design.

#### *Questionnaires*

The questionnaires were developed after reviewing the questions that had been asked on questionnaires in other studies about beliefs about written CF (Schultz, 2001; Leki, 1990). Some of the same questions were used while others were developed to reflect the specific needs of the current study. Beliefs were collected using an initial questionnaire that included a section on feedback type preferences and a section on general beliefs about feedback and writing (Appendices R, S, T). This information was then used to place student participants into one of three feedback groups (direct, indirect, metalinguistic) or the control group. The same questionnaire was also

distributed to the teachers who were participating in order to determine their beliefs regarding written CF (Appendix U). Questionnaires were chosen in order to elicit initial comparable information (Gass & Mackey, 2005) and also in order to quickly collect information on student beliefs so that they could be appropriately placed into feedback groups. Questionnaires were administered to students during regular class time in the students' usual classrooms while teachers were asked to take the questionnaire home to fill it out. To ensure that students understood what was being asked, questionnaires were provided in both their native language and English.

In week seven of the study a short exit survey was given to evaluate if students beliefs about written CF had changed at all over the course of the study (Appendix V). Once again, the survey was given during regular class times.

### *Interviews*

The data from the surveys was supplemented by semi-structured one-on-one interviews with 22 Lao participants and 20 Kuwaiti participants, and with the five teachers (Appendices P and Q). The questions for this were developed after looking at the questionnaire and determining where further information may be needed. Not all participants were interviewed for two reasons. The first is because several did not give consent to be recorded. The second is because over the course of the interviewing process, it was determined that data saturation was reached after interviewing a cross-section of around half of the participants as no new categories or information for existing categories were emerging from the data. Interviews were chosen because they are a good procedure for collecting oral data on pre-determined categories, along with categories that were not predicted beforehand (Brown, 2001). They were also selected due to their flexibility and the fact that they allowed me to ask participants to elaborate on the answers they gave on the questionnaire (Gass & Mackey, 2005). In addition, they allowed for a personal focus and a chance to understand each participant's personal

context (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), which gave my study more depth. Because researchers have pointed out that beliefs are difficult to study due to their dynamic nature (Barcelos, 2003; Dufva, 2003), interviews were conducted multiple times in order to allow participants the opportunity to express any changes which may have occurred over the course of the study. It also had the major advantage of allowing the researcher to investigate things that cannot be easily observed, for example thoughts, feelings, and intentions (Patton, 1990).

One-on-one interviews were conducted to ensure participants were as open and honest as possible. Brown (2001) stated that such interviews allow for confidentiality and therefore participants are more likely to share their actual views. For this study, interviews were conducted in an unused classroom provided by each of the institutions. Each participant was asked questions from a list that had been made previously; however, depending on their answers they may have been asked slightly different follow up questions. The same room was used for the exit interviews at the end of the study.

### *Writing Prompts*

In order to determine the true effectiveness of written CF on improving learners' grammatical accuracy, feedback needs to be provided in as realistic of a writing context as possible (Appendix O). Long (2007) argued that the only way to measure language development is when learners' are focused on content rather than form. However, one of the problems with many of the previous CF studies has been that there is a clear focus on accuracy as the main purpose for the study (Bruton, 2009). For that reason, the genre of writing for this study (narratives) was chosen very carefully in the hope that by allowing students to write about something personal to them, thereby increasing the

chance that they would focus on mainly on content, their attention would not be only on form.

Students were given four writing prompts, each requiring a narrative about an aspect of the students' pasts. Prompt one was: Write about an important event in your life. What happened and why was it important. Prompt two was: Write about a friend who has been important in your life. Write about when you met, what you did, and how your friendship grew. Prompt three was: Write about the best holiday you have ever had. Describe where you went, whom you went with, what you did, and why it was so enjoyable. Prompt four was: Write about a special day spent with family or friends. Describe whom you were with, what you did, and why it was special. Their texts were used to monitor any changes in linguistic accuracy over the course of the study. Students were given 30 minutes and asked to write at least 200 words. As stated above, narratives were chosen in the hope that students would be motivated to write about themselves and thus perhaps focus on conveying a message to an audience without a clear focus on accuracy. In other words, it was hoped that a communicative writing task would allow students to write as they normally would in the classroom.

Narratives were also chosen because such prompts had the potential to create opportunities for students to use the past simple and present perfect tenses, which were the targeted linguistic forms of this thesis. These forms were chosen as they have been found to be problematic for students at all levels, even advanced (Ellis, Lowen & Erlam, 2006). Furthermore, the researcher had previous experience with learners from Laos and Kuwait and had found that students had trouble with these linguistic forms, possibly because of differences between the way they are formed in the students' L1 and the way they are formed in English. For example, in Arabic the past tense is formed using a fixed set of suffixes and there are no exceptions. Lao language the past tense particle 'laew' is

placed after the verb to indicate something happened in the past. Neither language has perfect tenses.

It has been argued that the use of prompts from different writing genres could affect the validity of the data because different genres require different cognitive processes (Ferris, 2004), so it was decided to use only one genre for all four writing prompts to ensure that this did not happen. Samples were collected under identical writing conditions (all were given during class time in the students' respective classrooms) as well as this could affect performance.

One of three types of feedback were provided to the treatment groups:

*Direct CF:* Both an indication of the errors as well as the corresponding target forms is provided.

*Indirect Coded CF:* Errors are underlined or error codes are inserted.

*Meta-linguistic Feedback:* Learners are supplied with meta-linguistic descriptions of their errors.

There was also a control group that did not receive feedback until after the study ended. When the papers were returned, students were given ten minutes to review the feedback or to look over their paper if they were in the control group. Students were not asked to revise and they were not allowed to check their textbooks, though some students were seen referring to their books after the papers had been recollected.

One criticism of many recent written CF studies is that they have only provided students with one off treatments, which is not the way written CF is usually provided in classroom settings (Storch, 2010; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2012). For that reason, students were provided with two treatments (after the pre-test and post-test) in order to see if students were able to further improve their accuracy after the second treatment.



**Table 4.3 Research Design**

Treatment Group	Pre-test Week 1	Treatment Week 2	Post-Test Week 2	Treatment Week 3	Delayed Post-Test Week 4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Delayed Post-Test Week 7
Direct WCF		Direct WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing		Direct WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing		
Indirect WCF	All Groups: Day 1: Questionnaire	Indirect WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing	Post-test	Indirect WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing	All Groups: Delayed Post-Test 1	All Groups: Delayed Post-Test 2
Metalinguistic Explanation	Day 1-3: Interview	Metalinguistic Explanation with 10 minutes to review before writing		Metalinguistic Explanation with 10 minutes to review before writing		Exit Survey and Interview
Control Group	Day 3: Pre-test	No WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing		No WCF with 10 minutes to review before writing		

#### 4.4.3 Data analysis

The analysis of my qualitative data was mostly inductive and I was aiming for thick description (Geertz, 1973). This was done through carefully transcribing my data, taking notes, and allowing themes to naturally emerge (Richards, 2009).

The first step of analysis which was taken was to read through the survey answers given by the participants who took part in the interview, at which point I took notes on anything I planned to follow up on in the interview.

I wrote the pseudonym of each participant on a note card and copied down the key information from their surveys onto it. I then listened to their interview and put notes from that on the card as well. This information was used to break students down into feedback groups in which some participants seemed to favor the given feedback type while others held a neutral or negative view of it. This was done in order to

investigate if students who claimed to have a positive view of a certain type of feedback actually used it better.

After this initial process had allowed me to place students into their feedback groups, I transcribed the interview data and asked participants to read it and verify whether or not it was accurate. I then worked on dividing the raw data into themes and subthemes based on the aims of my research, which in turn allowed the data to be sorted and compared (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). I created an index of themes and subthemes in order to create a clear framework (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Some examples of themes under indirect feedback included becoming independent and wasting time, with subthemes under those being studying abroad and not having an English teachers help under becoming independent and not understanding and having other things to do under wasting time.

I then made a chart in excel in which I entered each participant's pseudonym, initial survey information, and tentative themes from the interviews. Information was continually added to this (the results from their writing prompts, surveys, and final interview) so that I was able to track and compare their progress and feelings about the feedback they had received over the course of the entire study. This allowed participants to be looked at both as an individual and as a part of the group. Student and teachers answers were compared to find similarities and differences, and also any discrepancies between what the teacher said he/she does and what the students said the teacher does. This chart was also used to identify any points of interest that I wanted to follow up on during the final interview.

After I collected the data in both locations, I began to compare excel documents from Laos and Kuwait to identify similarities and differences. I began checking for associations across the two sets of data to find significant patterns and try to develop explicit accounts from the participants' actual responses and implicit accounts from the

patterns within the data (Ritchey & Lewis, 2003). Although all sets of data were related to a particular participant in order to look for individual differences during the analysis stage, the pseudonyms used by the participants were not used at any other stage or in any reports or presentations to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

Besides looking at the raw data, I revisited the recordings of the interviews and tried to determine how the interview had been constructed. For example, identifying any instances when discrepancies in answers may have been affected by the way a participant viewed me as a researcher.

The quantitative data from the questionnaires and the data from the writing samples was discussed with the Maths/Statistics Department and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The appropriate tests of statistical significance (e.g. ANOVA) were then carried out and an expert in statistics was consulted again after the tests were performed to confirm the claims arising from the data were valid. The teacher and student surveys (which used a Likert scale ranking) were analyzed using SPSS, which produced descriptive data in the form of percentages.

For all writing tasks, accuracy was calculated using obligatory occasion analysis, or the percentage of correct uses of the targeted linguistic form. In other words, seven correct uses out of ten obligatory occasions would give an accuracy rate of 70%.

A repeated measures ANOVA was performed to decide if there were between group differences and/or within group differences. It was chosen because, as Pallant (2001) stated, it “allows you to simultaneously test for the effect of each of your independent variables on the dependent variable and also identifies any interaction effect” (p. 202). In other words, repeated measures ANOVAs allow researchers to investigate the independent and joint effect of two independent variables (in the case of

the current research, time and feedback type) on one dependent variable (accuracy rates).

After differences within and between groups had been determined through the repeated measures ANOVA, one-way ANOVAs were performed to find out exactly where the differences had occurred. One-way ANOVAS are used to compare the variance between different groups and are used when you have one independent variable (feedback) with three or more levels (direct, indirect, metalinguistic, control) (Pallant, 2001). This was deemed to be the best test because there were different cases in each group and the researcher wanted to investigate the differences between the groups. Tukey's post hoc test was used to determine whether the groups being compared were equal at the start of the study.

To determine if there was a difference in the type of feedback that was most effective in promoting linguistic accuracy between the two countries, Laos and Kuwait, a three-way mixed ANOVA was performed with between-participant variables of feedback type (direct, indirect, metalinguistic, and control) and country (Laos and Kuwait) and the within-participant variable of time (pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test, delayed post-test two).

In order to investigate if there was a correlation between preferences and the elimination of errors data was analyzed using Fisher's Exact Test for Count Data. This test was run by a statistician from the Maths department. Fisher's Exact Test can be used when you have two variables (for example beliefs that matched the feedback and beliefs that did not) each having two categories (if they eliminated errors or not) and one or more of the expected counts for the four possible categories are below 10. It is called an exact test because all possible 2x2 matrices are known, along with the probability of getting each matrix. The null hypothesis for this study is that students whose beliefs match the feedback they receive will be no more likely to eliminate their

errors than the ones whose beliefs did not match the feedback they received. The greater the difference between the number of students whose beliefs match the feedback who were able to eliminate their errors and those who didn't get the feedback they wanted and were able to eliminate their errors, the smaller the likelihood that the results could be produced by chance alone.

#### *4.5 Ethical considerations*

Ethical approval for my research was gained from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC) (Ethics Application Number 10/209, Appendix W). Permission to conduct the research was first gained from the directors of the respective programs by sending a formal e-mail (Appendices A and B). In accordance with the ethical guidelines issued by the university's ethics committee, privacy and confidentiality were respected and considered of utmost importance throughout the research process. All participants were met one day before data collection commenced in order to have the aims of the study and the nature of their participation in it clearly explained to them. The information was provided in English as well as their native language in order to ensure their full understanding. This information was provided in the Participant Information Sheets (Appendices C, E, G, I, K, and M) and Consent Forms (Appendices D, F, H, J, L, and N)

After learners received the information about the study, requests for their voluntary participation in questionnaires and recorded interviews were made. In the case of student participants, requests were also made for permission to administer writing prompts and collect writing samples. All participants were reassured that their participation would not in any way affect their grades or employment.

Signed Consent Forms were collected from all participants prior to data collection. All participants were allowed to choose a pseudonym in order to ensure

confidentiality. They were also assured that the information they provided would only be used to fulfill the aims of the research and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

#### *4.6 Study trustworthiness*

The trustworthiness of this study was established during both the data collection and the analyzing of collected data. As mentioned before, triangulation of the data occurred through collection of data from multiple sources, students and teachers, and the use of multiple collection methods including interviews, surveys, and writing samples. Triangulation is important to ensure that the researcher has not “studied only a fraction of the complexity that you (the researcher) seek to understand” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 69). Furthermore, in order to determine reliability, Inter-rater reliability calculations were performed with a trained colleague and revealed a 95 percent agreement on the identification of targeted errors.

Credibility was also established through prolonged engagement with both the participants and the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Prolonged engagement means that an extensive amount of time is spent in the setting or with the participant and/or data to ensure that the researcher has more than a “snapshot view” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). To support this, data from the interviews and writing samples were collected over a period of time so that changes in beliefs and proficiency could be reported appropriately.

The trustworthiness of the interview transcripts was established through participant validation by allowing the participants to read and comment on the transcriptions before they were analyzed (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This was to ensure that the participants’ words and/or ideas had not been altered in any way.

#### *4.7 Materials testing*

Prior to the main study, the researcher tested the research instruments. The purpose of pilot testing is “to test- and often revise- and then finalize the materials and the methods” (Gass & Mackey, 2005, p. 43). It also gives the researcher advanced warning regarding whether the proposed research methods were inappropriate (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). The testing took place between October 28 and November 10, 2010 at a language school in Auckland, NZ. Permission was first obtained from the Director of Studies of the school. A school in Auckland was chosen for its convenience because it was not feasible to fly to the two countries where the data for the main study would be collected to conduct a pilot study. Two Saudi and two Thai students were chosen for the pilot study because of the similarities in language and culture between students from these two countries and students from the two countries in the main study (Kuwait and Laos). They were also chosen because their English language levels and goals were similar to those in my main study. Their teacher also filled out the questionnaire and was interviewed.

Through testing my instruments, I found the following changes needed to be made:

- Several interview questions were added to ensure that I would be able to fully answer the research questions.
- Several interview questions were deleted because they were deemed to be unnecessary.
- The open-ended questions were deleted from my survey as they could be better addressed during the interview.
- Some of the wording was changed on the Arabic survey form. This was to match the dialect of the students in my study.

#### *4.8 Conclusion to the methodology section*

This chapter presented the research design and provided a detailed description of the data collection procedures. A multiple case study methodology was chosen to investigate beliefs about written CF and how they affect uptake of written CF in two different contexts: Laos and Kuwait. In order to take advantage of the strengths of different data collection methods, and overcome their weaknesses, quantitative and qualitative approaches were integrated to create a mixed methods approach to data collection. Furthermore, triangulation of data sources and methods was used to add depth to the research and enhance the credibility of the data. Ethical considerations were taken into consideration and the privacy and confidentiality of the participants were ensured.

I have outlined the research methodology in this chapter and the next two chapters present the results for the research questions (Chapter 5) and a discussion of those results along with the empirical, theoretical, and pedagogical implications (Chapter 6).



## Chapter 5: Results

### *5.0 Introduction*

This chapter outlines the results of the study one research question at a time, with details of the analysis provided. The results of RQ1a are provided under section 5.1, while the results of RQ1b are given under section 5.2. Section 5.3 outlines the result of RQ2 and Section 5.4 provides the results of RQ3.

### *5.1 Research question 1a*

*Research Question 1a: What beliefs about written CF do language learners in Laos and Kuwait have and do those beliefs vary between the two groups and within each group?*

In order to answer this question, I begin by presenting the results from the Lao students in section 5.1.1, and then present the results from the Kuwaiti students in section 5.1.2 and finally present a comparison of the two groups in section 5.1.3.

#### *5.1.1 Lao students' results*

Analysis of the data from questionnaires (refer to table 5.1 below) and interviews (refer to table 5.2 below) with the 42 Lao participants revealed both similarities and differences among student participants.

The first set of questions dealt with whether students felt written CF was important and to what extent students' kept that feedback in mind on *revisions* and *new* texts. As table 5.1 reveals, all 42 students agreed with the first statement "It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing" (86% completely, 14% somewhat). Although the Lao students seemed to think that feedback from their teacher was very important, only 52.5% either completely or somewhat agreed with statement

two stating that they keep error corrections in mind while they revise their writing and just 43% completely or somewhat agreed with statement three that students keep error corrections in mind when they write new essays.

**Table 5.1 Student (N=42) Responses to Questionnaire (Laos)**

Statement	Completely Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Completely Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing	36	86%	6	14%	0	-	0	-	0	-
2. Students keep error correction in mind when they revise their work	9	21.5%	13	31%	9	21.5%	5	12%	6	14%
3. Students keep error corrections in mind when they write new pieces	8	19%	10	24%	12	28.5%	6	14.25%	6	14.25%
4. Teachers should correct all student errors	5	12%	13	30.5%	12	28.5%	10	24%	2	5%
5. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors	29	69%	6	14%	3	7%	2	5%	2	5%
6. Students should learn to locate their own errors	24	57.25%	12	28.5%	6	14.25%	0	-	0	-
7. It is the teacher's job to correct student errors	11	26%	12	28.5%	12	28.5%	5	12%	2	5%
8. I like it when the teacher corrects the errors in my writing	15	36%	13	30.5%	6	14.25%	5	12%	3	7%

9. Teachers should vary their feedback	42	100%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
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When asked about their answers in the interview (refer to table 5.2 for main interview points), five of the students (LS3, LS6, LS10, LS18, LS19) who disagreed with the statements said that, although they would like to keep corrections in mind, they were usually too focused on the content to think much about accuracy. One said:

I want to write correctly, but I have to umm..think so much what I want to say. I don't have time. Maybe someday when I can write my ideas faster I can think about feedback (LS6).

So it is not so much the case that they didn't care about keeping corrections in mind, but rather that they found it difficult to balance their focus between content and accuracy.

**Table 5.2 Summary of Main Points from the Interview Data (Laos)**

Student Responses	N=22
1. It is very important that I receive WCF to improve my grammar	22
2. It's difficult for teachers to correct every error students make	7
3. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think that my writing was so bad that my teacher couldn't help me	8
4. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think my writing was perfect	2
5. I'd feel confused if there was no WCF on my paper	3
6. If there were no WCF, my teacher may have forgotten to check it, but I wouldn't say anything.	1
7. It is difficult to keep WCF in mind because I usually focus on what I want to say/content	5
8. Most non-native English speaking teachers give direct feedback, but native English speaking teachers give indirect feedback	22
9. I think indirect WCF will better prepare me for university abroad	5
10. My English teacher won't always be there to help me so I need to learn to find my errors myself	3
11. Indirect feedback makes learners independent	6

The fourth statement “Teachers should correct *all* student errors”, dealt with whether students wanted focused or comprehensive feedback. Almost 43% of the students completely or somewhat agreed, while 28% each neither agreed nor disagreed or somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed. During the interview, many said that they would like feedback on all their errors because they couldn’t improve if they didn’t know their errors; however they felt this was a lot of work for their teacher. One student said, “When I see my errors, I can fix them for next time. But maybe I make a lot of errors so it’s difficult for my teacher” (LS6). During their interviews six other students also expressed concern that correcting all errors increased their teacher’s workload (LS2, LS5, LS11, LS14, LS17, LS21), so although some students expressed a desire to have all their errors corrected, there seemed to be at least some understanding that comprehensive error correction may not be feasible because it adds to the teacher’s workload.

The next set of questions (five to seven) deal with whose responsibility it is to correct errors. In this regard, although 54% of students agreed with the seventh statement “It is the teacher’s job to correct student errors, 83% also completely or somewhat agreeing with the fifth statement “Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors” and all agreed with the sixth statement “Students should learn to locate their own errors”. During the interview, three of the students said that because they will not always have an English teacher there correcting their work, it’s important that they learn to find their errors on their own. Five other students mentioned that they needed to be more independent learners. As far as enjoying written CF, 66% of students agreed that they liked it when their teacher corrected their writing errors and all students agreed with the ninth statement that teachers should vary their error feedback

techniques according to the type of error made. Thus, we can see that students see a shared responsibility to error correction and believe different techniques could be beneficial.

By examining the students' answers, we can see agreement regarding statements regarding the importance of receiving written CF, varying feedback depending the situation, and student and teachers' shared responsibility toward correcting errors. Conversely, there was little consensus on the statements regarding the number of errors that should be corrected and to what extent students keep errors in mind on *revisions* and *new* writings.

When asked in the questionnaire which feedback type they believe helps the most and would like to receive in the future, students always chose the same option for both (refer to table 5.3 below). They answered as follows: 48% preferred when the teacher underlines the error and writes a code (indirect), 24% preferred when the teacher writes the correct answer next to the error (direct) and 28% preferred when the teacher explains the grammar rules (metalinguistic explanation). Six students mentioned the word 'independent' when talking about indirect feedback (LS1, LS2, LS3, LS6, LS10, and LS21). Four of the students who preferred direct feedback also mentioned memorization as a strategy for using it (LS5, LS8, LS12, LS20). In addition, some interesting themes emerged from the interview data regarding the question of what students would think if they didn't receive written CF on their writing: eight said they would think their writing was so bad that the teacher couldn't even begin to correct it (LS2, LS5, LS8, LS10, LS12, LS13, LS19, and LS22) and two said they would think their writing was perfect (LS3 and LS21). Three other students said that a lack of written CF would leave them feeling confused (LS1, LS4 and LS18). One said that they would think their teacher had forgotten to check it, but wouldn't say anything because the teacher "would feel too bad" (LS4).

When the bio-data of the students involved in this research was looked at, 24 out of the 42 students came from Vientiane (the largest city and capital), and of those students, 16 preferred indirect feedback. They were also more likely to disagree that all errors should be corrected (11 of the students from Vientiane) and agree that they kept errors in mind on revisions and when writing new texts (19 and 16 students respectively). In contrast only four out of the other 18 students from other parts of Laos stated that they preferred indirect feedback and all but one student either agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed that all errors need to be corrected. Only three of these students said students keep error corrections in mind on revisions and two said they keep error corrections in mind on new pieces of writing. Also, of the 24 students from Vientiane, 21 of them said they had had native English speaking teachers prior to studying in their current program. This was in contrast to the students from other parts of Laos, none of whom had been taught by native English speaking teachers before this program.

**Table 5.3 Student (N=42) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Laos)**

	Direct	Indirect	Metalinguistic Feedback
Which type of feedback do you believe will help you the most in the future?	10	20	12
Which type of feedback would you like to receive in the future?	10	20	12

### *5.1.2 Kuwaiti students' results*

Analysis of the data presented in table 5.4 below revealed similarities among most Kuwaiti participants.

**Table 5.4 Student Responses to Questionnaire (Kuwait)**

Statement	Completely Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Completely Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing	26	87%	4	13%	0	-	0	-	0	-
2. Students keep error correction in mind when they revise their work	12	40.0%	17	56.7%	1	3.3%	0	-	0	-
3. Students keep error corrections in mind when they write new pieces	13	43.3%	11	36.7 %	4	13.3%	2	6.7%	0	-
4. Teachers should correct all student errors	14	46.7%	11	36.7%	5	17.7%	0	-	0	-
5. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors	14	46.7%	12	40.0%	4	13.3%	0	-	0	-
6. Students should learn to locate their own errors	18	60.0%	9	30.0%	2	6.7%	1	3.3%	0	-
7. It is the teacher's job to correct student errors	11	36.7%	13	43.3%	4	13.3%	2	6.7%	0	-
8. I like it when the teacher corrects the errors in my writing	17	56.7%	7	23.3%	4	13.3%	2	6.7%	0	-
9. Teachers should vary their feedback	23	76.7%	6	20.0%	1	3.3%	0	-	0	-

As table 5.4 reveals, all 30 students agreed with the first statement that: “It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing”, with 86% of students completely agreeing with the statement and 14% students somewhat agreeing with it. Furthermore, of the Kuwaiti students, 96.6% either completely or somewhat agreed with statement two stating that students keep error corrections in mind while they revised and 80% completely or somewhat agreed with statement three stating that students keep error corrections in mind when they write new essays.

When asked about their answers in the interview (refer to table 5.5 below), several students (KS3, KS7 and KS20) said that they thought very carefully about the feedback they had received when they wrote new writings in the future. One said, “This feedback really helps me to focus. I always think about it in the future. I never forget what my teacher told me” (KS3).

**Table 5.5 Summary of Main Points from the Interview Data (Kuwait)**

Student Responses	N=20
1. It is very important that I receive WCF to improve my grammar	20
2. Indirect feedback just wastes my time, the teacher should say exactly what's wrong	3
3. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think my writing was perfect and nothing needed changed	7
4. If I didn't receive any WCF, I'd think the teacher forgot to correct my paper and I'd talk to her about it.	2
5. When I'm writing, I always think about the feedback I got before	3
6. In my past I received mostly direct WCF	5
7. I feel frustrated when I get indirect feedback	2
8. Grammar explanations on my paper confuse me	1
9. Most non-native English speaking teachers give direct feedback, but native English speaking teachers give indirect feedback	18
10. Indirect feedback makes me think about my mistake when I revise my essays	1



To the fourth statement “Teachers should correct all student errors”, around 83% of the students completely or somewhat agreed, while around 17% neither agreed nor disagreed. When asked about their answer during the interview, The next statements (five to seven) pertained to whose responsibility it was to provide written CF. When presented with the seventh statement “It is the teacher’s job to correct student errors, 80% of students agreed while over 86% of students agreed that “Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors” (fifth statement). Most students (90%) also agreed with the sixth statement “Students should learn to locate their own errors”. This shows that Kuwaiti students feel a shared responsibility with the teacher for error correction.

On the questionnaire, when asked if they liked it when their teacher corrected their writing errors, 80% said yes, and all students agreed with the ninth statement that teachers should vary their error feedback techniques according to the type of error made. Thus students have positive feelings toward feedback and can see how a number of feedback types could be useful.

For the questionnaire questions about which feedback type they believe helps the most and would like to receive in the future, students always chose the same option for both questions (refer to table 5.6 below). Preferences for the three feedback groups were split fairly evenly, with 33.3% preferring indirect feedback, 30% direct, and 36.7% metalinguistic feedback. During the interview, two students admitted that they often feel frustrated when they receive indirect feedback. One said, “I look at the indirect feedback, but I don’t know what to do with it. When my teacher gives me that feedback, I just waste my time” (KS4). One student (KS1) also

said that grammar explanations written on the paper were confusing. Three of the Kuwaiti students who preferred direct feedback mentioned using memorization a strategy to use the feedback (KS7, KS12, and KS19).

