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## STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LECTURER FEEDBACK IN WRITING THESIS PROPOSAL

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### Abstract

This study investigates the role of lecturer feedback in developing writing thesis proposal among foreign-language learners in the English Education Department at Mandalika University of Education. It explores students' perceptions of the types of feedback that best enhance their abilities in writing the thesis proposal. This study involved fourteen students who have been conducting their thesis proposal. Two instruments were used to collect data: questionnaires and interviews. The research reveals that students value feedback for error correction, improving grammar, and boosting writing quality. Feedback also plays a key role in motivating and building students' confidence. The findings show that students prefer direct feedback that targets detailed mistakes. The study highlights the importance of effective feedback in writing development and provides insights for lecturers to tailor their students.

**Keywords:** Students' perception, lecturer feedback, thesis proposal writing

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## INTRODUCTION

Creating a thesis proposal is a vital milestone in graduate studies, laying the groundwork for the entire research project. To excel, students rely heavily on constructive feedback from seasoned lecturers, who guide them toward academic excellence and elevate the quality of their research. Through timely and insightful feedback, lecturers help students refine their ideas, clarify research questions, and hone their writing skills, making this feedback an essential component of the learning process.

Feedback plays a vital role in promoting and reinforcing learning, a fact widely acknowledged in the field of second language (L2) writing. It is especially valued in process-based and genre-oriented teaching approaches, where it helps students develop writing skills and gain greater control over their composing abilities (Hyland, F and Hyland, K: 2006). This underlines feedback's importance as a tool for self-assessment and progress pursuing. As noted by Ahmad and Aziz (2009), feedback motivates students and promotes ongoing improvement in writing. Moreover, students highlighted that feedback plays a key role in enhancing their confidence.

This article examines students' perception of lecturer feedback to students as they write their thesis proposal. It looks at the types of feedback that students find most beneficial to their academic progress. The article highlights the significance of feedback in academic development and its role in creating top-notch thesis proposals. It demonstrates the importance of lecturer-student interactions in promoting intellectual growth and research success.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Writing Thesis Proposal as Academic Writing

Writing a thesis proposal is a complex form of academic writing that requires students to demonstrate mastery of disciplinary knowledge, research conventions, and scholarly communication. As an academic genre, a thesis proposal demands clarity of purpose, coherence of argument, critical engagement with literature, and methodological rigor. Students are expected to articulate research problems, formulate research questions, justify the significance of the study, and outline appropriate research methods, all within accepted academic norms.

In second language (L2) contexts, thesis proposal writing is particularly challenging because students must simultaneously manage content knowledge, language accuracy, and genre-specific expectations. Hyland and Hyland (2006) emphasize that academic writing development is a gradual process supported by interaction, guidance, and feedback. Their work highlights that writing is not merely a product but a process in which students refine ideas through multiple drafts. Feedback therefore becomes central in helping students gain control over academic discourse and develop confidence in their writing.

From a learning perspective, writing a thesis proposal also involves self-regulation and strategic learning. Dignath and Veenman (2021) argue that higher-level academic tasks require learners to actively plan, monitor, and evaluate their work. Lecturer guidance, including feedback, plays a crucial role in activating students' self-regulated learning strategies, enabling them to revise their writing more effectively and independently. Thus, thesis proposal writing can be seen not only as an academic writing task but also as a learning process shaped by instructional support and feedback.

### **Teacher Feedback**

Teacher feedback is widely recognized as a key pedagogical tool in supporting student learning, particularly in writing instruction. In L2 writing research, feedback is defined as information provided by teachers regarding aspects of students' performance, such as content, organization, language use, and mechanics (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Feedback serves both formative and developmental purposes, guiding students toward improvement rather than merely evaluating their work.

Ferris (2002) highlights the importance of written corrective feedback in helping students address linguistic errors and improve accuracy over time. Her work suggests that effective feedback should be selective, clear, and aligned with students' proficiency levels. In academic writing contexts such as thesis proposal writing, feedback often extends beyond error correction to include higher-order concerns, such as argumentation, coherence, and methodological clarity.

Tunstall and Gipps (1996) propose a typology of teacher feedback that distinguishes between evaluative and descriptive feedback. Descriptive feedback, which provides specific guidance on how to improve, is considered more effective for formative assessment. This perspective aligns with process-based writing approaches, where feedback is used to scaffold learning and encourage revision.

Empirical studies further confirm the positive impact of lecturer feedback on writing development. Sultana and Yoko (2021) found that constructive and timely feedback significantly improved tertiary students' writing skills, particularly when feedback addressed both strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, Dignath and Veenman (2021) emphasize that instructional feedback supports students' strategic engagement with tasks, reinforcing learning and fostering autonomy. These findings underscore the role of teacher feedback as an essential component of effective academic writing instruction.

### **Students' Perceptions of Teacher Feedback**

Students' perceptions of teacher feedback play a critical role in determining how feedback is received, interpreted, and utilized. Research indicates that feedback is most effective when students perceive it as clear, supportive, and relevant to their learning needs. Ahmad and Aziz (2009) found that students valued feedback that enhanced their understanding and motivated them to improve, highlighting the emotional and cognitive dimensions of feedback.

