Analysing Written Feedback to Student-Texts
A Qualitative Study of English Teachers’ Approach to Providing Written Comments

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Abstract

Formative assessment has reignited the hopes of increasing student-learning by placing the student at the centre of their own learning. Through various instructional methods, teachers are able to both elicit evidence of knowledge and locate gaps in students’ learning. Although the shift in thinking is clearly reflected in most parts of the school curriculum, the implementation of formative assessment in written form did not experience equal reform. So far, research has been scarce regarding the art of providing written feedback to written texts. This presents a challenge in providing equally qualitative and effective feedback as the practice varies due to numerous factors. There is a lack of unity regarding the ‘correct’ way to provide written feedback, but nevertheless, written feedback is usually directed toward content and/or form. Thus, this analytical essay has the dual aim of firstly, to analyze teachers’ approach to written feedback in response to students’ texts, and secondly, shed light on the way teachers’ experiences, knowledge and attitudes affect their approach. The participants consisted of three upper-secondary school English teachers. The data was gathered through semi-structured interviews to highlight the teachers’ experiences and emotional input. The teachers provided two sets of written feedback to two students’ texts for further analysis. The overall analysis included a comparison between the teachers’ approach, their personal input and their style of providing feedback. Findings showed that the teachers focused on both content-and form-related feedback. The teachers more confident in their ability to provide feedback focused more on content-related feedback, regardless of factors of experience and attitude. All teachers displayed a progressive and optimistic perspective toward the use of written feedback practices and formative assessment in general, perceiving it as an absolute necessity for students’ learning. However, some struggled with defining the concepts in regard to the criteria, which presented issues in the implementation of specificity, clarity and tone.

Keywords

Formative assessment, student-centred learning, feedback, content-related feedback, form-related feedback
Contents

1. Introduction .............................................................................................................. 1
   1.1 Aim and Research Questions ................................................................................ 2
2. Definition of Terminology ....................................................................................... 3
   2.1 Formative Assessment ....................................................................................... 3
   2.2 Summative Assessment ..................................................................................... 3
   2.3 Feedback ............................................................................................................. 3
   2.4 Rubric ................................................................................................................... 4
   2.5 Errors and mistakes ............................................................................................. 4
3. Background and Literature Review ........................................................................ 4
   3.1 Communicative Language Teaching .................................................................. 4
   3.2 Formative Assessment ....................................................................................... 6
   3.3 Feedback ............................................................................................................. 7
   3.3.1 Written Feedback .......................................................................................... 8
   3.4 Types of Written Feedback .............................................................................. 11
   3.4.1 Content-related feedback .......................................................................... 11
   3.4.2 Form-related feedback ............................................................................. 11
   3.5 Rubrics and Criteria .......................................................................................... 11
4. Methodology ............................................................................................................ 12
   4.1 Qualitative Interview and Feedback Samples .................................................. 12
   4.2 Teacher Participants ......................................................................................... 13
   4.3 Limitations .......................................................................................................... 13
5. Analysis of Results .................................................................................................. 14
   5.1 Interview Data .................................................................................................... 14
   5.2 Teacher-written Feedback ............................................................................... 27
      5.2.1 Teacher 1 .................................................................................................. 27
      5.2.2 Teacher 2 ................................................................................................. 29
      5.2.3 Teacher 3 ................................................................................................. 31
6. Discussion ................................................................................................................ 33
   6.1 Attitudes and Perspective .................................................................................. 33
   6.2 Specificity of Feedback ..................................................................................... 34
   6.3 Teacher-feedback Content .............................................................................. 35
   6.4 Time and Tone ................................................................................................... 36
7. Conclusion ................................................................................................................ 37

References .................................................................................................................... 38

Appendix A: Teacher 1 Interview Answers ................................................................. 42
Appendix B: Teacher 2 Interview Answers ................................................................. 46
Appendix C: Teacher 3 Interview Answers ................................................................. 51
Appendix D: Teacher 1 Feedback Sheets ................................................................. 56
Appendix E: Teacher 2 Feedback Sheets ................................................................. 61
Appendix F: Teacher 3 Feedback Sheets ................................................................. 65
1. Introduction

The past few decades have seen a shift in educational institutions regarding the most efficient approach to promote learning. Subsequently, the emergence of the concept formative assessment has come to represent one of the most prominent hopes for improving student achievement and learning gains (Black & Wiliam, 1998). This shift in the conception of teaching and learning has affected every area of education, primarily by reconceptualizing all activities undertaken by teachers as possibly formative, i.e. a variety of methods used to evaluate student comprehension, learning need and progress. The student-specific information those activities provided teachers was, thereafter, used to adjust, engage and support students’ learning (Wiliam, 2011). The primary method of supporting student-learning is currently through feedback, which allows teachers to engage students in their own academic work. As the key component of formative assessment, feedback is the tool that formally generates information about a student’s current level in relation to the set standard criteria (Parr & Timperley, 2010).

The supposed shift in teaching and learning, however, was not substantiated by an equal shift within the area of written feedback (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Written responses to written students’ texts are considered a common form in highlighting the necessary areas of development. However, the perspective of written teacher feedback on students’ texts has not been of central theoretical concern in previous research (Parr & Timperley, 2010). Providing written feedback allows the teachers frequent insight to the students’ individual performances and can enable specified instructions to address potential gaps (Shute, 2008). The focus on written feedback first emerged as a preemptive method to support teachers in addressing and steering students’ writing development, eventually establishing itself as the primary way of addressing learning gaps in written work.

Although written feedback on students’ texts is considered a crucial aspect in maintaining a process of continual feedback and feed-forward (Nicol, 2010), its guidelines lack structure in ensuring the most prominent approach in achieving the best results. There are various approaches in which teachers tackle students’ texts, however, the effect and force of those approaches are more often investigated from a student’s perspective rather than a teacher’s perspective. Since written feedback has been largely focused on the interpretations and perceptions of students, their perspectives are logically the main source providing the most data and insight in the emotional motivation of approaching feedback. The importance of individual teachers’ experiences, perspectives and attitudes regarding written feedback is not as emphasized upon. This, however, disregards the importance of context and the interactive nature of providing written feedback and receiving a response for it (Parr & Timperley, 2010).

As important and crucial as written feedback is in terms of student responses and the subsequent results they yield, the area of focus should land upon the fundamental approaches in providing appropriate feedback in order for those results to emerge.
Multiple studies have emphasized the developmental process of teachers’ abilities in providing written feedback and permitting time for self-assessment would drastically improve the quality of feedback performances (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). The effects of experiences, attitudes and knowledge, however, were not considered. The few existing studies displayed a change in teachers’ affective states when faced with self-assessment, resulting in a more optimistic outlook and a more flexible capability in objectively reevaluating their own written responses (Parr & Timperley, 2010). This further emphasized the importance of directing the research spotlight toward the provider of written feedback in order to comprehend the varied approaches available.

Most written teacher feedback is a response to students’ written texts, with the main intent to further develop students’ writing skills. However, in some instances the content of written feedback has been difficult to decipher. Written feedback is not always understood to be entirely specific in addressing the topic at hand or the issues that needs attention, which can create a mismatch in expectations for both students and teachers about the aim of feedback (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). Most studies have highlighted an inclination in directing written feedback to address the content or the form as means to advance learning. Studies regarding the use of content-related feedback have garnered the most positive responses of being effective, however, with scarce evidence of it being applied (Almendral, 2014). According to Lee (2008), although teachers believe content-related feedback is of primary importance in students’ learning, they prefer to approach students’ texts with their feedback focused on form.

Teachers are constantly exposed to a variety of studies and information regarding the correct approach to implement written feedback and its maximum efficiency, most of which provide contradictory statements (Almendral, 2014). Especially regarding form-related feedback there is a debate among researchers about three things: its usefulness (Ferris et.al., 1997), its disadvantages (Truscott, 1996), and with a third aspect addressing the shortage of time as the culprit for disappointing results. Similarly, research about content-related feedback varies in findings and results. Although a consensus prevails regarding the positive advancements of content-related feedback, there is an equal agreement on its often ambiguous meanings (Wiliams, 2003). Regardless, written feedback is fundamentally unchallenged as a vital part in advancing student writing and is heavily teacher dependent. Since their perspective has largely been neglected in prior research, this project sets out to investigate how individual teachers’ attitude relate to their actual feedback practices, and how this practice-informed view can feed back into pedagogical theorizing.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

There are many studies in which the students’ perspective is highlighted, but only a few focus on the teachers’ attitudes and practices. For this reason, this essay will focus on the latter area of research in the hope to fill this research gap through the following questions:
• What are the teachers’ perspectives and attitudes towards providing written feedback to students’ written texts?
• Does the teachers’ written feedback focus on content or form?
  o What correlation can be concluded between their preferred type of feedback and their attitudes and experience?
• Are there any differences or similarities in feedback between the three teachers, and if so, what might account for that?

2. Definition of Terminology

This section provides both a definition and explanation of the broadest terms relevant for this study. The terms reoccur throughout the essay and are essential in the aim and understanding of this essay.

2.1 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is defined as the continuous instructional process used by both teachers and students to adapt the content and method of instructions in a way that maximizes students’ learning, and to further development of teaching practices through the means of written feedback. Although the concept usually enables a student-centered approach to improve achievement, the emphasis will be on teachers’ approach in the process of eliciting evidence of learning and providing enabling feedback (Wiliam, 2011).

2.2 Summative Assessment

In a school context, there are two essential types of assessment that are considered, namely formative and summative assessment. Although both types aim to measure learning, they are ultimately used for different purposes (Almendral, 2017). While summative assessment measures the total amount of learning that has occurred, formative assessment seeks to locate gaps in student’s learning that can be supported through a process-oriented approach (Almendral, 2017). In other words, formative assessment aims to enhance learning through a cyclic process and summative assessment aims to assess learning (HampLyons, 2009). Furthermore, although formative and summative assessment present different ideas they are neither mutually exclusive nor inclusive (Brookhart, 2001). Both types of assessment need to be involved in teachers’ approach in student-evaluations (Black, 1998) and kept in tension to ensure satisfactory results.

2.3 Feedback

Feedback functions as a tool of action within formative assessment. It is through feedback that information about the current level of learning can be elicited through a variety of methods, allowing teachers to comment on that information in order for
students to progress. The comments prompt students to pay attention to their areas of development in order to amend the knowledge gap and simultaneously provide teachers with a response concerning their received feedback. Henceforth, the focus is specifically on feedback defined in the form of written teacher-comments provided in response to student written assignments, with specific regard to advancing student achievement and learning development. The written feedback encompasses content-and form-related feedback.

2.4 Rubric
Rubrics are the template that explains the various increasing levels of knowledge and skill development expected of students, with each level stating specific requirements to achieve. The rubrics are related to the national standards and requirements, not only for the different subjects, but for every level within the subject. Henceforth, a rubric is defined as a coherent set of criteria for students’ written assignments, which includes a description of specific set of criteria for different levels of performance. The rubric aims to specify goals and aims of the grade levels A-F on which the comments are usually based, subsequently facilitating students’ self-assessment in deciphering and interpreting comments.

2.5 Errors and mistakes
Written feedback usually directs focus toward the linguistic deviations of errors and mistakes in students’ texts. A mistake is a deviation in language that occurs when a temporary discrepancy occur between a learner’s knowledge and their performance (Brown, 2007). Mistakes can occur in both native and second language as a result of non-linguistic factors, such as lack of concentration, memory slip, ungrammaticalities or simply a “slip of the tongue” (Keshavarz, 2003, p.49). An error is the unintended deviation occurring of ignorance of the rules and is systematically rule-governed. Errors cannot be self-corrected by students without teachers’ guidance (Keshavarz, 2003; Brown, 2007), while mistakes can be corrected when pointed out for the student.

3. Background and Literature Review
This section dives into the underlying research field of this essay with a specific regard to written formative assessment of written students’ texts. It includes an overview of the studies undertaken within this field and the results they have yielded.

3.1 Communicative Language Teaching
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to language learning and teaching that emphasizes the “interaction between learners rather than individualistic
approaches” (Gamble et.al., 2013). CLT is both goal-and study-oriented in its approach to language learning. Richards (2006) efficiently explained CLT as:

“A set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.” (p.2)

The aim of CLT is fundamentally to teach communicative competence as opposed to grammatical competence, i.e. “language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language” (Richards, 2006, p.3). While communicative competence focuses on the aspect of developing communication skills for a variety of contexts, grammatical competence focuses on the building blocks of sentences. Grammatical competence focuses on grammar, which usually includes teaching a list of grammatical rules and then providing students with opportunities to use the rules on examples (Richards, 2006). Although grammatical competence is an important component of language learning, CLT enables language learners to use the target language for a more meaningful communication through authentic experiences and to apply those skills in a wide variety of situations (Nunan, 1991).

CLT was initially developed as a reaction to the prevailing Traditional Language Teachings (TLT) that dominated the language teaching until the 1960’s (Richards, 2006). The priority of TLT was on the grammatical competence to develop language proficiency and placed grammar at the centre of both learning and teaching. When CLT emerged during the 1970’s (Ridge, 1992) it was first designed for ESL contexts to advance proficiency, based on which teachers began applying content-, skill- and task-based approaches to education instead of the previously grammar-based focus (Gamble et.al., 2013). Richards (2006) explains the shift in perspective as the realization that language proficiency required more than the competence to produce grammatically correct sentences: it also required the underlying knowledge and skills to appropriately use that grammar for various communicative purposes. When the combined approach of communicative- and grammatical competence was eventually reflected in the syllabus, CLT officially emerged (Richards, 2006).