**Table 5.6 Student (N=30) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Kuwait**

	Direct	Indirect	Metalinguistic Feedback
Which type of feedback do you believe will help you the most in the future?	9	10	11
Which type of feedback would you like to receive in the future?	9	10	11

When asked during the interview what they would think if they didn't receive written CF on their writing, seven Kuwaiti students said they would think their writing was perfect (KS1, KS4, KS7, KS10, KS12, KS13 and KS16). Two students said they would talk to their teacher because they would think she had forgotten to check their paper (KS2 and KS20).

The bio-data for the Kuwaiti students showed 29 of the 30 students had attended and graduated from government high schools in Kuwait City. The other student had spent one year of high school in the USA, but the rest was spent in Kuwait. Only five of the 30 students had had a native English-speaking teacher before starting their current program. The others had all had non-native English speaking teachers from Egypt, India, the Philippines and Jordan. None of the students had ever been taught by a Kuwaiti English teacher. Furthermore, in the interview students all agreed that native English speaking teachers used indirect feedback, but two of the Kuwaiti participants also said that the non-native teachers they had had used indirect feedback. The other eighteen participants said that their non-native teachers had either used direct feedback or oral metalinguistic feedback in the form of grammar lessons.

### *5.1.3 Comparison of Kuwait and Laos*

When comparing the results of Kuwait and Laos, one can see that there was a greater degree of consensus among the Kuwaiti students than among Lao students (refer to table 5.7 and 5.8). In fact, the only item that Kuwaitis disagreed on was the type of feedback they preferred and the type of feedback they believed would be most helpful (33% indirect, 30% direct, and 37% metalinguistic feedback). In contrast, Laos learners showed a high level of disagreement on four items: 1) Teachers should correct all errors (43% agree, 29% neither agree nor disagree, 29% disagree); (2) students keep feedback in mind when revising texts (52.5% agree, 21.5% neither agree nor disagree, 26% disagree); (3) students keep feedback in mind when writing new texts (43% agree, 28.5% neither agree nor disagree, 28.5% disagree); and (4) the type of feedback they believed to be most effective (48% indirect, 24% direct, and 28% metalinguistic feedback). Even though students from both countries showed disagreement about the type of feedback they preferred, Lao students tended to prefer indirect feedback while Kuwaiti students' preferences were split fairly evenly among the three feedback types. Of the students in both groups who claimed to prefer direct feedback, four Lao and three Kuwaiti students mentioned using memorization as a strategy for using feedback (LS5, LS8, LS12, LS20, KS7, KS12, and KS19).

With regards to the Lao students' answers during the interviews (refer to table 5.9 below) about what they would think if they did not receive written CF, eight students said they would think their writing was so bad the teacher couldn't help them (LS2, LS5, LS8, LS10, LS12, LS13, LS19, and LS22). None of the Kuwaiti students

**Table 5.7: Results of Lao Students (N=42) and Kuwaiti Students (N=30) Questionnaires (RQ 1a) (Comparing)**

Statement	Completely Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Completely Disagree	
	Lao %	Kuwaiti %	Lao %	Kuwaiti %	Lao %	Kuwaiti %	Lao %	Kuwaiti %	Lao %	Kuwaiti %
1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing	86%	87%	14%	13%	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Students keep error correction in mind when they revise their work	21.5%	40%	31%	56.7%	21.5%	3.3%	12%	-	14%	-
3. Students keep error corrections in mind when they write new pieces	19%	43.3%	24%	36.7%	28.5%	13.3%	14.25%	6.7%	14.25%	-
4. Teachers should correct all student errors	12%	46.7%	30.5%	36.7%	28.5%	17.7%	24%	-	5%	-
5. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors	69%	46.7%	14%	40.0%	7%	13.3%	5%	-	5%	-
6. Students should learn to locate their own errors	57%	60.0%	28.5%	30.0%	14.25%	6.7%	-	3.3%	-	-
7. It is the teacher's job to correct student errors	26%	36.7%	28.5%	43.3%	28.5%	13.3%	12%	6.7%	5%	-
8. I like the teacher to correct errors in my writing	36%	56.7%	30.5%	23.3%	14.25%	13.3%	12%	6.7%	7%	-
9. Teachers should vary feedback	100%	76.7%	-	20.0%	-	3.3%	-	-	-	-

**Table 5.8 Laos (N=42) and Kuwait (N=30) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs**

	Direct		Indirect		Metalinguistic	
	Laos	Kuwait	Laos	Kuwait	Laos	Kuwait
Which type of feedback do you believe will help you the most in the future?	10	9	20	10	12	11
Which type of feedback would you like to receive in the future?	10	9	20	10	12	11

**Table 5.9 Main Points from the Interview Data (Laos and Kuwait)**

Student Responses	Lao Students N=22	Kuwaiti Students N=20
1. It is very important that I receive WCF to improve my grammar	22	20
2. It's difficult for teachers to correct every error students make	7	0
3. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think that my writing was so bad that my teacher couldn't help me	8	0
4. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think my writing was perfect	2	7
5. If I didn't receive any WCF, I'd think the teacher forgot to correct my paper and I'd talk to her about it.	0	2
6. If I didn't receive any WCF, I'd think the teacher forgot, but I wouldn't talk to her about it.	1	0
7. I'd feel confused if there was no WCF on my paper	3	0
8. It is difficult to keep WCF in mind because I usually focus on what I want to say/content	5	0
9. Most non-native English speaking teachers give direct feedback, but native English speaking teachers give indirect feedback	22	18
10. I think indirect WCF will better prepare me for university abroad	5	0
11. My English teacher won't always be there to help me so I need to learn to find my errors myself	3	0
12. I need to be an independent learner when studying abroad	2	0

13. Indirect feedback just wastes my time, the teacher should say exactly what's wrong	0	3
14. When I'm writing, I always think about the feedback I got before	0	5
15. I feel frustrated when I get indirect feedback	0	2
16. Grammar explanations on my paper confuse me	0	1
17. When I receive feedback, I memorize it	4	3

mentioned this. However, seven of the Kuwaiti students said they would think their writing was perfect if they didn't receive CF (KS1, KS4, KS7, KS10, KS12, KS13 and KS16) as compared to two Lao students (LS3 and LS21). Two Kuwaiti students said they would talk to the teacher if they didn't receive feedback (KS2 and KS20), thinking that the teacher had made a mistake. Approaching the teacher wasn't mentioned by any Lao students, but one student (LS4) said maybe the teacher forgot but he wouldn't approach her because she may feel bad. By comparing their results from the interview, we can see very different attitudes toward not receiving written CF.

A number of the Kuwaiti students also expressed frustration at receiving indirect feedback with KS4, KS13, KS20 claiming that they felt indirect feedback was a waste of time and KS13 and KS16 mentioning feeling frustration when using indirect feedback. KS13 said, "Indirect feedback is umm confusing me. I look at the code from the teacher and ahh...don't know what can I do. That's frustrating." The Lao students, however, did not express negative views of indirect feedback. In contrast, five of the Lao students (LS1, LS2, LS9, LS10, and LS21) said that they felt indirect feedback would help prepare them for university. LS21 said:

In university in Australia, teachers don't want to correct my errors. I need to do it myself. Indirect feedback makes me think so maybe someday I can do by myself.

Interestingly, the word 'independent' was mentioned in connection with indirect CF by six Lao students (LS1, LS2, LS3, LS6, LS10, and LS21) but was not mentioned at all by

Kuwaiti students. This shows what seems to be a difference in the way some Kuwaiti and Lao students regard indirect feedback. Metalinguistic feedback and direct feedback were not specifically mentioned negatively during the interviews though one Kuwaiti student did say written grammar explanations were confusing (KS1).

## *5.2 Research question 1b*

*Research Question 1b: To what extent are native English speaking teachers' (American, South African, British) beliefs about written CF similar to or different from those of their students from Laos and Kuwait?*

To answer this question, I will first present the findings comparing the Lao students and teachers in section 5.2.1, and then the findings from Kuwaiti students and their teachers in section 5.2.2.

### *5.2.1 Laos results*

In order to gather the data needed to answer this question, teachers in Laos were asked the same questions as their students using both surveys and interviews. In contrast to the Lao students, who provided a variety of answers, there was solid agreement among the three participating teachers concerning their beliefs; however, a comparison of teacher and student surveys shows both similarities and differences between teachers and some of their students (refer to table 5.10, 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13). One similarity between students and teachers was that all three teachers completely agreed with the first statement “It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on

**Table 5.10: Results of Student (N=42) and Teacher (N=3) Questionnaires (RQs 1 and 2) (Laos)**

Table 3.10. Results of Student (N=42) and Teacher (N=5) Questionnaires (RQs 1 and 2) (Laos)																					
Statement	Completely Agree				Somewhat Agree				Neither Agree nor Disagree				Somewhat Disagree				Completely Disagree				
	Student N	%	Teacher N	%	Student N	%	Teacher N	%	Student N	%	Teacher N %		Student N	%	Teacher N	%	Student N	%	Teacher N	%	
1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing	36	86%	3	100%	6	14%	0	-	0	-	0		-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
2. Students keep error correction in mind when they revise their work	9	21.5%	0	-	13	31%	0	-	9	21.5%	2	67%	5	12%	1	33%	6	14%	0	-	
3. Students keep error corrections in mind when they write new pieces	8	19%	0	-	10	24%	0	-	12	28.5%	2	67%	6	14.25%	1	33%	6	14.25%	0	-	
4. Teachers should correct all student errors	5	12%	0	-	13	30.5%	0	-	12	28.5%	0	-	10	24%	0	-	2	5%	3	100%	
5. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors	29	69%	3	100%	6	14%	0	-	3	7%	0	-	2	5%	0	-	2	5%	0	-	
6. Students should learn to locate their own errors	24	57%	3	100%	12	28.5%	0	-	6	14%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	
7. It is the teacher's job to correct student errors	11	26%	0	-	12	28.5%	0	-	12	28.5%	0	-	5	12%	3	100%	2	5%	0	-	
8. I like the teacher to correct errors in my writing	15	36%	3	100%	13	30.5%	0	-	6	14.25%	0	-	5	12%	0	-	3	7%	0	-	
9. Teachers should vary feedback	42	100%	3	100%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	



**Table 5.11 Summary of Main Points from the Interview Data (Laos)**

Student Responses	N=22	Teacher Responses	N=3
1. It is very important that I receive WCF to improve my grammar	22	1. Receiving WCF is important for students' motivation	2
2. It's difficult for teachers to correct every error students make	7	2. Improving students' grammar is a slow process	1
3. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think that my writing was so bad that my teacher couldn't help me	8	3. Students prefer direct feedback because it is what they have experienced in the past	3
4. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think my writing was perfect	2	4. This language program could be impacting students' beliefs about WCF	3
5. I'd feel confused if there was no WCF on my paper	3	5. This language program could be impacting the way students' answered the questions on the survey	1
6. It is difficult to keep WCF in mind because I usually focus on what I want to say/content	5	6. Indirect feedback is best because it makes students independent learners.	3
7. In my past I received mostly direct WCF	17	7. Students would be overwhelmed if I corrected all errors, so I usually focus on errors that effect communication	1
8. I think indirect WCF will better prepare me for university abroad	5	8. Providing feedback is just part of the job	1
9. My English teacher won't always be there to help me so I need to learn to find my errors myself	3		
10. I need to be an independent learner when studying abroad	2		
11. When I receive feedback, I memorize it	4		

student writing”. They also agreed with students on the ninth statement that error correction techniques should be varied according to the type of error that has been made. Other questions the two groups agreed on were statements five and six that both students and teachers were responsible for correcting errors and students should learn to correct their own errors.

When teachers were presented with statements two and three regarding students keeping error corrections in mind during revisions and new writings, they were less positive than many of their students. Two teachers neither agreed nor disagreed and the other teacher somewhat disagreed. When asked during the interview to explain why she believed that it is very important to give feedback while disagreeing that students then kept that feedback in mind on revision and later writings, one teacher said:

I think it’s important for their motivation that they receive feedback, but I’m not convinced they keep it in mind when they are writing. Improving their grammar feels like a very slow process. (LT2)

One other teacher also mentioned student motivation as a reason for the importance of written CF as she felt students would not be motivated to write if they didn’t get any grammar correction. All of the teachers completely disagreed with statement four “Teachers should correct all student errors”, which was in contrast to 71% of the students in their classrooms. LT2 claimed to just mark errors that interfered with communication to avoid overwhelming students with too many corrections.

Furthermore, although only 48% of students believed indirect feedback would help them the most and would be most useful in the future, all three teachers believed that about this feedback type (refer to table 5.12 and 5.13). However, although they believed indirect feedback to be most beneficial, they all agreed that their students wanted direct feedback. This is a bit surprising considering that this was true of only 24% of students. During the interview, all three teachers also expressed surprise as, from their experience, most of the Lao students had received only direct feedback on

their writing before entering this program, so teachers felt their experience in this program may be influencing student beliefs, or at least their answers to questions about beliefs. LT1 said, “We always tell them we give them indirect feedback so they will be come independent learners, maybe our message is starting to sink in.” The other two teachers also mentioned indirect feedback making students independent learners.

#### 5.12 Student (N=42) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Laos)

	Direct	Indirect	Metalinguistic Feedback
Which type of feedback do you believe will help you the most in the future (to students)?	10	20	12
Which type of feedback would you like to receive in the future (to students)?	10	20	12

#### 5.13 Teacher (N=3) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Laos)

	Direct	Indirect	Metalinguistic Feedback
Which type of feedback do you believe helps students the most (to teachers)?	0	3	0
Which type of feedback do you believe your students want (to teachers)?	3	0	0

The answers to these questions showed that while some students held the same beliefs as teachers regarding the most useful type of written CF, others did not and this could possibly have an effect on some of the students in terms of student motivation and engagement with the written CF. Although there was consensus among the teachers,

they teach students with a wide range of beliefs about written CF practices, some of which differed from their own.

### *5.2.2 Kuwait results*

As in the case with Laos, native-speaking English teachers in Kuwait were asked the same questions as their students in both surveys and interviews. There was complete agreement between both teachers in the program and a high level of agreement among the Kuwaiti students; however, the answers sometimes differed between the students and their teachers (refer to table 5.14, 5.15 5.16, and 5.17). For example, when teachers were presented with statements two and three regarding students keeping error corrections in mind during revisions and new writings, both neither agreed nor disagreed with statement and somewhat disagreed, respectively. This was in stark contrast to their students who agreed with both statements. One teacher explained during the interview that although she repeatedly gave feedback on grammar, many students continued to make the same mistakes. She also said that students were often unable to fix their errors correctly when they received indirect feedback.

Unlike over 83% of their students, both teachers completely disagreed with statement four: “Teachers should correct all student errors”. KT1 said that it would be difficult for students to use the feedback if all errors were corrected and claimed to focus on errors that interfered with readers understanding. They also both believed indirect feedback to be the most helpful and useful for students, even though they stated in the interview that students seemed to have trouble using it sometimes. When asked during the interview, KT1 said:

They find it difficult sometimes to figure out what is wrong, but at least it makes them think about it and that’s important. If they can’t figure it out on their own, they can ask me in class and I’ll help them.

**Table 5.14: Results of Student (N=30) and Teacher (N=2) Questionnaires (RQs 1a and b) (Kuwait)**

Statement	Completely Agree				Somewhat Agree				Neither Agree nor Disagree				Somewhat Disagree				Completely Disagree					
	Student		Teacher		Student		Teacher		Student		Teacher		Student		Teacher		Student		Teacher			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing	26	87%	2	100%	4	13%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
2. Students keep error correction in mind when they revise their work	12	40%	0	-	17	57%	0	-	0	-	2	100%	1	3%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
3. Students keep error corrections in mind when they write new pieces	13	43%	0	-	11	37%	0	-	4	13%	2	100%	2	7%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
4. Teachers should correct ALL student errors	14	47%	0	-	11	37%	0	-	5	17%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	100%
5. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors	14	47%	2	100%	12	40%	0	-	4	13%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
6. Students should learn to locate their own errors	18	60%	2	100%	9	30%	0	-	2	7%	0	-	1	3%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
7. It is the teacher's job to correct student errors	11	37%	0	-	13	43%	0	-	4	13%	0	-	2	7%	3	100%	0	-	0	-	0	-
8. I like the teacher to correct errors in my writing	17	57%	2	100%	7	23%	0	-	4	13%	0	-	2	7%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
9. Teachers should vary their feedback	23	77%	2	100%	6	20%	0	-	1	3%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-

**Table 5.15: Student (N=30) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Kuwait)**

	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>	<b>Metalinguistic Feedback</b>
Which type of feedback do you believe will help you the most in the future (to students)?	9	10	11
Which type of feedback would you like to receive in the future (to students)?	9	10	11

**Table 5.16: Teacher (N=2) Feedback Preferences and Beliefs (Kuwait)**

	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>	<b>Metalinguistic Feedback</b>
Which type of feedback do you believe helps students the most (to teachers)?	0	2	0
Which type of feedback do you believe your students want (to teachers)?	2	0	0

In contrast, only about 33% of the Kuwaiti students agreed that indirect feedback was the most helpful for them and during the interview several claimed that it was frustrating and wasted their time. These students who spoke negatively about indirect feedback expressed very strong feelings and the frustration was evident from their voice. As to what students preferred, both teachers said direct feedback, which was the preferred feedback of 30% of the students. When asked during the interview why they thought only 30% of the students said they wanted direct feedback and they believed it was the most helpful, one teacher (KT1) said:

I think that they know they get indirect feedback from me, so some of them thought they should give that answer. I'm not sure it's what they really believe, though some seem to like it.

She also said that the students in her class were not interested in becoming independent learners. One similarity between students and teachers was that both teachers and students completely agreed with the first statement “It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing”. Furthermore both students and teachers in Kuwait agreed that error correction techniques should vary according to the type of error that has been made. There was also consensus regarding statements five and six that students and teachers were both responsible for error correction and students should learn to correct their own errors.

**Table 5.17 Summary of Main Points from the Interview Data (Kuwait)**

Student Responses	N=20	Teacher Responses	N=2
1. It is very important that I receive WCF to improve my grammar	20	1. Receiving WCF is something students expect	1
2. Indirect feedback just wastes my time, the teacher should say exactly what's wrong	3	2. Students would be upset if they didn't receive feedback on their writing	2
3. If I didn't receive any WCF, I would think my writing was perfect	7	3. Students prefer direct feedback because they have trouble using other types	2
4. If I didn't receive any WCF, I'd think the teacher forgot to correct my paper and I'd talk to her about it.	2	4. Some students feel like they are wasting their time when they have to figure out what grammar needs changed after receiving indirect feedback	1
5. When I'm writing, I always think about the feedback I got before	3	5. Students are not really interested in becoming independent learners	1
6. In my past I received mostly direct WCF	4	6. Some students may say they like indirect feedback because it's what I give them so they think they should say that.	1
7. I feel frustrated when I get indirect feedback	2	7. Students would have	1
8. Grammar explanations on my paper confuse me	1		

The results of the analysis of both student and teacher questionnaires show that although there is a high level of agreement among Kuwaiti students and between the two teachers, there are a number of differences between the students and their teachers. Particularly interesting are the differences in beliefs regarding the number of errors that should be corrected, the type of written CF that is most helpful, and the extent to which students keep feedback in mind when making revisions and in future pieces of writing. Such differences could impact students' attitudes as well as uptake of the feedback.

### *5.3 Research question 2*

*Research Question 2: To what extent do different types of written CF facilitate the uptake and retention of certain targeted linguistic error categories in the written work of students from two different countries (Laos and Kuwait)?*

In the first section (5.3.1) I present the findings from Laos, and then I present the findings from Kuwait in section 5.3.2. I next move on to compare the findings from the two groups in section 5.3.3.

#### *5.3.1 Lao students' results*

To answer this question, incorrect uses of the targeted linguistic features were first identified and corrected on the writing samples. Feedback was given to those in the three treatment groups. It was not given to those in the control group. Accuracy was calculated for all of the groups as a percentage of correct usage. For example, if a student had seven correct uses from ten obligatory occasions, the accuracy would be



calculated as 70%. Descriptive statistics for the pre-test and three post-tests were calculated separately for each of the four groups and are presented in table 5.18. The Lao learners made, on average, 5.71 errors in the use of the targeted forms on the pre-test. Tukey's post hoc test was run and no statistical difference was found between the groups on the pre-test ( $p=.19$ ). Because no statistically significant differences were found between the groups on the pre-test scores, a two-way repeated measure ANOVA was performed to determine improvement over time and any statistically significant between group differences. The appropriateness of the tests and results were checked with a statistician.

Table 5.18 shows the descriptive statistics for the mean test scores for the three treatment groups and the control group at the four testing periods.

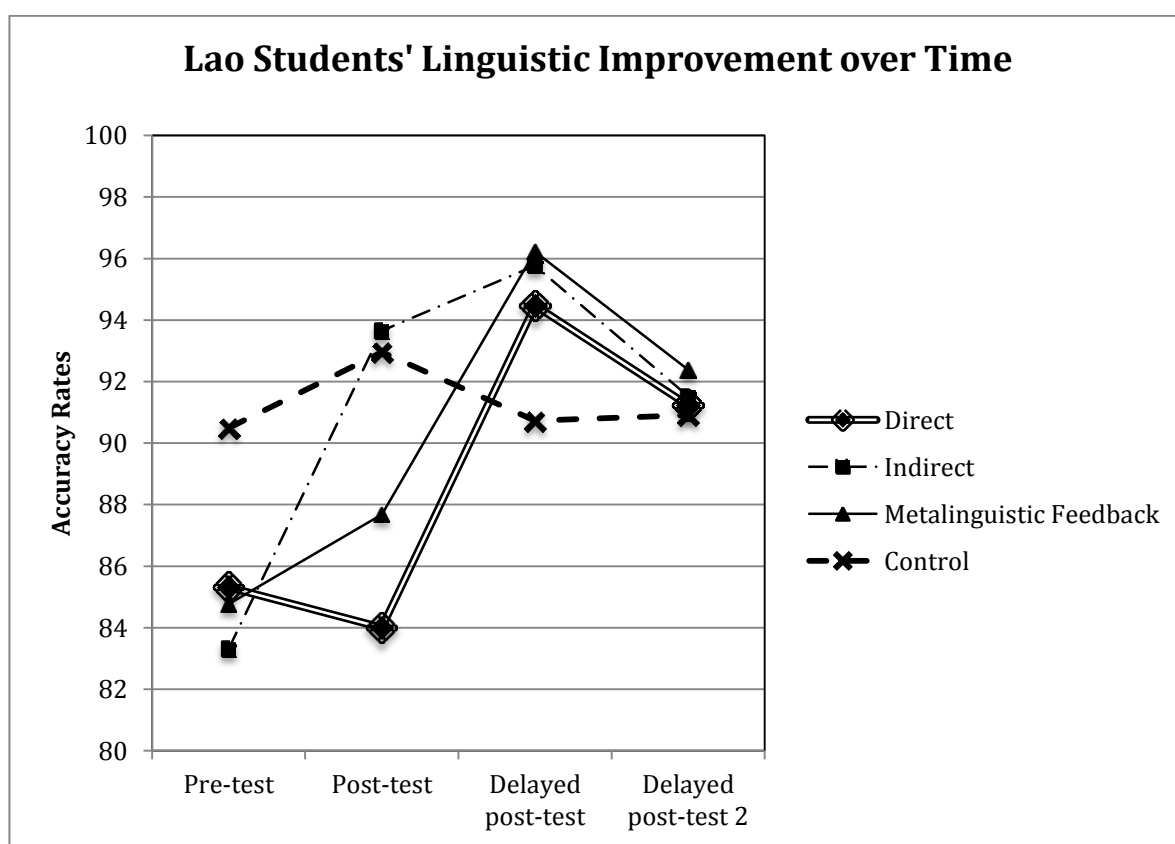
**Table 5.18 Descriptive statistics for mean test scores (Laos)**

Group	Number	Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed Post-test 1		Delayed Post-test 2	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Direct	10	85.19	9.22	84.00	12.99	94.47	8.89	91.23	8.21
Indirect	10	83.31	14.24	93.65	6.86	95.77	5.12	91.52	10.35
Metalinguistic	11	84.77	9.12	87.68	13.15	96.22	6.30	92.38	8.19
Control	11	90.49	8.94	92.96	6.09	90.73	5.62	90.91	7.11

Figure 5.1 is a visual representation of the mean percentages over the four testing periods. As can be seen, although the control group started out stronger than the other three groups (but not significantly so) and improved slightly on the immediate post-test, it did not show any improvement on the two delayed post-tests. Of the three written CF groups, both the metalinguistic and indirect feedback groups showed an observed improvement on their immediate post-test, and all three groups showed an observed improvement on their first delayed post-test. Although there was a decline on their

second delayed post-test, all three groups had still shown an observed improvement from their pre-test.

To compare the treatment and control groups' scores across all four tests, a series of ANOVAs were computed. Because a one-way ANOVA showed no significant difference between the groups  $F(3, 57.19) = .425, p = .74$ , a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was performed. In this two-way ANOVA, the test scores were entered as the dependent variable of Time and the written CF types as independent variables. Table 5.19 shows the results of this analysis.



**Figure 5.1 Lao Students' Linguistic Improvement over Time**

**Table 5.19: Results of two-way ANOVA (Laos)**

Source	Df	F	<i>p</i>
<b>Between Subjects</b>			
WCF type	3	.425	.736
<b>Within Subjects</b>			
Time	3	15.14	.000
Time x WCF Type	9	1.918	.143

As can be seen from the results, there was no significant interaction between time and the type of written CF given; however, there was a significant difference found in regards to time when within-subjects effects were examined. One-way ANOVAs were then performed and the results showed that all three feedback groups showed statistically significant improvements (direct feedback  $p$ -value= .00, indirect feedback  $p$ -value= .00, metalinguistic feedback  $p$ -value= .00) over time but the control group did not ( $p$ -value= .93). Figure 5.1 shows that although the students receiving direct feedback first showed a decrease in accuracy that was not significant at time two (post-test), they significantly improved their accuracy at time three (first delayed post-test). The indirect feedback group showed a significant increase in accuracy at time two and continued to improve significantly at time three. The metalinguistic feedback group experienced an increase in accuracy that was not significant at time two, then a significant improvement regarding accuracy at time three. Although all three feedback groups saw a decrease in accuracy that was not significant from time three to time four, so they retained a significantly higher rate of accuracy than they had at the beginning of the study. The control group, which started out with a higher level of accuracy, showed no significant change over the course of the study.