In writing contexts, students often perceive lecturer feedback as a primary source of guidance and reassurance. Hyland and Hyland (2006) note that students' engagement with feedback is influenced by their beliefs about its usefulness and their relationship with the teacher. Positive perceptions can increase students' confidence and willingness to revise, while negative perceptions may lead to resistance or confusion.

Recent studies continue to emphasize the importance of student perceptions. Sukreni et al. (2024) reported that university students perceived lecturer feedback as highly beneficial for improving writing quality, particularly when feedback was detailed and dialogic. Students appreciated feedback that addressed both content and language, as well as opportunities for clarification through lecturer-student interaction. Similarly, Sultana and Yoko (2021) observed that students who perceived feedback as constructive showed greater improvement in writing performance.

Understanding students' perceptions is also crucial for qualitative research on feedback practices. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) emphasize that learners' perspectives provide rich insights into how instructional practices function in real educational settings. In the context of thesis proposal writing, exploring students' perceptions of lecturer feedback helps illuminate which types of feedback are most meaningful and how feedback contributes to academic development.

The literature suggests that lecturer feedback is a central element in academic writing instruction, and students' perceptions significantly shape its effectiveness. Examining these perceptions in the specific context of thesis proposal writing is therefore essential for improving feedback practices and supporting student research success.

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of students' perceptions of lecturer feedback in the context of thesis proposal writing. A case study design allowed the researcher to focus on a specific group of students within a particular institutional setting, enabling a detailed exploration of their experiences and perspectives regarding lecturer feedback.

### Research Context and Participants

The study was conducted in the English Education Study Program at Mandalika University of Education during the academic year 2024–2025. The participants consisted of 14 undergraduate English Education students who were in the process of writing their thesis proposals. Of these participants, 10 were female and 4 were male.

The participants were selected through random sampling from students who had received lecturer feedback on their thesis proposal drafts. This sampling technique was applied to minimize selection bias and to ensure that the participants represented diverse experiences with lecturer feedback during the proposal-writing process.

### Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using two instruments: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The use of multiple data sources aimed to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings through data triangulation.

#### *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire was adapted from Sukreni et al. (2024) and consisted of two main sections. The first section focused on students' perceptions of the importance of lecturer feedback in writing thesis proposals. The second section examined the types of lecturer feedback that students perceived as most beneficial to their academic writing development. The questionnaire items were designed to elicit students' views

on various aspects of feedback, including clarity, usefulness, and impact on writing improvement.

### ***Semi-Structured Interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four students selected from the questionnaire respondents. The interviews aimed to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions of lecturer feedback that could not be fully captured through the questionnaire alone. An interview guide was used to ensure consistency across interviews, while still allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their responses. Each interview focused on students' experiences in receiving feedback, how they utilized it, and how it influenced their thesis proposal development.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three interconnected stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

First, data condensation was carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying the data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. Only information relevant to students' perceptions of lecturer feedback and its role in thesis proposal writing was retained, while irrelevant or repetitive data were omitted.

Second, the condensed data were organized and presented in the data display stage. The data were displayed in the form of concise narratives and thematic descriptions to facilitate interpretation and pattern identification.

Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified by examining recurring themes and comparing findings across data sources. The integration of questionnaire and interview data enabled the researcher to validate interpretations and ensure consistency in the research findings.

### **Trustworthiness of the Study**

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, data triangulation was applied by combining questionnaire and interview data. This approach helped enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. In addition, careful documentation of data collection and analysis procedures was maintained to support the dependability and transparency of the research process.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study's results are categorized into two main areas: the significance of feedback for students' writing development and the types of feedback students find

most helpful. The data from questionnaires and interviews sheds light on the challenges students face in improving their writing skills, and the key findings are summarized below.

### **Students' Perception of the Significance of Feedback in Writing Thesis Proposal**

Lecturer feedback plays a crucial role in helping students improve their writing by identifying mistakes and guiding them toward better writing skills. Understanding how students perceive and use this feedback is essential, as it not only enhances their skills but also impacts their motivation and emotional responses. Feedback allows students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, fostering a deeper understanding of their writing abilities. The findings from the questionnaire highlight the importance of lecturer feedback in boosting students' writing skills, confidence, and ability to self-assess showed in following table:

Table 1. The significance of feedback for students' writing development

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Feedback helps me to identify and understand writing mistakes.	57.2%	26.6%	7.1%	0%	7.1%
2	Feedback is important to improve my academic writing skills.	21.5%	64.3%	7.1%	0%	7.1%
3	Feedback highlights areas for improvement in writing thesis proposal.	35.7%	50%	14.3%	0%	0%
4	Feedback helps to improve writing organization and structure.	42.9%	35.7%	21.4%	0%	0%
5	Feedback contributes to overall writing improvement of thesis.	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	0%	0%
6	I revise my writing based on lecturer's feedback to improve the quality of my thesis proposal.	35.7%	50%	14.3%	0%	0%
7	Without feedback, it is not easy to assess progress of my thesis proposal.	42.9%	42.9%	14.2%	0%	0%
8	Feedback highlights strengths and weaknesses in writing thesis proposal.	21.6%	50%	28.6%	0%	0%
9	Feedback motivates me to achieve better writing results of thesis proposal.	35.7%	42.9%	21.4%	0%	0%
10	Feedback provides insights into effective writing	21.4%	64.3%	14.3%	0%	0%

techniques.						
11 I feel confident sharing my work after receiving feedback from my lecturer/ thesis consultant.	21.4%	57.2%	21.4%	0%	0%	
12 Feedback motivates me to continue improving my writing skills.	21.4%	71.5%	7.1	0%	0%	