The development of CLT created a foundation that could efficiently advance both language learning and proficiency. Communicative competence encompasses all aspects of didactic contexts, which include learning, teaching and assessment (Bardel, 2019). The development of CLT thus resulted in the emergence of formative and summative assessment as individual concepts, which aimed to provide continuous support in language learning in order to reach set standards. The concept of formative assessment is of special interest, especially when the Swedish perspective of upper-secondary school English courses is considered, where emphasis is placed on the process of communicative classroom language learning (Savignon, 2018) to advance language proficiency.
3.2 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a theoretical concept with a variety of definitions, however, what connects all definitions is that they equally claim the relevance and importance of the concept in maximizing learning gains and student achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Bell and Cowie, 1999; Looney, 2014; Shepard, 2017). Formative assessment has had various definitions depending on the methods of assessment used (Almendral, 2014) and function by eliciting evidence of learning and improving future instructional decisions. Although the various definitions have not affected the mutual characteristic that all definitions agree upon, namely that it is a continuous cyclic process of improving student-learning and teacher’s teaching, it has affected its implementation depending on the method used. Formative assessment might not have one defining definition from which all student-learning activities are assessed, but it does have the fundamental structure to ensure advancement in learning.

The original idea of formative assessment responded to the need to adjusting teacher-instructions for assignments. As the concept is defined by its purpose “to help form, or shape, a student’s learning” (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p.2), the value of teacher-instructions became prominent as an adjustable tool to promote students’ learning. The point of formative assessment in such a context is to locate the instructional areas in which students have difficulty apprehending (Abedi, 2010) and to thereafter adjust the instructions to facilitate overcoming the difficulties. This specific approach originally found inspiration in Bloom’s (1974) mastery of learning, a strategy outlining an “instructional strategy to make use of this feedback and corrective procedure” (Guskey, 2010, p.108; Trumbull & Lash, 2013), by focusing on developing one specific skill at a time. By adjusting instructions in order to elicit specific information of a development area, they usually become more direct and less prone to misunderstandings. However, that can only occur by constantly adjusting the teacher-instructions to fit the intended goals for students. In other words, if the students understand the instructions for a task or assignment they are more likely to engage in learning and produce individually progressive results.

Approaching formative assessment as a process places the student at the center of their learning, while approached as a tool places more emphasis on the teacher’s quest to measure students’ needs and identify specific learning gaps (Shepard, 2017). However, in both contexts the students are required to occupy an active role in contextualizing their experiences with respect to their perception of the goals and realize their autonomy as owners of their learning. Although formative assessment demands more of students, i.e. having them take a more serious approach to learning and work harder with targeted feedback (Trumbull, 2013), it is particularly in the teachers’ ability to properly guide them in their quest of learning approaches in which “knowledge and skills are used in real world contexts” (Maclellan, 2001, p.1) that the weight falls on. There is logically a contrast in how formative assessment is implemented in everyday classroom practices compared to the theoretical outline of the concept, which is neither sufficiently addressed nor highlighted in previous studies.
As previously established, there are various methods to approach and apply formative assessment in learning contexts, but the one of particular interest is that in feedback. Teacher-feedback is considered to be one of the fundamental methods in advancing language learning, where emphasis is placed on a process-oriented approach, i.e. comments on strengths, weaknesses and areas of development (Green, 2018). Although feedback is a common practice within Swedish upper-secondary schools, the implementation of teacher feedback can fluctuate depending on the type of feedback applied.

### 3.3 Feedback

Feedback is the force of action that maintains the cyclic process of student-learning. The role of feedback in formative assessment is an undisputed fact, as is its fundamental necessity in advancing students' knowledge. Both Ramaprasad (1983) and Sadler (1989) explain that the role of feedback is to help students to become aware of their learning-gap in order to amend them. Feedback approaches student-learning by focusing on students’ knowledge and abilities, as well as providing information about their current level, areas for development and future suggestion for progress (Skolforskningsinstitutet, 2018). Feedback can be provided in a variety of ways, which fundamentally depends on what type of assignment is assessed, which course it is or which student it considers.

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) explains that feedback should include thorough information about a student’s current state and be provided along a rubric with set standards and goals. Therefore, effective feedback requires a degree of specificity, i.e. “level of information presented in feedback messages” (Goodman & Wood, 2004, p.809; Green, 2018), which should be tied to an action plan that the students are familiar with. The Swedish curriculum of upper-secondary school stipulates a rubric on which teachers anchor both their summative and formative assessment on and also defines the grading criteria on which the students’ performative evaluation is based on. The rubric lists requirements for the different grade levels and thus enable teachers to provide goal-directed feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The feedback could, therefore, be explicitly focused toward a students’ specific needs without the content being either too broad or too narrow (Brookhart, 2017). In other words, specificity in comments should provide guidance and suggestions for students to concretely move forward (Brookhart, 2017).

Furthermore, Panadero and Johnson’s (2013) research emphasized the necessity and importance in teacher-feedback, without which the students would not possess realistic qualities to advance. Therefore, no matter how much emphasis is put on the importance of feedback in general, it will not enable students to attain a more advanced level if the feedback is uninterpretable. Thus, the need for feedback clarity, i.e. comments that are “clear and easy to understand” (Hall, 2019, p.2), is emphasized as one of the fundamental factors in advancing students’ learning. In order for teacher-feedback to appear clear and interpretable, a close interaction between students and teachers is
required. Nicol (2010) and Almendral (2014) emphasized that feedback should be conceptualized as a dialogical two-way process and encourage a mutual collaboration in approaching organized instructions and teacher-feedback for progress. The interactive process thus enables both students to accurately decipher teacher-feedback and teachers to provide targeted feedback to students (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004). That in turn, however, presupposes a progressive development of the relationship between teachers and students (Green, 2018).

As established, feedback is an integral part of the learning process and provides information about the knowledge gap (Turner, 2004). The feedback highlights aspects in which the “the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system feedback parameter” (Walker, 2009, p.68) can be amended. Therefore, Abedi (2010) explains that feedback should be as descriptive and detailed as possible to properly address and amend the gap. Otherwise, the feedback would be considered ineffective (Gedye, 2010; Walker, 2009). In such evaluative contexts, feedback, especially in written form, relies on the tone in which it is delivered. Tone, i.e. “the expressive quality of feedback message” (Brookhart, 2017, p.38) plays an important role in students’ perception of the feedback and their subsequent performances. Lunsford (in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) emphasized that feedback should be non-authoritative and constructive in tone, since the communication with students is decisive in whether the feedback result in inspiring or discouraging them (Brookhart, 2017). Additionally, Green (2018) explains that feedback needs to be truthful in its constructive approach to advance and to position students as agents of their learning.

As feedback can be given in a variety of ways, the three characteristics mentioned above are better suited in developing certain specific skills than others: one such skill is the students’ written proficiency. In order to advance a students’ written skills, a teacher’s guidance and support are two fundamental requirements. When considering texts written by students, such requirements are usually provided through written feedback practices.

3.3.1 Written Feedback

Written feedback plays a vital part in advancing students’ development of written skills. The concrete feedback allows teachers to provide individualized instructions as to explicitly guide students in amending their learning-gaps (Brookhart, 2017). To provide written feedback in order to feed-forward the student’s learning requires continuous effort by teachers. The final results can be derived from the whole learning-process of providing feedback, interpreting it, acting upon it and thereafter applying the changes (Turner, 2004; Wiliam, 2011; Brookhart, 2017). Moreover, in many cases and studies, written feedback has been accompanied by summative feedback. In such a context feedback is said to lose its purpose and generate no advancement, thus diminishing its effect on the students’ learning (Wiliam, 2011). Nicol (2010) seconds the statement by claiming that delaying the grade until the feedback has been addressed, increases the chances of students reading and applying their received feedback to some extent. In the
case of providing both a grade and comment, the latter will most likely be of less interest.

A study conducted by Price et. al (2010) explained the difficulties students encountered when attempting to interpret their provided feedback. Although the teachers had been of the understanding that their comments had been both direct and clear, their students had the opposite experience. Moreover, the students believed that the content of the written feedback could have been understood through a mutual dialogue, a perspective that was reinforced by Zhan’s (2016) study. There, Zhan (2016) highlighted the importance of the “connections and interactions” (p.74) between teachers and students, especially when it considered formulating and providing targeted feedback to students. The perspective is shared by both Hattie and Gan’s (2011) and Nicol’s (2010) studies, which emphasized the importance of communication in constructing meaning, particularly regarding the feed-forward content in teacher feedback.

Furthermore, the option of constant individual dialogue is not a sustainable approach for the teachers, mainly because of the lack of time. The focus thus falls on the need to provide written feedback in a methodological, efficient and formative manner that are useful for students. However, feedback is only as effective as the purpose it serves: if the students do not understand the written teacher feedback they will not act upon them (Andrade, 2001). Feedback can also have an emotional impact on students, which will consequently steer their willingness to either improve their written work or completely overlook the feedback (Macelllan, 2001). The main effort thus falls on the teachers’ ability to provide appropriate and efficient feedback in a time efficient manner, which should consider both students’ experience of the feedback and simultaneously direct them toward advancement. However, that ultimately depends on, as well as affect, the teachers’ perception of written feedback practices.

Moreover, Gibbs and Simpson (2004) explains that providing written feedback is a time-consum ing activity and can limit a teacher’s ability to provide “comprehensive and useful feedback” (p.10). Although Gibbs and Simpson (2004) claim that written feedback is central in students’ learning, they simultaneously state that there are only a few instances in which the feedback is of proper quality and quantity. There are instances when extensive written feedback is provided, but students neither understand nor read it (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004). An additional limiting factor regarding ability is the approach to individual students since written feedback must be adapted to each student’s personal need in order to advance their written skills.

Furthermore, Price et. al (2010) urged teachers to consider factors such as quantity, frequency and timing when they provide feedback. However, the challenge lies in the student’s individuality and their inclination to utilize feedback. At different times and stages of their individual abilities, students will approach and respond to feedback in different ways. However, that same behaviour can be applied to individual teachers as well. The factor of uncertainty is based on scarce and vague guidelines in identifying the moments most promising to evaluate students. Even if approached timely, the results the feedback yield may fluctuate enormously. Nicol’s (2006) study promotes a
higher quantity of feedback provided regularly to prioritize specifying skills of improvement, which simultaneously puts a heavier strain on teachers. Moreover, Wiliam (2011) was of the opposite opinion that feedback should, firstly, require more work of the student than the teacher and, secondly, that less is more.

Brookhart (2017) emphasized three areas of importance in individualizing written feedback: clarity, which aims at adapting the language to the receiver; specificity, refers to not being too narrow or too broad; and tone, “refers to the expressive quality of the feedback message” (p.33). Additionally, Wiliam (2011) lists applicable suggestions in providing constructive feedback. Specificity is highlighted in terms of providing comments on errors rather than mistakes, clarity is emphasized by suggesting explicit comments to move forward, and tone regards the emotional impact that the feedback generates. The three aspects are further elaborated upon by Price et.al. (2010), who also add the factor of timing. Feedback can be applicable immediately or distributed over a longer timeframe, which consequently impacts the measurement of effectiveness.

Regarding the content of written feedback, Turner’s (2004) study showed that students “preferred the feedback form that had specific criteria and room for comments” (p.31), which were considered easier to decipher and more detailed. The comments students most appreciated were of understandable language, specified and direct, where linguistic or cultural biases were removed from the equation (Abedi, 2010; Turner, 2004). The study by Lunsford (1997, as cited in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) neatly summarized the three main points on written feedback which enabled the most prominent results:

1. Three well-thought out feedback comments per essay.
2. The comments should indicate to the student how the reader experiences the essays as it was read.
3. Comments should be written in a non-authoritative tone and provide correct feedback (2006, p.209).

Although in Weaver’s study (2006, as cited in Bruno & Santos, 2010) students identified the same three markers which they considered helpful, they added a fourth marker stating that their received feedback had not been related to the assessment criteria, which is a necessity for both advancement and efficacy (Gedye, 2010). Although, in the previous findings, students were adamant in their beliefs on how written feedback should be provided (Hyland, 1998), not much is said about the teacher’s perspective and approach to providing written feedback on students’ texts.

To advance learning, the written teacher-feedback requires an approach to address the students’ gap in learning and to, thereafter, suggest concrete options to advance. Jers) explains that written feedback should focus on both the linguistic correctness and the multidimensional aspect of a written text (Skolverket, 2019), which is often the preferred approach for teachers to direct their written feedback toward.
3.4 Types of Written Feedback

Almendral (2014) describes two distinct approaches to written students’ texts, which are content-and form-related feedback. The studies by Çelik (2016), Ahmadvand & Nejadansari (2014), Hagemann (2003) and Hillocks (2005) have all had an explicit focus on content-and form-related feedback in relation to written texts. Their studies have yielded results that suggests that evaluating written texts requires a joint approach of both content-and form-related feedback, which generates the most promising learning results.

3.4.1 Content-related feedback

The written feedback on the content encompasses the entirety of a written task, where the overall structure and meaning is in focus. This type requires more effort and time to both assess and provide the necessary written feedback. Furthermore, various studies have suggested that different teachers provide different written comments on the same written work, which can cause confusion regarding which areas are being targeted and need improvement. In such contexts, the need and necessity of a rubric is an understatement.

3.4.2 Form-related feedback

The written feedback on form emphasizes the grammatical aspect of language, including that of punctuation and word usage. This type is not as time-consuming or complicated as content-related feedback, with a directed focus on mistakes rather than errors. Various teachers create their own inventory list as to provide students guidelines on the inclusion of obligatory aspects, where some even create a list of grammar and punctuation acronyms.