### 5.3.2 *Kuwaiti students' results*

As with the Lao data, incorrect uses of the targeted linguistic features were first identified and corrected on the writing samples with accuracy calculated as a percentage of correct usage (seven correct uses out of ten obligatory occasions equals a 70% accuracy rate). The Kuwaiti learners made, on average, 5.46 errors in the use of the targeted forms on their pre-test. Descriptive statistics for the pre-test and three post-tests were calculated separately for each of the four groups and are presented in table 5.18. Because no statistically significant differences were found between the groups on

the pre-test scores after running Tukey's post hoc test ( $p=.75$ ), a two-way repeated measure ANOVA was performed to determine improvement over time and any statistically significant between group differences. The appropriateness of the tests and results were once again checked with a statistician.

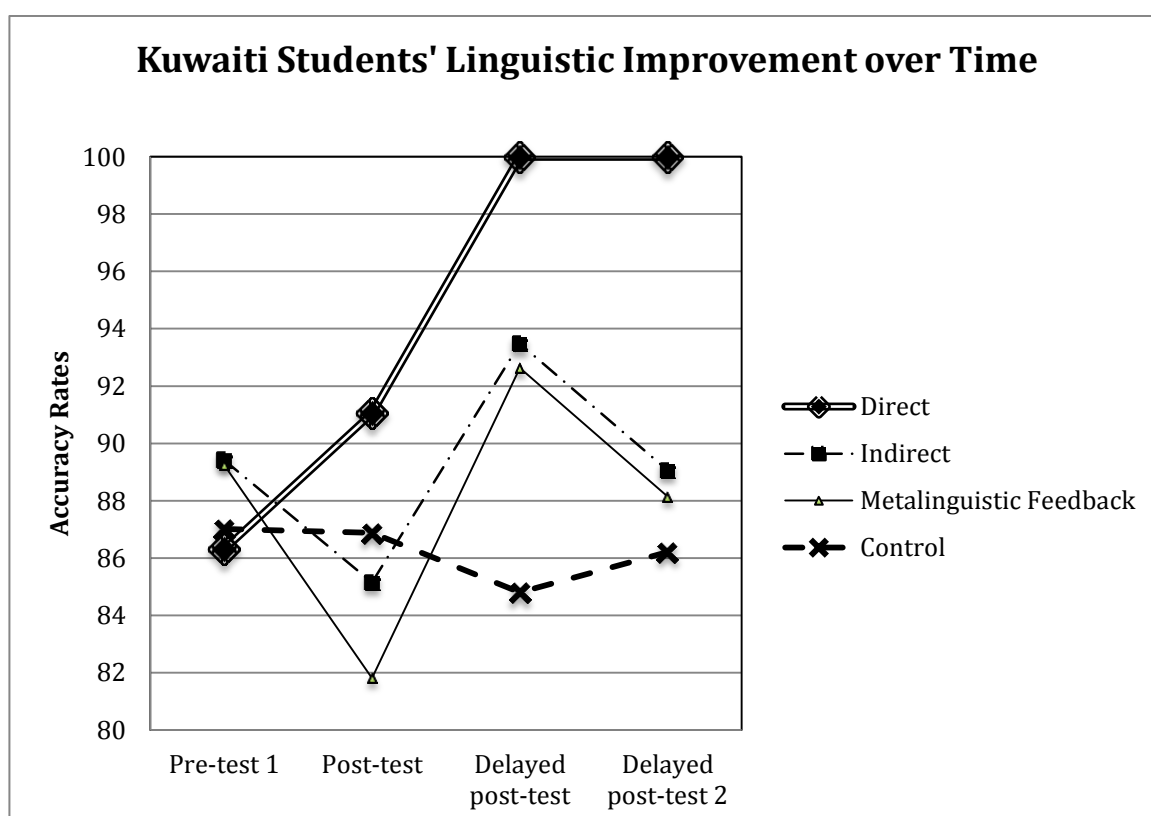
Table 5.20 shows the descriptive statistics for the mean test scores for the three treatment groups and the control group at the four testing periods.

**Table 5.20: Descriptive statistics for mean test scores by group and testing period (Kuwait)**

Group	Number	Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed Post-test 1		Delayed Post-test 2	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Direct	8	86.31	6.63	91.05	11.69	100.00	.00	100.00	.00
Indirect	7	89.42	5.04	85.15	8.32	93.48	8.93	89.06	6.00
Metalinguistic	8	89.25	5.55	81.81	8.37	92.63	5.71	88.14	9.21
Control	7	87.01	8.32	86.88	7.01	84.80	7.69	86.21	6.16

Figure 5.2 shows the mean percentages over the four testing periods. All three groups started at a similar level, with no significant difference found. Students in the control group remained steady over the four testing times (pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test 1, delayed post-test 2). Both the metalinguistic feedback group and the indirect feedback group showed an observed decline in their immediate post-test, then an observed increase in their first delayed post-test. There was a decline again on their second delayed post-test, with students making nearly the same number of errors as they did on their pre-test. However, the direct feedback group performed differently. This group showed an observed improvement between the pre-test and immediate post-test, and then showed a significant improvement between the immediate post-test and first delayed post-test. These improvements remained significant on the second delayed post-test.

To compare the treatment and control groups' scores across all four tests, a series of ANOVAs were computed. Because a one-way ANOVA showed no significant difference between the groups  $F(3, 21.62) = .772, p = .75$ , a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was performed. In this two-way ANOVA, the test scores were entered as the dependent variable of time and the written CF types as independent variables. Table 5.21 shows the results of this analysis.



**Figure 5.2 Kuwaiti Students' Linguistic Improvement over Time**

**Table 5.21: Results of two-way ANOVA (Kuwait)**

Source	Df	F	<i>p</i>
<b>Between Subjects</b>			
WCF type	3	4.049	.017
<b>Within Subjects</b>			
Time	3	7.511	.011
Time x WCF Type	9	4.465	.011

As can be seen from the results, there was a significant interaction between time and the type of written CF given. One-way ANOVAs were then performed and the results showed that the direct feedback group showed statistically significant

improvements (direct feedback  $p$ -value= .00) over time but the indirect feedback group, metalinguistic feedback group and control group did not (indirect feedback  $p$ -value= .62, metalinguistic feedback  $p$ -value= .61, control  $p$ -value= .55).

### *5.3.3 Comparison of Kuwait and Laos*

In order to determine if there was a difference in the type of feedback that was most effective in promoting linguistic accuracy between the two countries, Laos and Kuwait, a three-way mixed ANOVA was performed with between-participant variables of feedback type (direct, indirect, metalinguistic, and control) and country (Laos and Kuwait) and the within-participant variable of time (pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test, delayed post-test 2). The results showed a significant difference ( $p$ = .03) in the type of feedback that led to improved linguistic accuracy in the two countries (refer to figure 5.1 and figure 5.2 for a visual representation).

### *5.4 Research question 3*

*Research Question 3: To what extent do beliefs about written CF impact uptake and retention of the targeted linguistic features in the two contexts?*

I first present the results from Lao participants in section 5.4.1, followed by those of Kuwaiti students in section 5.4.2. The specific findings of two cases are then presented in section 5.4.3.

#### *5.4.1 Lao students' results*

In order to answer this research question, the relationship between students' beliefs about written CF and their performance after receiving written CF that either matches or doesn't match their beliefs must be investigated. At the beginning of the

study the information from student questionnaires and interviews was used to place students into one of four feedback groups. Students had been asked based on their beliefs, which type of feedback they preferred and which type of feedback they would like to receive in the future. Using their answers to these questions, students were either placed into the group they said they preferred and would like to receive or another group (either another feedback group or the control group). Of the 42 students who participated in the Lao part of the study, eight got the type of feedback they said they preferred while 34 did not.

It was noticed upon data entry that many students were able to eliminate all errors pertaining to the past simple and present perfect tenses in their first delayed post-test, and that this was carried over into the second delayed post-test. In order to investigate if there was a correlation between preferences and the elimination of errors data was analyzed by Fisher's Exact Test for Count Data. Fisher's Exact Test can be used when you have two variables (for example beliefs that matched the feedback and beliefs that did not) each having two categories (if they eliminated errors or not) and one or more of the expected counts for the four possible categories are below ten. It is called an exact test because all possible 2x2 matrices are known, along with the probability of getting each matrix. The null hypothesis for this study is that students whose beliefs match the feedback they receive will be no more likely to eliminate their errors than the ones whose beliefs did not match the feedback they received. The greater the difference between the number of students whose beliefs match the feedback who were able to eliminate their errors and those who didn't get the feedback they wanted and were able to eliminate their errors, the smaller the likelihood that the results could be produced by chance alone.

Of the eight students who got the type of feedback they preferred seven were able to eliminate all their targeted errors on their second delayed post-test. In contrast,

of the 34 students who did not get the type of feedback they said they wanted, only four were able eliminate all targeted errors on their final post-test (refer to Table 5.22). The

**Table 5.22: Students Able to Eliminate Errors on Both Delayed Post-tests (Laos)**

	Received the type of feedback they believed to be most helpful	Did not receive the type of feedback they believed to be most helpful
Eliminated targeted errors	7	4
Did not eliminate targeted errors	1	30

$p$ -value=.00 ( $p$ -value < .01%) shows that there is a strong reason to believe that these results could not have been reached if beliefs had not had some effect on learners uptake of the written CF they received. Even more interesting is that of the 11 students in the control group, none were able to eliminate all their targeted errors, which would seem to indicate that, while receiving written CF may not lead every student to be able to eliminate their targeted errors, receiving no written CF may lead to no students eradicating the targeted errors. Besides this evidence, several students in the control group expressed their frustration in the exit interview. One student stated: “How can I improve if I just write and write and no one ever tells me my mistakes?” This type of comment and the inability of students in the control group to eliminate the targeted errors would seem to support the use of written CF, while the stronger performance of the students who received their preferred type of feedback would seem to indicate that beliefs may impact the effectiveness of written CF.

#### *5.4.2 Kuwaiti students' results*

The same procedure was followed for the Kuwaiti participants as for the Lao participants. Students' answers to the survey and interview questions were used to place them into groups that either got the written CF they preferred or another group.



Of the 30 Kuwaiti students who participated in this study, five got the type of feedback they said they preferred but 25 did not.

**Table 5.23: Students Able to Eliminate Errors on Both Delayed Post-tests (Kuwait)**

	Received the type of feedback they believed to be most helpful	Did not receive the type of feedback they believed to be most helpful
Eliminated targeted errors	1	7
Did not eliminate targeted errors	4	18

Of the five students who got the type of feedback they said they preferred only one was able to eliminate all their targeted errors on their second delayed post-test (refer to table 5.23). Furthermore of the 25 students who did not get the type of feedback they said they wanted, seven were able eliminate all targeted errors on their final post-test. The  $p$ -value= 1.00 shows that in regards to the Kuwaiti students in this study, beliefs did not seem to effect the uptake of the written CF. This is in stark contrast to the Lao students who showed a strong correlation between beliefs and uptake ( $p$ -value= <.001). However, as was the case with the Lao students, none of the Kuwaiti students in the control group were able to eliminate all their targeted error.

#### *5.4.3 Results for Research Question 3: Two Cases*

In order to provide a fuller picture of the impact beliefs can have on written CF, I have chosen to highlight two cases in-depth. Although these cases fall at the extreme ends of the spectrum, they are useful in showing how strongly held beliefs can affect the use of written CF. First LS1's case will be described, then KS10's.

During the interview, LS1 expressed very positive beliefs about the effectiveness of indirect feedback. For example she said:

Indirect feedback makes me think about my writing and what I know about English grammar. My teacher told me this will make me a more independent

learner and well, I think it's right. I need to be independent when I study in Australia. I have to help me.

When asked if she thought there was a particular type of feedback that wasn't useful, she said: "Not really, I think any feedback is good". However, this did not seem to be the case after she received direct feedback on her first text. When she was given ten minutes to review her errors, she called me over and asked what she should do for ten minutes as the corrections had already been provided. I told her to look over the corrections and think about the errors she had made. She spent about one minute looking over them and then put the paper in a folder. When she received direct feedback on her second text, she just glanced at it and then placed it in her folder and waited to receive the next prompt.

During the exit interview, LS1 expressed her anger at having received direct feedback. She said:

This feedback, I have to do nothing. Just look and see, oh, there's an error. It didn't help me become independent learner...not at all. I like the feedback my teacher gives much better. I can learn a lot. This type of feedback just wastes my time. I write, but I get nothing....so I don't want to write anymore.

While looking at her set of texts, I noticed that the length of her last two texts were considerably shorter than the first two. Her first text consisted of 256 words, the second one was 225 words, the third one was 122 words, and the last was 134 words.

Furthermore, she was unable to reduce the number of targeted errors she made. In this case, it seems her negative feelings about the feedback impacted her willingness to engage with it, thus influencing her uptake and retention.

On the other hand, take the following example of KS10, who received the type of feedback she believed to be most beneficial. During the interview, KS10 expressed a preference for indirect feedback. For example, she said, "Indirect feedback makes me...think about my mistake when I revise my essays and stuff. I think it's good". She

also stated that her current teacher provided indirect feedback on students' work and said: "She's a very good teacher, she knows what's good for us."

KS10 was given indirect feedback on her writing. When I returned her text with indirect feedback on it, she went straight to work fixing her mistakes during the ten minutes she was given, even consulting the back of her textbook after the paper had been recollected to check for the correct past tense form she was uncertain of. She did this both times that she received feedback.

During the exit interview, she was very positive about the feedback she had received. "It really helped me to know my mistake. I'm so happy I got this feedback." With regards to her performance, she had made six errors in using the regular and irregular past tense in her pre-test, four errors in her post-test, zero in her delayed post-test, and one in her second delayed post-test. Because she showed more improvement between her post-test and first delayed post-test, this case also supports the provision of feedback on more than one occasion.

By looking at these two cases, we can see the two extreme ends of the spectrum. In the case of LS1, receiving a type of feedback she did not find to be useful made her react very negatively to the feedback she received, and also affected her engagement with that feedback. On the other hand, KS10 was very motivated and positive about the feedback she received and it showed in the way she interacted with the feedback and in the progress she made. This shows that although beliefs may not affect every student, they seem to affect some. It also highlights the importance of looking at individual students as well as groups of students when looking at mediating variables. The statistical results to this question would seem to indicate that beliefs did not affect Kuwaiti students' uptake and retention of written CF; however, that wasn't true in the case of KS10.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

### *6.0 Introduction to the chapter*

This chapter discusses the four research questions in light of the findings from Chapter 5 and existing theory/empirical studies. The first sections (6.1, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4 and 6.1.5) discuss research question 1a. After that, research question 1b is discussed (sections 6.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.2.3). The following section 6.3 then offers concluding remarks for research questions 1a and 1b. The chapter goes on to discuss the findings of research question 2 (sections 6.4, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3 and 6.4.4) before ending with the discussion of research question 3 (sections 6.5, 6.5.1, 6.5.2, and 6.5.3).

### *6.1 Introduction to the discussion of research question 1a*

*Research Question 1a: What beliefs about written CF do language learners in Laos and Kuwait have and do those beliefs vary both between the two groups and within each group?*

Regarding the beliefs of Lao and Kuwaiti language learners about written CF, the results from the survey and interview data showed a high level of agreement regarding the importance of teachers providing written CF (all of the Lao and Kuwaiti students either agree or somewhat agree) and the shared responsibility of teachers and students in providing written CF (83% of Lao students either agree or somewhat agree, and 86.7% of Kuwaiti students either agree or somewhat agree) (refer to table 5.1 and 5.4). This indicates students may share general beliefs about the provision of feedback in formal language learning. The data from Schulz (2001) also showed that students from both Colombia and the US felt positively about written CF, with 98% of Colombian and 97% of American students claiming they like having their written errors

corrected. Such findings, along with the ones from the current study, seem to show that students have a strong positive belief that written CF plays an important role in foreign language learning.

Despite these similarities, there were also a number of differences between the two groups regarding: (1) the number of errors teachers should correct; (2) if students keep written CF in mind during revisions and new writings; and (3) the type of feedback they believed to be most effective. There was a high level of agreement among Kuwaiti students on all points except the type of feedback they believed to be most effective; however, although the Lao students were all studying in the same program, there were a number of differences in beliefs among them. The points of difference both between the two groups and among the Lao students are discussed in detail in sections 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3 and 6.1.4.

#### *6.1.1 Teachers should correct all errors*

When presented with the statement “Teachers should correct all errors”, 43% of Lao students agreed, 29% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 29% disagreed. As can be seen from these findings, students have varied beliefs as to how many errors teachers should correct, which may be explained by the theory of constructivism. According to constructivism, students create knowledge by linking the new information they are presented with to their past experiences, thus creating a personal process for meaning making (Bruner, 1990; Novak, 1998; Piaget, 1966), and in this study support for the role of past experiences can be found in the bio-data. The Lao students can be divided into two groups: 24 from the capital of Vientiane and 18 from other provinces. Of the students from other provinces, all but one either agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement “Teachers should correct all errors”; however, 11 of the students from Vientiane disagreed with the statement. This shows a significant difference

regarding beliefs between these two groups of Lao students and illustrates the importance of investigating prior educational experiences in order to determine which factors may have led to differences among a group of students.

Another reason some of the students disagreed with the statement could have something to do with the feeling that correcting all errors may be difficult for the teacher. In the interviews, seven of the Lao students (LS5, LS6, LS9, LS11, LS14, LS17 and LS21) mentioned that correcting all their errors might be too much work for teachers. LS5 said, “Maybe I make a lot of errors so it’s difficult for my teacher to correct all. Too much work!” This concern over teachers’ workload may have influenced their answers.

Unlike the Lao students, the Kuwaiti students showed a high level of agreement regarding the statement “Teachers should correct all errors”, with 93.3% reporting they either agree or neither agree nor disagree. The difference in the level of agreement between the Lao and Kuwaiti students may stem from the fact that the Kuwaiti students had had more similar prior educational experiences than the Lao students had had. The bio-data for the Kuwaiti students showed that all but one student had attended and graduated from high school in Kuwait City. The other student had had most of her schooling in Kuwait City but had spent one year of high school in the USA. Only five of the 30 students had had a native English-speaking teacher before starting their current program. Although the others had all had non-native English speaking teachers from countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, the Philippines and Jordan, none of the students had been taught English by a Kuwaiti teacher. This shows that the previous educational experiences of the Kuwaiti students seem to be far more homogenous than those of the Lao students, which may have led to fewer differences when answering this question.

The fact that the Lao students had a number of differences among them, however, does not support the findings of a previous study. When McCargar (1993)

collected data regarding the number of errors that should be corrected, he found a high level of agreement on this issue among students from the same country. This was not true in the case of Laos in this study. Once again, this difference may stem from the diverse educational experiences that the Lao participants had had. McCargar did not include specific data about the participants of his study so it is difficult to determine the extent to which they may have had similar or different prior educational experiences.

The findings showing that students from the same country differed could be important to consider when designing future studies. The findings for the Kuwaiti group go along well with the idea of country as context; however the Lao data shows that there can be a large degree of variance among students from the same country. Studies designed to collect data that pertains to factors that may cause differences within a group of students from the same country would be useful for providing a clearer picture.

#### *6.1.2 Students keep feedback in mind when revising texts and when writing new texts*

When Lao students were presented with the statement “Students keep feedback in mind when revising texts, 52.5% agreed, 21.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 26% disagreed. Furthermore, even fewer students believed students keep feedback in mind when writing new texts (43% agree, 28.5% neither agree nor disagree, 28.5% disagree). During the interview, five students said that they often found it difficult to think about written CF because they were too busy focusing on what they wanted to say. In contrast, all of the Kuwaiti students either agreed (96.7%) or neither agreed or disagreed (3.3%) that students kept feedback in mind when revising texts and 80% agreed students keep feedback in mind while writing new texts, with a further 13.3% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 6.7% disagreeing.

Once again a higher level of agreement can be seen among the Kuwaiti students than among the Lao students, which supports the idea that the students from Laos had more diverse previous educational experiences than those from Kuwait. According to constructivist theory, learners use their experiences to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning (Fosnot, 1996). The learners in Laos came from different parts of a very diverse country. Some had been studying with native English speaking teachers for a long time, others had not. All claimed that there were differences between native English speaking teachers and Lao English teachers. On the other hand, the Kuwaiti learners had almost all had non-native English teachers before their current program. The students with less diversity in their experiences may have held more tightly to what they believed to be true. Researchers have claimed that students have diverse feedback preferences that are based on factors such as prior education (Cumming & Riazi, 2000), future goals and the task they are presented with (Hedgecock & Lefkowitz, 1994, 1996). Because these students all had similar goals (to study in an English medium university abroad) and were given the same task (to write about a set narrative prompt) under the same conditions, previous experience regarding education would seem to be a likely key to understanding their differences in beliefs.

#### *6.1.3 The type of feedback that is most effective*

When it comes to the type of feedback they believe to be most effective, 48% of Lao students chose indirect, 24% chose direct, and 28% chose metalinguistic feedback. Once again, there seems to be a relationship between where the Laos students come from (Vientiane versus other provinces) and this answer. After analysis of the bio-data of the students involved in this research, of the 24 from Vientiane, 16 preferred indirect feedback. In contrast only four out of the other 18 students from other parts of Laos stated that they preferred indirect feedback. Also, of the 24 students from Vientiane, 21



of them said they had had native English speaking teachers prior to studying in their current program. This was in contrast to the students from other parts of Laos, none of whom had been taught by native English speaking teacher before this program. This means that the students from Vientiane were more likely to have been exposed to western teaching styles, which may include a variety of feedback practices. Schools in Vientiane often have native English speaking teachers working in them; however, schools in other provinces do not. This is important because according to the interview data about the type of feedback provided by Lao teachers and native English speaking teachers, all the participants claimed that Lao teachers gave direct feedback (or no feedback at all) but native English speaking teachers encouraged them to think and figure out their errors on their own by giving indirect feedback. The added exposure to indirect feedback could have led to the differences in beliefs found in this study among the Lao students from Vientiane and those of the other Lao students. It may also serve as a caution against generalizing findings too broadly along country lines.

As with the Lao students, the Kuwaiti students gave diverse answers regarding the question of the type of feedback they felt to be most beneficial (33% indirect, 30% direct, and 37% metalinguistic feedback). This could be surprising because the bio-data for the Kuwaiti students showed that only five of the thirty students had had a native English-speaking teacher before starting their current program. When asked during the interview about the type of feedback provided by native English speaking teachers and non-native English speaking teachers, most students reported that there were differences. Students all agreed that native English speaking teachers used indirect feedback, but two of the Kuwaiti participants also said that at least one non-native teacher they had had provided indirect feedback. The other eighteen respondents said that their non-native teachers had either used direct feedback or oral metalinguistic feedback in the form of grammar lessons.

Because of the information they reported, the results are not as surprising as they may first have seemed. The Kuwaiti students had been exposed to teachers with varying practices regarding the provision of written CF (with non-native English speakers generally providing direct feedback and metalinguistic explanations and native English speakers providing indirect feedback). This could have caused a cognitive conflict in students because they may not have been getting the type of feedback they believed to be helpful. Strike and Posner (1985) argued the importance of cognitive conflict as the first step necessary in order to force learners to consider a different conceptual view. This possibility is supported by the interview data from KS8 who said: “I like indirect feedback, like this teacher gives”. When asked why she went on to say:

My teacher says indirect feedback makes you think more and I think she’s right. Before, I got direct and I never think. Now, I think and try to decide how can I fix my mistake.

This example shows that the teacher told the student her reason for providing a particular type of feedback. The student listened to the teacher’s reason and decided it was valid. By exposing students to other types of feedback, they can reassess their beliefs and possibly alter them. Furthermore, because it is believed that beliefs can be resistant to change (Driver, 1989; Osborne & Freyberg, 1985), the fact that some of the students had been exposed to different types of feedback for a longer period of time may have meant that they had the time needed to evaluate their existing beliefs in light of the new feedback practices.

There are some similarities and differences between these results and those of another study. As far as differences between the two groups, these findings support Lennane’s (2007) findings regarding oral CF. He found when he compared the beliefs Canadian ESL and Taiwanese EFL students there was a much higher preference for recasts among the Taiwanese students. However, unlike Lennane’s study, the students in the Kuwaiti group and Lao group reported a wide-range of feedback preferences.

There was a high level of homogeneity in the feedback preferences reported in the other study. Despite this, Lennane (2007) and the current study seem to show that context can affect beliefs, which would support that idea that context should be an important consideration when investigating beliefs about written CF.

There was also an interesting theme of ‘independent learner’ that emerged from the Lao interview data when students talked about indirect feedback; however the term was not mentioned by any of the Kuwaiti students. This could be because of a philosophy of creating independent learners that was present in the Lao context, but not the Kuwaiti one. One Lao student (LS21) said:

My teacher said to us that indirect feedback helps us to be active learners because we have to figure out our mistake for ourselves. I think this is true. I think indirect feedback is really useful to make us independent.

This shows that at least one of the teachers had expressed his/her belief regarding the benefits of indirect feedback to a student, and that student had taken that on, remembering what the teacher had said. The student then used the teacher’s belief to validate her own.

This type of explanation could be seen as particularly important from a constructivist perspective because constructivism takes the focus off of the teacher and puts the students’ efforts to understand what is being taught at the center of the educational experience (Prawat, 1992). Posner et al. (1982) stated that to change a belief, the person holding the belief must first become dissatisfied with their existing belief in some way. They must then find an alternative belief that they find intelligible and useful. Third, they must be able to connect their new beliefs with their earlier conceptions. By teachers explaining why they provide feedback in a certain way, they can cause students to question and possibly become dissatisfied with their previous belief. Through their explanation, the teacher can make the new belief intelligible to the student and show how it could be useful.

#### *6.1.4 What would you think if you didn't receive any written CF?*

Another interesting difference that arose between the two groups emerged from the interview data. The reactions they reported they would have if they didn't receive written CF were very different, with Lao students more likely to believe their writing was "bad" (eight Lao, zero Kuwaitis) and Kuwaitis more likely to believe theirs was "perfect" (seven Kuwaitis, two Lao). Also, although several Kuwaiti students mentioned that they would talk to their teacher about the lack of feedback on grammar because it must be a mistake, no Lao student said that. One reason for that may be that Lao students would worry that their teacher would feel embarrassed for making a "mistake" and wouldn't want to bring it up, an idea mentioned by one Lao student in the interview. As Lao culture has a strong focus on saving face (Rehbein, 2007), this answer would seem to indicate that the student would avoid pointing out a teacher's "mistake" in order to spare the teacher from a loss of face.

Constructivist theory sees students as bringing a variety of prior experiences, knowledge, and beliefs that they use in constructing new understandings in the current classroom. As Barcelos (2000) argued: "everything that we experience takes up something from the past and modifies the quality of future experiences" (p. 16). In this light, the differences between the two groups of participants, and among the Lao participants, make sense. The Lao and Kuwaiti students all had similar levels of English and future goals (to study in English-medium universities), and they were presented with the same writing tasks in the same conditions. Because of that, it seems that the differences they exhibit may stem from their previous educational experiences or factors such as the idea of face that exist in a given culture.

