Effects of Different Types of Written Corrective Feedback on Korean High School Students' Writing

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This paper examined effects of three types of written corrective feedback (CF) on L2 learners' grammatical accuracy in writing, focusing on the use of verb tense and articles. Within Ellis' (2008) typology of CF, the present study focused on direct, indirect, and metalinguistic CF. The feedback was provided at each stage of writing, and the participants were to write three new pieces of writing. Changes in the accuracy of the grammatical targets were measured. Results indicated that despite the limitations of the small number of the participants, positive changes in the grammatical accuracy were found with metalinguistic CF for verb tense and with indirect CF for articles in new pieces of writing. In addition, unlike previous studies, a negative role of direct written feedback was observed in the present study.

Key Words: written corrective feedback, focused feedback, English verb tense, English articles, Korean high school students

Ⅰ. Introduction

How teachers provide corrective feedback for L2 learners' writing has attracted enormous interests from both researchers and teachers (Ellis, 2008). However, even though teacher feedback is an essential part of L2 writing programs, the literature has demonstrated its equivocal effectiveness for L2 learner's development (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). One of the most avid opponents of corrective feedback (CF) was Truscott (1996, 1999, 2004, 2010). Truscott (1996) claimed that written CF is ineffective and even harmful in L2 learning. He also strongly emphasized that it is teachers who change students' attitudes towards what teachers would do with their writing by adopting a 'correction-free approach' in the instruction (Truscott, 1999), and that the time allocated to dealing with error correction in class is more beneficial for students with additional writing practice (Truscott, 2004). However, despite Truscott's advice, teachers have consistently considered the necessity of responding to the students' writing as they feel error-free work to be very important (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Some research findings

have also indicated that L2 students want and expect their teachers to correct all of their errors and believe that teacher feedback is beneficial (e.g., Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Ferris, 1997, 2004; Hyland, 1998). Moreover, in responding to Truscott, some studies have tried to provide empirical evidence that error correction is effective for the improvement of grammatical accuracy in L2 students' writing (e.g., Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012).

Meanwhile, there has been an argument that the research on the lack of benefits of error correction is not as conclusive as Truscott claims, as Hyland and Hyland (2006) stated (e.g., Ferris, 1999, 2004). After Truscott (1996) raised an issue of abolishing the linguistic error correction, the debate long continued, and methodological issues lied in the middle of argument (Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 2004, 2006; Sheen, 2007). For instance, Bitchener (2008) pointed out that studies addressing CF had not been well designed and not examined its efficacy over time, so they ended up with producing conflicting results. Sheen (2007) and Guenette (2007) also addressed the methodological limitations. They argued that the variation in ways to measure the effectiveness of CF and the failure of a systematic investigation of different types of CF had made it difficult to reach any definite conclusion.

In order to cope with this fuzzy situation, Ellis (2008) suggested that researchers and teachers should identify the various options that they can provide in correcting students' writing in a systematic way. Then, this can be applicable both for designing studies to assess whether CF is effective or what kind of CF is more effective and for making pedagogical decisions. He suggested a typology of the options teachers can take for correcting linguistic errors in students' written work: direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic CF, the focus of the feedback, electronic feedback, and reformulation. This detailed classification was significant in that the type of CF is one of the key factors in written CF studies. It can also allow researchers to conduct a study that carefully examines the effect of individual types of CF and combinations of CF (Ellis, 2008).

The present study purposed to examine effects of different types of feedback, and find out more effective types of written corrective feedback for improving learners' grammatical accuracy in the EFL context, especially for Korean high school students. Therefore, the present study focused on three types of feedback within Ellis' (2008) typology of written CF – direct CF, indirect CF, and metalinguistic CF. As for the focus of the feedback, the present study investigated the use of two grammatical structures, verb tense and articles. Moreover, in order to address the methodological issues raised by the prior studies noted above (i.e., the way of measuring the efficacy of CF), the present study examined multiple changes in L2 learners' gain of grammatical structures in new pieces of writing.