3.5 Rubrics and Criteria

The QAA’s (Quality Assurance Agency) guidelines on assessment feedback highlight the importance of how written feedback must relate to assessment criteria (Higgins et.al., 2002). Nicol (2006) seconds the statement by stating that “to clarify task requirement, provide students with written documents containing statements that describe criteria and/or the standards that define different levels of achievement” (p.206). All educational purposes are based on external reference points, e.g. criteria within a curriculum, which define goals for students and teachers alike. The written feedback should relate a student’s current state of level to the standards and criterias in the curriculum, with active student involvement in all feedback processes (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). For this purpose, teachers can make use of a rubric or evaluation roster.

Rubrics are essentially documents that “articulate expectations for an assignment […] by listing the assessment criteria and by describing levels of quality in relation to each of these criteria” (Panadero & Jonsson, 2013, p.130), which provide clarity in terms of written feedback. As previously mentioned, students found difficulties in interpreting
their received feedback, especially since the contexts were unclear and due to the obcurity of the teacher’s expectations (Andrade & Du, 2005). The implementation of rubrics has thus provided students with support in deciphering feedback and provided teachers with a certain format on which their written feedback can be referred back to. Yet again, however, the studies on the use of rubrics and their capabilities are often based on a student’s perspective rather than a teacher’s approach and attitude.

4. Methodology

This section describes the methodology used to explore the research questions about teacher-written feedback: 1) What are the teachers’ perspectives and attitudes towards providing written feedback to students’ written texts? 2) Does the teachers’ written feedback focus on content or form? 3) Are there any differences or similarities in feedback between the three teachers, and if so, what might account for that?

4.1 Qualitative Interview and Feedback Samples

For this research a qualitative approach was chosen. This was primarily decided due to the fact that limited amount of time was available to complete the research, and secondly, based on the chosen topic. Because the focus of the research was to gain an understanding of teachers’ approach to written feedback of formative purposes to students’ written texts, their personal experiences and thoughts on the matter were crucial factors in that understanding. Therefore, the approach of qualitative interview was chosen as the overviewing research method for this scope of essay.

The interview questions were formulated after the aim of the research was decided upon, which reached a final stage of not being overtly leading or biased through continual communication with my supervisor. The final compilation of the questions reached a total of 13, although a few follow-up questions were included during the interview sessions. When formulating the questions there had to be a clear aim as to what the research would aim to achieve, both in terms of the questions to be answered and how those answers could further contribute to existing research in the same field. For this research, neither structured nor unstructured interview questions would suffice as they would be either too narrow or too broad. Therefore, a semi-structured approach was favoured, as the approach contains some vital characteristics of both a structured- and unstructured interview approach (Groom & Littlemore, 2011). As the teachers’ input was of crucial importance, the questions could neither be too broad or limited.

The transcribing of interview answers may provide a challenge in regard to content and especially so if they are of longer quantities. Although the scope of the essay is fairly limited with three participants, three interviewees providing thorough answers on 13 questions requiring a great amount of input, thoughts and explanations, proved a challenge regarding content. Groom & Littlemore (2011) explain that one should first
listen to the recordings in order to decide which aspects are most relevant to the research questions, as to avoid incessant hours on transcribing every word. However, in this case, after replaying the tapes, the interviews were transcribed in their entirety.

4.2 Teacher Participants

In order to recruit participants for this study, an e-mail containing detailed information about what the study aimed to achieve was sent out. It was primarily teachers who taught English as their first subject in Upper Secondary Schools that were targeted. As this study had a short timeframe for completion, the expectations and scope were extremely limited, prompting the study to detail a discussion with three participants.

As the e-mails sent out generated far more replies than anticipated, a decision regarding which participants to include was made. The decision was based on the teachers’ experience career-wise, as their experience of the shift toward student centered-learning pre-, during- and post-implementation of specific formative assessment might provide interesting insights. The factors of gender as well as Upper secondary school levels were deliberately excluded from this study.

The three chosen teachers volunteered to provide their experiences, insights and understanding of formative assessment of and feedback on written texts. All teachers have more than 10 years in experience in their mutual subject of English and they all hold the role of lead teachers. Furthermore, they teach within three different programs: teacher 1 teaches in both English and Swedish within the natural science program; teacher 2 teaches English and computer engineering within the electricity- and energy program; and teacher 3 teaches English and history within the economics program.

4.3 Limitations

Like countless other studies, both in similar and different fields, there are limitations which affect the process and result to some degree. For this study the number of participants was three, with each participant providing only two sets of written feedback. A higher number of participants would have provided more data and revealed clearer patterns in the teachers’ thoughts, attitudes and perception of formative assessment and written feedback practices. Common patterns that occur in the perceptions would serve as base for a more definite conclusion and generalization. Furthermore, the provided feedback comments to students’ texts, their content and type of focus would assist in drawing parallels to teachers’ backgrounds based on their own input. The number of participants would not inherently change the main methodology of qualitative interviews, but more likely add to the level of reliability and validity.

Furthermore, the participant criteria are a limiting factor depending on the group of people the study aims to reach. For this study the participants were of approximately the same age, experience in the education system and as a teacher, and non-gender specified. Had the number been higher and evenly spread between genders, or divided
between Upper Secondary School programmes, or between two groups of varying experiences, a comparison of several factors could have provided enough substantial data to look for correlations between types of feedback and attitudes with these parameters. For the purpose of an analysis, a larger number of participants and a more specified approach could have provided a deeper insight into the surrounding factors affecting formative assessment.

5. Analysis of Results

This section will present the data collected from the interviews and the provided teacher written feedbacks to students’ texts in relation to previous research within the specific field. Firstly, the interview questions will be summarized and secondly, an analysis of the written feedback will be made.

5.1 Interview Data

Table 1: Interview responses to question Q1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: How would you define formative assessment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1: Well, formative assessment to me is assessment that teaches the students how to proceed and how to move forward, and what to learn from their mistakes. So, it is both in terms of evaluating, but mostly, in terms of concrete, practical advice [...]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2: Formative assessment to me is a process of - if you do writing- then it is a process of writing which means that they get feedback, preferably during the lesson. [...] I walk around and look at what they have read and give them tips and suggestions on how to improve. [...] Because speaking of formative writing, that exists in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3: If I am speaking generally, it is when you are giving someone feedback in a way where you want them to think about what they need to improve instead of just measuring where they are, and then just give them a quantifiable assessment of a specific time. [...] If I am thinking formative I am thinking that you get your feedback that tell you your next step in order to improve, to do ‘this’ or ‘that’. So each time they come back, hopefully they have worked with the feedback and do a better job the next time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 displays that the teachers were unison in their understanding of formative assessment as a cyclic process of locating a gap in knowledge or understanding, thereafter providing written feedback on how they can amend the gap, and lastly
working with the suggestions in order to improve. The teachers displayed an approach to formative assessment as a way of molding the students into agents of apprehension and learning, primarily by providing their insights, suggestions and advice on advancing areas of development. Furthermore, the teachers seem aware of the importance of the students’ role in the process of learning, as every method and action seem to derive with the students’ learning advances in mind.

Table 2: Interview responses to Q2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2: What purpose do you believe written feedback serves?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 2 Teacher 1 appears to be more concrete in their understanding of the purpose of formative assessment. They describe it as highlighting areas for learning, based on both their own and student’s ability. Teacher 2 appears to focus on the overall picture and simultaneously pinpoint the smaller factors of language. Furthermore, Teacher 2 appears contradictory in their approach to review every assignment word for word contra the overall picture, as they explicitly focus on mistakes rather than errors. Teacher 3 believes their purpose in providing written feedback is to highlight areas of development, especially those regarding reoccurring errors. Moreover, both Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 reflects on the emotional impact feedback can have on students, a factor which can affect students’ future approach to feedback. Lastly, all three teachers agree on the basic formulation of written feedback to be as clear, detailed and specified as possible.
Table 3: Interview responses to Q3.

| Teacher 1 | Very concrete ways of giving feedback by showing student examples: that is very much appreciated. So that they can see what other students have done before them and adapt to that. And also to show them, very clearly, what the different levels of grading demands. |
| Teacher 2 | [...] I think it is better to say what is good and 'what can I improve?'. [...] I would rather say to give them feedback in the sense of some grade criteria being covered in that they might extent vary their words or what they could do in the future, maybe use more synonyms or try to explain the same things in different words. That way they can show a variation in their explanation. So I think that is quality feedback, saying what is good and what they need to improve. |
| Teacher 3 | The student needs to think it is useful information, something that they think is worth spending their time with. The problem is that there are some teachers that say that do not think it is worth putting so much time onto written comments, because they just glance at it and throw it away and never come back to it again. I think, after seeing a lot of feedback teachers give, that it is important to make sure that you are giving stuff that is focused on the important things and that they can understand what it is that you are talking about, so that they can feel like it is useful information and do something with it. |

Table 3 displays that the teachers agree that quality feedback requires straightforward comments that allow students to move forward. Teacher 1 suggests providing examples of assignments of different evaluative levels in order for students to compare them to the grading criteria and their own rubrics. Teacher 2 also suggests incorporating the grading criteria so that students understand the teacher’s expectations to thereafter adapt their performance accordingly. Teacher 3 mentions the time-consuming task that is written feedback and how that might affect the written comments, highlighting that feedback should primarily be of useful value to the students to move forward. Again, Teachers 2 and 3 emphasize that students’ comprehension of the feedback should be of both primary interest and aim, because the students cannot act upon the feedback if they do not understand it.
Table 4: Interview responses to Q4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 4: Do you believe you have a clear understanding on how to provide written FA of written texts?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4, Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 appear more confident and concrete in their ability to provide written feedback than Teacher 2. Teacher 1 presents themself as possessing a great deal of knowledge and understanding of formative assessment by taking part in personal advancements of the topic. Teacher 3 also appears to possess current updates on the topic by having taken part of several classes about formative assessment. Furthermore, Teacher 3 is of the opinion that feedback and formative assessment can primarily be understood and interpreted correctly in situational contexts since the concepts are of subjective nature. Moreover, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 emphasizes the importance of the student-teacher relationship, especially considering the way written feedback can be provided and how it might be perceived by students.
Table 5: Interview responses to Q5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5: How often do you provide written formative feedback of written texts?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Is the formative feedback accompanied by a grade/score?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that Teacher 1 routinely provides written comments on every student assignment. That frequency of feedback requires enormous effort and time, which Teacher 3 highlights as one of the limiting factors in their own feedback practice. Furthermore, Teacher 1 and 3 believe that written feedback on students’ texts should not be combined with a grade or a score, with both teachers agreeing that a summative assessment should be provided at the end of the school term. Teacher 2 explains their experience in providing a combination of both, where students tend to direct their focus on the summative grade rather than the formative comments for advancement. Moreover, Teacher 2 describes their students’ reaction to the decision to solely focus on formative assessment for a year, where the students’ attachment to a summative grade emerged more clearly. Lastly, all three teachers mention complementing their written feedback with verbal comments in order to properly relay their intentions with the feedback. A combination of both approaches appears to enable both a two-way dialogue in interpreting the basic meaning of the comments and engage students to move forward.
| Teacher 1 | Yes. We tend to focus a lot on that: talk about it and use it as a way of making the students less stressful. Does not always work out, but still. Because they come here with these really high grades and they are so stressed out because they have a belief. |
| Teacher 2 | Not in the beginning, but I have had some of them for three years. I can say that during the second semester the first year, they started to understand. They understand the abbreviated system. I also give them a checklist to use every lesson in the first year, which will remind them to include important parts in their writing. In a way, that helps working up to an independency. |
| Teacher 3 | Yes and no. Sometimes I might spell things out for people and other times I want them to do some thinking about. For example with verbs, if you just tell them the answer then it might sometimes make sense. But other times I like to tell them that ‘there is a problem here’ and then you can talk to them about it later. I just do not want to tell them the answer. I want them to see that there is a problem and think about it so that they can realize what the answer is and then talk about it. |