#### *6.1.5 Conclusion to the discussion to research question 1a*

The findings regarding this research question are interesting on two fronts. First of all, in the case of Laos differences were found among students from the same country. Because most studies looking at beliefs about written CF have not presented data regarding the students' backgrounds, they have usually used countries alone to define groups of students. These findings indicate the importance of identifying any within group differences.

On the second front, differences were also found between the Kuwaiti group and the Lao group. The differences between the two groups also point to the need for comparative studies that investigate the similarities and/or differences between groups of students. Not only is it important to look at students from different countries/regions, but also those from different educational contexts, proficiency levels, etc. Knowing the beliefs of different student populations will help inform pedagogical practices, which is important. After all, as Hyland (2010) points out, written CF can only be useful to learners if they are "willing and motivated to engage with it" (p. 177). It is important to be aware of students' beliefs, because if students' feel strongly about a certain type of feedback it may influence the way they use the feedback they are given.

In order to determine the extent that there is a match or mismatch between the students in this study and their teachers, the next section (6.2) will look at the extent to which the students' beliefs are similar to or differ from those of their native English-speaking teachers. This is important to know because it is thought that a mismatch in student and teacher beliefs may impact learning because if student expectations of regarding written CF are not met, student motivation to engage with the feedback and teacher credibility may suffer (McCargar, 1993; Schulz, 1996, 2001).

## *6.2 Introduction to the discussion*

*Research Question 1b: To what extent are native English speaking teachers' (American, South African, British) beliefs about written CF similar to or different from those of their students from Laos and Kuwait?*

Research question one b examined the beliefs of five native English-speaking teachers (three in Laos and two in Kuwait) in their programs as compared to those of their Lao and Kuwaiti students. Several questions showed a high level of agreement between the teachers and the students. For example, all the teachers and all the students agreed that, “it is very important to provide feedback on student writing”. Furthermore, most students (86% of Lao students and 90% of Kuwaiti students) and 100% of teachers felt that students should learn to locate their own errors and 83% of Laos students, 87% of Kuwaiti students and 100% of teachers believed both students and teachers are responsible for correcting student errors. This shows a certain level of agreement regarding the provision of feedback; however, there was a high level of disagreement on a number of other points: (1) teachers should correct all errors; (2) students keep feedback in mind when revising texts and writing new texts; and (3) the type of feedback that is most effective.

### *6.2.1 Teachers should correct all errors*

All five of the teachers disagreed with the statement “Teachers should correct all errors”. This was in contrast to many of their students because 43% of Lao students agreed with the statement, 29% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 29% disagreed. Showing an even higher level of disagreement with their teachers were the Kuwaiti students, as 93.3% either agreed, or neither agreed or disagreed. This supports previous findings regarding this question in other CF studies. For example, in McCargar’s

(1993) study of 161 English language learners and 41 English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the US, he found that, when presented with the statement “My teacher should correct all of my errors” teachers disagreed while all of the students (Indonesian, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Thai, Hispanic and Arabic) except the Japanese strongly agreed. He did not provide any specific reasons why this may have occurred other than that students’ cultural backgrounds may have caused them to have different beliefs. Although it is unclear what percentage of students in each group in his study gave a certain response, one can see from the current study that there was also a high level of disagreement between teachers and students.

In addition, both international undergraduate students in Diab’s (2005) case study stated in an interview that they wanted all their errors corrected and when Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) surveyed 31 teachers and 33 students at two private language schools in Canada, they also found that most students (93.9%) of students in their study wanted all their errors corrected, while only 45.2% of teachers felt they should correct all student errors. The results of the previous studies (McCargar, 1993; Diab, 2005; and Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010) along with the current study all show students to have a much higher preference for comprehensive feedback than their teachers.

One reason for this difference could be because teachers feel that correcting all student errors overwhelms students (Kepner, 1991) so they would prefer to focus on only the errors that impede understanding or are reoccurring. KT1 said:

My students make a lot of mistakes. If I marked everything, they just wouldn’t know where to begin. That’s why I tend to only mark the errors that are interfering with communication. The others can be dealt with later.

It could be useful for them to explain this to students so that they have a better understanding of why the teacher is not correcting all of the errors. Another teacher

(LT2) claimed:

Some of my students can deal with a lot of feedback, but many get overwhelmed. It's much better to just focus on the mistakes that cause the reader confusion, or the ones that alter what the student wants to say.

Upon examination of the comments of the teachers, it would seem they believe their students only have a limited capacity to process the feedback they are given. This is supported by Robinson's (1995, 2003) hypothesis that individual differences in memory and attentional capacity could affect the extent to which learners' noticed input, thus impacting acquisition. These teachers believe that their students could not/have not been able to retain feedback when they have received feedback on a large number of items. This indicates that these teachers believed limited processing capacity could affect their students' use of written CF.

Both of these teachers also claimed to mark errors that interfered with communication, showing a focus on the importance of having students communicate more clearly instead of a focus on targeting grammatical features based on their students levels. This is interesting because sometimes the grammar issues that interfere with communication are quite complex, which may also help explain why students are sometimes unable to use the feedback provided in real classroom settings, particularly if the feedback being provided is indirect, or if it only deals with part of the problem. Truscott (1996) argued that teachers do not take developmental readiness into consideration when providing feedback, which is one of the reasons he argued against the practice. If a teacher focuses only on providing feedback on grammar features that interfere with communication, they may not be at the learner's stage of development, which means the learner may not be able to use the feedback that has been provided.

#### *6.2.2 Students keep feedback in mind when revising texts and when writing new texts*

There were also differences between students and teachers in regards to the



following statements: “Students keep feedback in mind when writing drafts” and “Students keep feedback in mind when writing new pieces of writing”. Students were much more likely to report keeping feedback in mind on drafts (97% of Kuwaiti and 52.5% of Lao students) and new writings (80% of Kuwaiti and 43% of Lao students) than their teachers (none of the teachers involved in the study agreed with this). A similar difference was found by Schulz (1996) when she gave a Likert-scale questionnaire to 824 US FL students and 92 FL teachers, and asked them to agree or disagree with the statement that students keep grammar in mind when they write a new text, 68% of students but only 27% of teachers agreed.

The finding that teachers feel the need to give feedback though they are unconvinced of its effectiveness was also found in a case study by Diab (2005). The teacher in the case study stated:

I don't think students really benefit from grammar correction ... most of the current research shows that they don't, but I think it's important, as a “security blanket.” Students need to see those red marks on their papers ... If they get a blank one [with no corrections], they wouldn't know how to start revising ... They wouldn't know what to do (p. 34).

KT1 in the current study said:

My students wouldn't even try to revise any grammar if I didn't give them some feedback about it. Not only that, they would get angry and complain, or just lose motivation.

Such statements support the idea that, although teachers feel it is important that they provide written CF in order to guide students or to provide affective support, they are not fully convinced of its benefits or how to effectively provide it.

Besides being unconvinced of its efficacy, some teachers may simply provide it because they feel it is what is expected of them. Teachers have been found to have negative feelings associated with providing feedback in previous studies. For example, teachers have described it as frustrating (Ferris, Pezone, Tade, and Tinti, 1997) and

tedious and unrewarding (Hyland 1990). The teachers in the current study also made similar comments. KT2 said, “I don’t enjoy giving feedback and I often feel students don’t even pay attention to it, but they would be very upset if I didn’t correct their grammar errors”. Furthermore, LT3 stated, “Giving feedback is just something I have to do, it’s part of the job”. For some teachers, act of providing feedback is seen simply a necessity, whether it is effective or not. Because of this view, some teachers may not feel the need to vary their feedback or try to find the most effective way to provide it because they are not sure their students even use it.

### *6.2.3 The type of feedback that is most effective*

Besides the previously mentioned points, some students did not hold the same beliefs as their teachers regarding the type of written CF that is most useful (100% of teachers believed that indirect feedback was most useful, while for Lao students, 48% preferred indirect, 24% direct, and 28% metalinguistic feedback and for Kuwaiti students 33% preferred indirect, 30% direct, and 37% metalinguistic feedback). This finding supports the finding of McCargar (1993) who found, when presented with the statement “teachers should point out student errors without correcting them”, teachers and Korean students mildly agreed, while all other groups (Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese, Persian, Thai, Hispanic and Arabic) strongly disagreed. This illustrates the preference for indirect feedback most teachers have, while also showing that many students may disagree that this is the best type of feedback. McCargar’s study involved students from a wide range of proficiency levels but this issue was not investigated, so it is difficult to determine if proficiency level played any role in the findings. However, all the students in the current study were at an advanced level, so proficiency is unlikely to be an issue in this study’s findings.

The theme of the need for students to be independent learners emerged in the

interview data from the three Lao teachers. All of these teachers stated that indirect feedback should be provided because it makes students independent learners. This was in line with what many of the Lao students who stated a preference for indirect feedback reported (refer to section 6.1.3). This may indicate a certain pedagogical philosophy present in either among the teachers or in the program the students were studying in. This theme did not emerge from any of the students in Kuwait, though one of the teachers did mention it when she stated her students were not interested in becoming independent learners. The idea that indirect feedback makes students better able to edit their work independently is often supported by teachers (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferris, 2002). Because the term ‘independent’ was used so often by the teachers working in Laos in this study, it would seem that they held a similar core belief about the function of indirect feedback.

As with their students, from a cognitive constructivist perspective teachers’ current beliefs and practices regarding written CF are closely linked to their past experiences (Piaget, 1966; Novak, 1998; Bruner, 1990), which may include their own time as a student, their teacher training programs, or their previous teaching experiences. Regardless of their backgrounds, all the teachers in this study seemed to share similar ideas about the benefits of indirect feedback, which indicates a common belief among the English speaking teachers, despite them coming from a number of different backgrounds, which may have come from a common factor in their backgrounds or training that the data collected was unable to identify.

Furthermore, because the students in these classes did not always hold the same beliefs as each other, their decisions as to if and how to use the written CF provided by their teacher could be different. This means that even if a teacher provides the same feedback to two students, the students may choose to use that feedback differently.

Such decisions may affect whether or not their linguistic accuracy improves, which could help to explain why written CF seems to work well with some students but not others. If this is the case, it is important for teachers to understand the beliefs of their students. In one case, Hyland (2000) reported on a study in which the teachers treated students' drafts as finished pieces that just needed to be slightly revised, while students felt that the feedback they received on the drafts enhanced their language learning. In that study, Hyland felt that because the teachers tried to control the feedback rigidly, individual student goals were not taken into account. As Storch and Wigglesworth (2012) point out, when considered from a sociocultural point of view, the provision of feedback needs to take cognitive and affective factors into account. If teachers hold rigid beliefs about written CF, they may not be able to effectively do this. Teachers need to be willing to alter their own beliefs in order to provide the students in their class with the most effective feedback possible. Furthermore, Wenden (1986) and Ferris (2003) claimed that because of the negative impact differences in beliefs between teachers and students may have on learning, teachers need to be aware of student beliefs and provide them with opportunities to help them become aware of their own beliefs and why they hold them.

Saito (1994) also recommended that teachers pay careful attention to the way students feel about the way they are given feedback and attempt to find an appropriate way to overcome any differences in beliefs between teachers and students. Explanations regarding why a certain type of feedback was chosen were also suggested. In fact, Plonsky and Mills (2006) found that when the teacher in their study explained his approach to providing written CF to his ESL students in the US, there was a significant change in students' beliefs about how written CF should be provided and their new beliefs became more aligned with their teachers' practices. This idea was supported by one of the Lao students in the current study who said:

I used to think direct feedback would be the only one to be helpful. Then my teacher told me this one [indirect] will make me a more independent learner and well, I think it's right (LS7).

Through this we can see that this student has had a teacher explain why he/she provides feedback in a certain way, leading the student to believe that this way could be beneficial to learning. On the other hand, some students reported negative reactions to what they were told by their teacher.

When the teacher just says I made a mistake, I have to change it myself. It wastes time, and sometimes I change to a different mistake. My teacher needs to tell me exactly what's wrong. He says this type will help me more, but I don't think so. (KS6)

This type of answer shows that, even though a teacher may share his/her belief with a student, the student may reject it and hold to an existing belief.

When differences in beliefs are found to exist, both students and teachers may need to give a little bit. Teachers cannot expect all of their students to simply change their beliefs to come in line with those of the teacher. Furthermore, students need to be open to receiving various types of feedback so that the teacher can tailor the feedback to different situations.

### *6.3 Conclusion for the results of research question 1a and 1b*

As can be seen from the answers to research questions 1a and 1b, past experiences influence both students and teachers alike. Everyone comes to the classroom shaped by their prior educational experiences, which means everyone's beliefs have formed differently. Depending on how similar or different their past experiences have been, learners and teachers can exhibit a large number of similarities or a large number of differences. The Kuwaiti students in this study reported a lot of similarities, because they had all gone to government schools in Kuwait City and they had all had non-native English speaking teachers before their current program. For this reason, it makes sense that there was a high level of consensus among them.

The Lao students, on the other hand, exhibited a number of differences among them. This could be because they came from different parts of the country and some of them had only had Lao teachers before their current program, while others had had a lot of experience with native speaking English teachers. This finding is important, because too often students from the same country are considered to be a homogeneous group. This study showed that not only can differences be found between groups, but also among students from the same group. In order to provide a full picture of students' beliefs, data need to be collected so numerous factors, including past experiences, can be examined to help explain differences among students from the same country and well as differences between students from different countries. Because the students in this study were of similar proficiency levels, and were studying in IEP programs with the goal of studying in English medium universities, it is believed that the differences found arose from previous educational experiences.

Furthermore, a number of important differences were found between the Kuwaiti and Lao students and their native English-speaking teachers. These differences in beliefs between students and teachers could cause some problems in the classroom and could cause students to engage with the feedback differently. If teachers do not provide feedback in a way that students find useful, it may be ignored, which may affect uptake. This would mean that despite teachers' beliefs that indirect feedback is the most beneficial, if this type of feedback goes against their students' beliefs, it may not actually lead to linguistic improvement.

The next sections (6.4, 6.4.1, 6.4.2 and 6.4.3) look at if written CF improved the linguistic accuracy of Lao and Kuwaiti students, and if there was any difference in the type of feedback that was most effective for each group. This is important in order to determine if feedback is actually an effective way to improve linguistic accuracy on the

past simple and present perfect tenses, and to determine if arguments regarding the superiority of a certain type of feedback are valid. These findings are then discussed in section 6.5, 6.5.1, 6.5.2, and 6.5.3 with regards to students' preferred feedback types as determined from research question 1a.

#### *6.4 Discussion of findings for Lao and Kuwaiti data with regards to cognitive frameworks*

*To what extent do different types of written CF facilitate the uptake and retention of certain targeted linguistic error categories in the written work of students from two different countries (Laos and Kuwait)?*

This section looks at the findings regarding research question two which looked at the effectiveness of three different types of written CF (direct, indirect, metalinguistic) on Lao and Kuwaiti students' linguistic accuracy regarding the simple past tense and the present perfect tense, and compared their improvement to the improvement of the control group. The two sets of results were also compared to each other.

There has been a distinction between direct (explicit corrections) and indirect (drawing students' attention to errors through less explicit means, leaving the student to make the correction) (Ferris, 2002, 2006; Hendrickson, 1980); however whether a particular feedback type is more effective at facilitating uptake remains unclear (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). In the results pertaining to the Lao students in this study, there was no statistically significant difference between the three feedback groups (direct, indirect, and metalinguistic), or between the control group and the feedback groups; however, all three feedback groups were able to significantly improve their accuracy in using the past simple and present perfect tenses over the course of the study

(direct feedback  $p$ -value= .00, indirect feedback  $p$ -value= .00, metalinguistic feedback  $p$ -value= .00), whereas the control group was not able to do so ( $p$ -value= .93).

In the case of the Kuwaiti participants, the results of this research question showed a significant difference between the direct feedback group ( $p$ -value= .00) and the other three groups (indirect feedback  $p$ -value= .62, metalinguistic feedback  $p$ -value= .61, control  $p$ -value= .55). In other words, although there was no difference between feedback groups in Laos, in Kuwait, only learners in the direct feedback group were able to significantly improve their accuracy after receiving written CF.

The positive results of this study support the role of noticing from two perspectives. DeKeyser (1998) argued that if exposure to the language is not enough to trigger acquisition, negative evidence, such as written CF, to alert learners that an error has been made may be necessary. He claimed that if learners already have knowledge of the form they received feedback on, the mechanisms associated with explicit knowledge will be activated and they can correct the error. Furthermore, the slower nature of writing (as compared to speaking) means that the students in this study had the opportunity to stop and retrieve prior knowledge during the writing process (Kuiken & Vedder, 2011).

The general positive effects of written CF found in this study also support the framework for the cognitive hypothesis suggested by Gass (1988), which says that input must be noticed by students in order for them to become aware of any differences between the target language and their existing L2 knowledge. Because students received written CF and saw that the hypothesis they had made about the language was not correct, some were able to use the correct form the next time they produced a text, which means they progressed to the next stage of comprehended input, which then led them to the next stage of intake because it was used again correctly in future texts.



Not all students, however, were able to make significant gains in accuracy. For example, the Kuwaiti students who received indirect or metalinguistic feedback did not show significant improvements. There may be several reasons for this. One may have to do with students' limited processing capacity (Robinson, 1995, 2003). Because there is a limit to the amount of information that can be processed at one time, learners focus first on the more salient parts of the input, such as grammatical features they have already been exposed to. Perhaps the indirect and metalinguistic feedback was not as salient to the Kuwaiti students, leaving them unable to process it. This is supported by at least one students' response in the exit interview. KS1 said of the metalinguistic feedback she had received:

It's so confusing, I often don't know what they mean...it's not like grammar explanations in class where I can ask questions if something is not clear. That's why I need teacher to tell me exactly how to change

Furthermore, KS4 said of indirect feedback:

I looked at the indirect feedback, but I don't know what to do with it. When I get that feedback, I just waste my time. Just tell me what to change, and I'll do it.

Comments such as these seem to indicate that parts of the feedback, or the way the feedback was given, led students to not be able to/not want to use it because they were unable to process it. This could have resulted from limited exposure to indirect and metalinguistic feedback.

This limited exposure in the Kuwaiti group may have led to the differences in uptake and retention between the Lao and Kuwaiti group. Both of the English teachers in Kuwait said their students had trouble using indirect feedback. As mentioned in the previous discussion on beliefs, the Kuwaiti students reported having had limited exposure to feedback types other than direct feedback, with most of them only experiencing other feedback types since starting their current program. This lack of experience may have meant that they were unable to process those types of feedback

effectively. On the other hand, many of the Lao students had reported more experience with indirect and metalinguistic feedback types, so they may have been better equipped to use those types of feedback.

#### *6.4.1 Discussion of findings for Lao and Kuwaiti data with regards to empirical studies from a cognitive perspective*

Despite differences between the two groups, the results regarding both the Laos and Kuwaiti students somewhat support the findings of Bitchener and Knoch (2010b) study that showed written CF helped advanced level students improve their linguistic accuracy in using English articles. Like the Lao group, all three treatment groups outperformed the control group in the immediate post-test. However, differences between the two studies were found because in the Bitchener and Knoch (2010b) study both the written meta-linguistic input and written and oral meta-linguistic input groups outperformed the indirect and control groups in the delayed post-test that was administered in week ten. In the current study, there was no difference between the three feedback groups on delayed post-test one or two (direct, indirect, metalinguistic). Furthermore, for the Kuwaiti group in this study, only direct feedback led to significant improvement in accuracy rates.

Although the results from the Bitchener and Knoch (2010b) study and the Lao and Kuwaiti group in the current study all showed different results regarding the type of written CF that is most effective, at least one type of feedback led to statistically significant improvements in accuracy in each group in both studies. The results of these studies seem to indicate that advanced level students are able to improve their accuracy in regards to certain rule-based linguistic features when provided with written CF; however, the type of CF that is most effective may vary for different proficiency levels

or contexts as indicated by the differences found between the Lao and Kuwaiti groups (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

The results of this study showed that the effects of written CF can last over time, so they also corroborate the results of other recent longitudinal written CF studies which focused on lower proficiency levels (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009, 2010a; Sheen, 2007). All of these results showed that students who received written CF showed a greater improvement in the linguistic accuracy of targeted rule-based items than those who did not. For example, Sheen (2007) found that intermediate students who were given direct feedback and direct feedback plus metalinguistic explanation outperformed the control group when all three groups were provided with feedback on the use of articles. Furthermore, she found the group that received the metalinguistic feedback outperformed the group that only received direct feedback. However, because Sheen's (2007) study combined direct and metalinguistic feedback, the results are not directly comparable with the current study because in this study feedback types were not combined.

Bitchener (2008) looked at the effects of written CF on low intermediate students' acquisition of English articles. He found all four of the feedback groups (direct corrective feedback, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback and written meta-linguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback only) outperformed the control group. His findings were further supported in Bitchener and Knoch's (2008, 2009, 2010a) studies that continued to examine the effects of written CF on the acquisition of English articles. In all of these studies, learners who received written CF on their writing outperformed the control groups.

Most written CF studies have only investigated improvement in the use of the English article system (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009, 2010; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007); however, Bitchener et al. (2005) looked at the past simple tense

and prepositions along with articles, which showed written corrective feedback was able to significantly improve accuracy in the use of the past simple tense and articles, but not the use of prepositions. The current study supports Bitchener et al.'s findings regarding the simple past tense and also adds to existing research by looking at the present perfect tense. Because this study only provided feedback on rule-based linguistic features (past simple and present perfect tenses), based on the evidence from this research we cannot say if written CF helps learners improve their linguistic accuracy on more complex, idiosyncratic and item-based linguistic features, so further research is needed on the effects of written CF on treating such items.

The findings from this study also add to a growing body of research that disproves Truscott's theory that the only value to second language acquisition written CF could have would be for "errors that involve simple problems in relatively discreet items" (Truscott, 2001, p. 94) such as spelling, but not for errors in grammar. However, the findings of this study support the idea that written CF can improve the linguistic accuracy of certain targeted grammatical features, in this case the simple past and present perfect verb forms. In regards to the different feedback types provided (direct, indirect, and metalinguistic feedback), the Lao students showed no differences in the improvement of grammatical accuracy among the three groups; however, only the Kuwaiti students in the direct feedback group showed statistically significant improvement in their use of the simple past and present perfect tenses.

Both of the cases in this study show the positive effects of direct feedback. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) also found that in their case study involving advanced level learners at an Australian university, although indirect feedback promoted a higher level of engagement with the feedback, the direct feedback groups showed a greater level of accuracy. Similar results were found in Storch and Wigglesworth (2012a), a larger scale study of 36 pairs of advanced level students at an Australian university.

They felt that this was because the students in their study tended to use memorization as a technique to remember the feedback, so having the correct version directly provided may have been more advantageous. In the current study, a number of students who said they preferred direct feedback also mentioned that they memorize the feedback they receive (LS5, LS8, LS12, LS20, KS7, KS12, and KS19). For students who rely on memorization in order to remember the feedback, it makes sense that direct feedback could lead to improved accuracy.

As can be seen from the results of these studies, numerous recent studies suggest that there is some validity to the use of written CF to improve students' linguistic accuracy on at least some grammatical items. However, there is still no consensus as to the type of feedback that is most useful. An investigation into social factors that may impact the type of feedback that is most effective for different students is needed in order to explain differences between groups and among students, and also provide a fuller picture of the complex interaction of cognitive and social factors on students' use of written CF.

#### *6.4.2 Discussion of findings for Lao and Kuwaiti data with regards to empirical studies from a social perspective*

Besides supporting cognitive theory and the results of previous CF studies, the results of this study also support the belief that there is a need for more studies that investigate differences between contexts. Atkinson (2002) felt the need for a perspective that integrates the learner and his context and Firth and Wagner (1997) suggested a “significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language”, which the current study sought to provide. Because the results in the two contexts (the language school in Laos and the one in Kuwait) were different, it shows that students' prior experiences and their contexts should be considered as possible influences in their uptake of written CF in order to provide a fuller picture of the

effectiveness of written CF. When the results of the students in Laos are looked at separately, there was no difference in effectiveness among the three feedback types (direct, indirect, metalinguistic feedback), even though all three groups showed significant improvements on their delayed post test while the control group did not. This is in contrast to the Kuwaiti participants, who only showed significant improvement when they were provided with direct feedback. If the results had been combined and the students considered as one group, the findings regarding the differences between the groups could not have emerged. The results would have either shown significant improvements for all groups, or a very significant improvement in the direct feedback group.

Activity theory may support the differences found between the two groups (Engstrom, 2001; Leontiev, 1978). This is because different learners may have approached the activity differently, which could have led to some of the differences in uptake and retention. According to activity theory (Leontiev, 1978), there are three levels in an activity: the social motives influencing beliefs and attitudes that are behind the activity, the actions brought about by agents' (in this case learners') goals, and the conditions under which the activity is carried out. Although the students' had certain beliefs about written CF, the effects of those beliefs may have been affected by what they hoped to achieve by performing the writing task they were given in this study. According to Engstrom (2001) and Leontiev (1978), 'motives' of individuals or groups are viewed as independent but subordinate units of analysis that can only be fully understood when studied in perspective with the entire activity system.

The findings from the current study show that differences between groups may stem from differences in the 'goals' the students had for the activity, in other words, what students hoped to achieve from undertaking the activity. Support for this idea may be found in the interviews, because a number of students claimed that when they were

focused on content, they often forgot to attend to grammar (LS3, LS6, LS10, LS15, LS18, LS19 and KS5). When asked if she kept feedback in mind on new writings, LS6 said:

I want to write correctly, but I have to umm..think so much what I want to say. I don't have time. Maybe someday when I can write my ideas faster I can think about feedback.

Furthermore, LS18 reported that he sometimes got stressed while writing in class and would focus on his ideas only. These answers show that perhaps the main focus for these students is content, and that they focus on grammar only if they feel they have time.

As students were producing their text in response to the prompts in this study, they may have interpreted the task differently. In Engstrom's (2001) first principle, he stated that students' "motives" may vary. This difference in motives regarding the activity could have impacted how students respond to the written CF. For example, if some learners looked at the writing tasks as ways to express themselves, they may have been less likely to attend to the grammar (Oliver & Mackey, 2003). However, if learners looked at the writing as a way to focus on using the grammar they had learnt, they may have been more focused on the previous feedback and on trying to writing with a higher degree of linguistic accuracy.

Furthermore, the students in this study would participate in activity systems in which they have different identities, some specific to their identity as a learner (for example: English language learner, independent learner, future university student), that are related to their participation in types of activity, such as being an English language student, hoping to become a university student. Depending on which of these identities students are relating to at the time of the activity, they may find different types of feedback useful. For example, if a student sees himself/herself as an English language learner while performing a writing task, he/she may focus more on form. If this is the

case, direct or metalinguistic feedback may be the most useful to that student. On the other hand, if a student views himself/herself as a future university student and sees the task as a chance to develop skills that will aid in that future goal, indirect feedback may be most useful because many have the perception that indirect feedback makes you become an independent learner.