Ⅱ. Literature Review

1. Types of Corrective Feedback

Corrective feedback (CF) is defined as "an indication to the learners that his or her use of the target language is incorrect" (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 172). The two major types of written CF that most studies have attended to are direct and indirect CF. Direct CF refers to the case where the teacher provides the student with the correct form. As Ferris (2006) states, example forms of direct CF include "crossing out an unnecessary word, phrase, or morpheme, inserting a missing word or morpheme, and writing the correct form above or near to the erroneous form" (p. 83). Direct CF has an advantage that it guides learners with the explicit correct form for their linguistic errors (Ellis, 2008). Ferris and Roberts (2001) suggest that direct CF can be beneficial especially for writers at lower levels of L2 proficiency, because they may not know how to correct the erroneous forms by themselves (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, 2008). However, this direct feedback may not contribute to long-term learning because the learner is likely to depend on the teacher's correction by just copying the correct form provided by the teacher (Ellis, 2008).

On the other hand, indirect CF is involved with the teacher's mark that indicates the student's error without actually correcting it (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). This can take various forms such as underlining or circling the error, using indicators to show omissions in the student's text, or recording in the margin the number of errors in a given line (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ellis, 2008). This type of feedback sometimes involves deciding whether or not to show the precise location of the error (Ellis, 2008; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). In addition, in some studies including earlier research on written CF, indirect CF tended to include the provision of a code to show the category of error (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). There have been a number of studies that considered the effect of indirect correction. Among them, Lee (1997) examined two types of indirect correction. The first group had their errors underlined by the teacher and students themselves corrected them. The second group received the indirect feedback where only the locations of the error-free are provided, and students should find errors where no indication was present and correct the errors. The last group (control group) was not given any feedback at all. Results showed that students performed best in the marked condition where they were given a clue about the error and an opportunity to correct them themselves. Ferris and Roberts (2001) compared the different effects of indirect CF between the codes and no-codes groups. They revealed a positive result that error codes helped students self-edit their writing, compared to the no-feedback group, but it was not more so than the other indirect feedback that had no-codes.

Besides the distinction between direct and indirect CF, Ellis (2008) distinguished metalinguistic CF from other kinds of feedback in the sense that it provides learners with some explicit comments about the nature of the errors they have made. This is achieved, according to Ellis (2008), by using of error codes which are abbreviated labels for kinds of errors given over the location of the error in the student's text or in the margin. An additional way is providing metalinguistic explanations of the errors such as numbering errors and giving metalinguistic comments or explanations at the end of the text. This makes metalinguistic CF different from indirect coded CF. In this type of CF, specific error corrections are not made and metalinguistic explanations are provided in the form of postwriting instruction (Shintani, Ellis, & Suzuki, 2014).

2. Studies Comparing Types of Corrective Feedback

Much of the studies to date have compared the effects of direct and indirect feedback, and they have produced conflicting results (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Cho, 2017; Ellis et al., 2008; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986, Semke, 1984; Suh, 2014; Van Beuningen et al., 2012). For instance, Lalande (1982) reported that students who received indirect coding showed accuracy improvement over time, whereas those who received direct feedback did not. Ferris (2006) demonstrated that providing error codes were helpful for students improve their accuracy over time, especially for verb errors; however, this was not the case with noun, article, lexical, and sentence errors. However, Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) found no statistically significant differences in long-term gains among four direct and indirect feedback groups (i.e., direct error correction, indirect coding, indirect highlighting, indirect marginal error totals), but all the groups improved.

A few studies have reported an advantage of direct CF over indirect CF for grammatical accuracy (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Suh, 2014; Van Beuningen et al., 2012). Taking Van Beuningen et al.'s (2012) study for example, they examined the different effects between direct and indirect CF over two control groups (i.e., self-editing and sheer writing practice groups without CF). The results demonstrated that even though both CF groups improved in accuracy, in a separate analysis of grammatical and nongrammatical errors, direct error correction led to gains in grammatical accuracy, whereas the benefit of non-grammar items was driven by indirect CF. Bitchener and Knoch (2010) also showed the long-term effect of direct correction, but all direct and indirect feedback types were equally effective in the short-term. However, the early study done by Semke (1984) told a different story. In his study, the four groups received different types of feedback: content comments, direct correction, direct plus comments and indirect coded feedback. Results indicated that direct error correction did not

improve students' writing skills and it did not increase total competence in the target language either, which was German. Moreover, there was no difference between the groups. Based on the findings, thus, he concluded that student progress is enhanced by writing practice alone.