Table 6 shows Teacher 1 as confident in their practice of both providing written feedback and ensuring that it is acted upon. Teacher 1 approaches formative assessment as an opportunity to initiate communication with their students regarding its function and aim. Teacher 2 explains that interpreting teacher-feedback might be a struggle in the beginning, however, as the students and teacher get to know one another, it becomes easier to interpret the feedback. Moreover, Teacher 2 introduces their students to a checklist that aims to facilitate the feedback process for both themself and the students, primarily by “working up to an independency”. Teacher 2 elaborates that some students are completely clueless in their approach to feedback and require explicit instructions, while others can simply procure the intended information from the provided feedback. Furthermore, Teacher 3 prefers a more individualized approach to the meaning of comprehension because it can vary from student to student. Teacher 3 mentions expecting students to somewhat panic by the overwhelming feedback they are provided, mainly in order to push them to work harder.
Table 7: Interview responses to Q7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Yes, since they get this all the time. It serves the purpose to clarify to the student what is meant with all of these words and how I see it. That is something I talk about all the time to make them learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>They do in relation to when I have the grade conference, because I have a rubric for every student. On this rubric I could write 1 to 5 depending on how far they go on every grade criteria. Then I give this to them and they can see it at the grade conference. [...] So that is a way of opening their eyes to the criteria and how to use them when looking at assignments. [...] I wanna say that I focus on the grade criteria, mostly, because the grade criteria for analysis says that they have to be varied, they have to explain, do improvements of their own writing, using synonyms “väggrundade framställningar”, but also grammatically. Also sentence structure where they have to keep the sentences together in an English way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>People do this differently because the language in those can be ambiguous, where people can interpret them differently. Instead I give them guidelines and tell them exactly what I want from these different categories and put it in my own language, to specifically tell them what I am grading them on and so on. [...] Sometimes people get upset because they want to know exactly how much work they need to put in to get an A or other grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 displays that all teachers’ are unison in their approach in anchoring their teaching and feedback to a rubric of different level criteria. Again, Teacher 1 emphasizes the view on feedback as a dialogical process between students and teachers, which includes communicating to students their current level of learning in a comprehensive way. Teacher 1 includes their students as active agents in their advancement by relating their progress to a rubric. Furthermore, Teacher 2 fills out a rubric for every student, but the students do not appear to be active participants of their progress in relation to the criteria before their grade conference. Teacher 3 highlights the subjectivity of feedback interpretation, which they amend by reformulating the criteria in their own words that reflect their expectations. Lastly, the teachers all agree that the content and language in the criteria are both vague and ambiguous in interpretation, which allows multiple approaches in their practical implementation.
Table 8: Interview responses to Q8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 8: <strong>How do the students experience their given written feedback?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Do you believe students spend as much time utilizing the provided written feedback as it had taken to provide it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 explains that Teacher 1 is confident in their students’ appreciation of their feedback, which is based on students’ approval and claims of experiencing less stress. Since Teacher 2 prefers to provide thorough feedback with focus on both content and form, some students experienced the approach as overwhelming. Moreover, Teacher 2 believes they invest more time in providing feedback than students use to utilize it. As previously mentioned, Teacher 3 prefers to induce mild panic in their students in the beginning, but simultaneously does not wish to overwhelm them with comments. Teacher 3 also emphasizes students’ individuality as a factor in whether feedback is utilized or not. Some students might be susceptible to extensive feedback at a certain time of their education or for specific assignments, while others require explicit guidance in systematically approaching feedback.
Table 9: Interview response to Q9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 9: Do you adapt your feedback strategies/assignments to individual students or groups of students?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 displays that all three teachers agree that feedback should be adapted to every student as they thrive under different circumstances and require different amount of attention to advance. Teacher 3 elaborates that individualized feedback is the core of formative assessment, where different approaches to feedback might provide different results. Moreover, Teacher 3 says that feedback should be developed and formed based on an existing relationship between students and teachers, as that relationship dictates the way a student can be approached. Another aspect that both Teacher 1 and 2 mention is group-feedback, which refers to highlighting reoccurring and common mistakes and errors among several students. Such situations require a run-through that address the common mistakes in class without singling out individual students.
Table 10: Interview responses to Q10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>No, I just give feedback over the whole picture. It is adapted to different assignments. I go with my experience after seeing what works in class or not. But I do feedback sometimes by recording. That has been very easy as well, to just talk to people and send them an audio file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>There are some assignments based on some I would say, definitively depending on the level of English as well. I try to use the words from the grade criteria. I do not translate the whole level of E or other grade, but I try to use some of the value words in my written feedback. My focus is mainly on the purpose of the assignment, because it changes somewhat on different levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>I do not have any models that I follow. My time budget is a big factor, how much time I have to do it, and it has to do with my own planning as well. [...] Then you make time to give written feedback. I just have the main things that I focus on during that particular assignment, based on the &quot;kunskapskrav&quot;, and that is more or less what I comment on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 explains that Teacher 1 does not follow any specific frame when providing feedback but focuses on the requirements for each assignment. Instead, Teacher 1 chooses to apply a variety of methods and simultaneously focus on the overall picture. Teacher 1 elaborates that they at times provide responsive feedback as audio files to students’ texts, which they believe can be easier for students to understand than through written feedback. Moreover, Teacher 2 views the grading criteria as the framework on which their assessment is based on. Teacher 3 does not follow any framework because of their main issue with time. Lastly, both Teacher 2 and 3 prefer to explicitly anchor their feedback to the criteria levels, where Teacher 2 even incorporates “value words” from the criteria in their feedback to facilitate students’ comprehension.
Table 11: Interview responses to Q11.

| Question 11: **How do you formulate your written feedback of student-texts?**  
| *Do you consider the terms/phrases/words used in your provided written assessment of written texts?* |
| Teacher 1 | In English 7 we tend to be more academic, of course, so we use more academic vocabulary. So, in that sense it is more consciously done in order for us to have this ambiance of academic studies. In English 5, perhaps the terminology, syntax, topic sentences or passive voice, participles, are considered more. **It is mostly about grammar terms and terminology I would say.** |
| Teacher 2 | I would say yes. It depends on the individual on how I write my comments. Everything has to do with the relationship you have with your students and mental illness is a big thing. Because depending on how stable the students is, the harsher you can be on your feedback. And with some you can only have verbal feedback. Relationship is everything. **There is not one way of doing it:** sometimes I write a lot, sometimes I just write a sentence. |
| Teacher 3 | I think so. There are some things you think of when commenting and English 5 student compared to an English 7 student. I look at what the criteria of the English level states and try to incorporate some of the words in them. Then again, it depend on the individual within a level too, as well as how direct I can be or not. **I tend to focus the comment on what I think is most important for that student in that assignment.** |

Table 11 explains that teachers consider the way they formulate written feedback to students’ texts. Teacher 1 appears to place less focus on the language in which feedback is provided than the other two teachers, and only consciously adjust their language between English levels in terms of grammar and terminology. Furthermore, Teacher 2 speaks of mental illness as contributing factor in the way feedback can be delivered. Teacher 2 believes that building a relationship with one’s students allows teachers to approach student with appropriate feedback, specifically referring to whether feedback should be detailed or superficial. Moreover, although Teacher 3 appears to consciously consider their language when approaching students of different levels, they prefer to direct their focus of feedback toward the aspects they consider the most important for the student.
Table 12: Interview responses to Q12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 12: <em>Do you believe your written feedback have an impact on students’ learning? Have you noticed explicit progress made possible by your provided feedback?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 shows that Teacher 1 seems confident in their ability to influence their students’ learning, which is based on the students’ feedback about the teacher-feedback. Moreover, Teacher 2 has created a self-made checklist that the students follow before submitting their assignments, which aims to improve their conscious decisions and self-assessment ability. According to Teacher 2, the checklist has done a great deal to the students as its results have displayed an overall improvement. Moreover, Teacher 3 mentions students’ level of motivation to be a contributing factor in ensuring learning advancement, without which the students might not engage in advancement. Lastly, both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 feel that their job as teachers would be useless if their methods did not elicit any evidence of learning and to further push for progress.
Table 13: Interview responses to Q13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 13: Do you feel your assessment strategies have changed over the past years?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1: For once we have more concrete, detailed information on how to grade people. It is not just based on what I think or I feel. It is very regulated and the point is for it to be fairer. [...] It is a backbone we have not had before, something to refer back to and talk about with parents and students. Before it was just that people did not know what or why they were doing certain things, and even if it is sometimes criticized now it is much better than before. Your relationship to the students is less tense because they know what I know and I am not keeping anything from them. I am not met with that reaction [frustration and anger] anymore at all, which I was before the new system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2: I would say yes, because when I started we had G, VG and MVG and it was very different. [...] The grading system now is so much more detailed now, there are so many more things to think about. Before you could just translate grades, I mean grade E is not really equivalent to a G, but to the students it is. [...] I do not think that, as a teacher, I wrote as many comments about what was good and can be improved as I do today. Even if I did correct the grammar or sentence structure like before, now I focus on how to use your words to paint a picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3: I think in the beginning I wrote more than I do now. I started to realize that I was doing too much and so I might do a little less than I did before. I think I direct the focus more on the things that I think they should do first, the most important things. I always combine the comments with a link to resources and that is something the students have appreciated, because they want to feel like they can go to a place and learn on their own. [...] That also helps me in a sense because it puts it on them to take responsibility and to do some work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 displays the teachers’ perspective of the changes the implementation of formative assessment has had, especially when comparing the previous grading systems with the newer one. Teacher 1 also mentions how formative assessment has changed the relationship between teachers and students for the better. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 believe that their approach to assessment and feedback have changed as a result of the theories of formative assessment that have developed, which have provided them with a more structured and detailed foundation on which feedback can be provided. Moreover, Teacher 2 mentions that the grading criteria can cause uncertainty because of the subjective nature of interpreting it. Furthermore, Teacher 2 and 3 present different views in how their approach to feedback have changed. Teacher 2 has increased their quantity of written feedback and directed focus toward future improvements, while Teacher 3 has decreased in quantity. Even so, both teachers tend to focus on covering the most important areas of development for students, providing more context and detail with a complimentary verbal feedback or include a resource link. Although Teacher 2 previously focused their feedback on addressing grammar-and sentence structures, their current focus aims to address the way students use “words to paint a picture”.

26
5.2 Teacher-written Feedback

This sections presents the written feedback the teachers have provided to two students’ texts each, mainly focusing on their differences and similarities in approach.

5.2.1 Teacher 1

Feedback 1 and 2 are both formulated and provided in Swedish as opposed to in English. The teacher has translated the criteria to Swedish and then divided those into categories of requirements, on which student-performances are consequently evaluated.

Feedback 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INNEHÅLL</th>
<th>SLUTSATSEN BYGGER DELVIS PÅ TEXTREFERATEN</th>
<th>SLUTSATSEN BYGGER I HUVUDSAK PÅ TEXTREFERATEN</th>
<th>RESONEMANGET ÄR VÄL UTVECKLAT OCH SLUTSATSEN BYGGER TYDLIGT PÅ TEXTREFERATEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KÄLLHÄNVISNINGAR</th>
<th>CITAT- OCH REFERATTEKNIKEN FUNGERAR I HUVUDSAK VÄL MED EXREFERATMARKÖRER</th>
<th>CITAT- OCH REFERATTEKNIKEN ÄR VÄL FUNGERANDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENINGSBYGGNAD</th>
<th>SPRÅKET FÖLJER I HUVUDSAK SKRIFTSPRÅKETS NORMER FÖR SPRÅKRIKTIGHEIT</th>
<th>SPRÅKET ÄR KLART OCH BÄR UPP ELEVEN S RESONEMANG</th>
<th>SPRÅKET ÄR VÄLFORMULERAT MED PRECISION I ORDLVAL OCH UTTRYCKSFÖRMER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STILNIVÅ - ANPASSNING</th>
<th>SPRÅKET UPPVISAR EN TYDLIG ANSATS ATT ANPASSA STILEN EFTER DE KRAV SOM GÄLLER FÖR UTREDANDE/ARGUMENTERANDE TEXT</th>
<th>SPRÅKET ÄR VÄL ANPASSAT EFTER DE KRAV SOM GÄLLER FÖR UTREDANDE/ARGUMENTERANDE TEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>STAVNING, VERSALER/GEMENA, ORDFORM</th>
<th>STAVFEL OCH ANDRA FORMFEL FINNS MEN STÖR INTE KOMMUNIKATIONEN</th>
<th>TEXTEN HAR FÅ FORMFEL</th>
<th>TEXTEN HAR INGA FORMFEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAMMATIK</th>
<th>TEXTEN UPPVISAR FÅ GRAMMATIKFEL OCH Dessa RöR INTE GRUNDLÄGGANDE VERBBÖJNING</th>
<th>TEXTEN HAR INGA GRAMMATIKFEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Feedback 1 is a sheet designed by the teacher in order to facilitate the process of providing feedback in a way that is properly interpreted by the students. The written assignments can be divided into smaller sections of content, referencing, sentence structure, ability to adapt, form and grammar. Although both types of feedback is given
attention, the feedback is more content-related than it is form-related. Evidence of that can also be found in Feedback 2 and 2.1 (see Appendix D).

Feedback 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BESKRIVNING AV UPPGIFten, se lärarens anvisningar samt kursens kunskapskrav</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eleven's name:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student D</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Uppsalen har lämnats in i tid</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ja</strong></th>
<th><strong>Nej</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uppsalen har en titelsida</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uppsalen har en korrekt</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>inhållsförteckning med sidhänvisning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uppsalen har en tydligt formulera</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>frågeställning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uppsalen har en inledning, en</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>avhandling med underrubriker samt</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>en avslutning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- underrubrik 2.3 är formulera</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>på sätt som liknar huvudfrågan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten citeras och refereras minst</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>två engelskspråkiga källor</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Källförteckningen är korrekt uppställd, d v s i alfabetisk ordning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I inledningen redovisas syfte, bakgrund</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>material och metod, samt viss källkritik</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textens omfång är 1500 – 2000 ord</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej – 1626 ord</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten finns referatmarkörer (reporting verbs)</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten finns sambandsmarkörer (linking words)</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntaxen varieras med vissa verb i passiv form</td>
<td><strong>Ja</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nej</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback 2 is a checklist designed by the teacher to provide students with a sense of structure. It is supposed to be checked off before handing in assignments and includes finishing details such as keeping within the word limit, verb variation, referencing etc. The teacher’s aim is for students that the student will eventually make it into a subconscious habit to implement them prior to every assignment. Moreover, the teacher prefers to provide digitalized feedback on students’ texts so that they are stored and can be returned back to.
5.2.2 Teacher 2

In feedback 3 and 4, teacher-feedback of the students’ texts are manually provided by the teacher. The teacher focuses on both content-and form-related feedback.

Feedback 3

Is Brexit really worth the risk of war?