The fact that the results were so different in these two contexts also lends support to the idea from constructivism that differences in previous educational experiences could lead to differences in how learners construct knowledge and beliefs. Constructivists believe learner's past experiences shape their beliefs, which in turn inform their assumptions about how a language is learned which may impact the types of strategies individual students choose to use (Cohen, 1983, 1987; Horwitz, 1987; Wenden, 1986). In the current study, learners who believe language learning is best learned through memorization (LS5, LS8, LS12, LS20, KS7, KS12, and KS19) reported that they believed direct feedback to be most beneficial. If students rely on a strategy such as memorization, direct feedback may be the type of feedback that leads to a higher level of improvement because it lends itself to memorization. The past experiences that shaped what these learners believe about the way languages are learned may, therefore, have led to different types of feedback being more effective for different students in this study.

The findings of the current study are also supported by the findings regarding oral CF (Lyster & Mori, 2006; Sheen, 2004). Sheen (2004) found students in four contexts (Canadian Immersion, Canadian ESL, New Zealand ESL, and Korean EFL) showed differences in uptake when she compared their uptake rate for recasts and other types of oral CF, with uptake from recasts being much higher in the New Zealand and Korean contexts. However, she compared data from four different studies with data collected by different researchers, so it is unclear if the instruments used to collect data,



the data collection process, or the analysis of the data could have had anything to do with the differences that were found. These students also had multiple proficiency levels (beginner to intermediate) and that may have caused differences in the effectiveness of different types of feedback. Lyster and Mori (2006) also found the type of feedback that elicited the highest number of repairs to be different in two countries with similar pedagogical contexts (French immersion and Japanese immersion), with prompts being more effective in French immersion classrooms and recasts having a bigger impact in Japanese immersion classrooms. The results of these two oral CF studies (Sheen, 2004; Lyster & Mori, 2006) and the findings of the current study seem to indicate that the type of CF that is most effect may vary from context to context.

In most previous written CF studies (for example: Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010; Sheen, 2007), students from diverse contexts were considered as a homogenous group. One exception that divided students into two different groups is Bitchener and Knoch's (2008) study investigating how valuable written CF is to migrant and international students studying in New Zealand. Although this two-month study once again found that the students who had received written CF outperformed the control group, it went further to investigate if there were any differences in the extent to which migrant students improved their accuracy as compared to international students. The study found no difference between the two groups. However, unlike the current study, both groups were still made up of students from diverse countries and backgrounds. Because the learners from two different contexts were looked at separately in the current study and attention was paid to prior educational experiences in this study, the results of the two studies cannot be directly compared. One reason for the absence of clear findings to the question that has typically been asked is the possibility that researchers have been asking the wrong question. In fact, a number of researchers have called for written CF studies to examine the interactional effect of the

type of feedback provided with proficiency and other variables (Bitchener, 2010a, 2010b; Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). They believe that simply asking which type of feedback is most effective provides too wide of a scope and that more nuanced questions investigating the interacting influence of other factors will provide more useful answers. The results of this study support their view, because when advanced students in similar programs with similar goals were compared in this study, differences in the most effective type of feedback were found.

#### *6.4.3 Conclusion to research question 2*

Differences were found between the two groups of students regarding which type of feedback was most effective at improving students' linguistic accuracy of the targeted features (past simple and present perfect tenses). Such differences could stem from different educational backgrounds and experiences between the groups of students or differences in beliefs about the efficacy of various types of feedback. The results of this study seem to indicate that, in the future, it would be beneficial for further written CF studies that take context into account to be carried out.

The next section (6.5) discusses the findings of research question 3, which investigated whether the beliefs students hold about written CF actually affect their uptake of it in order to support the hypothesis that beliefs do, in fact, impact the way students use written CF.

#### *6.5 Discussion of findings for Lao and Kuwaiti data with regards to constructivism*

*Research Question 3: To what extent do beliefs about written CF impact uptake and retention of the targeted linguistic features in the two contexts?*

This section looks at the findings regarding research question three, which investigated if students' beliefs about written CF affected their uptake of the CF they were provided with. This study found that students' beliefs about the type of feedback that is most effective and helpful in future writings did not seem to affect most Kuwaiti students' ability to eliminate the targeted errors; however, such beliefs may have influenced Lao students' ability to do so. In other words, while the Kuwaiti students who were able to eliminate the targeted errors were not, for the most part, the ones who received the type of feedback they believed to be the most useful, the Lao students were. Of the eight Kuwaiti students who were able to eliminate their errors, all of them had received direct feedback; however, only one had received his preferred type of feedback. This seems to indicate that regardless of their stated beliefs, direct feedback was more effective than other feedback types. These results are in contrast to the Lao results, where learners across all three feedback groups were able to eliminate their targeted errors after receiving the feedback type they believed to be most useful (seven out of eight students). This shows a marked difference between the two groups of students, with beliefs seeming to influence uptake in the case of participants in Laos, but not with Kuwait.

It is difficult to know why this is but if we look back at the results from research question 1a, students' past educational experiences may have impacted whether beliefs impacted their uptake of the CF because most of the Lao students who preferred indirect feedback had had previous experience with that type of feedback. This idea is supported by constructivism for, as stated by Fosnot (1996), at the core of constructivism is the idea that learners use their experiences to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning. Perhaps the lack of an impact of beliefs on uptake could have occurred because the Kuwaiti students who claimed to prefer indirect or metalinguistic feedback had had less experience with receiving that type of feedback

and therefore were still struggling to actually use it. The teachers in Kuwait preferred indirect feedback, but felt it was difficult for their students to use it. Ferris (2010) argued indirect feedback may help in the development of effective strategies for acquiring metalinguistic skills and tools to aid in the revision process, but that this may take time. If the Kuwaiti students had not yet had time to develop those strategies due to limited exposure to indirect feedback, the indirect feedback may not have been effective, regardless of their beliefs about its effectiveness.

Another reason for the different effects of beliefs on written CF could have to do with the nature of different feedback types and students' previous experiences dealing with those types of feedback. The Lao students who said they believed indirect and metalinguistic feedback helped them the most had had more experience with those types of feedback than the Kuwaiti students who claimed to prefer them. It could be that the effects of indirect feedback take longer to improve accuracy because students have to test their hypotheses and wait to see if they were correct. When students are given indirect feedback, they are required to make their own hypotheses about how to correct it. They then make the changes they believe are correct based on their hypotheses; however, they must wait for further feedback from their instructor in order to determine if these changes were correct. This makes the process of correcting an error a long one when students have received indirect feedback. In addition, it may also take longer to see the effects of metalinguistic feedback because learners are given information about the grammar rule and are required to process that as part of the feedback. This may have affected the saliency of the feedback for some of the students in the current study. On the other hand, the students who received direct feedback knew exactly how to fix their targeted errors on future pieces of writing.

Because the Kuwaiti students had had less previous experience with indirect and metalinguistic feedback and were used to the immediate knowledge of the correct form

provided by direct feedback, their ability to use indirect and metalinguistic feedback may have been affected, even if it was the type of feedback they preferred. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that the students in the indirect and metalinguistic feedback Kuwaiti groups actually showed a decrease in accuracy after the first treatment they received before showing an increase in accuracy after the second treatment (refer to figure 5.2). This may indicate more treatments would be needed in order for the Kuwaiti students to be able to effectively use the feedback.

There is also the possibility that the Kuwaiti students did not honestly report their beliefs about written CF, but instead told me what they thought I wanted to hear or what their teacher would like them to say. This is what KT1 believed may have happened and is known to be a drawback of self-report data collection measures (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009). This lack of honest reporting may be due to their native English teachers expressing a preference for indirect feedback.

#### *6.5.1 Discussion of findings in light of empirical findings on the effect of beliefs on written CF*

The current study shows that in some cases, beliefs can affect students uptake of written CF, which was found to be the case in Laos, but not in Kuwait; however, the case of KS10 (refer to section 5.4.3) shows that beliefs also affected uptake in at least this one Kuwaiti student. Furthermore, Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) found that when learners did not believe the feedback they had received was effective (reformulation in their case), their beliefs about that type of feedback affected their uptake of it, as it led them to not attend to it. This is supported by the findings regarding LS1 (refer to section 5.4.3) in this study. LS1 reacted very negatively towards the feedback she received, and she then refused to engage with the feedback

when given ten minutes to review it. It seems this was the reason she was unable to improve her accuracy rate.

Regarding the impact of negative feelings on performance, it is also important to note that the students in the control groups, both in Laos and Kuwait, expressed their displeasure at not receiving written CF throughout the study and during the exit interview. They felt that just writing without receiving written CF was a waste of time. This would seem to support previous research that found that though certain beliefs about written CF could be changed, students' desire for error correction is so strong that it cannot be altered (Brice & Newman, 2000). Furthermore, during the interviews eight of the Lao students said if they didn't get written CF on their writing, they would think their writing was so filled with errors that the teacher couldn't help them and two said they would think that their writing was perfect, while seven Kuwaiti students said they would think their writing was perfect and two said they would think their teacher had made a mistake and approach them about it. This indicates that if teachers decide not to give written CF, an explanation as to the reasons why should be given in order to avoid confusion and overly positive or negative reactions based on their misinterpretations of why CF was not given.

On the other hand, the current study also seems to indicate that positive beliefs about the feedback received leads to uptake and retention in some cases. The Lao students who received their preferred type of feedback were able to eliminate the targeted errors on the two delayed post-tests in seven out of eight cases. Furthermore, KS10 was able to eliminate the targeted errors on her first delayed post-test and had only one error on her second delayed-post test when she received her preferred type of feedback. This was, however, not the case with the majority of the Kuwaiti students who were only able to eliminate their errors when provided with direct feedback, regardless of their stated beliefs.

The results from the current study show the need for further research into the effects of beliefs and other individual factors on the uptake of written CF.

Furthermore, reasons why beliefs affect uptake for some students and not others need to be investigated. In order to conduct such research, researchers should perhaps consider investigating the topic so that the participants' contexts are considered along with their information processing ability. Because various individual and contextual factors have been found to impact cognition, these factors require further identification and investigation in order to determine why written CF works in some instances but not in others.

#### *6.5.2 The impact of assumptions about how languages are learned on written CF*

The differences between the way beliefs affected (or didn't affect) the Lao and Kuwaiti students' uptake and retention of written CF could come from differences in their beliefs about how languages are learnt. If the type of feedback they receive goes against such beliefs, they may refuse to engage with it. Findings from a number of studies have revealed that students make various assumptions about language learning based on their beliefs and these assumptions may impact the types of strategies individual students choose to use (Cohen, 1983, 1987; Horwitz, 1987; Wenden, 1986). This point was perhaps best illustrated through the two cases (refer to section 5.4.3) of LS1 and KS10. LS1 believed indirect feedback would lead her to be an independent learner and that that was important for her language learning. She then expressed very negative opinions about the feedback she had received (direct). On the other hand, KS10 also believed indirect feedback led to more in-depth language learning, received that type of feedback, and was very positive about it. By looking at these two cases, we can see the two extreme ends of the spectrum. In the case of LS1, receiving a type of feedback she did not believe would be useful for her language learning made her react

very negatively to the feedback she received, and also affected her engagement with that feedback. Her writings got shorter, she was not interested in engaging with the feedback and she expressed anger at the type of feedback she had received. On the other hand, KS10 was very motivated and positive about the feedback she received and it showed in the way she interacted with the feedback and in the progress she made. Although she was not able to eliminate all her errors, she went from making six errors in the use of the past tense on her pre-test to making one on her second delayed post-test. By closely examining these two cases, we can predict that beliefs about how languages are learned, and how written CF aids in that process, may impact the uptake and retention of written CF for some students.

If, as seems the case with the Lao students and the cases of LS1 and KS10, beliefs impact engagement with and uptake of CF, it is important that students and teachers come to some understanding with regards to their beliefs. In the case of the Lao students, there was no difference in the effectiveness of any one type of feedback in improving the linguistic accuracy of the targeted grammar; however, when beliefs were taken into consideration, students were more likely to eliminate their errors when they received the type of feedback they believed would be most helpful.

### *6.5.3 Discussion of pedagogical and theoretical implications*

This finding has important pedagogical implications. Dornyei (2001) stated that in order to ensure students' beliefs do not interfere with their language learning, they need to (1) develop an understanding of second language acquisition and what constitutes reasonable progress; (2) be made aware that there are a number of different ways that mastery of a second language can be achieved and that diverse strategies can be used; and (3) understand that a key factor for learners' success is the self-discovery of the methods which best help them to learn. In regards to written CF, this would also



mean that teachers would need to be willing to use a variety of feedback techniques to ensure that their students are able to find the technique that best helps them improve their linguistic accuracy. Teachers may also need to be more explicit in their explanations as to why they provide feedback in a certain way, in order to make it clear to students that there is more than one way to give feedback and that there may be a specific thinking or goal behind the feedback choices a teacher makes.

The findings of this research question also have implications for information processing views of cognition. It seems that, in some instances at least, beliefs can impact the way students' process information. A negative reaction may cause students to refuse to even engage with the feedback, which is a necessary first step to start the processes involved in information processing. For written CF to be effective students must first notice or give attention to the feedback and the amount of attention given to the feedback may determine the extent to which it becomes uptake (Schmidt, 1990). Schmidt (1990) claimed that individual motivational and affective factors could impact the amount of attention a learner pays to the feedback. If students have negative feelings about the feedback they have received, they may only superficially notice it, which could affect the extent to which it becomes uptake that is used in new writings. In other words, if a student believes the feedback to be wrong, or if they refuse to engage with the feedback because they believe it is not useful, this could hinder their progression through the next steps of information processing, as their negative reaction may prevented the student from noticing the CF sufficiently enough for it to become part of their short-term memory.

As can be seen from the results of this study, beliefs can impact some students' engagement with and uptake of written CF. Future studies need to take mediating factors such as beliefs into account in order to help researchers and teachers understand

why feedback works in some cases but not in others. By uncovering the factors that may interfere with the effectiveness of written CF, teachers can work with students to provide tailored feedback that meets the varied needs of their students.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

### *7.1 Introduction*

The role that corrective feedback plays in the second language acquisition process is an issue that has been receiving a lot of attention; however questions still remain as to mediating factors that impact the effectiveness of CF. The objective of this study was to investigate the beliefs about and effectiveness of written CF by using case studies in two different contexts. Advanced level Lao English language learners and their three native English speaking teachers were chosen for the first case study and advanced level Kuwaiti English language learners and their two native English speaking teachers were chosen for the second case study. A triangulated approach was utilized to collect data using multiple methods (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and writing samples) and data sources (students and teachers) over a seven-week period during a semester.

In this chapter a summary of the key findings of the research is presented in section 7.2. After that the contributions made by this study are outlined (section 7.3, 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4, 7.3.5, 7.4 and 7.5), as well as its limitations (section 7.6) and implications for further research (section 7.7). Finally, the chapter ends with concluding remarks in section 7.8.

### *7.2 Summary of key findings*

This study was designed to investigate (1) Lao and Kuwaiti students' beliefs about written CF, (2) if those students had similar or different beliefs to their teachers, (3) if focused written CF helped students in Lao and Kuwait improve their linguistic accuracy and (4) if beliefs about written CF affected the improvement of students' linguistic accuracy regarding the targeted errors.

With regards to the first the question “What beliefs about written CF do language learners in Laos and Kuwait have and do those beliefs vary both between the two groups and within each group?”, the two groups showed some similarities: (1) it is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing and (2) both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors. However, there were differences between the two groups of students concerning: (1) the number of errors teachers should correct; (2) if students keep written CF in mind during revisions and on new writings; (3) the type of feedback they believed to be most effective; and (4) what they would think if they didn’t receive any feedback. For example, Lao students were less likely than Kuwaiti students to think teachers should correct all their errors. They were also less likely to believe students keep written CF in mind during revisions and on new writings. When it came to the type of feedback they believed was most effective, although there was some variance among students in both groups, Lao students were more likely to say indirect feedback was more effective while Kuwaiti students most often reported that metalinguistic feedback was the most effective. Finally, when asked what they would think if they didn’t receive any feedback, Lao students often said they would think their writing was very bad, but Kuwaiti students reported they would think their writing was perfect.

Besides the differences between the two groups, some differences in student beliefs were found among the Lao students, and these differences seemed to correspond with the region students came from, and seemed to stem from their differences in previous educational experiences. The Kuwaiti students showed more similarities among them regarding their beliefs about written CF than the Lao students did, and also reported fewer differences in prior educational experiences.

Regarding the second question, “To what extent are native English speaking teachers’ (American, South African, British) beliefs about written CF similar to or

different from those of their students from Laos and Kuwait?”, although all five teachers (three in Laos and two in Kuwait) held similar beliefs, their beliefs differed from those of some of their students regarding (1) the number of errors teachers should correct; (2) if students keep written CF in mind during revisions and on new writings; and (3) the type of feedback they believed to be most effective. All of the teachers believed they should not correct all students’ errors; however, most Kuwaiti students and many Lao students believed they should. Furthermore, the teachers were much less likely to say they believed students keep written CF in mind during revisions and when writing new texts. The teachers also all reported that they believed indirect feedback was the most effective type, but more than half of the students said they preferred either direct or metalinguistic feedback.

Concerning the question “To what extent do different types of written CF facilitate the uptake and retention of certain targeted linguistic error categories in the written work of students from two different countries (Laos and Kuwait)?”, all three of the feedback groups in Laos showed significant improvement in their linguistic accuracy regarding the past simple and present perfect tenses on both the delayed post-tests, while only the direct feedback group in Kuwait showed significant improvement.

As far as the final question, “Do beliefs about written CF impact uptake and retention of the targeted linguistic features in the two contexts?”, a difference was found between the two groups. The Lao students who got the type of feedback they preferred were able to eliminate the targeted (simple past and present perfect tenses) linguistic errors in seven out of 8 instances, while the other students were able to accomplish the same in only four out of 34 cases. In the case of Kuwait, only one out of the five students who got the type of feedback they believed to be best was able to eliminate the targeted linguistic errors. However, seven of the 25 students who didn’t get their

preferred type of feedback were able to eliminate the targeted errors, and all of these students had received direct feedback.

### *7.3 Contributions to theory*

This section begins by outlining the contribution this study makes to existing cognitive theories. It starts by discussing the study's contribution to what we know about the value of explicit knowledge (section 7.3.1). It goes on to next show how the findings contribute to the importance of feedback being salient in order to set in motion the different stages of information processing (section 7.3.2). After that, it outlines the theories that underscore the importance of developmental readiness and discusses the contribution the findings of this research make (section 7.3.3).

After discussions related to cognitive frameworks, section 7.3.4 discusses the contribution to theory this thesis makes with regards to differences in beliefs between the two groups (Lao and Kuwaiti) and among the students in a given group. Following that, theoretical contributions as to possible reasons why the type of feedback that is most effective varied between the two groups are discussed (section 7.3.5).

#### *7.3.1 The value of explicit knowledge*

The results of this study lend support to several cognitive theories. The first point has to do with the value of explicit knowledge in writing, which has been a topic of contention. As explained in section 2.3, implicit knowledge is the knowledge that can be used automatically and unconsciously by learners while explicit knowledge consists of the knowledge that learners have that only becomes available through conscious and controlled processing (DeKeyser, 1994). Krashen (1985) and Truscott (1996) oppose the practice of providing CF because they claim that, at best, it can only lead to the development of explicit knowledge. However, DeKeyser (1998) and N. Ellis (2009)

argued that both implicit and explicit knowledge are important in the process of L2 acquisition because students are able to use both types of knowledge when they have the time to access them. DeKeyser (1998) also went on to say that explicit knowledge allows the skill to be broken apart into smaller units so they are easier to process.

Questions remain as to if CF is stored and retrieved as implicit or explicit knowledge (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a) and although we cannot know if explicit knowledge became implicit (which would be the ultimate goal, as implicit knowledge is automatic), the findings of the current study and a number of other recent written CF studies (for example Sheen, 2007; Bitchener, 2008, Bitchener & Knoch, 2009a, b) show that written CF, even if it only promotes explicit knowledge, does lead to improved accuracy regarding certain linguistic features, at least during timed writings. Take for example the current study: the students received feedback on the past simple and present perfect tenses twice, once after the pre-test (week 1) and once after the post-test (week 2). In the case of Laos (refer to figure 5.1), improvement was seen on the post-test, and significant improvement was seen on the first delayed post-test (week 4). Although there was a slight drop in accuracy on the second delayed post test, the results still showed improvement. The control group remained steady over the course of the study. This seems to indicate that students who received written CF were able to draw on the explicit knowledge that had been provided by the feedback, even several weeks after the feedback had been provided. The absence of improvement in the case of the control group indicates that the improvement of the feedback groups was not just the result of practice or exposure to the language from other sources.

A case for the value of explicit knowledge can also be made when the results from Kuwait are examined (refer to figure 5.2). There was only an increase in improvement for the direct feedback group on the post-test. The other three groups (indirect, metalinguistic, and control) showed a decrease in accuracy. On the first

delayed post test, all three feedback groups improved, though only the direct group improved significantly. The accuracy of the direct feedback group was sustained on the second delayed post test, while the indirect and metalinguistic feedback groups, along with the control group, showing a decline in accuracy rates. These three groups (indirect, metalinguistic and control) ended the study with very similar accuracy rates to what they started with. In this case, the explicit knowledge provided by direct feedback led to a sustained improvement in students accuracy rates regarding the past simple and present perfect tenses.

These findings support the value of explicit knowledge in the context of writing. This is because they show that the explicit knowledge gained from written CF can have long-term positive effects. The improved accuracy of the groups that had significant improvements (the indirect, direct and metalinguistic feedback groups for Laos and the direct feedback group for Kuwait) was shown in new texts, not simply revisions, indicating a level of retention. Even though we cannot show that explicit knowledge can become implicit, the results seem to support that explicit knowledge can be accessed during the writing process. Furthermore, because the current study used narrative writing prompts, it shows that explicit knowledge can be used even when students are given tasks where the focus is communication rather than form. Long (2007) pointed out that prompts that allow students to freely construct their responses may allow for the most valid measurement of language development because focus is not being drawn specifically to form.

Although there is still debate as to if explicit knowledge can become implicit, several theories posit that it can (refer to section 2.2.1.1). If that is true, another function of explicit knowledge that is supported by the findings of this study is that it helps ensure that incorrect grammar forms do not become proceduralized, or implicit knowledge (DeKeyser, 2007). In Anderson's (1983) ACT model, he refers to explicit



knowledge as declarative knowledge and to implicit knowledge as procedural knowledge. He goes on to claim that declarative knowledge can be converted to procedural knowledge through practice, leading to automatization. When learners receive written CF before the incorrect grammar forms become automatic, there is still a chance for them to internalize the correct form. However, without CF the incorrect grammar form may be internalized and as such very difficult to change. Because some of the learners in this study were able to improve their linguistic accuracy, and that improvement was sustained in the delayed post-tests, the explicit knowledge they receive from the CF will help ensure that the wrong form does not become implicit and automatic.

Another contribution this thesis makes is that it shows more than one treatment may be necessary for some students in order for them to use the explicit knowledge gained from written CF. Although the positive effects of written CF have been reported by a number of studies, Storch (2010) has pointed out that most written CF studies have provided students with a single treatment and that to truly see the impact of the feedback, several cycles of feedback treatments may need to be performed. In order to determine if multiple treatments could lead to a further increase in accuracy in some students, the current study provided learners with two feedback treatments. This may be important, because a decrease in accuracy was observed for students who received indirect and metalinguistic feedback in the Kuwaiti group and for students who received direct feedback in the Lao group. All these groups then showed an increase after the second treatment. This may indicate that at least some of the students needed a second treatment in order to be able to use the explicit knowledge gained from the feedback more effectively. Because of this finding, future studies may need to include more treatments in order to determine if added treatments lead to more significant long-term gains in accuracy.

### *7.3.2 The value of written CF to the stages of information processing*

Besides support for the benefits of explicit knowledge, the findings of the current study also support the idea of input leading to more accurate output that was proposed in a number of information processing models (Long, 1983; Gass, 1988). These models stress the role of input (of which written CF is one type) in helping learners' to pay attention to certain targeted forms. If the input is salient, it may then cause students to focus on the correct form in revisions or future writings, which are considered output. When considered within such a framework, learners in this study were able to use the input, if it was salient to them, to improve their written accuracy on output in the form of new pieces of writing. In Laos all three feedback groups (direct, indirect and metalinguistic) were able to significantly improve their linguistic accuracy of the targeted forms, and in Kuwait the direct feedback group was able to do so. However, this kind of improvement was not seen in all of the students. Two of the students in the study reported that the feedback they received was not salient to them. KS1 said that she didn't like written metalinguistic feedback because she found it confusing and had no one to ask in order to make it clearer. Furthermore, KS4 said that he didn't know what to do with the indirect feedback he had received. As the feedback was not salient to these two students, they were unable to process it and use it in future writings. Although only two students in this study admitted they had been unable to process the feedback they had received, this could have been the case for other students as well, and helps explain why written CF is beneficial in some cases but not in others.

Support that written CF can facilitate another stage of the information processing model, intake, can also be seen in the findings of this study. Schmidt (1990) argued that the potential for CF to be converted to intake, and therefore internalized, exists if the learner 'attends' to (or notices) the feedback. Because the students in the direct, indirect and metalinguistic feedback groups in Laos and the direct feedback

group in Kuwait all showed improvement on new pieces of writing, this shows that those students noticed the feedback and it became part of their short-term memory, able to be used on a new piece of writing. Furthermore, because the study was longitudinal, it showed the benefits of the written CF lasted for seven weeks when it came to all written CF types (direct, indirect, metalinguistic feedback) in the case of the Lao students and of direct CF in the case of the Kuwaiti students. Because at least some of the students were still able to retrieve the feedback several weeks after having received it, the written CF provided seemed to have become integrated (part of the learner's long-term memory), which is the final stage of acquisition where the targeted feature moves from the learner's temporary memory to their long-term memory. The evidence that this has happened comes from the sustained increase in accuracy on the first and second delayed post-tests, which were administered several weeks after the feedback had been provided.