Meanwhile, relatively little has been known about the effect of metalinguistic CF. Despite the scarcity, similar to the inconsistent evidence for the different effects between direct and indirect CF, a strong advantage of metalinguistic CF has not so far been conclusive. Most related studies compared its effect in combination with direct error correction to the independent direct CF and the control groups (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2010; Sheen, 2007; Shintani et al., 2014). However, there was some evidence that it is effective when combined with direct CF (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Sheen, 2007). For example, Sheen (2007) compared direct correction and metalinguistic CF with the control group that received no corrective feedback. For the group of direct-only correction, she employed a traditional error correction strategy with the provision of the correct form. For the direct metalinguistic CF, she not only provided the students with the correct form but included metalinguistic comments that explain the correct one. As a result, she found that both CF groups outperformed the control group on the immediate posttests, but the group with metalinguistic comments was more effective than the direct-only correction group in the delayed posttests. However, in a more recent study that investigated the sole effect of metalinguistic explanation over direct CF, Shintani et al. (2014) revealed stronger benefits of direct correction for a complex syntactical structure (i.e., the hypothetical conditional).

Therefore, driven by still-inconsistent study results about the effects of written CF so far, the present study purposed to compare the benefits of the three different CF types – direct, indirect, and metalinguistic CFs. While many researchers have conducted a study with the combination of CFs, the present study investigated distinctive effects of individual types of CF. This consideration was necessary because among numerous previous studies that employed quite complicated research design with diverse variables including metalinguistic comment, little studies have focused on the sheer differences between CF types. Therefore, by examining the basic individual gains in grammatical accuracy in writing by different types and how L2 students perceived such types of CF, it is expected to enlarge the understanding of the practice of written CF for L2 learners.

3. Methodological Issues in Written Corrective Feedback Studies

As factors in failure to reach consistent results in previous studies, methodological issues were primarily addressed (e.g., Sheen, 2007; Shintani et al., 2014). The studies varied in research designs to assess the effectiveness of written CF and also had

limitations to reveal the sole effects of CF. Some of the methodological limitations include whether the feedback is focused or unfocused, or the kinds of the writing tasks involved (Shintani et al., 2014). Therefore, in order to carefully design a study, the present study first focused on two grammatical structures: verb tense and articles. This was to eliminate possible confounding results that can be induced by the unfocused examination with the provision of comprehensive CF, as shown in Ferris (2006) and Van Beuningen et al. (2012). More clearly, Sheen, Writing, and Moldawa (2009) stated that unfocused written CF possesses limited pedagogical values, whereas focused CF clearly led to the improvements in grammatical accuracy. Farrokhi and Sittapour (2012) also suggested that focused CF was more effective in terms of accurate grammar use (e.g., English articles)

Next, the nature of the writing tasks is also addressed as a key issue regarding the efficacy of written CF. Sheen (2007) pointed out the writing tasks in measuring improvement of linguistic accuracy are too diverse to reach any certain conclusion. One form of measurement was examining the learners' revised texts (e.g., Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). However, due to its limited effect in learning by error correction, Sheen (2007) suggested that the study include a new piece of writing so that the improvement of revisions can carry over to another piece of written text. Therefore, the present study employed multiple stages of writing with a certain type of written CF for a new topic at each stage. In this way, the present study is expected to explore and demonstrate any changes in the improvement of grammatical accuracy in L2 writing.

In line with the preceding review of the written CF studies, the present study raised the following three research questions. These were to investigate the effects of three types of written CF (direct, indirect, and metalinguistic CF) on the linguistic accuracy gains in new pieces of English writing of Korean high school students.

1. Is there any difference in the effect of direct, indirect, and metalinguistic corrective feedback on L2 learners' accurate use of English verb tense?
2. Is there any difference in the effect of direct, indirect, and metalinguistic corrective feedback on L2 learners' accurate use of English articles?
3. How do Korean high school students react to the different forms of corrective feedback?