Brexit will affect a lot of countries in the world, with a lot of different aspects. One could be economic, education, free movement and so on. But another big discussion is the conflict between Ireland and Northern Ireland. In 1998 a 30 year old violent conflict was brought to an end because of the border being opened between the two countries. Brexit will mean that the border will close again, and the old conflict could blow up again. The conflict in Northern Ireland has political and religious roots that are centuries old. The violence started in Northern Ireland where thousands of people died in different attacks by both sides. People who believed that Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom was mainly the protestant unionist community; the ones who wanted to leave the UK was mainly the catholic nationalists. In 1969 counter-protests from citizens who are loyal to the british crown started; these protests spiralled into brutal and homicidal. Around 3,600 people died during the 30 year war between the two sides. If the United Kingdom leave the European Union it may lead to the conflict to start again. Is brexit worth more than the lives of innocent people?

It is crazy that England can leave the European Union with a good concussions! Perhaps the government should look back and see the consequences the conflict had on the people living in the countries. People living close to the border had to be aware of the hazards of living there constantly! No one should ever feel scared when they are at home. Under these 30 years, bombs and other violent actions were made from both the catholics and protestants. Citizens close to the border and in UK, Northern Ireland and Ireland will feel frightened. They don’t know when or where the next attack will happen, you should feel safe and secure in your home. Not scared and frightened that one in your family or yourself could pass away in a tragic manner.

If there is no hard-Brexit the chances are big that old enemies will begin to argue, but not only that, they will use violence to try to control each other and this will affect innocent people exactly as much as the people involved in the organisations who create the disorder. This struggle will disturb the peace we’ve had now for almost 30 years! Why repeat the past again? We want peace, not war. Can’t we solve this in another way than to try to kill one another? Have peaceful demonstrations and state your opinion in a peaceful way, don’t bomb houses with opposing viewpoint.

Politicians in United Kingdom think twice before you leave the EU. Is Brexit really worth the risk of war? Think about the lives of innocent people who can lose their relatives because you wanted the benefits that comes with being a member of the European Union without being a member. People of Europe, let’s get together and preserve the peace between Ireland and Northern Ireland, let’s state our opinion in an calm and harmonious manner! A non-violent manner.

Reference list:

BBC, 2019. Quick guide: Northern Ireland conflict. (online). Available at:
Feedback 3 shows in what way the form is commented on. The teacher has mentioned their use of a checklist with abbreviations referring to specific linguistic mistakes and errors, which the students are aware of. Although a separate sheet of the checklist was not provided, its abbreviations are explained in Feedback 1 (see Appendix E). The teacher also used a red marker to indicate mistakes and errors on the students’ text, and at times commented with a question for further elaboration, a question mark for something in need of clarity or a mistake in format.

Feedback 4

Feedback 4 displays the teacher’s summarized feedback to a students’ text. This part of the comments is content-related as they highlight what works well in the text followed by an advancing or improving suggestion. Moreover, the teacher appears vague in the
meaning of some words, e.g. deeper, relatively formal (Feedback 1.1, Appendix E), missing or using the wrong word etc.

5.2.3 Teacher 3

Feedback 5 and 6 approach the students’ text with a focus on both content- and form-related feedback, with emphasis on the former. The teacher uses a clear and easy language that should be understood by the students.

Feedback 5

Hey John Doe,

Nice job with this, and I think this gives us a solid example of your strengths and weaknesses so that you can move forward knowing what things to focus on.

What I’m quite happy with is your tone while you write, and that you have used linking words and phrases to help structure and add flow in your writing! These things are important so keep up the good work in this regard.

Overview:

Your introduction works well and has the funnel shape we discussed – well done!

Your summary represents the episode well, yet it is slightly on the long side. This is not a deal breaker for me, but consider how you could condense the episode even more, or give the same information in less words. As I said earlier, the writing flows well and I’m happy about that.

You have done well referring to articles in your response! Moving forward, do your best and even make it a general rule to comment on and develop the information that you have brought in. Here, you have mentioned the articles and have given a short representation of their points as you should, but then moved on without discussing.

Grammatically, you have a few recurring mistakes that will need some deliberate studying and practicing to fix:

- Verbs: verb forms & subject verb agreement (check mistakes marked in green and consider improvements)
- Commas: unnecessary commas & comma splices
- Articles: a/an

If you were to work through the subject-verb agreement, commas, and comma-splice exercises at https://chompchomp.com/exercises.htm you would come out an expert.

For verb tenses and articles I suggest you review and take the quizzes found at https://www.englishpage.com/index.html

Feedback 5 provides a summary of the teacher-feedback. The teacher begins by mentioning what works well in the students’ text and what the student should consider for next time. Thereafter, the teacher provides an overview that highlights areas such as introduction, referencing and grammar. The teacher explains which parts have worked well and their reasoning behind it, as well as adding concrete suggestions for future assignments. Mistakes are summarized and categorized, with each category providing
suggestions on improving the students’ writing, both explicitly, e.g. verbs and commas, and implicitly, e.g. reformulate sentences and words. The teacher also provides online links to students about their area of development, so that they can work on improving their skills on their own.

Feedback 6

At the end of the trip, the woman tells Lacie to be herself. Sooner, Lacie gets another phone call from Naomi, where she says that she doesn’t want her at the wedding, which makes Lacie very angry. When she finally gets to the wedding and instead of her planned speech, she tells the guests how she was used by Naomi in college. Eventually she gets arrested and freed from her phone. Later, she encounters a man from a cell next to her and unable to note him down, she starts an offensive dialogue, releasing her true emotions and herself.

Personally, I can relate to the topic concerning the addiction of social media, especially the act of making your life seem good in front of others. Things like Lacie biting of the cookie and not eating it, just to take a good picture or her preparing for the conversation with Naomi in the chaotic real life, similar to what I often see on social media. Just the act of making every aspect of someone’s life perfect seems like something that is doomed to fail, because life can be (if we want it or not) quite messy, that it makes it impossible to just to end and ignore it.

In an article about why we are addicted by the likes of social media, it was stated that the structure of today’s social media is very similar to what Lacie experienced while trying to acquire her “boost”, that you need to have a dedicated group of people liking your posts in order to maintain the high status (Ro, 2018).

Another interesting theme throughout the episode is the process of dehumanization people with low ranking and not looking for their real skills. Imagine a world where you, having great skills in woodworking, can’t get a job at the furniture store, because your social score does not meet the store’s criteria, just because you called someone a bad word. It changes the way people see each other and personally, I think that the whole rating system could be implemented maybe as a test, because for me, that could entirely change how we communicate in society. However, according to an article on an American business site, China is already implementing an rating system, similar to the one in the episode where similarly, people would get punished for doing bad things in society and therefore, lower their ranking that would disable some perks, for example: ways to commute, good jobs or acceptance into university, all to glorify idea of being truthful (Ma, 2018).

Feedback 6 shows the teacher pointing out some linguistic mistakes and grammar issues. The teacher prefers to provide feedback electronically because of their colour-coded checklist. Each colour highlights a specific mistake or error which the students are aware of, and students themselves must correct them. The teacher refrains from providing excessive comments on the students’ text and instead summarizes the main points on a separate sheet.
6. Discussion

This section aims to consolidate the collected data of both interviews and teacher-written feedback with previous research regarding written formative feedback. The discussion is divided into four sections, where each section deals with the themes of attitudes and perception, specificity, clarity and tone in written feedback.

6.1 Attitudes and Perspective

The analysis suggested that there was an agreement in the teachers’ understanding of and attitude toward written formative feedback practices in response to students’ texts. The interview responses to Q1, Q2 and Q13 provided an insight into the teachers’ individual perspectives on formative assessment.

All teachers displayed an almost mutual understanding of the concepts and their subsequent implementation. Although the concept of formative assessment cannot be summarized under one definition, the teachers’ responses displayed an understanding of it as a continuous cyclic process of eliciting evidence of learning, locating a knowledge-gap and then working to amend that gap through targeted feedback (Wiliam, 2011; Trumbull & Lash, 2013; Guskey, 2010). The link between formative assessment and feedback as its primary tool was corroborated in their responses, which further highlighted the co-dependency of the concepts in formulating both their definitions and meanings. Moreover, formative assessment was understood as being more than just non-graded content assessment, as it is also a process in teachers’ continuous adaptation of learning material and strategies in discovering the optimal fit for individual students (Cizek, 2010). Although the teachers emphasize the importance of placing students at the centre of learning, their important role in administering learning and advancement through creative methods does not go unnoticed. The teachers were extremely aware of their roles and the responsibility they have, with all teachers fortunately perceiving students’ learning and advancement as being the core of their profession.

Furthermore, the teachers upheld an optimistic perception of written feedback practices overall, both regarding its theoretical understanding and its practical use. The teachers agreed that formative feedback should aim to provide advice on how to develop qualities for advancement through constructive comments. Especially in written form feedback and guidance for students must be helpful to be effectively create a foundation for future action; otherwise, the feedback would be rendered practically useless (Brookhart, 2017). Regarding Q13, the teachers reflect on the fact that formative assessment has provided them with a backbone on which all assessment and evaluation can be anchored. It has also provided a sense of direction regarding written feedback practices, which highlights characteristics such as specificity, clarity and tone (Brookhart, 2017). Furthermore, the teachers also experience their relationships with the students having improved over the years, which was credited to the student-centred approach to learning. With formative assessment students are required to occupy a more
engaging and active role in contextualizing their experiences with respect to their perception of the goals as well as realize their autonomy as owners of their learning. Consequently, both students and teachers occupy an equal role in students’ learning, which further decreases the chances for uncertainty and increases transparency regarding students’ current learning level.

6.2 Specificity of Feedback

It could be deduced that there was a uniform consensus in teachers’ written feedback with a combined approach of both content-and form-related feedback. The interview responses to Q3, Q7 and Q10 provided insight into the teachers’ strategical approach in formulating written feedback in relation to set standards of a rubric or criteria.

As criteria serves as the written foundation for assessing different parts of classroom education, their necessity for both students and teachers alike are a given fact. All teachers made use of a rubric, or criteria of the different grading levels, as a foundation in both formulating and providing their written comments. Anchoring the feedback to existing criteria facilitates the student-learning process as it allows students to actively engage in their advancement (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Moreover, the purpose of rubrics and criteria is to clarify to students the requirements for both assignments and grade levels (Nicol, 2010). However, the criteria can at times be ambiguous and vague in meaning, making interpretation a subjective matter. Teacher 3 handles the situation by reformulating the criteria in their own words so that the students have a clearer understanding of the teacher’s expectations and their own requirements. By explicitly explaining their focus, Teacher 3 also provides students the necessary information with which they can eventually assess themselves (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Furthermore, Teacher 2 highlights the importance of explaining the grading criteria before projects or assignments, however, they appear uncertain in their own understanding and interpretation of the criteria.

The rubric lists requirements for the different grade levels and enable teachers to provide goal-directed feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Regarding the specificity of feedback, Teachers 2 and 3 explain the importance of students comprehending the content of comments, for without it the students will neither read nor act upon it. For all teachers quality feedback essentially means highlighting the good parts and the parts requiring improvement. All three teachers approached students’ texts with both content- and form-related feedback, however, with a different amount of emphasis on either. Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 appeared to be more confident in their experience, ability and knowledge of feedback and formative assessment, which showed in their focus on content-related feedback rather than on form. Less emphasis was put on occurring mistakes than errors, which is a characteristic of specificity of feedback (Wiliam, 2011). However, Teacher 3 incorporated a fair amount on form-related feedback as well with suggestions for improving smaller mistakes and errors, while Teacher 1 did not leave any time for that. Furthermore, although Teacher 1’s feedback focuses on the overall
content, no detailed and explicit comments are suggested for future advancements. Even if students locate the problematic areas, without explicit instruction on how to amend those will result in reoccurring problems. Teacher 2 appeared to focus more on form-related feedback than content-related. In their content-related feedback, Teacher 2 uses words which with vague and ambiguous intentions, e.g. “economic”, “deeper”, which are neither elaborated upon nor explained. The approach itself appears to contradict their attitude about providing practical feedback.

6.3 Teacher-feedback Content

The analysis suggested that the teachers could provide effective feedback by keeping a dialogue with their students. The interview responses to Q4, Q6, Q8 and Q9 provided an insight into the teachers’ perspective of their students’ reaction to received feedback.

All teachers appear to contextualize formative assessment and feedback through continuous communication with their students. It is through a two-fold dialogue that feedback can be conceptualized as effective, clear and helpful (Nicol, 2010; Wiliam, 2011; Almendral, 2014). This statement is repeated throughout the teachers’ interview responses, where emphasis is placed on the students’ engagement in utilizing their received feedback to their advantage. Emphasis is also put on developing a relationship with the students in order to provide targeted feedback (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004), a characteristic highlighted as one of the cornerstones of formative assessment. Teacher 1 also emphasize the dialogical aspect as a precondition for them to provide adapted feedback in order to ensure the most rewarding outcome. Although Teacher 3 does not mention it explicitly, their approach to formative feedback is founded on communication with their students. The main point of a two-way dialogue is to affect the way teachers provide comments and the way in which they are interpreted by students (Zhan, 2016).