### *7.3.3 Developmental readiness and the provision of written CF*

The current research makes an important contribution to a number of theories regarding the importance of students' developmental levels and how these may affect the effectiveness of the written CF provided by teachers. Two of the teachers mentioned that, when choosing grammatical features to provide feedback on, they usually choose the ones that are interfering with the student's ability to communicate. Admissions such as these may provide some support to Truscott's (1996) argument that the way teachers provide CF on learners' writing is not effective because they often do not think about students' developmental levels. Pienemann (1985) argued that for grammar instruction to be effective, it must happen when the learner is at a stage in his interlanguage that is close to the point when the grammar point could be acquired naturally. In the information processing models, the salience of the feedback is important, which means

the learner's level or existing grammatical knowledge could affect his/her ability to pay attention to the feedback. Furthermore, both Krashen's  $i+1$  (1985) and Vygotsky's ZDP (1978) stress that learners' developmental levels need to be taken into account when providing instruction and CF to students. Because these various theories all have something to say about the importance of learner levels, it seems to be a relevant issue. However, if teachers simply provide feedback on the issues causing problems with communication they may not be providing salient CF to their students. Although the ability to effectively communicate ideas is very important to writing, after an examination of theory it would seem that simply targeting the issues that interfere with communication may not be the best strategy for providing CF. According to Polio (2012), even if CF is tailored toward each student's errors, if it is not at their developmental level it is unlikely to be usable.

#### *7.3.4 Reasons for differences in student beliefs*

With regards to beliefs, a number of the differences that emerged both between and within groups seemed to stem from previous and current educational experiences, an idea strongly supported by the theory of constructivism. According to Fosnot (1996), at the core of constructivism is the idea that learners use their experiences to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning. Particularly in Laos, teachers believed that students' beliefs may have been influenced by the program they were in and that they could be moving from believing direct feedback was best to believing indirect feedback was best due to their teachers' beliefs and the type of feedback they usually received in the program. In fact, the students who said that they believed indirect feedback was most helpful often said that their teacher had told them this, so they believed them. Furthermore, in Kuwait KS8 claimed she liked indirect feedback because she believed what her current teacher had told her about it. Strike and Posner

(1985) posited that in order to change a belief, there must first be a cognitive conflict that forces the learner to consider an alternative conceptual view. Because students had been confronted with their teachers' beliefs, they could evaluate their own beliefs and choose whether to modify their beliefs in light of what their teacher had said.

Not only their current program, but also their past experiences may have influenced students' beliefs about feedback. According to Driver (1989), students' preconceptions that they bring with them to the classroom stem from their earlier educational experiences and form a filter for later learning. The past educational experiences of the Lao students in particular were diverse, and when the bio-data was looked at, it seemed that the students who had studied in Vientiane had different beliefs from those who had studied in other provinces. The students from Vientiane had had more exposure to teachers from other countries who used diverse feedback methods to provide written CF and were much more likely to say they preferred indirect feedback (16 out of 24 students from Vientiane as compared to four out of 18 of the students from other provinces). They were also more likely to disagree that teachers should correct all errors (17 out of 24 students from Vientiane as compared to one out of 18 from other provinces). Cumming and Riazi (2000) claimed that students have diverse feedback preferences that are based on factors such as prior education and these findings seem to support that claim.

#### *7.3.5 Reasons for differences in the type of feedback that is most effective*

Differences were found regarding the type of feedback that was most effective in the two contexts in the current study. Theoretically, this is important. According to Bitchener (2012), whether the more explicit types of CF are more effective than the less explicit ones is theoretically important because the theories that explain and predict how learners acquire a second language need to include such differences as conditions of L2

learning. I would go on to say that they also need to explain and predict the conditions that may cause the type of feedback that is most effective to vary between contexts and classes. The findings regarding which type of feedback is most effective have shown varied results (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010a, 2010b, Lalande, 1982; Robb, et al., 1986; Semke, 1984; Sheen, 2007). Because of the lack of a consensus as to the most effective type of feedback, Bitchener (2012) called for comparisons between different types of CF to be tested with study designs that include potentially mediating variables. The current study did that by looking at the mediating variables of beliefs and past educational experiences and found that the type of feedback that was most effective varied in the two contexts, with all three feedback types (direct, indirect, metalinguistic) leading to increased accuracy in the Lao context, but only direct feedback leading to increased accuracy in the Kuwaiti context. It was found that differences in previous educational experiences may have led to differences in the type of feedback that is most effective. Kuwaiti students had had less experience with indirect and metalinguistic feedback and two students claimed they had trouble using these types of feedback. The English teachers in Kuwait also claimed that their students had trouble using indirect feedback.

Furthermore, students' beliefs about and attitudes towards a particular type of feedback may impact effectiveness. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) found that negative attitudes toward receiving a particular type of feedback (reformulation in their case) led learners to not attend to the feedback. In the current study, when two cases were looked at in depth, it was found that the student who had negative feelings about the feedback she received (LS1) was unwilling to engage with or give attention to it while the student who received her preferred type of feedback and had positive feelings about it (KS10) engaged with the feedback beyond what was required in the study. Schmidt (1990) claimed that the amount of attention a learner pays to feedback may

determine the extent to which it becomes intake and that the extent to which this occurs may be determined by a range of mediating factors, including individual motivational and affective factors. The negative feelings some students have toward a certain type of feedback may, therefore, be one such factor. It is too early to come to any conclusions about the extent to which mediating factors can impact students' engagement with the CF. While a number of theories have something to say about the role written CF may play in second language learning and acquisition, as yet there is no one theory that encompasses the way mediating factors influence cognitive functions. A framework or theory that accomplishes this is needed if future studies are to capture the nuanced differences that emerge between groups of students and among students in each group.

The mediating effect of beliefs on written CF may also be explained through certain aspects of activity theory, and this contributes to what we know about how that may happen. The students in the current study all had similar long-term goals (to study in English medium universities) and proficiency levels (advanced), yet the type of feedback that was most effective varied between the two groups. These findings may stem from differences in the 'goals' the students had for the activity. According to activity theory (Leontiev, 1978), there are three levels in an activity: the social motives influencing beliefs and attitudes that are behind the activity, the actions brought about by learners' goals, and the conditions under which the activity is carried out. Although the students' had certain beliefs about written CF, the effects of those beliefs may have been affected by what they hoped to achieve by performing the writing task they were given in this study. According to Engstrom (2001) 'motives' of individuals or groups are viewed as independent but subordinate units of analysis that can only be fully understood when studied in perspective with the entire activity system.

The students in this study would be functioning in activity systems in which they have different identities, some specific to their identity as a student (for example:

English language learner, independent learner, future university student). For students who viewed themselves as English language learners and simply wanted to write with grammatical accuracy, direct feedback or metalinguistic feedback may have been most beneficial because they may have considered those types of feedback as helpful in reaching their goal. If they were focused on that goal, their beliefs about the type of written CF that is most effective may not have had as much of a mediating effect. On the other hand, if students viewed themselves as future university students during the writing task, and felt the act of writing was a chance to express themselves, grow as an independent learner and develop future study skills, they may have been more willing to engage more deeply with the feedback and their beliefs about written CF may have played more of a mediating effect. Such differences in students' personal goals regarding what they hope to gain from writing activities could help explain why the type of feedback that was most effective varied between the two groups. It may also help explain the differences between Lao students, whose beliefs seemed to impact uptake, and Kuwaiti students, who only significantly improved their accuracy after receiving direct feedback. Furthermore, it may help explain differences individual students, such as K10, who was able to improve her linguistic accuracy with indirect feedback, even though the finding only emerged when her case was studied independently of the other students.

#### *7.4 Contributions to research*

The results of the current study also support existing empirical research on both written CF and beliefs. When considering this research in regards to existing written CF research, it corroborates previous research, which found that focused written CF does improve the long-term acquisition of certain targeted grammatical features (Bitchener 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Sheen, 2007). Furthermore, it



added to existing research by focusing on the past simple and present perfect tenses, two areas that have received only limited attention. To date, the majority of studies have looked at English article use (Bitchener 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Sheen, 2007); however, Bitchener et al., (2005) did investigate the effects of written CF on the past simple tense. This study confirmed the findings of the Bitchener et al. study by showing that feedback on the past simple tense can lead to increases in linguistic accuracy in some students. Furthermore, it added to existing research by adding the present perfect tense as a grammatical feature being investigated.

A further contribution to research pertains to investigating the efficacy of different types of feedback. The current study also tried to shed light on the issue of which type of feedback is most effective. On this topic, no difference in effectiveness was found among the feedback groups in Laos; however, direct feedback was found to be the most effective feedback type among Kuwaiti students. This supports the conflicting findings regarding the question of which type of feedback is most effective (Lalande, 1982; Robb et al., 1986; Chandler, 2003; Sheen 2007). These differences could have emerged because different students require different feedback. Future research regarding written CF should consider this and design studies that will investigate if such differences exist among the students in their study. This is important because had the students in the current study been considered as a single group, the findings would have been different: either no difference between feedback options would have been found or, more likely because of the results of the Kuwaiti group, a strong finding for the significance of direct feedback would have been found. Instead of asking which type of feedback is most beneficial, researchers should ask more nuanced questions (for example, regarding students goals, beliefs and proficiency levels) specific to certain student populations in order to determine if a certain type of feedback is most effective for a certain type of student. For example, the current study revealed that, in

the case of the Lao students, beliefs seemed to be related to uptake. Furthermore, it revealed that direct feedback was the only type of feedback that helped the Kuwaiti students in the study improve their linguistic accuracy.

In regards to beliefs, it lends further support to prior studies that found differences in beliefs between teachers and students (MacCarger, 1993; Schulz, 1996, 2001). Because it used the same instruments to collect in IEP programs in two different countries, it adds to existing research by showing similarities and differences between Lao and Kuwaiti students, two groups that had not been researched before. By using case studies and multiple methods to collect data, a fuller picture of how the students' prior educational experiences might affect their current beliefs could be provided. Moreover, because the students involved in the study planned on studying abroad the findings should be of interest to teachers both in the students' home countries and at tertiary institutions where they may study in the future.

The most important contribution to research regarding beliefs, however, is that it goes one step further and investigates the extent to which the differences in beliefs affect students' improvement of linguistic accuracy after receiving written CF. As no other study attempting this could be found, this study is attempting to fill an important gap in existing research with findings that suggest beliefs could play a role in the way some students use the written CF they have been given. It is hoped that this will influence future research designs and that researchers will be more inclined to consider social, individual and contextual factors that may influence students' feedback preferences, along with their retention and uptake of the feedback. If the students in the current study had been grouped together as one group, would the same results have emerged? Considering the separate results, probably not. Comparing different populations of students can provide added insight into the true effectiveness of feedback, and help explain why feedback works in some instances but not in others.

Though it did not survey students to find out the specifics of their beliefs, Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) did find a possible relationship between beliefs and the uptake of written CF. This study confirmed their findings, but also used other methodologies to investigate the topic. In Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) learners' interactions in pairs were recorded in order to determine which factors may have impacted uptake; however, the current study used surveys and interviews to determine learners' specific beliefs regarding written CF. Furthermore, the other study only looked at learners' ability to write a second time on the same topic whereas the current study had students write new texts. Writing new texts is more of an indication that learning has occurred because it shows students did not simply memorize what they wrote before with regards to the feedback previously given.

The current study has also contributed to what we know about the appropriate research methodology to investigate the topic of written CF when questions regarding contextual, individual and social mediating factors have been raised. For example, a multiple case study methodology was used in order to investigate similarities and differences in two contexts, and also within a given context. Yin (2003) argued for the use of a case study design when how and why questions are being proposed, and when you want to cover aspects of the contextual conditions because they are relevant to the phenomenon being studied, which was the case in the current study, as it sought to investigate how beliefs impact language learning and if the impact was different for the students in Laos and Kuwait. Choosing to use a multiple case study allowed participants to be chosen very carefully and variables such as proficiency levels and students goals to be controlled so that the two cases could be easily compared.

As for the contribution this study makes toward choosing data collection methods to investigate written CF, both quantitative and qualitative instruments were used. Many previous studies have looked solely at whether written CF improved the

linguistic accuracy of students through the collection of writing samples; however, the current study combined questionnaires and interviews with the collection of writing samples to provide a fuller picture of the way beliefs may affect students' uptake of written CF. Without the data gleaned from the interviews and questionnaires, students' beliefs or the way their past educational experiences impacted their beliefs could not have been determined. Furthermore, the link between students' beliefs and uptake could not have been made. The results of this study indicate that multiple methods of data collection may be needed to answer the more nuanced questions regarding written CF that are being asked.

### *7.5 Pedagogical Implications*

In regards to pedagogy, because written CF was studied in two different contexts and the findings in the two contexts varied, the findings of this study can offer teachers valuable insight into the practice of providing feedback.

The first contribution is that teachers should feel confident about providing feedback on students' past simple and present perfect tense errors. The results of this study showed that targeted feedback on these errors can help students increase their linguistic accuracy in the contexts investigated in this study. This may lead teachers to view providing written CF in a more positive light, because though many feel it is part of their job, many are not convinced that it is particularly helpful to students. This and numerous other studies (for example Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010; Sheen, 2007; Van Beuningen, 2008) indicate that written CF can yield positive effects. Because of the differences found in the two contexts for different feedback options, perhaps the most important implication this research has for teachers is that they should try to find the best way to provide feedback for their own students. One issue, though, has to do with developmental levels. Teachers need to consider their students' levels and what they

know about each individual student's grammatical knowledge when deciding which errors to target to ensure that students are at a level where they are able to use the feedback provided. Simply targeting an error because it interferes with communication may not be the most effective way to provide feedback.

It would seem there is no right or wrong answer when it comes to the provision of written CF, by experimenting with feedback options and providing feedback on different errors they feel are at their students' levels, teachers can determine what works best in their context for the students seated in their classrooms. However, the findings are specific to this study and further studies, including replications, are needed in order for broader generalizations to be made.

The results regarding beliefs would also seem to warn against employing a one-size-fits-all policy of providing feedback on written work, because students' prior experiences with feedback and their beliefs about the ways feedback should be given, along with a host of other factors not investigated in the current study, may impact their uptake of the feedback. It may be beneficial if teachers vary their feedback depending on the needs of each student in order to try to ensure the greatest opportunity for uptake. Because the findings of this study suggest that beliefs may impact language learning, the importance of teachers being aware of the beliefs held by their students, and also of carefully explaining their own beliefs, is clear. If a teacher explains why he/she is providing feedback in a certain way, students may be more aware of the possible benefits. Similarly, if teachers are aware of each student's feedback preferences and beliefs, they may be better equipped to bridge any gaps between the feedback the student expects to be given and the type the teacher will provide. This newfound awareness could lead to an improved classroom environment in which everyone feels that his/her beliefs are understood and respected, which could in turn lead to positive gains regarding linguistic accuracy.

According to Arndt (1993), a negotiated compromise is needed when there are differences between student and teacher beliefs. In other words awareness and compromise is needed on both sides. Increased discussion between instructors and students could go a long way to help students and teachers better understand what happens when students receive written CF. If teachers explain why they are giving a certain type of feedback and the benefits they believe it provides, students may be more open to accepting a new or different type of written CF than they have received in the past. On the other hand if teachers understand why their students have a certain preference, they can set about either varying their feedback techniques to come in line more with the expectations of their students, or try to intervene to alter their students beliefs if such intervention is needed (Redecki & Swales, 1988), although it is important to show respect for students' existing beliefs. Because the purpose of providing feedback is to improve students' linguistic accuracy, teachers should be willing to re-evaluate their beliefs and use a variety of feedback techniques to assist their students in accomplishing that goal.

#### *7.6 Limitations of the study*

While the results of this study seem to support that beliefs can have an impact on the way some students respond to and use written CF, there are several limitations. The first one pertains to generalizability. It is important to note that the participants of this study all came from the same language school which means that this study cannot be generalized to learners in other contexts. This was done because I sought to provide a deep understanding of the two schools being investigated; however, further research in other contexts, in Lao PDR, Kuwait and other countries, is needed in order to see if students with different language proficiencies and in different schools show a similar correlation between beliefs and uptake. Furthermore, participants were all advanced

level adult English language learners so once again the results cannot be generalized. Other levels and age groups need to be looked at in order to determine if those factors impact beliefs and the use of written CF, and also look at if they influence changes in students' beliefs over time. For example, are younger, lower level students more likely to change their beliefs to match those of their teacher than older, higher level students.

Another issue has to do with sample size, because I was looking only at advanced level English language learners and using a multiple case study methodology, the sample size was quite small. This was particularly true for the number of students who received their preferred type of feedback (8 in Laos and 5 in Kuwait). Preferably this group would have been larger; however, because of the inclusion of a control group (none of whom could receive their preferred type of feedback) it was not possible to create a larger group.

A further limitation is that the present study also investigated the effect of beliefs on the acquisition of only two grammatical features, the past simple and the present perfect. Other grammatical structures also need to be looked at, particularly features which are not rule based, in order to see if students receiving the type of feedback they prefer show a higher level of improvement of targeted structures. Furthermore, because the students did not make many mistakes with the present perfect tense, the errors could not be looked at separately to see if there was any difference in uptake between the two error categories.

The length of the study (7 weeks) is also a limitation. Though the current study did show that the positive effects of written CF could endure over the 7 week time period, the Lao students did show a slight decline in all three feedback groups on the second delayed post-test. It would have been interesting to have administered another delayed post-test to determine if the decline continued; however, the logistics of a longer stay in the two countries, made extending the length of the study unfeasible.

There are also limitations regarding the methodology used in this study due to some methodological issues that have been identified with self-report, such as participants reporting what they think the researcher wants to hear. Although the combination of questionnaires, interviews and writing samples provided robust results, measures such as classroom observations, recorded pairwork, and think alouds could have also been useful to provide insights into the phenomena being studied. Such methodologies would also allow the researcher to be more removed from the research being done, which would perhaps help ensure that students answer honestly.

### *7.7 Suggestions for future research*

This study has revealed a number of issues that require investigation. First of all, students from other schools within the countries investigated in this study need to be investigated in order to determine the extent to which the findings of the current study can be generalized. Besides further investigations within the two countries, investigations need to be carried out in other countries to determine factors impacting those students' beliefs about written CF, along with if those beliefs affect uptake. Students who are at different proficiency levels and with a variety of goals need to be investigated to determine if those are mediating factors when it comes to beliefs and written CF. Studies lasting longer periods of time would also be useful to further monitor the lasting effects of written CF.

Atkinson (2002) argued, language acquisition and use is integrated into a world that is socially mediated, so those social aspects need to be investigated as part of the same cognitive processes that underlie L2 acquisition and development. The current study has shown how past social, educational and contextual experiences may work together to construct both student and teachers' current beliefs about and practices regarding teaching and learning languages. For future written CF research, it is



important to take this into consideration and continue investigating the environmental (educational background, current classroom environment, etc.) and social factors (social identity, cultural expectations, etc.), which may impact the extent to which written CF is effective. Furthermore, other individual factors (such as personality, etc.) should be investigated to determine if they impact students' use and retention of written CF.

The current study also confirmed the usefulness of mixed-methods data collection when seeking to provide a fuller picture of the factors impacting the effectiveness of written CF. As very few studies to date have investigated such factors, future study designs should perhaps take them into account by using both quantitative and qualitative instruments to collect data. Besides surveys and interviews, classroom observations, recorded pairwork, and think alouds may all be useful in providing added insight into what action happens with the feedback when students receive it. Smaller individual case studies could be used to try to provide a deeper understanding about which specific factors most affect certain learners.

### *7.8 Concluding remarks*

Because of the nature of our work as teachers, how to best help our students improve their written accuracy will remain a topic of discussion. No teacher wants to spend hours marking students' writing, only to find that there is never any improvement. The findings of the current study seem to show that we should take a more personalized approach to providing feedback, taking students' beliefs about feedback and other individual differences into account when developing feedback strategies. Furthermore, perhaps there should be more communication between teachers and students about the type of feedback they believe is useful and why they believe it is useful. By knowing what students expect in regards to feedback, and explaining reasons why feedback is provided a certain way on the part of the teacher, students may

become more receptive to different types of feedback and the type of feedback that is most useful may no longer be an issue.

It is hoped that future research along the same lines as the current study will be conducted, and that such studies will guide teachers in a direction that allows feedback to be better used by students. If teachers found that feedback were more effective, it could also become less of a chore for them to provide it, making the process of providing feedback more rewarding for everyone.

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## Appendix A

Dear .....,

My name is Stephanie Rummel and I am an American PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. I am writing to you because I would like to conduct part of my research in Laos and would be most appreciative if I were given permission to visit your campus in order to do this. The reason for my interest in Laos is because I spent two years as the Principal at Panyathip Bilingual School some years ago and thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Lao people and Lao culture. I believe my studies will make a significant contribution to the field of EFL.

To be more specific, my research will investigate how students and teachers alike perceive corrective feedback on student writing, and how students in turn use the corrective feedback they receive. Research to date has focused mainly on ESL settings in the USA, New Zealand, and Australia and the students who participated have come from varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, a few studies have taken place in EFL settings such as Japan and Colombia. My research, however, will be a comparative study between two groups of EFL students, namely Lao and Kuwaiti. By focusing on two homogeneous groups with different first languages and cultures, I hope to move the field forward and provide new insights into how best to foster language acquisition through a better understanding of culture.

My study will include a survey for students and teachers, and at least one interview with a small portion of the students and teachers. I would also ask students to write 3 short samples which I would then give feedback on. I would ensure that my time with the students would not interfere with their regular studies in any way. On the contrary, I hope to provide them with added opportunities to use and develop their English skills.

My PhD supervisor is Dr. John Bitchener at Auckland University of Technology. If you would like to contact him regarding my status in the program, his e-mail address is [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz)

Yours sincerely,

Stephanie Rummel

## Appendix B

Dear .....,

My name is Stephanie Rummel and I am an American PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. I am writing to you because I would like to conduct part of my research in Kuwait and would be most appreciative if I were given permission to visit your campus in order to do this. The reason for my interest in Kuwait is because I have been an English teacher and Program Coordinator for Arabic-speaking students for many years and am especially interested in Middle Eastern culture. I believe my studies will make a significant contribution to the field of EFL.

To be more specific, my research will investigate how students and teachers alike perceive corrective feedback on student writing, and how students in turn use the corrective feedback they receive. Research to date has focused mainly on ESL settings in the USA, New Zealand and Australia and the students who participated have come from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, a few studies have taken place in EFL settings, such as Japan and Colombia. My research, however, will be a comparative study between two groups of EFL students, namely Kuwaitis and Laotians. By focusing on two monolingual groups with differing first languages and cultures, I hope to move the field forward and provide new insights into how best to foster language acquisition through a better understanding of culture.

My study will include a survey for students and teachers, and at least one interview with a small portion of the students and teachers. I would also ask students to write 3 short samples which I would then give feedback on. I would ensure that my time with the students would not interfere with their regular studies in any way. On the contrary, I hope to provide them with added opportunities to use and develop their English skills.

My PhD supervisor is Dr. John Bitchener at Auckland University of Technology. If you would like to contact him regarding my status in the program, his e-mail address is [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz)

Yours sincerely,

Stephanie Rummel

## Participant Information Sheet for Teachers (Kuwait)

**Date Produced:**

**7 July, 2010**

**Project Title:** *The effects of written corrective feedback on student writing*

**Investigator** Stephanie Rummel

**E-mail** [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)

### Introduction

I'm a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand. You are invited to consider participating in my research study. I will be evaluating the effect culture has on how English as a foreign language (EFL) students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback. This form will describe the purpose and nature of the study and your rights as a participant in this study. The decision to participate or not is yours. You may withdraw yourself or any information that you have provided for this project at any time prior to the completion of data collection without being disadvantaged in any way. If you withdraw, all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

### Explanation of the study

This study will look at different issues surrounding the correction of errors on written work. I am interested in comparing the way Kuwaitis and Laotians improve their writing through different forms of written corrective feedback, thus looking at possible cultural influences. Reports, papers, and articles based on my dissertation may be published in the future.

### Participants

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are an English instructor in Kuwait.

### Benefits

The results of the study will lead to new insights into the effects of culture on corrective feedback in the field of second language teaching and learning, an area which has not received much attention in research literature to date. For participating teachers, you will gain an understanding of how culture affects corrective feedback.

### Requirements

You will be asked to fill out a survey which will take about 15 minutes. You may also be asked to participate in a 15 minute interview.

### Are there risks?

There will be no risk at all and I do not expect that you will feel any form of discomfort. If you do, please feel free to discuss any issue with me or the Head of Department.

If you feel uncomfortable about the recording or interview, any question can be unanswered, or the recording and/or interview will be stopped at any time you say so, and you will not be disadvantaged in any way.



If you feel uncomfortable while answering the questionnaire, you are free to stop at any time or leave any question blank. You will not be disadvantaged in any way.

**Your participation**

You will have two days to decide if you want to participate in this study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. That means you do not have to be a part of the study. Your decision to participate will in no way affect your employment status. If you do decide to participate, you must first complete a consent form. If at any point you change your mind and no longer want to participate, you can tell me.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Prof. John Bitchener, [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext7830.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Madeline Banda, [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext 8044.

**Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

If you have any other questions about the research, you can contact me, Stephanie Rummel, at [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com) or [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz)

**Participant Consent Form for Teachers (Kuwait)**

*Project title: A study on the effect of culture on the way students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback*

*Project Supervisor: Prof. John Bitchener*

*Researcher: Stephanie Rummel*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 7 July, 2010.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research and allow what I say and the information I provide in it to be used for the second language teaching and learning study.
- ☐ I understand only the researcher and the supervisor have access to the recordings and they will always be kept confidential.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):  
Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Date : .....

Participant's name : .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

## Participant Information Sheet for Teachers (Laos)

**Date Produced:**

**7 July, 2010**

**Project Title:** *The effects of written corrective feedback on student writing*

**Investigator** Stephanie Rummel

**E-mail** [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)

### **Introduction**

I'm a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand. You are invited to consider participating in my research study. I will be evaluating the effect culture has on how English as a foreign language (EFL) students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback. This form will describe the purpose and nature of the study and your rights as a participant in this study. The decision to participate or not is yours. You may withdraw yourself or any information that you have provided for this project at any time prior to the completion of data collection without being disadvantaged in any way. If you withdraw, all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

### **Explanation of the study**

This study will look at different issues surrounding the correction of errors on written work. I am interested in comparing the way Kuwaitis and Laotians improve their writing through different forms of written corrective feedback, thus looking at possible cultural influences. Reports, papers, and articles based on my dissertation may be published in the future.

### **Participants**

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are an English instructor in Laos.

### **Benefits**

The results of the study will lead to new insights into the effects of culture on corrective feedback in the field of second language teaching and learning, an area which has not received much attention in research literature to date. For participating teachers, you will gain an understanding of how culture affects corrective feedback.

### **Requirements**

You will be asked to fill out a survey which will take about 15 minutes. You may also be asked to participate in a 15 minute interview.

### **Confidentiality**

Your questionnaire will not have your name on it. These papers will be held by only the researcher and the supervisor. They will not be seen by anybody else.

In the interview, a pseudonym will be used too instead of your real name. The tape will be transcribed by the researcher. Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to them, and they will not know your real name.

Whenever data from this study is published, your name will not be used. The data will be stored on a computer and only the researcher will have access to it.

#### **Are there risks?**

There will be no risk at all and I do not expect that you will feel any form of discomfort. If you do, please feel free to discuss any issue with me or the Head of Department.