Ⅲ. Method

1. Participants

Originally, 25 high school students participated in this study. However, excluding those who did not complete all the required writing tasks, 10 students were included in analysis. All the participants were the first graders at a high school located in Seoul. They belonged to a high-level English class and were all male students. The present research is a quasi-experimental study, so the participants were from an intact class. The school of the participating students adopted differentiated instruction for the subject of English that took into account of students' English language proficiency. Hence, the high-level English class the participants belonged to consisted of those students who showed upwards of 70% of academic achievement in the school exam. However, considering proficiency levels of the students as a whole in the school, the participating students can be, in general, regarded to be from intermediate to upper-intermediate EFL learners. The high school students were selected for this study in that they had been accumulating grammatical knowledge through the public English language education but limited to extend it to the actual use, i.e., to the level of language acquisition. Thus, in order to establish a context to enhance their learning of English, the present study focused on the performance of the high school students.

With regard to the students' perceived ability for English writing, according to the questionnaire results that administered for the participants' basic information, five out of ten replied that their English composition ability was not good enough, followed by three answers of neutral. On the other hand, two students answered respectively that they were good or very good at English writing. Regarding previous writing experiences, half of them told that they had written in English such as journals, letters (multiple responses included). Only one student reported his experience of writing argumentative essays. A majority of them (4 participants) responded that they wrote in English only occasionally, whereas one said that he was writing once a week. Lastly, for the past experience of English writing instruction, three students answered that they had never received any written feedback from anyone, while two had received feedback from teachers at private institutions.

2. Design and Procedure

The participants were randomly divided into three treatment groups by types of feedback: direct CF, indirect CF, and metalinguistic CF. Each group was given a writing topic once a week for three times. The writing topics were: (1) family members and the

last family get-together, (2) the last school field trip, (3) the happiest or saddest moment in his life. The research was conducted for three weeks, and the written corrective feedback was provided for the first two students' compositions. The final compositions were used to measure the treatment effect of the feedback.

In order to see if there are any difference in the effect of corrective feedback across different grammatical categories, two types of linguistic errors were chosen: errors in articles and in verbal tense. All the related errors to the target structures were addressed in the error treatment. These grammatical structures were targeted because as Ferris (2006) suggested, they are considered "treatable" errors that "occur in a patterned, rule-governed way," (Ferris, 1999, p. 6) and it is often reported that written CF tends to be effective for treatable structures (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005). In fact, Ferris (2006) demonstrated high percentages of successful student revisions for such treatable errors as articles and verb tense.

For details of feedback type, in the direct CF group, the students received direct error corrections where erroneous language forms of the target grammar occurred. For the indirect CF group, the combination of indicating marks for errors and labeled error codes was provided. Lastly, the metalinguistic CF group received additional explicit explanation or comments for the errors that they had made. For example, in order to make a reference between errors and metalinguistic comments, in the place above the student errors, the labeled error codes were provided as in the indirect CF group. In addition, the related explanation or comments to the errors were provided in the margin below the student writing in the form of end-comment. All the feedback was given in Korean, the first language of the participants. Examples (1) and (2) illustrate this error treatment.

시제(verb tense)
(1) I have went to my family's festival three months ago.
동사시제: 'ago'와 함께 쓰이는 동사 시제와 형태는 무엇일까요?

관사(article)
(2) I go to farm in 강원도 on weekends.
관사: 'farm'은 관사를 필요로하는 명사입니다. 강원도에 있는 '한
     농장'을 의미하겠지요.

Lastly, in order to investigate how the students perceive corrective feedback and how they took it in the next stage of writing, a questionnaire was devised. The students answered the questionnaire after they completed the last writing task. Due to the small sample size of the present study, the purpose of the questionnaire was not to obtain a

general pattern in responses, but only to examine how the individual students react to the given feedback.

3. Data Analysis

The target-like use (TLU) analysis was used to assess participants' knowledge of articles and verb tense, adopting Pica's (1983) formula. They were first counted for correct use in obligatory contexts. Then this became the numerator of a ratio whose denominator was the sum of the number of obligatory contexts for articles or tense and the number of non-obligatory contexts in which the usage was inappropriate. Thus the calculation formula is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of correct suppliance in obligatory contexts}}{\text{Number of obligatory contexts} + \text{Number of suppliance in non-obligatory contexts}} \times 100$$

To ensure the reliability of the scoring, a total of 30 texts was rescored by another independent rater who was an expert in English education. The interrater agreement was achieved with over 95% for both scores of verb tense and articles.