Furthermore, differences occur in the teachers’ use and successful implementation of formative and summative assessment. For Teacher 1, their students appear to be of high achieving backgrounds and are thus more susceptible to formative feedback as that increases their chances of a higher summative grade. Although Teacher 1 views feedback as an approach to decrease the stress and pressure, it might not have the intended effect because of the frequency and quantity of feedback the teacher provides (Price et.al., 2010). The amount of written feedback Teacher 1 provides may appear overwhelming for some students regardless of achievements. Moreover, Teacher 2 used to provide extensive formative feedback along with a summative grade, which is claimed to diminish student-learning considerably (Nicol, 2010; Wiliam, 2011). Students that are provided a summative grade are less inclined to even read the feedback. Furthermore, Teacher 3 appears to deliberately overwhelm their student with feedback so as to force them to actively engage in their learning-process. The teacher only mentions providing a summative grade at the end of the semester, fully aware of the consequences if both types of assessment are provided.
6.4 Time and Tone

The analysis deduced that the teacher approached the factors of time, quantity, timing and tone in both similar and different ways. The interview responses to questions Q5, Q11 and Q12 provided an insight into the teachers’ habits of providing feedback.

To provide written feedback is a time-consuming task and requires the undivided attention on both the students’ written text and the student’s overall performance, where only written feedback does not seem to suffice. The teachers agree that feedback should be provided with some verbal comments as well, which is why the two-fold dialogue between students and teachers is such a prominent option. Although all teachers were of the opinion that time was a limiting factor in providing enough and quality feedback, Teacher 1 was the one least afflicted by it. They believed that they could find time for providing such extensive and frequent feedback because of their planning skills. Although it would be admirable, it may be unrealistic for many schools or teachers.

Furthermore, tone refers to the emotional aspect that the feedback generates (Wiliam, 2011) and is closely related to both specificity and clarity. The tone should be non-authoritative tone and relay some optimistic input (Lunsford in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006), since that is what determines how students perceive the feedback and their subsequent performances. Teacher 3 embodies just that in their feedback to students’ texts, where their tone asserts the students as learners and provides both constructive feedback and encouraging comments. Teacher 2 is similar in approach, basing their comments on a modified version of two stars and a wish, however, their focus is on lifting what works well and what can be improved. Moreover, Teacher 2 thinks that the better the relationship with the students, the easier it to formulate the feedback and predict students’ reactions to it. Moreover, Teacher 2 mentions mental illness as a factor that they need to constantly consider in approaching individual students. Depending on the students, Teacher 2 suggests adapting the feedback on a scale from mild to harsh. The emotional impact feedback has on students can thus consequently steer their inclination to either improve or overlook the comments (Maclellan, 2001). Teacher 2’s tone appears more dulled than the optimistic tone of Teacher 3. This may be due to the fact that while Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 provide feedback electronically, Teacher 2 prefers to provide feedback manually. The handwritten feedback appears cluttered and can lead to a visual overload for some students. Lastly, tone goes along with focused feedback. Since feedback tends to affect the students’ emotional state, the importance in providing the correct amount of feedback becomes an essential factor in advancing learning.
7. Conclusion

In summary, the current study found that the English teachers have a progressive attitude toward the aim and usage of written feedback as they deem it a necessity in providing detailed and useful comments. Since written feedback was understood to be the most efficient approach in advancing writing skills, teachers purposely adapted their strategies to be as detailed and helpful as possible. This is enabled by considering the three characteristics of quality feedback of specificity, clarity and tone. Furthermore, all teachers preferred a combined approach of both content-and form-related feedback, but to different degrees of each component. Depending on experience and confidence in comprehending the fundamental criterias of formative assessment as well as its implementation in written form, teachers appear to prefer directing focus on content-related feedback with elements of form-related feedback. Moreover, although the teachers believed themselves to be experienced in giving written feedback to students’ texts, some uncertainties regarding subjectivity were raised. As no uniform method of providing written feedback has been laid out in any guidelines, and there is scarce research from a teachers’ perspective in the field, not only is an increase in awareness required but also support in systemizing written feedback practices. Finally, this study aimed to contribute to the research field by presenting the first attempt at exploring English teachers’ perspective and attitudes toward written feedback, and then to displaying how those factors might reflect on their approach to actually practice written feedback. Although definite and general conclusions cannot be drawn from such a qualitative study, it could be of value as basis for future quantitative studies within the field.
References


Brookhart, S. M. (2017). How to give effective feedback to your students. USA: ASCD.


Appendix A: Teacher 1 Interview Answers

1. How would you define formative assessment (FA)?
Well, formative assessment to me is assessment that teaches the students how to proceed and how to move forward, and what to learn from their mistakes. So, it is both in terms of evaluating, but mostly, in terms of concrete, practical advice: do this, don’t do that. My definition is mostly based on my experience as teacher and not from research.

2. What purpose do you believe written formative feedback serves?
It is to be very concrete and to make sure that the students realize what they are supposed to learn. It is to demonstrate my expectations of certain assignments so that they can adapt and do the best to their ability.

3. What do you believe constitutes quality written feedback?
Students appreciate concrete advice. When I, as a teacher, have paid attention to certain things, that the particular student tends to do over and over again for instance. So, very concrete ways of giving feedback by showing student examples: that is very much appreciated. So that they can see what other students have done before them and adapt to that. And also to show them, very clearly, what the different levels of grading demands.

4. Do you believe you have a clear understanding on how to provide written FA of written texts?
Yes, I would say so. I mean, we have been to lectures of course, taking about how formative assessment should be 30% of the total amount of time with the student. The lectures has been on our study days, where we have been asked to go.

5. How often do you provide written formative feedback of written texts?
All the time, for all they do. It is for every written assignment and shorter drafts. And oral assignments as well.

*is the formative feedback accompanied by a grade/score?
Everything is sort of graded, now we are sort of getting to the core of formative assessment. I do not make a difference there. I mean graded, we do not grade them more than once and that is done in April. But grade is just only done once. We have to very careful when talking about grades other than what they get when the course is finished. So no, everything is essentially formative assessment.

So the scores, I put the scores up here [a joint page between the student and teacher] so that they can never be connected to any sort of criteria, but they are information of course. The students take a part of it too. This is something I communicate all the time.
with the student(s) throughout the year. So that the student(s) see how their journal is being built up. Every time something new happens I share it with the students.

* How many written assignments do the students hand in every year?
So I am the kind of teacher who does a lot of them with my students. So, English 5 last year did, around six essays and out of those, three exams. They get formative assessment in things like that [see examples].

* Do you constantly provide the written feedback or are the students encouraged to provide each other feedback?
Definitively, I have done that too. Actually I did it just this morning. But yes, peer editing should be a vital part of their education. So, I take away the names from their assignments and send them off to other students as text 1, text 2 and etc. Their feedback is usually on top of my own feedback

6. Do your students have a clear understanding on how to approach their received feedback?
Yes. We tend to focus a lot on that: talk about it and use it as a way of making the students less stressful. Does not always work out, but still. Because they come here with these really high grades and they are so stressed out because they have a belief or they tell me that their previous teachers have said that “if you fail once, you are a failure” right at the very end. That is a misinterpretation if a teacher should do that, say that or understood it that way. I tell them that your teacher must have misunderstood. That is the reason I am doing what I am doing today.

So yes, we use it a lot and we use it in order for the students to understand that what they are graded on is what they know in May. We do not talk about grades until then. So we are very careful about that until the grades are set. So you get a grade on how you have met the criteria at the very end of the course, because that is when you are supposed to know it.

7. Are the students given/taught a rubric related to the learning goals?
Yes, since they get this all the time. It serves the purpose to clarify to the student what is meant with all of these words and how I see it. What makes me put an exam or a book report on 1984 in the A-box [grade criteria] and not here [other grade] or not here [other grade]. That is something I talk about all the time to make them learn.

8. How do the students experience their given written feedback?
They appreciate it. First of all they appreciate it, second of all they told me, and other teachers as well, that they feel calm and that they have an insight into their own development throughout the whole course. Meaning that they are less stressed about the grades because they can see it and I can see, there is no hiding or secret or something they know nothing of. Because they are invited to share the information I have all the time.
* Do their responses feed back into your practice of providing feedback?
All the time, it is very much dependent on the individual student. They respond once a year, they always do that. It is usually during or after Christmas holiday, when I ask them to summarize in English since I tend to want to write in Swedish up here. So, to summarize my advice and summarize for every one of these criterias, because we have divided the criterias up into understanding, production, source/referencing, redrafting and content. So for each one of these five I make sure that they understand where they are at and what it would take if they had any aspirations of moving from a C to A. So they have to confirm in writing once a year and then we talk about it constantly. But they must confirm it in writing that they have understood their feedback.

* Do you believe students spend as much time utilizing the provided written feedback as it had taken to provide it?
I make sure that they use it in front of me in the classroom. They are definitively provided time in class, I am very hands on. They have to learn how to read feedback in class, I really make sure of it whether it has sunk in.

9. Do you adapt your feedback strategies/assignments to individual students or groups of student?
It is always individually adapted, but then there are times students ask general questions about what it would take for me to put them in a specific grade. Then I of course explain to the whole class.

10. Is there a theoretical model/assessment design of feedback you prefer?
No, I just give feedback over the whole picture. It is adapted to different assignments. I go with my experience after seeing what works in class or not. But I do feedback sometimes by recording. That has been very easy as well, to just talk to people and send them an audio file. Sometimes that is much faster than me having to read from my own notes.

11. How do you formulate your written feedback of students’ texts? Do you consider the terms/phrases/words used in your provided written assessment of written texts?
No, I would not say that. Our students are usually at a very good or high level. So no, I do not really adapt my language. It is nothing I have in mind at all.

I mean, when it comes to English levels it certainly is somewhat different. In English 7 we tend to be more academic, of course, so we use more academic vocabulary. So, in that sense it is more consciously done in order for us to have this ambiance of academic studies. Other than that, no. In English 5, perhaps the terminology, syntax, topic sentences or passive voice, participles, are considered more. It is mostly about grammar terms and terminology I would say.
12. Do you believe your written feedback have an impact on students’ learning?
Yes, that is what they tell me. And I make sure that that is what happens, because since I have written done what I would like to see in their matrix/rubric, it is a long list of things to address, I would like to see it next time.

* Have you noticed explicit progress made possible by your provided feedback?
Yes, definitively. All the time, otherwise I would be very dissatisfied and displeased with my students. No, but that is the whole point, for me to see it, otherwise my job would be pointless. We have students here who are very eager to read the teacher, understand what the whole teaching is all about and learning from that. We have students who are very easily taught because they want to learn. But there is a difference depending on programs, a fact which we should not hide. I am on the natural science-program, so we have top students.

13. Do you feel your assessment strategies have changed over the past years?
As a teacher, it has changed for the better. For once we have more concrete, detailed information on how to grade people. It is not just based on what I think or I feel. It is very regulated and the point is for it to be fairer. It is better than ever. I started in 1980s and it is better than it has ever been for teachers, from a teacher’s point of view. Some people say that students are stressed out because they have too much information about what it takes for their grades to be what they wanted. I guess it depends on how you treat this information. So, as a teacher, it is better than ever and they are now improving strategies even more. It is a backbone we have not had before, something to refer back to and talk about with parents and students. Before it was just that people did not know what or why they were doing certain things, and even if it is sometimes criticized now it is much better than before.

Of course it takes time with formative assessment, but if your organize your work so that it is a natural part of your daily routine, to include formative assessment and communicate to and with students via (e-)mail, it helps you in terms of assessing grading. Your relationship to the students is less tense because they know what I know and I am not keeping anything from them. We can talk about assessments throughout the year and not in just May when they suddenly get a grade and do not understand why and get frustrated or angry. I am not met with that reaction anymore at all, which I was before the new system. For me formative assessment have brought a whole new situation and with the students. They are not afraid of surprises.

For some teachers, they [students] tell me, they do not have much to go on and all of a sudden they got this grade with no clue as to why. Then they become annoyed and irritated of course. And I have faced that kind of reaction as well before, but I do not anymore.
Appendix B: Teacher 2 Interview Answers

1. How would you define formative assessment (FA)?
Formative assessment to me is a process of - if you do writing- then it is a process of writing which means that they [students] get feedback, preferably during the lesson. If they get three lesson to do a movie analysis for instance I have a structure and then I work with them during these three lessons, where I walk around and look at what they have read and give them tips and suggestions on how to improve. I wanna say that I focus on the grade criteria, mostly, because the grade criteria for analysis says that they have to be varied, they have to explain, do improvements of their own writing, using synonyms “välgrundade framställningar”, but also grammatically. Also sentence structure where they have to keep the sentences together in an English way, not a Swedish way.

2. What purpose do you believe written formative feedback serves?
When I work formatively in the classroom, it is where I want to work formatively, I read every single word and so everything takes a lot of time. I look at the structure, I do not read one sentence and go ‘here is your mistake’, but I look at the overall picture. So I can see that you [student] have problem with tenses and try to explain why, like ‘here is past tense and future tense’ [visual aid], you need to keep it together. Or if they have an apostrophe problem then I try to go through that and explain what that is with one or two examples, then I want them to go through the rest of them on their own. Then I can come back later to see if there is a difference.

3. What do you believe constitutes quality written feedback?
I think you might be familiar with the ‘two stars and a wish’- system, which I do not like too much because I think it is better to say what is good and ‘what can I improve?’.
Because with two stars and a wish makes them very grade oriented I have noticed. So if i give them ‘this is very good’ they immediately think ‘A’. So two stars and a wish, two good things and one thing that can be improved, translates to an ‘A’ in students’ minds. So I would rather say to give them feedback in the sense of some grade criteria being covered in that they might extent vary their words or what they could do in the future, maybe use more synonyms or try to explain the same things in different words. That way they can show a variation in their explanation. So I think that is quality feedback, saying what is good and what they need to improve. It has to be individualized, how can I otherwise assess them? When I write feedback for instance I do not have pre-written comments for E or for D or so on, I just base it completely on what they write. So I can give different feedback even on the same grade level.
4. Do you believe you have a clear understanding on how to provide written FA of written texts?
I wanna say no because every student is different, every classroom situations is different. And it also depends on where they come from and what their grade school situation looks like. So I can never-, I do not have structured grammar lessons, not even once. For instance, when I do writing exercises I look at the bigger picture in the classroom, grammar wise, and then I deal with them. And then they [students] get grammar feedback based on a pre-abbreviated system that I use. They already know the system.