If you feel uncomfortable about the recording or interview, any question can be unanswered, or the recording and/or interview will be stopped at any time you say so, and you will not be disadvantaged in any way.

If you feel uncomfortable while answering the questionnaire or writing for the writing prompt, you are free to stop at any time or leave any question blank. You will not be disadvantaged in any way.

#### **Your participation**

You will have two days to decide if you want to participate in this study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. That means you do not have to be a part of the study. Your decision to participate will in no way affect your employment status. If you do decide to participate, you must first complete a consent form. If at any point you change your mind and no longer want to participate, you can me.

#### **What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Prof. John Bitchener, [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext7830.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Madeline Banda, [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext 8044.

#### **Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

If you have any other questions about the research, you can contact me, Stephanie Rummel, at [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com) or [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz)

### **Participant Consent Form for Teachers (Laos)**

*Project title: A study on the effect of culture on the way students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback*

*Project Supervisor: Prof. John Bitchener*

*Researcher: Stephanie Rummel*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 7 July, 2010.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research and allow what I say and the information I provide in it to be used for the second language teaching and learning study.
- ☐ I understand only the researcher and the supervisor have access to the recordings and they will always be kept confidential.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):  
Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Date : .....

Participant's name : .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

## Participant Information Sheet for Student Participants (Kuwait)

**Date Produced:**

7 July, 2010

**Project Title:** *The effects of written corrective feedback on student writing*

**Investigator** Stephanie Rummel

**E-mail** [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)

### Introduction

I'm a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand. You are invited to consider participating in my research study. I will be looking at the effect culture has on how English as a foreign language (EFL) students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback. This form will describe the purpose and nature of the study and your rights as a participant in this study. The decision to participate or not is yours. You may withdraw yourself or any information that you have provided for this project at any time prior to the completion of data collection without being disadvantaged in any way. If you withdraw, all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

### Explanation of the study

This study will look at different issues surrounding the correction of errors on written work. I am interested in comparing the way Kuwaitis and Laotians improve their writing through different forms of written corrective feedback, thus looking at possible cultural influences. Reports, papers, and articles based on my dissertation may be published in the future.

### Participants

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are an English student in Kuwait.

### Benefits

The results of the study will lead to new insights into the effects of culture on corrective feedback in the field of second language teaching and learning, an area which has not received much attention in research literature to date. For students participating in the study (the questionnaire, writing prompts and interview), you will be able to reflect on your own use of feedback in improving your writing and be able to make adjustments to facilitate your English learning.

### Requirements

You will write in response to a prompt three times over a period of six weeks. Each prompt will take about 20 minutes of your time. You will also be asked to fill out a survey and possibly take part in an interview. The survey will take you about 15 minutes to fill out and the interview will last no more than 15 minutes.

### Are there risks?

There will be no risk at all and I do not expect that you will feel any form of discomfort. If you do, please feel free to discuss any issue with me, your class teacher, or the Head of Department.

If you feel uncomfortable about the recording or interview, any question can be unanswered, or the recording and/or interview will be stopped at any time you say so, and you will not be disadvantaged in any way.

If you feel uncomfortable while answering the questionnaire or writing for the writing prompt, you are free to stop at any time or leave any question blank. You will not be disadvantaged in any way.

### **Your participation**

You will have two days to decide if you want to participate in this study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. That means you do not have to be a part of the study. Your decision to participate will in no way affect your grade in any class. If you do decide to participate, you must first complete a consent form. If at any point you change your mind and no longer want to participate, you can tell your teacher.

### **What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Prof. John Bitchener, [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext7830.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Madeline Banda, [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext 8044.

### **Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

If you have any other questions about the research, you can contact me, Stephanie Rummel, at [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com) or [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz)

**Participant Consent Form for Student Participants (Kuwait)**

***Project title: A study on the effect of culture on the way students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback***

*Project Supervisor: Prof. John Bitchener*

*Researcher: Stephanie Rummel*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 7 July, 2010.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research and allow what I say and the information I provide in it to be used for the second language teaching and learning study.
- ☐ I understand only the researcher and the supervisor have access to the recordings and they will always be kept confidential.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):  
Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Date : .....

Participant's name : .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....



## Participant Information Sheet for Student Participants (Laos)

**Date Produced:**

7 July, 2010

**Project Title:** *The effects of written corrective feedback on student writing*

**Investigator** Stephanie Rummel

**E-mail** [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)

### Introduction

I'm a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand. You are invited to consider participating in my research study. I will be looking at the effect culture has on how English as a foreign language (EFL) students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback. This form will describe the purpose and nature of the study and your rights as a participant in this study. The decision to participate or not is yours. You may withdraw yourself or any information that you have provided for this project at any time prior to the completion of data collection without being disadvantaged in any way. If you withdraw, all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

### Explanation of the study

This study will look at a variety of issues surrounding the correction of errors on written work. I am interested in comparing the way Kuwaitis and Laotians improve their writing through different forms of written corrective feedback, thus looking at possible cultural influences. Reports, papers, and articles based on my dissertation may be published in the future.

### Participants

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are an English student in Laos.

### Benefits

The results of the study will lead to new insights into the effects of culture on corrective feedback in the field of second language teaching and learning, an area which has not received much attention in research literature to date. For students participating in the study (the questionnaire, writing prompts and interview), you will be able to reflect on your own use of feedback in improving your writing and be able to make adjustments to facilitate your English learning.

### Requirements

You will write in response to a prompt three times over a period of six weeks. Each prompt will take about 20 minutes of your time. You will also be asked to fill out a survey and possibly take part in an interview. The survey will take you about 15 minutes to fill out and the interview will last no more than 15 minutes.

### Are there risks?

There will be no risk at all and I do not expect that you will feel any form of discomfort. If you do, please feel free to discuss any issue with me, your class teacher, or the Head of Department.

If you feel uncomfortable about the recording or interview, any question can be unanswered, or the recording and/or interview will be stopped at any time you say so, and you will not be disadvantaged in any way.

If you feel uncomfortable while answering the questionnaire or writing for the writing prompt, you are free to stop at any time or leave any question blank. You will not be disadvantaged in any way.

### **Your participation**

You will have two days to decide if you want to participate in this study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. That means you do not have to be a part of the study. Your decision to participate will in no way affect your grade in any class. If you do decide to participate, you must first complete a consent form. If at any point you change your mind and no longer want to participate, you can tell your teacher.

### **What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Prof. John Bitchener, [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext7830.

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### **Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

If you have any other questions about the research, you can contact me, Stephanie Rummel, at [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com) or [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz)

### **Participant Consent Form for Students (Laos)**

***Project title: A study on the effect of culture on the way students perceive, respond to and use corrective feedback***

***Project Supervisor: Prof. John Bitchener***

***Researcher: Stephanie Rummel***

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 7 July, 2010.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research and allow what I say and the information I provide in it to be used for the second language teaching and learning study.
- ☐ I understand only the researcher and the supervisor have access to the recordings and they will always be kept confidential.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):  
Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Date : .....

Participant's name : .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....



## نموذج معلومات للموافقة على المشاركة

تاريخ الإصدار:

7 يوليو 2010

اسم المشروع: آثار التعليقات التصحيحية المكتوبة على مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب

الباحثة ستيفاني رومل

[srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com) البريد الإلكتروني

مقدمة

إننا طالبة أحضر رسالة الدكتوراه في جامعة أوكلاند للتكنولوجيا في أوكلاند بنيوزلندا، وأدعوكم للتفكير في المشاركة في دارستي البحثية التي سوف أقيم فيها تأثير الثقافة على مدى فهم الطلاب واستجابتهم واستخدامهم للتعليقات التصحيحية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. سوف يشتمل هذا النموذج على وصف للغرض من الدراسة وطبيعتها وحقوقك كمشارك فيها. وقرار المشاركة من عدمها راجع إليك، كما يمكنك الانسحاب من الدراسة أو التراجع عن أية معلومات قدمتها لهذا المشروع في أي وقت قبل إتمام جمع البيانات دون حرمانك من أية مزايا بأي شكل من الأشكال. فإذا ما قررت الانسحاب، سيتم تدمير كافة المعلومات ذات الصلة بك بما في ذلك الأشرطة المسجلة والنسخ أو أي أجزاء منها.

### معلومات حول الدراسة

سوف نبحث في هذه الدراسة مجموعة من المسائل التي تحيط بعملية تصحيح الأخطاء في الأعمال المكتوبة. وأنا معنية بالمقارنة بين الكويتيين واللاويين من حيث طريقة تحسينهم لمهاراتهم الكتابية من خلال مختلف الصيغ للتعليقات التصحيحية المكتوبة، وبالتالي سأبحث في التأثيرات الثقافية المحتملة. وقد يتم في المستقبل نشر تقارير وورقات بحثية ومقالات حول أطروحتي.

### المشاركون

لقد طلب منك المشاركة في الدراسة نظراً لكونك معلم لغة إنجليزية في الكويت أو في لاوس، أو لأنك طالب تدرس اللغة الإنجليزية في الكويت أو في لاوس.

### المزايا

سوف تؤدي نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى رؤى جديدة أكثر عمقاً في آثار الثقافة على التعليقات التصحيحية في مجال تدريس لغة ثانية وتعلمها، وهو مجال لم يحظى بكثير من الاهتمام في الأبحاث إلى يومنا هذا. بالنسبة للمدرسين المشاركين، سوف تفهمون مدى تأثير الثقافة على التعليقات التصحيحية. أما بالنسبة للطلاب المشاركين في الدراسة، (الاستبيان وإشارات الحث على الكتابة والمقابلة)، سوف تستطيعون التفكير في استخدامكم للتعليقات في تحسين مهاراتكم في الكتابة وإجراء تعديلات لتيسير تعلمكم للغة الإنجليزية.

### المتطلبات

بالنسبة للمدرسين: سوف يُطلب منكم استكمال استبيان سوف يستغرق 15 دقيقة. وقد يُطلب منكم المشاركة في مقابلة تستغرق 15 دقيقة.

بالنسبة للطلاب: سوف تكتبون ردًا على أية إشارة حث على الكتابة ثلاث مرات خلال ستة أسابيع. وسوف يستغرق كل إشارة حث على الكتابة حوالي 20 دقيقة من وقتكم. وسوف يُطلب منكم أيضاً استكمال استبيان وربما المشاركة في إحدى المقابلات. كما سيستغرق استكمال الاستبيان حوالي 15 دقيقة، وستستغرق المقابلة 15 دقيقة لا أكثر.

### السرية

لن يوضع اسمك الحقيقي على الاستبيان أو عينات الكتابة. وسيتم التعرف عليها عن طريق استخدام اسم مستعار كأحد الأسماء الإنجليزية التي تفضلها. وسوف يتم الاحتفاظ بهذه الأوراق لدى باحث واحد فقط والمشرف على المشروع، ولن يطلع عليها أي شخص آخر.

في المقابلة الشخصية، سوف يتم أيضاً استخدام الاسم المستعار بدل اسمك الحقيقي. وسيتم نسخ الشريط المسجل بمعرفة الباحث. ولن يستطيع أحد الوصول إليهم إلا الباحث والمُشرف الذان لن يعرفا اسم الحقيقي. ولن يُستخدم اسمك في أية بيانات تُنشر من الدراسة. وسيتم تخزين البيانات على كمبيوتر ولن يستطيع أحد الوصول إليها إلا الباحث.

#### هل هناك أية مخاطر؟

لن يكون هناك أية مخاطر على الإطلاق وأتوقع أنك لن تشعر بعدم الراحة بأي شكل من الأشكال. وإذا ما شعرت بعدم الراحة، فلا تتردد في مناقشة أي مسألة معي أو مع مدرسك في الفصل أو مع رئيس القسم. وإذا شعرت بالانزعاج إزاء تسجيل المقابلة، سوف يتم تخطي أي سؤال دون إجابته أو يتم إيقاف التسجيل و/أو المقابلة في أي وقت تطلب فيه ذلك، ولن يتم حرمانك من أية مزايا بأي شكل من الأشكال. وإذا شعرت بعدم الراحة أثناء الإجابة على الاستبيان أو الكتابة بناء على إحدى إشارات الحث على الكتابة، فلك الحرية في التوقف في أي وقت أو تخطي أي سؤال دون إجابته. ولن يتم حرمانك من أية مزايا بأي شكل من الأشكال.

#### مشاركتك

سوف يكون لديك يومان لكي تقرر ما إذا كنت ترغب في المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. فالمشاركة في هذا الدراسة اختيارية تماماً. وهذا يعني أنك لست مضطراً إلى أن تكون جزءاً من الدراسة. ولن يؤثر قرارك بالمشاركة بأي حال من الأحوال على ترتيبك في أي فصل. وإذا قررت المشاركة، يتعين عليك أولاً أن تستكمل نموذج الموافقة. وإذا غيرت رأيك ولم تعد ترغب في المشاركة في أي وقت، يمكنك أن تخبر مدرسك.

#### بالنسبة للمشكلات المتعلقة بالبحث

ينبغي على الفور إخطار مشرف المشروع، الأستاذ جون بتشنر، بأية مشكلات بشأن طبيعة المشروع [john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz](mailto:john.bitchener@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext7830.

وينبغي إخطار السكرتيرة التنفيذية بجامعة أوكلاند للتكنولوجيا، مادلين باندا، بأية مشكلات ذات صلة بإجراء [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) +64 921 9999 ext 8044.

وإذا كانت لديك أية أسئلة عن البحث، يمكنك الاتصال بي، ستيفاني رومل على البريد الإلكتروني [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz) أو [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)



## نموذج الموافقة على المشاركة

اسم المشروع: دراسة لتأثير الثقافة على طريقة تقبل الطلاب للتعليقات التصحيحية والاستجابة لها واستخدامها

الأستاذ الجامعي جون بتشنر المشرف على المشروع:

ستيفاني رومل الباحثة:

- لقد قرأت وفهمت المعلومات المقدمة عن مشروع البحث هذا في كشف المعلومات المؤرخ في 7 يوليو 2010.
- أتيت لي الفرصة لطرح أسئلة والحصول على إجابات لها.
- أفهم أن هناك ملاحظات سيتم تدوينها أثناء المقابلة وأنه سيتم تسجيلها ونسخها.
- أفهم أنه يمكنني الانسحاب من الدراسة أو التراجع عن أية معلومات قدمتها لهذا المشروع في أي وقت قبل إتمام جمع البيانات دون حرمانني من أية مزايا بأي شكل من الأشكال.
- أفهم أنني إذا ما قررت الانسحاب، سيتم تدمير كافة المعلومات ذات الصلة بك بما في ذلك الأشرطة المسجلة والنسخ أو أي أجزاء منها.
- أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث والسماح باستخدام ما أقوله والمعلومات التي أقدمها فيه في دراسة حول تعليم اللغة الثانية وتعلمها.
- أفهم أن الباحث والمشرف فقط هما من يحق لهما الوصول إلى التسجيلات وأنهم سيحافظون دائماً على سريتها.
- أأرغب في الحصول على نسخة من تقرير من الباحث (يرجى وضع علامة على إجابة واحدة): نعم ○ لا ○

توقيع المشارك: .....

التاريخ: .....

اسم المشارك: .....

بيانات الاتصال بالمشارك (إن أمكن): .....



## ແບບຟອມ ທີ່ ສະແດງຂໍ້ມູນຂອງຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ

ວັນທີອອກເອກະສານ:

7 ກໍລະກົດ, 2010

ຫົວຂໍ້ຂອງໂຄງການ: ຜົນກະທົບຂອງຄຳເຫັນທີ່ຂັບລົງເພື່ອແກ້  
ໄຂຄຳຜິດໃນບົດຂັບຂອງນັກຮຽນ

ຜູ້ສຳຫຼວດ ສະເຕັບຟານີ ຣຳແມວ ອີເມວ

[srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)

ບົດສະເໜີ

ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າແມ່ນນັກຮຽນປະລິນຍາເອກທີ່ຮຽນຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລ  
ເຕັກໂນໂລຊີອັອກແລນໃນເມືອງອັອກແລນ, ປະເທດນິວຊີແລນ. ທ່ານ  
ຖືກເຊີນໃຫ້ພິຈາລະນາເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການສຶກສາຄົ້ນຄວ້າຂອງ  
ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ. ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າຈະຕີລາຄາປະເມີນວ່າຜົນກະທົບຂອງ  
ວັດທະນະທຳມີແນວໃດຕໍ່ຄວາມຮັບຮູ້ຂອງນັກຮຽນທີ່ຮຽນ  
ພາສາອັງກິດເປັນພາສາຕ່າງປະເທດ (EFL), ຕອບສະໜອງຕໍ່ແລະໃຊ້ຄຳ  
ເຫັນຂອງການແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດ. ແບບຟອມນີ້ຈະອະທິບາຍຈຸດປະສົງແລະ  
ສະພາບຂອງການຮຽນແລະສົດທົດຂອງທ່ານເຊິ່ງເປັນຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ  
ຄົນໜຶ່ງໃນການສຶກສານີ້. ການຕັດສິນໃຈທີ່ຈະເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ  
ຫຼືບໍ່ແມ່ນຂໍ້ນັກບໍ່ທ່ານເອງ. ກ່ອນຈະລວບລວມຂໍ້ມູນໄດ້ສຳ  
ເລັດ, ທ່ານອາດຈະຖອນຕົວຫຼືບໍ່ໃຫ້ຂໍ້ມູນໃດໆຕໍ່ໂຄງການ  
ນີ້ໄດ້ສະເໝີໂດຍບໍ່ມີການເສຍຜົນປະໂຫຍດໃດໆ. ຖ້າທ່ານຖອນ  
ຕົວຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງທັງໝົດລວມທັງການອັດເທັບແລະສຳ  
ເນົາເອກະສານຫຼືບົດເວົ້າຈະຖືກທຳລາຍ.

**ການອະທິບາຍກ່ຽວກັບການສຶກສາ**

ການສຶກສານີ້ຈະເປັນໜ້າຫຼາຍຢ່າງກ່ຽວກັບການກວດກາຄຳຜິດ  
ໃນບົດຂັບ. ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າສົນໃຈໃນການປຸກທົບທວນທີ່ຄົນອີ  
ຢິບແລະຄົນລາວບັບປຸງການຂັບຂອງພວກເຂົາຈາກຮູບແບບ  
ທີ່ແຕກຕ່າງໃນການຂັບຄຳເຫັນເພື່ອແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດຂອງບົດຂັບ,  
ດັ່ງນັ້ນຈຶ່ງເປັນໄປທີ່ຜົນສະທ້ອນທາງດ້ານ

ວັດທະນະທຳທີ່ ອາດຈະເປັນໄປໄດ້. ບົດລາຍງານ, ເອກະສານ ແລະ ບົດຄວາມ ທີ່ ອົງໃສ່ ບົດນິພົນຂອງຂໍ້ ອຍ ອາດຈະຖືກຈັດພິມໃນອະນາຄົດ.

### **ຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ**

ທ່ານຖືກຂໍໃຫ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການສຶກສານີ້ ເພາະວ່າທ່ານເປັນ ອາຈານສອນພາສາອັງກິດໃນປະເທດອົຢິບ ຫຼື ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ, ຫຼື ເປັນ ນັກຮຽນທີ່ ຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດໃນປະເທດອົຢິບ ຫຼື ສປປ ລາວ.

### **ຜົນປະໂຫຍດທີ່ຈະໄດ້ຮັບ**

ຜົນໄດ້ຮັບຈາກການສຶກສາ ຈະພາໃຫ້ເກີດມີຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈໃໝ່ທີ່ ເລິກເຊິ່ງ ໃນຜົນກະທົບຂອງວັດທະນະທຳຕໍ່ ຄຳເຫັນຂອງການແກ້ຄຳ ຜິດ ໃນການສອນ ແລະ ການຮຽນພາສາທີ່ສອງ, ເຊິ່ງເປັນຂົງເຂດໜຶ່ງ ທີ່ ບໍ່ໄດ້ຮັບການເອົາໃຈໃສ່ ຫຼາຍໃນວັນນະຄະດີຂອງການຄົ້ນ ຄ້ວາໃນປະຈຸບັນ. ສຳລັບອາຈານສອນທີ່ ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ, ທ່ານຈະໄດ້ຮັບ ຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈທີ່ ວ່າວັດທະນະທຳມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ ຄຳເຫັນໃນການ ແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດໄດ້ແນວໃດ. ສຳລັບນັກຮຽນທີ່ ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການສຶກສາ (ແບບສອບຖາມ, ການເຕືອນຄວາມຈື່ຈຳດ້ວຍການຂຽນ ແລະ ການສຳພາດ), ທ່ານຈະສາມາດໄດ້ຮັບຜົນສະທ້ອນ ຈາກການນຳໃຊ້ຄຳເຫັນຂອງທ່ານເອງ ເພື່ອມາປັບປຸງການຂຽນ ແລະ ສາມາດແກ້ໄຂ ເພື່ອ ອຸ່ມໃນການຮຽນ ພາສາອັງກິດຂອງທ່ານ.

### **ຄວາມຕ້ອງການ**

ສຳລັບອາຈານສອນ: ທ່ານຈະຖືກຂໍໃຫ້ຂຽນໃສ່ ແບບຟອມສຳຫຼວດ ເຊິ່ງຈະໃຊ້ ເວລາປະມານ 15 ນາທີ. ທ່ານອາດຈະຖືກຂໍໃຫ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ໃນບົດສຳພາດ 15 ນາທີ ເຊັ່ນກັນ.

ສຳລັບນັກຮຽນ: ທ່ານຈະຂຽນເພື່ອເຕືອນຄວາມຈື່ຈຳ ໃນຈຳນວນສາມຄັ້ງໃນຊ່ວງໄລຍະຫົກອາທິດ. ການຂຽນເຕືອນຄວາມຈຳ ແຕ່ລະຄັ້ງ ຈະໃຊ້ ເວລາຂອງທ່ານ 20 ນາທີ. ທ່ານຈະຖືກຂໍໃຫ້ຂຽນ ໃສ່ໃນແບບຟອມສຳຫຼວດເຊັ່ນກັນ ແລະ ເປັນໄປໄດ້ທີ່ ຈະ ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນບົດສຳພາດ. ການສຳຫຼວດຈະໃຊ້ ເວລາປະມານ 15 ນາທີ ເພື່ອຂຽນໃສ່ໃນແບບຟອມສຳຫຼວດ ແລະ ການສຳພາດຈະໃຊ້ ເວລາ ເກີນ 15 ນາທີ.

### **ການຮັກສາເປັນຄວາມລັບ**

ແບບສອບຖາມຂອງທ່ານ ແລະ ຕົວຢ່າງໃນການຂຽນ ຈະບໍ່ມີຊື່ແທ້ຂອງ ທ່ານໃສ່. ສິ່ງຕ່າງໆເຫຼົ່ານີ້ຈະຖືກກຳນົດໂດຍນາມປາກກາເຊັ່ນຊື່ ພາສາອັງກິດທີ່ທ່ານມັກ. ຈະມີພົງແຕ່ ຜູ້ຄົນຄວ້າ ແລະ ອາຈານປະຈຳ



ໂຄງການ ເທົ່ານັ້ນທີ່ຈະເກັບຮັກສາເອກະສານເຫຼົ່ານີ້. ຈະບໍ່ມີໃຜເຫັນພວກມັນອີກ.

ໃນການສຳພາດ, ນາມບາກກາຈະຖືກນຳໃຊ້ແທນຊື່ແທ້ຂອງທ່ານເຊັ່ນດຽວກັນ. ຜູ້ຄົນຄື່ນຄ້ວາຈະເປັນຜູ້ຂຽນຄຳເວົ້າທີ່ອັດສະໄນໃນເທັບອອກມາ. ມີພົງແຕ່ຜູ້ຄົນຄື່ນຄ້ວາແລະອາຈານປະຈຳໂຄງການ ເທົ່ານັ້ນຈະເຂົ້າເບິ່ງຂໍ້ມູນເຫຼົ່ານັ້ນ ແລະ ພວກເຂົາຈະບໍ່ຮູ້ຊື່ແທ້ຂອງທ່ານ.

ເມື່ອໃດກໍ່ຕາມທີ່ຂໍ້ມູນຈາກການສຶກສານີ້ໄດ້ຖືກເຜີຍແຜ່, ຊື່ຂອງທ່ານຈະບໍ່ຖືກນຳໃຊ້. ຂໍ້ມູນຈະຖືກເກັບຮັກສາໄວ້ໃນຄອມພິວເຕີ ແລະ ມີພົງແຕ່ຜູ້ຄົນຄື່ນຄ້ວາເທົ່ານັ້ນທີ່ຈະເຂົ້າເບິ່ງຂໍ້ມູນ.

### **ມີຄວາມສ່ຽງບໍ່?**

ຈະບໍ່ມີຄວາມສ່ຽງອັນໃດເລີຍ ແລະ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າບໍ່ຄາດວ່າທ່ານຈະຮູ້ສຶກບໍ່ສະບາຍໃຈ. ຖ້າທ່ານບໍ່ສະບາຍໃຈ, ກະລຸນາປຶກສາບັນຫາຕ່າງໆກັບຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ, ອາຈານສອນໃນຫ້ອງຮຽນຂອງທ່ານ ຫຼື ຫົວໜ້າພະແນກໄດ້ສະເໜີ.

ຖ້າຄວາມຮູ້ສຶກຂອງທ່ານບໍ່ສະບາຍໃຈກ່ຽວກັບການບັນທຶກ ຫຼື ການສຳພາດ, ຄຳຖາມຕ່າງໆຈະຖືກຂ້າມໄປໂດຍບໍ່ຕ້ອງມີຄຳຕອບ, ຫຼື ການບັນທຶກ ແລະ/ຫຼື ການສຳພາດ ຈະຖືກຢຸດຕິເວລາໃດກໍ່ໄດ້ທີ່ທ່ານບອກ ແລະ ແນວໃດກໍ່ຕາມ ທ່ານຈະບໍ່ເສຍຜົນປະໂຫຍດ.

ຖ້າທ່ານຮູ້ສຶກບໍ່ສະບາຍໃຈໃນຂະນະທີ່ຕອບແບບສອບຖາມ ຫຼື ຂຽນຈາກຄວາມຈິ່ງຈຳ, ທ່ານສາມາດຍົກເລີກໄດ້ຕະຫຼອດເວລາ ຫຼື ຂ້າມຄຳຖາມໃດກໍ່ໄດ້ໂດຍບໍ່ຕ້ອງຕອບ. ແນວໃດກໍ່ຕາມ ທ່ານຈະບໍ່ເສຍຜົນປະໂຫຍດ.