IV. Results and Discussion

1. Changes in the Usage of Verb Tense

In order to answer the first research question, which addresses the effects of different types of corrective feedback on L2 learners' use of English verb tense, mean scores for each composition in each group were examined. Table 1 shows overall changes in the verb tense usage across different feedback types.
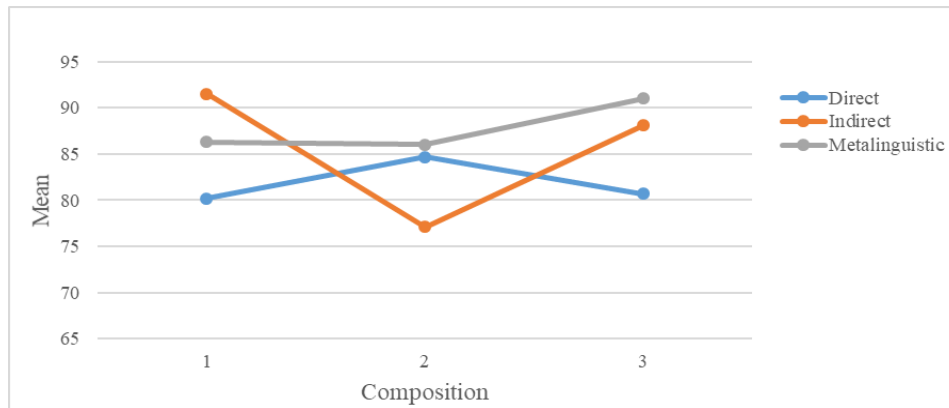
TABLE 1

Mean Scores of Verb Tense Use

	Direct		Indirect		Metalinguistic	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Composition 1	80.2	11.7	91.5	3.6	86.3	6.5
Composition 2	84.7	8.3	77.1	20.9	86.0	15.1
Composition 3	80.7	17.4	88.1	6.4	91.0	8.5

As can be seen in Table 1, the correct verb tense use showed some differences across

three different feedback types. In two feedback types of indirect and metalinguistic feedback, the use of verbal tense showed a U-shaped pattern. In other words, the students showed a rather high rate of correct usage of verb tense in the first composition, and after the first corrective feedback, they showed a back down from the previous one. It should be noted, however, that individual differences could be assumed due to the rather big standard deviations in the second composition. Next, on the last composition, after given the second feedback, the students showed an improvement from the second one; especially, for Metalinguistic feedback, they showed the higher corrective usage rate than that of the first composition. Figure 1 illustrates those changes discussed above.

FIGURE 1

Mean Scores in the Use of Verb Tense by Feedback Types

In contrast to the other two types of feedback, in the direct feedback group, the students showed an improvement in the second composition after getting the feedback. However, they showed a return to their original state of the verb tense use at the third composition, when they were even after getting the direct feedback twice. In general, students in this group did not show a certain meaningful change in the grammatical accuracy (See Table 2 for detailed changes in the individual students' performance). This indicated that just providing the correct answer without any further explanation cannot lead to the acquisition, thus certain other forms of correction seem to be required in addition to the direct correction.

TABLE 2

Individual Changes in the Correct Use of Verb Tense (Unit: % to total)

Feedback Type	Student	Composition 1	Composition 2	Composition 3
Direct CF	A	69% (9/13)	78% (7/9)	56% (9/16)
	B	95% (37/39)	96% (25/26)	96% (22/23)
	C	73% (19/26)	86% (18/21)	82% (9/11)
	D	84% (16/19)	79% (11/14)	89% (8/9)
Indirect CF	E	95.2%(20/21)	58.8%(10/17)	88%(22/25)
	F	91.4%(32/35)	72.7%(8/11)	81.8%(18/22)
	G	88%(22/25)	100%(13/13)	94.7%(18/19)
Metalinguistic CF	H	86% (24/28)	70% (7/10)	100% (20/20)
	I	93% (21/24)	88% (21/24)	90% (27/30)
	J	80% (24/30)	100% (15/15)	83% (5/6)

Since indirect and metalinguistic feedback groups showed the U-shaped development, it could cast more light on the nature of this change if several more writing samples were collected from the same participants to see whether they would continue to improve or not. Nevertheless, a possible explanation for this phenomenon can come from the relatively high accuracy scores of the first composition as can be seen in Table 2. It suggested that most students had some knowledge about the correct use of verb tense. Thus, even though the scores of those students temporarily dropped at the second writing, the explicit explanation of the correct usage of verb tense may have triggered their awareness and led to the noticing in the way up to the third composition.