But at the same time, in a sense I do know. You get to know your students, meaning I can walk up to a student and know that they, for example, writes in English but in Swedish. I mean, it would be useless for me to comment on a thing such as apostrophes in such a case, so I ignore that part. It would be too much. So I choose to focus on word order instead. I do have a sense because you create a relationship with them. If I can see a common mistake in the classroom, I can work with that in the class. Also, I think that before you even start a project, you have to explain what the grade criteria means. For example “välgrundade förbättringar av egna framställningar”, that alone is something they are completely clueless to. For them [students] it is ‘i write something, give it to you, you correct it and I revise it’. And I think no, that can actually be done before you hand it in.

5. How often do you provide written formative feedback of written texts?
I have different amount of writings for different courses. What I do is that I have one written and one verbal examination on every assignment, so they do both. When you do that you can easily assess the work, for instance when they write they do not do it in the classroom, but outside the classroom. And I cannot assess something that is done outside the classroom. So if I have a verbal examination in combination with a written examination, then you can see that a student is on a certain level. So let us focus on English 7: they have 5-6 writings during the course. I probably do more in English 5 and 6.

*Is the formative feedback accompanied by a grade/score?
I have done both in terms of just giving feedback and then also given a grade in combination. But I do not want to give them a grade, because then that is all they focus on. They are so used to getting a grade on every assignment that even if they do not get it, they ask me what level their work is on. However, this year I am doing it differently. In all my classes I do not give any summative assessment on anything they do, they only get formative feedback and that is my use of ‘a star and a wish’. Then I have a grade conference with them in December. Next year I will start giving them summative feedback again and compare to this year. I know what they prefer, but the important part is what they learn the most from.
I have seen a difference already, in the sense that they read my comments when there is no grade. They do not like it, not at all, but at least they read it. Then what they try to do is convert what they have read to the grade criteria. Once each semester, the students give each other feedback on speeches or writings. I do everything in class, they do not have any tests or any homework. Because speaking of formative writing, that exists in the classroom. Without that I would not be able to give fair comments to their assignments.

6. Do your students have a clear understanding on how to approach their received feedback?
Not in the beginning, but I have had some of them for three years. I can say that during the second semester the first year, they started to understand. They understand the abbreviated system. I also give them a checklist to use every lesson in the first year, which will remind them to include important parts in their writing. In a way, that helps working up to an independency.

7. Are the students given/taught a rubric related to the learning goals?
They do in relation to when I have the grade conference, because I have a rubric for every student. I have numbers for every assignment. So let us say I do 12 assignments over the year, and I do 12 assignments because I have verbal assignments as well as classroom activities. On this rubric I could write 1 to 5 depending on how far they go on every grade criteria. Then I give this to them and they can see it at the grade conference. However, I post whatever grade criteria I use for a specific assignment, on every assignment. On our “school-port” all the grade criterias for English 5, 6, 7 are posted in a rubric there too so they can take a look.

They are not updated by me, but it is up to them. I go through it. When speaking of being updated it is easy to assume that they understand, but they do not. And I think that is understandable, because the language is very vague in the criterias, especially between grade levels. Since I have two English classes on every level I sometimes take one assignment from one class, remove the name, and put it up in another classroom. Then those students can walk around and assess it. The thing is, they always give such low grades: much lower than I ever would ever give. But then they have to explain themselves when I give them the grade criteria. Then I ask them why they gave the grade they did, how the criteria can back up their statements and what parts should be better. So that is a way of opening their eyes to the criterias and how to use them when looking at assignments, because they have to back up their opinions with the criterias.

8. How do the students experience their given written feedback?
In the beginning I wanted to be very thorough, so I commented on every word. I mean, I did not comment on every word, but I read every word. I put a comment on almost every line and I guess I still do in a way. It takes forever. Then I got a feedback from a student, early on, who said that it was not fun getting something like that back,
something that was just marked all over the place. So I try to do that less and less. If someone has a problem with apostrophe, I would mark that twice in the beginning and then give the feedback ‘look through your other assignments regarding where you could have problems with apostrophe’. It is very tricky and hard, because I want them to be the best versions of themselves. So if they get the opportunity to be that, then is that not through precise feedback? I do not know, it is difficult.

*do you believe students spend as much time utilizing the provided written feedback as it had taken to provide it?

No. Simple and easy, no. I mean, I do not think that they always care. That sounds harsh, but that is how it is. It takes a minimum of approximately 20 minutes to give them written, individualized feedback, but they do not come close to spending 20 minutes to look at it and use it. Then again, some ask me for tips and suggestions on specific aspects of their writing.

9. Do you adapt your feedback strategies/assignments to individual students or groups of student?

Definitively both. Individualized is when I go from one student to another, even when it is about written feedback. But it is class-based when it comes to common mistakes that they all make, which is usually 3-4 things they all could improve. Then I do it infront of everybody.

10. Is there a theoretical model/assessment design of feedback you prefer?

There are some assignments based on some I would say, definitively depending on the level of English as well. I try to use the words from the grade criteria. I do not translate the whole level of E or other grade, but I try to use some of the value words in my written feedback. That way they can see them and recognize them. My focus is mainly on the purpose of the assignment, because it changes somewhat on different levels.

11. How do you formulate your written feedback of students’ texts? Do you consider the terms/phrases/words used in your provided written assessment of written texts?

I would say yes. It depends on the individual on how I write my comments. Everything has to do with the relationship you have with your students and mental illness is a big thing. It sounds as if I am out of context here, but I am not. Because depending on how stable the students is, the harsher you can be on your feedback. You could have students that say they want to apply to Harvard and then correct every single word and then there are student who, just by seeing a red mark on their paper, might break down. And with some you can only have verbal feedback. Relationship is everything. There is not one way of doing it: sometimes I write a lot, sometimes I just write a sentence. I cannot always tell why I am doing it, because there is no such thing as consistency in these cases.
12. Do you believe your written feedback have an impact on students’ learning?
I want to say yes, otherwise I would feel like a complete failure. So, yes.

* Have you noticed explicit progress made possible by your provided feedback?
Definitively. I think that with my checklist, which is formative assessment, that I use in English 5 is excellent, superb. I actually encourage all teachers to have a checklist of what is important to them. Just such a thing as ‘do not hand anything in until you have gone through your checklist’. As using ‘I’ with a capital letter or putting their name on the paper, full paragraphs with an explanation of what that means. Little things like that. If they learn that checklist it will immediately improve.

13. Do you feel your assessment strategies have changed over the past years?
I would say yes, because when I started we had G, VG and MVG and it was very different. I had to relearn everything again. I am still learning. You would think it is easy with the grade criterias, but it is super complex. You would think that one grade criteria means one thing for ever and ever, but it is not so. It depends on what assignment you give them. So, I do not fully know or understand the grade criteria, because I think they change depending on how you interpret them and see how they can affect the students’ process. It is still changing, I am still learning.

The grading system now is so much more detailed now, there are so many more things to think about. Before you could just translate grades, I mean grade E is not really equivalent to a G, but to the students it is. Or no, maybe to us as well in the way that it is also understood as a passing grade. Students who get an E or a D think it is a failure, compared to getting a G and thinking that they passed. I do not think that, as a teacher, I wrote as many comments about what was good and can be improved as I do today. Even if I did correct the grammar or sentence structure like before. Now I focus on how to use your words to paint a picture.
Appendix C: Teacher 3 Interview Answers

1. How would you define formative assessment (FA)?
If I am speaking generally, it is when you are giving someone feedback in a way where you want them to think about what they need to improve instead of just measuring where they are, and then just give them a quantifiable assessment of a specific time. However, that is almost impossible to get away from. If I am thinking formative I am thinking that you get your feedback that tell you your next step in order to improve, to do 'this’ or ‘that’. So each time they come back, hopefully they have worked with the feedback and do a better job the next time. The teacher obviously have to be the one giving feedback and that the students actually wants to work with the feedback. Because if you have someone who is actually motivated to improve and not just try to maintain or do the minimal, then you can see someone make huge jumps: someone going from a D to B, I have seen that with people who are actually motivated. The teacher gives the feedback and hopefully in way that the student can understand.

I think that is another part of the teacher’s job, to get to know their students well enough to say things in a language that works for the students. When you are talking about grammar all the terminology can throw people off. So if you are be able to say things in a way that they can understand them I think you will see better result. The student have to be able to work off the feedback. That is part of the teacher’s job too, that the feedback is given in a way where the student can take it and refer back to it. If it is written then it is something they can get back to, if they get a copy of it. Some teachers just have meetings and just speak and have a conversation about it, to talk about the texts but never actually give them anything. They nod their head and act as if they have understood.

2. What purpose do you believe written formative feedback serves?
There are a few things I want to have happen. I want the student to understand that there are some good things happening in their work and that there are some things that they are doing right so that they can feel that they are not completely hopeless. I might even tell or focus on some of the mistakes to point them out, but then they are going to see a lot of errors. But the purpose of it is to find something, hopefully the errors they repeat as those are the ones easy to fix – and that they can recognize throughout the text that they have problems in some areas. I even like to use colors in word, because then it is easy to look at a text and say what sort of problems that occur. I prefer that rather than mark everything with a black pen on a piece of paper: it is really hard to decipher and takes a long time to go through it. So, I might even color-code the mistakes and sometimes not even write anything: then they can look at the color and identify the problem themselves.
3. What do you believe constitutes quality written feedback?
The student needs to think it is useful information, something that they think is worth spending their time with. The problem is that there are some teachers that say that do not think it is worth putting so much time onto written comments, because they just glance at it and throw it away and never come back to it again. I think, after seeing a lot of feedback teachers give, that it is important to make sure that you are giving stuff that is focused on the important things and that they can understand what it is that you are talking about, so that they can feel like it is useful information and do something with it. I see the written feedback as a way to document that you have given feedback and you want it to be something that they can open up again. That way they can go back and review it before they write the next time.

4. Do you believe you have a clear understanding on how to provide written FA of written texts?
I can start reciting a bunch of academic papers and research right now that I went through at Stockholm University just some time ago, where I took several classes. So yes I think I have a decent idea, but at the same time you start having discussion with other teachers and some people have other ideas.

For example, using the “kunskapsskrav” to show ‘this is where you are in this area’ and to improve you have to improve that area too. In a sense that you say that, as soon as you put it on the matrix, then it is a quantitative assessment. Whether or not that is part of the formative assessment or not, I think people disagree.

5. How often do you provide written formative feedback of written texts?
There is not enough time to provide all their texts with formative feedback, unfortunately. I think that is one of the toughest things about written formative feedback, that you only have so much time. I usually give them the written feedback along with a verbal comments, usually only on the practice written assignments. If I have 38 students in a class, it is going to take me at least 15 minutes to do a decent job with feedback per student. Doing the math it takes up to a few hours work.

I try to be really active in their process during writing, as they write. Because I think that giving them feedback afterwards is helpful and necessary, but even more important – in my opinion – is that while they write, they can raise their hand and ask for tips and help. Then I can give feedback on the spot and catch, for example, grammar problems that they can actively work on in the process.

* Is the formative feedback accompanied by a grade/score?
The only time I might only provide a score is at the very end of the school year. Otherwise, there is always feedback in some form.
* How many written assignments do the students hand in every term/year?
There are a lot of written assignments that we do weekly. The ones that are actually graded might be 3, they are heavier projects. The other things are used for practice and feedback for the upcoming projects. You might say that it is a formative way to go as we work with skills rather than just test them right away and give them a grade. We practice them and get feedback on them, giving each other feedback.

* Do you constantly provide the written feedback or are the students encouraged to provide each other feedback?
Sometimes I use programs for peer-review, where people upload their essay and they comment on each other’s work before they get to see the other people’s comments on their work. Other times, for feedback, sometimes there is only enough time to take examples from a bunch of texts to put them into a PowerPoint and then have them on the board for everyone. Then we talk about all the problems together, that way we can expedite the process a bit.

6. Do your students have a clear understanding on how to approach their received feedback?
Yes and no. Sometimes I might spell things out for people and other times I want them to do some thinking about. For example with verbs, if you just tell them the answer then it might sometimes make sense. But other times I like to tell them that ‘there is a problem here’ and then you can talk to them about it later. I just do not want to tell them the answer. I want them to see that there is a problem and think about it so that they can realize what the answer is and then talk about it.

7. Are the students given/taught a rubric related to the learning goals?
People do this differently because the language in those can be ambiguous, where people can interpret them differently. Instead I give them guidelines and tell them exactly what I want from these different categories and put it in my own language. To specifically tell them what I am grading them on and so on. I give them examples of texts that have gotten a good grade in the past so that they have something to relate to. Sometimes people get upset because they want to know exactly how much work they need to put in to get an A or other grade.

8. How do the students experience their given written feedback?
Well, it is kind of a mix. If it is someone who has a lot of issues in their writing I might purposely try not to overwhelm them with too many things. Instead I might say that there are things I want you to do first or to work on these problems that you have. I think people, when they first work with me, they might feel a little overwhelmed in the beginning. But I almost want them to panic a little bit in the beginning and try to work hard, and not to get too comfortable. I want them to understand and be able to say okay, I get this.
I like to work with online resources and I have got many fantastic website for grammar exercises. If I can show them that this is something that you have here that you can fix, then we might talk about it. I have it written down as well. I try to show them a way rather than just state ‘this is really bad, go figure it out yourself’: I try to say that ‘you have these things happening’ and ‘this is how you fix them’, through hard-work. They need to really make and effort.