### **ການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມຂອງທ່ານ**

ທ່ານຈະມີເວລາສອງມື້ໃນການຕັດສິນໃຈວ່າທ່ານຕ້ອງການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການສຶກສານີ້ຫຼືບໍ່. ການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການສຶກສານີ້ແມ່ນໂດຍສະເໝີກິດຈະການທີ່ຈຳເປັນ. ນັ້ນໝາຍຄວາມວ່າທ່ານບໍ່ຈຳເປັນຕ້ອງເປັນສ່ວນໜຶ່ງຂອງການສຶກສາ. ການຕັດສິນໃຈຂອງທ່ານໃນການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ຈະບໍ່ມີທາງກະທົບຕໍ່ຄະແນນຂອງທ່ານໃນຫ້ອງຮຽນ. ຖ້າທ່ານຕັດສິນໃຈເຂົ້າຮ່ວມອີ່ຫຼີ, ກ່ອນອື່ນໝົດ ທ່ານຕ້ອງຂຽນແບບຟອມ ສະແດງການຍື່ນຍອມໃຫ້ສຳເລັດ. ຖ້າມີຈຸດໃດທີ່ທ່ານບໍ່ປົນໃຈ ແລະ ບໍ່ຕ້ອງການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມອີກແລ້ວ, ທ່ານສາມາດບອກອາຈານສອນຂອງທ່ານ.

ສຳລັບຄວາມກ້ຽວນັດ ' າງກ ' ບົວກັບການຄົ້ນຄ້ວາ

ຄວາມກ້ຽວນັດໃດກໍ່ຕາມກໍ່ບົວກັບສະພາບຂອງໂຄງການນີ້ ຄວນຈະແຈ້ງເປັນ  
ກໍ່ລະນີ ທຳອິດໄປຫາ ອາຈານປະຈຳໂຄງການ, ອາຈານ ຈອນ ບິດເຊັນເນີ,

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ຄວາມກ້ຽວນັດກໍ່ບົວກັບການດຳເນີນການຄົ້ນຄ້ວາ ຄວນຈະແຈ້ງໄປຫາເລຂາ  
ບໍລິຫານ, AUTECH, ແມນເດີລິນ ແບນດາ, *madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz +64 921*  
*9999 ຕໍ່ ' 8044.*

ຖ້າທ່ານມີຄຳຖາມຕໍ່ ' າງກ ' ບົວກັບການຄົ້ນຄ້ວາ, ທ່ານສາມາດຕິດ  
ຕໍ່ ' ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ, ສະເຕັບຟານີ ຣຳແມວ, ທີ່ [srummel444@yahoo.com](mailto:srummel444@yahoo.com)  
ຫຼື [fgv8295@aut.ac.nz](mailto:fgv8295@aut.ac.nz)

## ແບບຟອມສະແດງການຍື່ນຍອມຂອງຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ

ຫົວຂໍ້ຂອງໂຄງການ: ການສຶກສາຜົນກະທົບຂອງວັດທະນະທຳໃສ່ໃນທາງ  
ທຶນັກຮຽນຮັບຮູ້ກ່ຽວກັບການຕອບສະໜອງແລະ  
ນຳໃຊ້ຄຳເຫັນໃນການແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດ

ອາຈານປະຈຳໂຄງການ: ອາຈານ ຈອນ ບົດເຊັນເນີ

ນັກຄົ້ນຄ້ວາ: ສະເຕຟານ ອຳເມວ

- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າໄດ້ອ່ານແລະເຂົ້າໃຈຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ມີໃຫ້ກ່ຽວກັບໂຄງການຄົ້ນຄ້ວານີ້ໃນເອກະສານຂໍ້ມູນວັນທີ 7 ກໍລະກົດ, 2010.
- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າມີໂອກາດຖາມຄຳຖາມແລະໃຫ້ພວກເຂົາຕອບຄຳຖາມ.
- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເຂົ້າໃຈວ່າໃນເວລາສຳພາດຈະມີການບັນທຶກໄວ້ແລະຍັງຈະຖືກອັດເທບໄວ້ແລະບໍ່ຜິດປົກກະຕິໃຫ້ເປັນຕົວໜັງສື.
- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເຂົ້າໃຈວ່າຂ້າພະເຈົ້າອາດຈະຖອນໂຕຫຼືຂໍ້ມູນໃດກໍ່ຕາມທີ່ໄດ້ໃຫ້ໂຄງການນີ້ໄດ້ຕະຫຼອດເວລາກ່ອນຈະລວບລວມຂໍ້ມູນໃຫ້ສຳເລັດໂດຍບໍ່ເສຍຜົນປະໂຫຍດຫຍັງເລີຍ.
- ຖ້າຂ້າພະເຈົ້າຖອນໂຕ, ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເຂົ້າໃຈວ່າຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງທັງໝົດ, ລວມທັງເທັບແລະເອກະສານຫຼືບົດເວົ້າຈະຖືກທຳລາຍ.
- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເຫັນດີເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການຄົ້ນຄ້ວານີ້ແລະອະນຸຍາດໃຫ້ສົ່ງທີ່ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເວົ້າແລະຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າໃຫ້ນຳໄປໃຊ້ສຳລັບການສຶກສາດ້ານການສົດສອນແລະການຮຽນພາສາທັງສອງ.

- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າເຂົ້າໃຈວ່າ ມີພຽງແຕ່ຜູ້ຄົນຄວາມແລະ ອາຈານປະຈຳໂຄງການເທົ່ານັ້ນທີ່ສາມາດເຂົ້າເບິ່ງການ ບັນທຶກ ແລະ ພວກເຂົາຈະເກັບເປັນຄວາມລັບສະເໝີ.
- ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າຫວັງວ່າຈະໄດ້ຮັບສຳເນົາບົດລາຍງານຈາກການ ຄົ້ນຄວ້າ (ກະລຸນາໝາຍຂໍ້ໜຶ່ງ): ແມ່ນ ໐ ບໍ່ແມ່ນ ໐

ລາຍເຊັນຂອງຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ: ..... ວັນທີ: .....

ຊື່ຂອງຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ: .....

ລາຍລະອຽດການຕິດຕໍ່ຂອງຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ (ຖ້າເໝາະສົມ):

.....

### **Narrative Writing Prompts**

- 1. Write about an important event in your life. Describe what happened and why it was so important.**
- 2. Write about a friend who has been important in your life. Think about when you met, what you did, and how your friendship grew.**
- 3. Write about the best holiday you have ever had. Describe where you went, who you went with, what you did, and why it was so enjoyable.**
- 4. Prompt four: Write about a special day spent with family or friends. Describe who you were with, what you did, and why it was special.**

**Interview Questions for Students (Feedback)**

1. What was the most useful feedback you received about this draft?
2. From which sources did you get feedback?
3. How did you use the feedback you got?
4. Do you feel that the feedback you received will be useful in the future?  
What aspects in particular?
5. Was there any type of feedback that you didn't like in the beginning, but find very useful now?

**Interview Questions for Students (Grammar)**

1. What aspects of English grammar are similar to your own language?
2. What aspects are different?
3. How do the differences affect your use of English?

**Interview Questions for Students (Culture)**

1. Were there any types of feedback you were uncomfortable with? Why?
2. How do you feel when a teacher isn't sure of an answer?
3. Describe characteristics of a good teacher....a good classroom environment.

**Interview Questions for Students (Learning Environment)**

1. How do teachers usually correct your writing (both in your L1 and English)?
2. How do you feel about reading/writing in your own language?
3. When you write (in L1 or English) are you expected to write multiple drafts? How useful is it?

**Interview Questions for Teachers (Feedback)**

1. What areas do you focus on in your written feedback? Why?
2. Do you mark errors comprehensively or selectively? Why?
3. Do you link your error correction with grammar instruction?
4. Do you like to use error codes? Why or why not?
5. In your opinion, what is the best way to correct errors? Why?
6. Do you ask students to revise their work after they receive error correction?

**Interview Questions for Teachers (Grammar)**

1. How grammatically different is English from Arabic/Lao?
2. What are the major differences between the two languages? How may those differences affect students' acquisition of English?
3. Are some errors more difficult for students to correct? Why do you think that is?

**Interview Questions for Teachers (Culture)**

1. How important is directness in your culture? Do you think that could affect how students view the type of feedback that they receive?
2. How do you show politeness in your culture? Could this have any effect on the type of feedback that students prefer?
3. What role do students expect teachers to play?
4. How do/would your students feel if you said "I don't know"?

### Student Survey

#### Section A

The questions in the following section are meant to find out how you feel about error corrections on your written work. Please follow the directions for each part.

Part 1: Put a check in the box that best answers each question. Please choose only one answer.

	Which way is the easiest to correct errors in your writing?	Which way is the easiest to see the errors you made?	Which way do you learn from the most?	Which way will help you the most in the future?	Which would you like your teacher to use in the future?
When the teacher writes the correct answer next to my error					
When the teacher underlines my error and tells me what type of error it is, but doesn't fix it for me					
When the teacher explains the grammar rules to the class					

Part 2: Please circle the answer that best describes your agreement with the given statement.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1 completely agree, 2 somewhat agree, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 somewhat disagree, 5 completely disagree)

1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing.

1      2      3      4      5

2. Teachers should correct ALL student errors.

1      2      3      4      5



3. It is the teacher's job to locate errors and provide corrections.

1      2      3      4      5

4. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors.

1      2      3      4      5

5. Teachers should vary their error feedback techniques according to the type of error.

1      2      3      4      5

6. Students should learn to locate their own errors.

1      2      3      4      5

7. When I make errors in writing, I like my teacher to correct them.

1      2      3      4      5

8. Students usually keep error corrections in mind when they revise essays.

1      2      3      4      5

9. Students usually keep error corrections in mind when they write new essays.

1      2      3      4      5

10. Students are responsible for their own learning.

1      2      3      4      5

11. I enjoy writing in English.

1      2      3      4      5

12. I enjoy writing in my own language.

1      2      3      4      5

## Section B

Think about education in general and circle the answer that best describes how you feel.

1. How important is it that you have a very structured lesson? (1=very important,  
2=somewhat important, 3=not important)

1      2      3

2. Is it okay if a teacher is not sure of an answer?

Yes

No

Sometimes

3. Complete the following sentences:

Teachers should \_\_\_\_\_

A good teacher is \_\_\_\_\_

A bad teacher is \_\_\_\_\_

A good student is \_\_\_\_\_

A bad student is \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C

Country of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

Which province in Laos/Kuwait are you from? \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

I have studied English for (circle the correct answer):

Under a year    1-2 years    3-4 years    5-6 years    7-8years    More than 8  
years

I spend \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day studying English in class.

I spend \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day studying English out of class.

Why are you studying English?

To study abroad    To get a better job    Because I enjoy it    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your first language? \_\_\_\_\_

What languages other than your first language and English have you  
studied? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any other languages that you are familiar with?

\_\_\_\_\_

Which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

### ແບບສອບຖາມນັກຮຽນ

#### ໝວດ A

ຄໍາຖາມໃນໝວດຕໍ່ໄປນີ້ແມ່ນມີຄວາມໝາຍເພື່ອຊອກຫາວ່າທ່ານ ຮູ້ສຶກແນວໃດກ່ຽວກັບການແກ້ຄໍາຜິດໃນບົດຂັ້ນຂອງທ່ານ.

ກະລຸນາເຮັດຕາມຄໍາແນະນຳສຳລັບແຕ່ລະພາກ.

ພາກທີ 1: ໝາຍໃສ່ໃນຫ້ອງທີ່ເປັນຄຳຕອບທີ່ດີທີ່ສຸດ

ໃນແຕ່ລະຄໍາຖາມ. ກະລຸນາເລືອກພຽງແຕ່ຄຳຕອບດ້ວຍ.

	ທາງໃດ ແມ່ນ ງ່າຍ ທີ່ ສຸດໃນ ການແກ້ ຄໍາ ຜິດໃນ ບົດ ຂັ້ນຂອງ ທ່ານ?	ທາງໃດ ແມ່ນ ງ່າຍ ທີ່ ສຸດໃນ ການເຫັນ ຄໍາ ຜິດທີ່ ທ່ານ ເຮັດ?	ທ່ານ ຮຽນ ຈາກທາງ ໃດຫຼາຍ ທີ່ສຸດ?	ທາງໃດ ທີ່ຈະ ຊ່ວຍ ທ່ານໄດ້ ດີທີ່ ສຸດໃນ ອະນາຄົດ ?	ອັນໃດ ທີ່ທ່ານ ຍາກ ໃຫ້ຄູຂອ ງທ່ານໃຊ້ ໃນ ອະນາຄົດ?
ເມື່ອອາຈານ ສອນຂັ້ນຄຳ ຕອບທີ່ ຖືກຕ້ອງໃກ້ ກັບຄຳຜິດຂອງ ຂ້ອຍ					
ເມື່ອ ອາຈານຂີ້ ດກ້ອງ ຄໍາຜິດຂອງ ຂ້ອຍແລະບອກ					

ຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດ ແມ່ນຄວາມ ຜິດຊະນິດໃດ, ແຕ່ວ່າບໍ່ ໄດ້ແກ້ໄຂໃຫ້ ຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດ					
ເມື່ອ ອາຈານອະທິບາຍ ຫຼັກການ ຂອງຄຳກຳມະ ໃນຫ້ອງຮຽນ					

ພາກທີ 2: ກະລຸນາ ໝາຍວົງມົນ ນັ້ນ ອະນຸຍາດຕອບທີ່ ອະທິບາຍສິ່ງທີ່  
ທ່ານເຫັນດີທີ່ ສຸດດ້ວຍປະໂຫຍກທີ່ໃຫ້ມາ. ທ່ານເຫັນດີ  
ກັບປະໂຫຍກເຫຼົ່ານີ້ ຈຳໃດ? (1 ເຫັນດີທີ່ ສຸດ, 2 ຂ້ອນ  
ຂ້າງເຫັນດີ, 3 ທັງເຫັນດີ ຫຼື ບໍ່ເຫັນດີ, 4 ບໍ່ເຫັນດີ ບາງໃດ,  
5 ບໍ່ເຫັນດີ ເລີຍ)

1. ອາຈານໃຫ້ ຄຳເຫັນໃສ່ ໃນບົດຂຽນນັກຮຽນ ເປັນສິ່ງທີ່ ສຳຄັນ  
ຫຼາຍ.

1      2      3      4      5

2. ອາຈານຄວນຈະແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດຂອງນັກຮຽນ ທຸກຄົນ.

1      2      3      4      5

3. ມັນແມ່ນວິທີການຂອງອາຈານ ທີ່ ຈະໝາຍຄຳຜິດ ແລະ ແກ້ໄຂໃຫ້.

1      2      3      4      5

4. ທັງອາຈານ ແລະ ນັກຮຽນ ມີຄວາມຮັບຜິດຊອບແກ້ໄຂຄຳຜິດ.

1      2      3      4      5

5. ອາຈານຄວນຈະປ່ຽນແປງ ເຕັກນິກໃນການໃຫ້ຄຳເຫັນຕໍ່ ຄຳຜິດຂອງ  
ນັກຮຽນ ຕາມປະເພດຂອງຄຳຜິດ.

1      2      3      4      5

6. ນັກຮຽນຄວນຈະຮຽນໝາຍຄຳຜິດຂອງພວກເຂົາເອງ.

1      2      3      4      5

7. ເມື່ອຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດ, ຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດໃຫ້ອາຈານແກ້ໄຂຄໍາຜິດເຫຼົ່າ  
ນັ້ນໃຫ້.

1 2 3 4 5

8. ນັກຮຽນມັກເກັບຮັກສາການແກ້ໄຂຄໍາຜິດໄວ້ໃນໃຈເມື່ອພວກ  
ເຂົາອ່ານບົດຄວາມຄືນ.

1 2 3 4 5

9. ໂດຍທົ່ວໄປແລ້ວ ນັກຮຽນເກັບຮັກສາການແກ້ໄຂຄໍາຜິດໄວ້ໃນໃຈ  
ເມື່ອພວກເຂົາຂຽນບົດຄວາມໃໝ່.

1 2 3 4 5

10. ນັກຮຽນຮັບຜິດຊອບຮຽນດ້ວຍຕົວພວກເຂົາເອງ.

1 2 3 4 5

11. ຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດວ່າການຂຽນເປັນພາສາອັງກິດ.

1 2 3 4 5

12. ຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດວ່າການຂຽນພາສາຂອງຂໍ້ອະນຸຍາດ.

1 2 3 4 5

## ໝວດ B

ຄຶດຫາການສຶກສາທົ່ວໄປແລະ ໝາຍວົງມົນອ້ອມຄໍາຕອບທີ່  
ອະທິບາຍຄວາມຮູ້ສຶກຂອງທ່ານໄດ້ດີທີ່ສຸດ.

1. ມີຄວາມສໍາຄັນແນວໃດເມື່ອທ່ານມີບົດຮຽນທີ່ມີໂຄງ  
ສ້າງຫຼາຍ? (1=ສໍາຄັນຫຼາຍ, 2=ຂ້ອນຂ້າງສໍາຄັນ, 3=ບໍ່ສໍາຄັນ)

1 2 3

2. ຖ້າອາຈານສອນບໍ່ແນ່ໃຈຄໍາຕອບ ຈະໄດ້ບໍ່?

ໄດ້ ບໍ່ໄດ້ ບາງເທື່ອ

3. ຂຽນປະໂຫຍກເຫຼົ່າໃດໃຫ້ສົມບູນ:

ອາຈານສອນຄວນຈະ \_\_\_\_\_

ອາຈານສອນທີ່ດີແມ່ນ \_\_\_\_\_

ອາຈານສອນທີ່ບໍ່ດີແມ່ນ \_\_\_\_\_

ນັກຮຽນທີ່ດີແມ່ນ \_\_\_\_\_

ນັກຮຽນທີ່ບໍ່ດີແມ່ນ \_\_\_\_\_

## ໝວດ C

ມາຈາກປະເທດ: \_\_\_\_\_

ເພດ: \_\_\_\_\_

ຂ້ອຍໄດ້ຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດເປັນເວລາ (ໝາຍວົງມົນອ້ອມຄຳຕອບທີ່ຖືກຕ້ອງ):

ພາຍໃນ 1-2 ປີ

3-4 ປີ

5-6 ປີ

7-8 ປີ

ຫຼາຍກ່ວາ 8 ປີ

ຂ້ອຍໃຊ້ເວລາ \_\_\_\_\_ ຊົ່ວໂມງຕໍ່ມື້ ໃນການຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດໃນ  
ຫ້ອງຮຽນ.

ຂ້ອຍໃຊ້ເວລາ \_\_\_\_\_ ຊົ່ວໂມງຕໍ່ມື້ ໃນການຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດນອກ  
ຫ້ອງຮຽນ.

ເປັນຫຍັງທ່ານຈຶ່ງຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດ?

ເພື່ອໄປຮຽນຕ່າງປະເທດ

ເພື່ອໄດ້ຮັບວັດທະນະດີກ່ວາ

ເພາະວ່າຂ້ອຍມ່ວນກັບມັນ

ອື່ນໆ: \_\_\_\_\_

ພາສາທຳອິດຂອງທ່ານແມ່ນພາສາຫຍັງ? \_\_\_\_\_

ພາສາຫຍັງທີ່ທ່ານເວົ້າຢູ່ບ້ານ? \_\_\_\_\_

ພາສາໃດແດ່ທີ່ທ່ານຮຽນນອກຈາກພາສາທຳອິດຂອງທ່ານ ແລະ ພາສາ  
ອັງກິດ? \_\_\_\_\_

ເປັນເວລາດົນປານໃດ? \_\_\_\_\_

ມີພາສາອື່ນບໍ່ທີ່ທ່ານຄຸ້ນເຄີຍ? \_\_\_\_\_

ພາສາໃດ? \_\_\_\_\_

## استبيان للطلاب

## القسم أ

يتمثل الهدف من الأسئلة الواردة في القسم التالي لمعرفة شعورك حيال تصحيح الأخطاء على عملك المكتوب.

يرجى اتباع التوجيهات في كل جزء.

الجزء الأول: ضع علامة في المربع الذي يجيب عن كل سؤال على أفضل نحو. يرجى اختيار إجابة واحدة.

أي الطرق تُعد الأسهل في تصحيح الأخطاء في كتابتك؟	أي الطرق تُعد الأسهل في رؤية الأخطاء التي تصنعها؟	ما هي أفضل الطرق التي تتعلم منها؟	ما هي أفضل طريقة ستساعدك في المستقبل؟	أي طريقة تود أن تستخدمها مدرسك في المستقبل؟

الجزء الثاني: رجاؤ وضع دائرة حول الإجابة التي تمثل أفضل وصف لمدى موافقتك على كل من العبارات التالية. إلى أي مدى توافق على العبارات التالية؟ (1 أوافق تمامًا، 2 أوافق إلى حد ما، 3 لا أوافق ولا أعارض، 4 أعارض بشدة)

أعارض إلى حد ما، 5 أعارض بشدة)

1. من المهم للغاية للمدرسين أن يقدموا تعليقاتهم وملاحظاتهم على ما يكتبه الطلاب.

1 2 3 4 5

2. ينبغي للمدرس تصحيح "كل" أخطاء الطلاب.

1 2 3 4 5

3. تتمثل وظيفة المدرس في تحديد الأخطاء وتصحيحها.

1 2 3 4 5

4. يكون الطالب والمدرس معًا مسؤولين عن تصحيح الأخطاء.

1 2 3 4 5

5. ينبغي للمدرسين تنويع أساليب تقديم التعليقات على الأخطاء وفق نوع الخطأ.

1 2 3 4 5

6. ينبغي للطلاب أن يتعلموا كيف يحددون أخطاءهم.

1 2 3 4 5

7. عندما أصنع أخطاءً في الكتابة، أحب أن يصححها مدرسي لي.

1 2 3 4 5

8. عادة ما يضع الطلاب تصحيح الخطأ في اعتبارهم عندما يقومون بمراجعة المقالات.

9. عادة ما يضع الطلاب تصحيح الخطأ في اعتبارهم عندما يكتبون مقالات جديدة.
- 1 2 3 4 5
10. الطلاب مسؤولون عن تعلمهم.
- 1 2 3 4 5
11. أستمتع بالكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 1 2 3 4 5
12. أستمتع بالكتابة بلغتي التي أتحدث بها.
- 1 2 3 4 5

### القسم ب

فكر في التعليم بوجه عام وضع دائرة حول الإجابة التي تحمل أفضل وصف لما تشعر به.

1. ما مدى أهمية أن تتلقى درسًا على درجة عالية من التنظيم؟ (1=مهم جدًا، 2=مهم إلى حد ما، 3=غير مهم)

2. هل لا بأس أن يكون المدرس غير متأكد من الإجابة؟
- 1 2 3
- أحيانًا لا نعم

3. أكمل الجمل التالية:

ينبغي للمدرسين  
المدرس الجيد هو  
المدرس السيئ هو  
الطالب الجيد هو  
الطالب السيئ هو

### القسم ج

بلد الميلاد:

النوع:

أدرس اللغة الإنجليزية منذ (ضع دائرة حول الإجابة الصحيحة):

ما بين ما بين خمسة إلى ستة أعوام ما بين ثلاثة إلى أربعة أعوام ما بين عام أو عامين أقل من عام

أكثر من ثمانية أعوام سبعة إلى ثمانية أعوام

أقضي ساعة يوميًا في دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية في الفصل.

أقضي ساعة يوميًا في دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية خارج الفصل.

لماذا تدرس اللغة الإنجليزية؟

لأسباب أخرى: لأنني أستمتع بذلك لأحصل على وظيفة أفضل لكي أدرس في الخارج

ما هي لغتك الأولى؟

ما اللغة التي تتحدث بها في المنزل؟

ما هي اللغات الأخرى التي تدرسها بخلاف لغتك الأولى واللغة الإنجليزية؟

منذ متى؟

هل تعرف أية لغات أخرى؟

ما هي؟



## Teacher Survey

### Section A

The questions in the following section are meant to find out how you feel about correcting errors on students' written work. Please follow the directions for each part.

Part 1: Put a check in the box that best answers each question. Please choose only one answer.

	Which technique is easiest for students to correct errors in their writing?	Which technique is easiest for students to see the errors they made?	Which technique do students learn from the most?	Which technique will help students the most in the future?	Which technique do students want/expect?
When the teacher writes the correct answer next to the error					
When the teacher underlines the error and tells students what type of error it is, but doesn't fix it					
When the teacher explains the grammar rules to the class					

Part 2: Please circle the answer that best describes your agreement with the given statement.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1 completely agree, 2 somewhat agree, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 somewhat disagree, 5 completely disagree)

1. It is very important for teachers to provide feedback on student writing.

1      2      3      4      5

2. Teachers should correct ALL student errors.

1      2      3      4      5

3. It is the teacher's job to locate errors and provide corrections.

1      2      3      4      5

4. Both teachers and students are responsible for correcting errors.

1      2      3      4      5

5. Teachers should vary their error feedback techniques according to the type of error.

1      2      3      4      5

6. Students should learn to locate their own errors.

1      2      3      4      5

7. When students make errors in writing, they like the teacher to correct them.

1      2      3      4      5

8. Students usually keep error corrections in mind when they revise essays.

1      2      3      4      5

9. Students usually keep error corrections in mind when they write new essays.

1      2      3      4      5

10. Students are responsible for their own learning.

1      2      3      4      5

11. My students enjoy writing in English.

1      2      3      4      5

12. My students enjoy writing in their own language.

1      2      3      4      5

What is your main purpose when you give feedback on students' writing?

Which of the statements best describes your error correction?

1. I never mark students' writing errors.

2. I mark ALL student errors.

3. I mark student's errors selectively.

### Section B

Think about education in general as you answer the following questions.

1. How important is it that you have a very structured lesson? (1=very important, 2=somewhat important, 3=not important)

1      2      3

2. Would your students feel okay if you didn't know the answer to one of their questions?

Yes                  No                  Not sure

3. Please finish the following sentences:

A good teacher is \_\_\_\_\_

A bad teacher is \_\_\_\_\_

A good student is \_\_\_\_\_

A bad student is \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Origin \_\_\_\_\_

Years of teaching experience \_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix V

### Exit Survey

1. What type of feedback did you receive?

I was given an error code

I was given a grammar explanation

I was given the correct form

I didn't receive any feedback

2. Was the type of feedback you received useful?

Yes

No

Why or why not?

3. Please write any other comments you have now:



## MEMORANDUM

### Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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To: John Bitchener  
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTEC  
Date: 27 October 2010  
Subject: Ethics Application Number 10/209 **The effect of culture on written corrective feedback.**

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Dear John

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 13 September 2010 and that on I have approved your ethics application. This delegated approval is made in accordance with section 5.3.2.3 of AUTEC's *Applying for Ethics Approval: Guidelines and Procedures* and is subject to endorsement at AUTEC's meeting on 8 November 2010.

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 27 October 2013.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 27 October 2013;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 27 October 2013 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

Please note that AUTECH grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this. Also, if your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply within that jurisdiction.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz) or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

On behalf of the AUTECH and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely



Madeline Banda

**Executive Secretary**

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: Stephanie Rummel [nygma44@hotmail.com](mailto:nygma44@hotmail.com)