This interpretation can be supported by looking at the instance of Student H who received metalinguistic CF, for example. In the first two compositions, he was a bit confused between the simple present and the simple past tense of verbs. These were the cases where the verb requires the agreement with the third person singular subject, or the verb expresses a general statement of fact, as illustrated in examples (3) and (4) below. However, after receiving two consecutive metalinguistic feedback on such errors, he showed a stabilized use of verb tense in the third writing. Thus, it can be seen that the explicit comments for the grammatical rules may have contributed to such improvement. Examples (3) thru (5) illustrate his changes in the verb tense.

(3) I think that announcer is very cool because announcer's voice <u>tell</u> people also announcer <u>gives</u> people hope and happiness. (Composition #1)
(4) This Island also <u>was</u> famous for chocolate that <u>consisted</u> of 백년초. (Composition #2)

(5) Nothing is more important that I intend to be an announcer in person. (Composition #3)

2. Changes in the Usage of Articles

As for the second research question, Table 3 shows how students changed in the use of English articles across the different types of feedback.
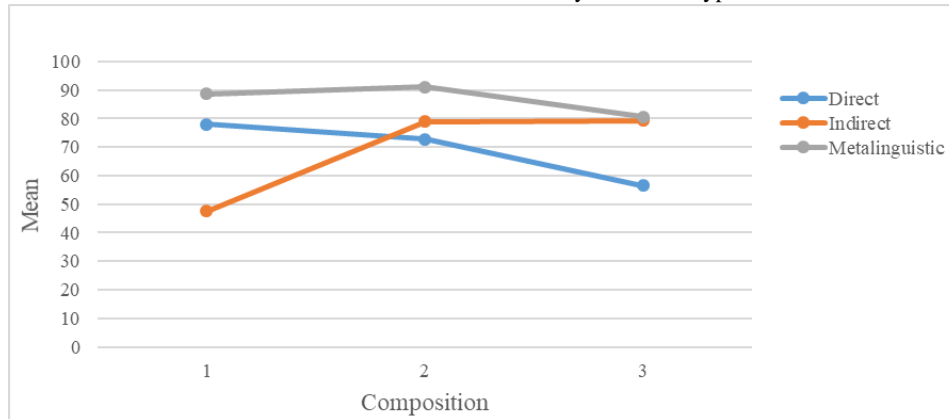
TABLE 3

Mean Scores of the Use of Articles

	Direct		Indirect		Metalinguistic	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Composition 1	78.0	16.5	47.6	11.4	88.6	5.1
Composition 2	72.7	7.6	78.9	22.9	91.0	7.6
Composition 3	56.5	29.8	79.4	11.8	80.6	6.8

In this grammatical structure, the students showed big differences across the three feedback types. With direct feedback, they rather showed a decline in the use of definite and indefinite articles although they received two intermediate direct corrections. Here, an individual difference could also be predicted by the big standard deviation in the last composition. As for the metalinguistic feedback, the students were likely to improve in the second composition after getting the first feedback, but they have gone down far from the first place in the third writing. Although the scores depended on how many specific words that require the articles occurred in the student writing, the results might indicate that two intermediate metalinguistic feedback was not enough for the students to internalize the correct use of English articles.

In contrast, the students showed a steady improvement with indirect feedback; even they showed a big improvement in the second writing. Figure 2 provides a tendency of the students' changes in the use of articles.