Notes: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither Agree nor Disagree (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

The finding of this research displays that lecturer feedback plays very important role in improving students writing abilities of thesis proposal. The table above shows that most of the students feel that lecturer feedback helps them to identify and understand writing mistakes, in which 57.2% stated strongly agree and 26.6% marked agree. This result aligns with earlier studies, such as Sukreni et.al (2024), that highlighted lecturer feedback is highly valued by students for its role in correcting mistakes. The students also confirmed that feedback is important to improve their academic writing skills.

The students found that lecturer feedback is important to improve their academic writing as well as thesis proposal. It also helps them to improve their writing organization and structure in order that they can produce very good product of an academic writing. Clear feedback from lecturer helps students to decide the part that need to revise. 35.7% respondents strongly agree and 50% of them agree that they revise their writing to improve the quality of my thesis proposal is based on lecturer's feedback. It means that feedback is really needed to have good quality of students' academic writing.

Most respondents reported increased their confidence and motivation after receiving feedback, indicating that feedback enhances not only skill development but also students' confidence and motivation. It is in line with Sultana and Yoko (2021), they found that feedback boosts students' self-assurance, especially when writing in a second language. Most than 50% of respondents gave positive response that they felt confident sharing their work after receiving feedback from my lecturer/ thesis consultant.

Moreover, lecturer feedback motivates students to continue improving their writing skills to achieve better writing results of thesis proposal. The findings of this study demonstrated that more than 75% selected positive response (strongly agree and agree). 21.4% respondents responded Neither Agree nor Disagree (neutral) and no one

gave negative response. It coincides with Ahmad and Aziz (2009), they emphasized that feedback plays a crucial role in motivating students and promoting ongoing improvement in their writing skills.

### **The Beneficial Types of Lecturer Feedback**

This part displays the result of questionnaire that survey students' perception due to types of lecturer feedback. The researcher wanted to find which type of feedback that they feel most effective in enhancing their quality of thesis proposal. The following table capture the result of students' response.

Table 2. The beneficial type of lecturer feedback

<b>No</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Content-focused feedback (topics, creativity)	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%	0%	0%
2	Form-focused feedback (grammar, tenses, vocabulary)	26.6%	71.4%	0%	0%	0%
3	Oral feedback	28.6%	64.3%	7.1%	0%	0%
4	Written feedback	28.6%	28.6%	42.8%	0%	0%
5	Direct feedback	35.7%	42.9%	21.4%	0%	0%
6	Indirect feedback	14.3%	28.6%	50%	7.1%	0%

The findings of questionnaire dealing with various types of lecturer feedback shows 100% (26.6% = SA and 71.4% = A) of students marked form-focused feedback (grammar, tenses, vocabulary) took very important role in developing their thesis proposal. Through interview they confirmed that this type of feedback might help them to enhance the quality of their thesis proposal writing. Meanwhile students also gave high score for content-focused feedback (topics, creativity) even it less than Form-focused feedback.

Most students (92.9%) preferred oral feedback, finding it more helpful for understanding writing mistakes than written feedback. They valued its interactive nature, which allowed them to ask questions and seek clarification. It aligns with Tunstall and Gipps' (1996) framework, they suggest that feedback should be a two-way dialogue between teacher and student, promoting understanding and progress, rather than just a one-way transmission of information. In contrast, 57.2% of students found written feedback less effective due to unclear or hard-to-interpret comments.

In terms of the significant of direct and indirect feedback, the result of this study supports Dignath et al. (2021), they mentioned that direct feedback enables students to correct mistakes more efficiently, leading to faster improvement in their writing skills. While indirect feedback can promote self-correction, students found direct feedback more practical for immediate understanding and progress. This study found that 35.7% students strongly agree, 42.9% students said agree and 21.4% decided neutral. Students mentioned that they feel more comfortable once the lecturer predominantly used direct feedback. It involves clearly providing corrections without hints (Ferris: 2002). Based on the result of the interview, the students said that the lecturer as thesis consultant used direct feedback during the students having thesis proposal consultation.

## CONCLUSION

The research revealed that students have a positive perception of lecturer feedback on their thesis proposal. The study highlights the importance of lecturer feedback in correcting mistakes and motivating students to improve the writing skills and achieve better result of their thesis proposal. Students preferred direct feedback, finding it more communicative and easier to understand. All respondents stated that Form-focused feedback (grammar, tenses, vocabulary) is very important to improve their writing thesis proposal quality. Instead of written feedback, the students prefer oral feedback because it seems more communicative and easier to understand.

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