FIGURE 2

Mean Scores in the Use of Articles by Feedback Types

English article system is so complex that it is often reported that L2 learners have difficulties in using it correctly across L2 proficiency levels (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener et al., 2005; Ferris, 2006). Moreover, since the use of articles does not interfere with the meaning and does not block the flow of the writing, attention towards articles is likely to be less paid. Instead, the content words such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs are considered important in understanding the text, so they draw much of the attention. Meanwhile, the article system seldom draws attention in the classroom since it is not easy to acquire correct usage by just a classroom instruction as some studies show (e.g., Bitchener et al., 2005, Master, 1995.) Nevertheless, some students who received the indirect feedback in the present study showed positive changes across a series of writing, as seen in detail for the individual students in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Individual Changes in the Correct Use of Articles (Unit: % to total)

Feedback Type	Student	Composition 1	Composition 2	Composition 3
Direct CF	A	100% (10/10)	80% (4/5)	100% (5/5)
	B	61% (14/23)	62% (8/13)	43% (3/7)
	C	80% (8/10)	74% (14/19)	50% (2/4)
	D	71% (10/14)	75% (9/12)	33% (1/3)
Indirect CF	E	37.5%(3/8)	82.3%(14/17)	90%(9/10)
	F	60%(3/5)	100%(15/15)	66.6%(8/12)
	G	45.4%(5/11)	54.5%(6/11)	81.8%(9/11)
Metalinguistic CF	H	93% (25/27)	90% (9/10)	83% (10/12)

I	90% (9/10)	85% (17/20)	73% (8/11)
J	83% (10/12)	100% (7/7)	86% (6/7)

Among the students in the indirect CF group, for example, Student G showed a steady improvement in the article use. Even though he made a good portion of errors in articles at the first composition, through the indirect intermediated treatments, positive changes were observed up to the third writing. This may suggest that the indication for errors might have led the student to learn about the correct use of English articles. However, it should be noted that this interpretation is limited to explain why the indirect group showed the most increase in the use of English articles. Thus, further research is needed for a more reasonable explanation for this positive effect of the indirect feedback. Examples of Student G are provided in (6) thru (8).

(6) I got <u>letter</u> a few days ago and read it so funny. (Composition #1)
(7) I rided <u>a airplain</u> at first. Riding <u>a airplain</u> is so interesting to me. (Composition #2)
(8) I know that <u>the last smile man</u> is <u>a real winner</u>. (Composition #3)

3. Students' Reactions to Corrective Feedback

For the third research question, which deals with how the participants perceive the different types of feedback, the questionnaire responses were examined. The results of questionnaire revealed that the participants were generally satisfied with the feedback type they were put into. Eight students expressed their satisfaction, while two students said that they wanted to receive another type of feedback (see Table 5). When asked if the feedback was helpful for improving their English writing, as shown in Table 6, four students answered that it helped in general, four were of neutral, and the other two said that it helped greatly and it did not help much, respectively.

TABLE 5
"Are you satisfied with the way your errors were corrected? (N=10)

	Direct CF	Indirect CF	Meta CF	Total
Satisfied	3	3	2	8
Want other correction	1		1	2

TABLE 6

"Do you think the provided error corrections helped improving your English composition skills?"

(N=10)

	Direct CF	Indirect CF	Meta CF	Total
Greatly helped	1	1	2	1
Helped	1	2	1	4
Neutral	2			4
Didn't help much				1
Didn't help at all				

With regard to follow-up reactions, a majority of them (7 participants) replied that they skimmed over the corrected errors and did not look at them again, as can be seen in Table 7. Among these, it was notable that three replies came from the direct feedback group, three from the indirect group, and only one came from the metalinguistic feedback group. By the same token, it is worth noting that two participants, who received metalinguistic feedback, replied that they pondered upon the feedback when they received it. In general, it seemed that those who received metalinguistic CF tended to spend more time on the feedback.

TABLE 7

"What did you do after you got your corrected composition back?" (N=10)

	Direct CF	Indirect CF	Meta CF	Total
I just skimmed over the corrected errors.	3	3	1	7
I sought help from teachers/friends.				
Others (I pondered upon the feedback.)	1			1
			2	2

Lastly, when asked to give an overall comment regarding the corrective feedback, several participants expressed appreciation for having an opportunity to receive written CF from teachers. On the other hand, there were also various requests from the students, including further feedback on vocabulary usage, periodical opportunities to receive written CF in English, writing both in Korean and in English at the same time, wishing for teachers to figure out what students really want to say in writing and provide relevant feedback in English, and so on.

4. General Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the effects of different types of corrective feedback (direct, indirect, and metalinguistic corrective feedback) on Korean high school students' improvement in accuracy of English verb tense and articles in new writings. The results showed that there was not an overall effect of corrective feedback in improving students' grammatical accuracy for the two structures. Nevertheless, the present study was meaningful in that it found out that some students did show an increase in their accuracy depending on grammatical structures and different feedback types. In case of the verb tense use, in the first composition, the mean score of the indirect group was the highest (M=91.5), but in the third composition, the metalinguistic group scored the highest (M=91.0). On the other hand, in case of the article use, only the indirect group showed the positive changes between the first and the last compositions while the other two feedback groups showed a decrease in their scores.

The positive role of metalinguistic CF revealed in the present study is consistent with the previous studies (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener et al., 2005; Sheen, 2007), which demonstrated that the metalinguistic explanation may be the most effective factor for making an improvement in accuracy. The reason why metalinguistic corrective feedback group improved in the verb tense use, not in the article use, can be attributed to the fact that tense use is more salient than the article use. On the other hand, for articles, since the grammatical explanations in the metalinguistic feedback group were given in written form, the limited detail and only two times of provision of written comments may not have been sufficient to have had an effect.

As for another factor, the present study makes a contribution to earlier work is that the negative role of direct feedback was found. In both grammatical categories, the direct feedback led a decrease in general. The increase in mean scores was found only once between the first and the second composition for the verb tense use, and even it was slight by 4.5 points, as can be seen in Table 1. Moreover, in the article use, while indirect group showed the relatively steady increase (by 31.8), and the metalinguistic group showed mild decrease (by 8) between the first and the third compositions, the accuracy of the direct group fell from 78 to 56.5 (by 21.5) despite the large variation of the effect of the feedback in the third writing (See Table 3). Therefore, this may indicate that the direct correction without any explanation for errors might not have affected the students' accuracy development even in case of a complex English article system. This quite contradicts to some earlier works that revealed the positive effects of direct written feedback (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Suh, 2014; Van Beuningen et al., 2012). In addition, the article use in the current study did not find any significant difference in effects of corrective feedback to the other grammatical category. The accuracy of article

use was low, compared with that of verb tense. This suggests that to Korean high school students, the English article system seems to be hard to acquire, even though the results cannot be applicable to wider groups of the students. The proficiency of English may have also played a role in the use of the grammatical structure. Therefore, further research is required so that more pedagogical implications can be drawn as to the acquisition of English articles.

For the last issue, students' reactions to the corrective feedback, the present study revealed that most of the students were satisfied with the written feedback. In particular, students in metalinguistic feedback paid more attention to the written feedback than those in the other groups of feedback type. This indicates that the explicit metalinguistic explanation about the correct use of grammatical categories can draw learners' attention to the forms the teacher wants to teach. Thus, since it can be viewed that this behavior can be led to learning of the target language in writing, further research is called for in order to generalize for more comprehensive pedagogical implications.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

In order to find out whether different types of feedback contribute to the development of grammatical accuracy in students' writing, the present study investigated the role of types of feedback for Korean high school students. The particular grammatical categories were verb tense and articles. It found that some students benefited from the corrective feedback, while others did not. More specifically, the verb tense use was helped with metalinguistic feedback, whereas indirect feedback was helpful for English articles. In addition, the present study revealed the positive effect of metalinguistic feedback and the negative role of direct written feedback. Ferris (1999, 2006) categorized verb tense and articles as treatable errors, which are amenable with corrective feedback, but in the present study, the two grammatical structures did not show any consistency. Therefore, further investigation is expected to shed light more on the similarity or difference between these two grammatical categories influenced by corrective feedback.

The present study had several limitations. First, a small number of students participated in the study. For this reason, large variations of the effect of the feedback types were observed at some points, and the interpretation of the results was limited to be generalized for wider groups of students. Also, the treatment period was rather short with three weeks, which made it difficult for the students to make significant changes in writing performance. Lastly, there was no control group in the present study, thus it was limited to state the comparative effectiveness over the control group which would not receive any type of corrective feedback. Hence, future research should be called for in

order to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of written corrective feedback.

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