* Do their responses feed back into your practice of providing feedback?
Everyone goes on to the school platform where they can find their feedback. They get time to read through it. Sometimes I do that and other times I do it individually, people come up to talk to me one-on-one. Then they have another journal where they have to keep track of the comments and summarize the things that they want to do, the things that they want to improve. Then people have the opportunity to ask me questions. Then I obviously listen to their questions and what kind of questions they ask, because that helps me understand what was unclear in my way of explaining.

9. Do you adapt your feedback strategies/assignments to individual students or groups of student?
Once you start teaching you realize you have so many students in passing. First you have to give all the instructions, then you have 5 people that have ADHD who you have to go and talk to again. Then you have to help start the assignment and open up a word document, which is when they can start working on their outline. It has to be individual because that is how you are supposed to work and that there are so many special needs people. For example, English 7 filter out a lot of people that are weaker for most of the courses here. But then again, not everyone has to take English 7. So it becomes a little bit better, or easier, in that regard. And if you know that there might be someone who might not make use of the written feedback, then another approach might be better suited. As a teacher you should get to know your students and then create an understanding on what works best for them. In the end, it all depends.

10. Is there a theoretical model/assessment design of feedback you prefer?
I do not have any models that I follow. My time budget is a big factor, how much time I have to do it, and it has to do with my own planning as well. If you have 6 groups you cannot make it so that they all turn in assignments at the same time. If you have three groups doing a presentation and three doing something written, then you can give them feedback in different ways. Then you make time to give written feedback. I just have the main things that I focus on during that particular assignment, based on the "kunskapskrav", and that is more or less what I comment on.
11. How do you formulate your written feedback of students’ texts? Do you consider the terms/phrases/words used in your provided written assessment of written texts?

I think so. There are some things you think of when commenting and English 5 student compared to an English 7 student. I look at what the criterias of the English level states and try to incorporate some of the words in them. Then again, it depend on the individual within a level too, as well as how direct I can be or not. I tend to focus the comment on what I think is most important for that student in that assignment. I try to give them the information I think is going to help them the most. Maybe inspire them a little bit, give them a little kick in the butt so they hopefully takes something seriously. If the students realize that a certain issue can, in the end, make a difference between an E and a C, then they are more likely to spend some time with it.

12. Do you believe your written feedback have an impact on students’ learning?

Yes, I have seen it. It depends on the student’s motivation. I can do the best with quality of the feedback I give, where I have seen the motivated students who have really taken to heart and made huge leaps. Then there are other who might put their priorities somewhere else, maybe aiming to maintain the same grade through the English levels. It still, in a way, means that they are improving although the grade itself has not changed necessarily.

13. Do you feel your assessment strategies have changed over the past years?

I think in the beginning I wrote more than I do now. I started to realize that I was doing too much and so I might do a little less than I did before. I think I direct the focus more on the things that I think they should do first, the most important things. I always combine the comments with a link to resources and that is something the students have appreciated, because they want to feel like they can go to a place and learn on their own. The textbooks that they have, have very little information about i.e. grammar. So I might give them the feedback and direct them somewhere else as well where they can practice. That also helps me in a sense because it puts it on them to take responsibility and to do some work. Also it becomes a safety net, because you do not want them to turn around and blame you for not giving them the information they need. That is one base I try to cover with my written feedback.
# Appendix D: Teacher 1 Feedback Sheets

**Feedback 1**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elevens namn:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student D</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beskrivning av uppgiften:</strong> se lärarens anvisningar samt kursens kunskapskrav</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppsatser har lämnats in i tid</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppsatser har en titelsida</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppsatser har en korrekt innehållsförteckning med sidhänvisning</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppsatser har en tydligt formulerad frågeställning</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppsatser har en inledning, en avhandling med underrubriker samt en avslutning</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Underrubrik 2.3 är formulerad på sätt som liknar huvudfrågan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten citeras och refereras minst två engelskspråkiga källor</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Källförteckningen är korrekt uppställd, dvs i alfabetisk ordning</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I inledningen redovisas syfte, bakgrundsmaterial och metod, samt viss källkritik</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textens omfång är 1500 – 2000 ord</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten finns referatmarkörer (reporting verbs)</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I texten finns sambandsmarkörer (linking words)</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntaxen varieras med vissa verb i passiv form</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INNEHÅLL

| Slutsatsen bygger delvis på textreferaten | Slutsatsen bygger i huvudsak på textreferaten | Resonemangt är väl utvecklat och slutsatsen bygger tydligt på textreferaten |

### KÄLLHÄNVISNINGAR

| Eleven tillämpar regler för citat och referatteknik | Citat- och referatteknen fungerar i huvudsak väl med t ex referatmarkörer | Citat- och referatteknen är väl fungerande |

### MENINGSBYGGNAD

| Språket följer i huvudsak skriftspråkets normer för språkriktighet | Språket är klart och bär upp elevens resonemang | Språket är välformulerat med precision i ordval och uttrycksformer |

### STILNIVÅ - ANPASSNING

| Försök görs att anpassa stilen efter de krav som gäller för utredande/argumenterande text | Språket uppvisar en tydlig ansats att anpassa stilen efter de krav som gäller för utredande/argumenterande text | Språket är väl anpassat efter de krav som gäller för utredande/argumenterande text |

### FORM stavning, versaler/gemena, ordform

| Stavfel och andra formfel finns men stör inte kommunikationen | Texten har få formfel | Texten har inga formfel |

### GRAMMATIK

| Texten har vissa problem med t ex verbbörjan | Texten uppvisar få grammatikfel och dessa rör inte grundläggande verbbörjan | Texten har inga grammatikfel |
Feedback 2

Kursmatris 2018 - 2019
Kurs: Engelska 7, 100 poäng

Elev: D

Övrig information / återkoppling / utvecklingsområden:
- CAE diagnos – med tip-strip – Reading – 32 av 53 = E
- CAE diagnos med tip-strip – Use of English – 52 av 63 = A
- glosförhör – What is CAE? - 13 av 20
- meningsbyggnad – vissa ord fattas
- ange den fullständiga källan – referera aldrig till enbart förnamn
- citat måste infogas smidigt i texten så att meningen fungerar grammatiskt
- stavning
- genitive
- meningsbyggnad – ej punkt framför bisats
- undvik för långa meningar
- vid analys – konkretisera – visa med exempel vad du menar

Course test grade – receptive skills: 80/99 = B
Reading: 22/30
Listening: 30/37
Use of English: 28/32

Essay: C – bedömd av IGU

Feedback 2.1

| Step 1: Synopsis | Yes | No – Prison sentence – rehabilitation or punishment
| Step 2: List of quotes and references | Yes | No |
| Step 3: Outline | Yes | No |
| Step 4: Peer editing of outline | Yes | No |
| Step 5: Peer editing of draft | Yes | No |
| Step 6: Final essay submitted | Yes | No |
| Step 7: Oral presentation | Yes | No |
| Step 8: Self-evaluation of essay using matrix | Yes | No |

– submitted
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amnestad</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Kunskapskrav för betyget E</th>
<th>Kunskapskrav för betyget C</th>
<th>Kunskapskrav för betyget A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Förståelse – Lisa och hyssna</td>
<td>a) Eleven kan förstå huvudsakliga innehåll och upptäcka mycket viktiga detaljer, samt med viss säkerhet även underförstådd betydelse, i talad engelska i relativt snabbt tempo, och i skriven engelska, i olika generer och av avancerad karaktär. Eleven visar sig förståelse genom att obehinderad redogöra för, diskutera, kommentera och dra slutsatser om innehåll och detaljer…</td>
<td>Eleven kan förstå huvudsakligt innehåll och upptäcka mycket viktiga detaljer, samt med viss säkerhet även underförstådd betydelse, i talad engelska i relativt snabbt tempo, och i skriven engelska, i olika generer och av avancerad karaktär. Eleven visar sig förståelse genom att obehinderad redogöra för, diskutera, kommentera och dra slutsatser om innehåll och detaljer…</td>
<td>Eleven kan förstå såväl helhet som detaljer, samt även underförstådd betydelse, i talad engelska i snabbt tempo, och i skriven engelska, i olika generer och av avancerad karaktär. Eleven visar sig förståelse genom att obehinderad redogöra för, diskutera, kommentera och dra slutsatser om innehåll och detaljer…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>b) samt genom att med godtagbart resultat agera utifrån budskap och instruktioner i innehållet.</td>
<td>samt genom att med tillfredsställande resultat agera utifrån budskap och instruktioner i innehållet.</td>
<td>samt genom att med god resultat agera utifrån budskap och instruktioner i innehållet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exam – Character analysis – To Kill a Mockingbird – prepared notes allowed

In-depth study – Is the current incarceration system socioeconomically beneficial?
### 3. BEARBEKTING
**progression under kurset**

- Eleven bearbetar, och gör välgrundade förbättringar av egna framställningar.
- Reported speech – The Danger of the Single Story - 1st draft and final version
- Version 2: Reported speech – The Danger of the Single Story - 1st draft and final version

### 4. KALLHANTERING – Innhåll

- Eleven kan välja och med vävs säkerhet använda strategier för att söka relevant information, struktura den och värdera olika källers tillfruktighet. Eleven väljer texter och talat språk från olika medier och kan på ett relevant sätt använda det valda materialet i sin egen produktion och interaktion.
- Exam – Character analysis – To Kill a Mockingbird – prepared notes allowed
- Optional task – Speech analysis – Oprah Winfrey and Emma Watson

### 5. KULTUR & SAMHÅLL – Innhåll

- Eleven diskuterar översiktligt några förteckningar i olika sammanhang och delar av världen där engelska används.
- Eleven kan också göra enskilda jämförelser med egna erfarenheter och kunskaper.
- Exam – Character analysis – To Kill a Mockingbird – prepared notes allowed

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**Förråd ovan:**

- Eleven kan välja och med säkerhet använda strategier för att söka relevant information, struktura den och värdera olika källers tillfruktighet. Eleven väljer texter och talat språk från olika medier och använder på ett relevant och effektivt sätt det valda materialet i sin egen produktion och interaktion.
- Assignment – Summary and response paper – To Kill a Mockingbird

- Eleven diskuterar översiktligt några förteckningar i olika sammanhang och delar av världen där engelska används.
- Eleven kan också göra enskilda jämförelser med egna erfarenheter och kunskaper.
- Assignment – Summary and response paper – To Kill a Mockingbird

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*In-depth study – Is the current incarceration system socioeconomically beneficial?*

*In-depth study presentation*
Appendix E: Teacher 2 Feedback Sheets

Feedback 1

Brexit have gotten stuck in a beartrap!

The UK are set to leave the EU the 31 of October. How they leave is an entirely different story. As explained in the article (posted by BBC.co 16/09-19 “What is a no-deal Brexit?” (BBC.co). There are many doors the UK can be heading towards, but all the options are different. The UK government are facing the task of making a exit deal with the EU when they are leaving. The deal is supposed to make the transition easier and stabilise export and import between the EU and the UK after they have left.

But a deal have not yet been settled and people's opinions crash, some wants a hard Brexit, some wants a soft and some wants chequers deal. But what happens if they don't get a deal, a no deal Brexit?

A no-deal Brexit will change a lot of small things we before haven't even thought of, our phones abroad will cost more and adults might need a special driving licence to drive across UK borders. Then we have some more obvious changes, transport and trade between the EU and UK will get severely affected if the UK leaves without a deal. What scares people isn't the fact they may leave without a deal because the UK got a great reputation in trade, but without a deal the UK will be leaving the EU without a transition period. The transition period is something ensuring for many people living in the UK because it means the departure will be more like a staircase instead of a freefall.

According to the article (posted by BBC.co 16/09-19 “What is a no-deal Brexit?” (BBC.co), many people are complaining about the departure and saying they are worried how there businesses will work if Brexit doesn't get a deal. People are right to be worried, if a deal don't get set up people's everyday life will change drastically. If you take the tariffs, trade complications for companies and the rising prizes on products in mind, this change will be hard and many will feel like they have shot themself in the foot.

Boris Johnson the prime minister of the UK have said they will leave with or without a deal. If the UK leaves they will need to buy in tons of medicine, reinforce there docking ports and borders with more security personal. But they didn't start implement this until it was only 92 days before they leave, why didn't they implement all of this 3 years ago when the Brexit vote passed? They aren't prepared and have been beating around the bush and just said it will get solved. How is it getting solved if they haven't started preparations until the last minute.

Grammar: G
Sentence structure: SS
Wrong word: WW
Sentence: T

P = Punctuation
W = Word
The Brexit vote was voted for and the majority wanted to leave the EU, but is it really this type of Brexit they wanted. A procrastinating and split government that really don't seem to see the solution of the problem. That problem being they wasn't prepared for the set back Brexit would lead to and the fact that the EU would put up a fight, by not giving in to the UK terms. The Brexit went from a patriotic and domestic economy good move to becoming a boxing fight there punches are thrown and pauses are taken but no knockdown ever happens. The UK's government don't wanna acknowledge the fact they were not prepared for the EU's hard terms and a no-deal Brexit have now become a door that seems to be unlocking.

Posted by BBC.co 16/09-19 “What is a no-deal Brexit?”(BBC.co)
Link: https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/46507260 (oct 7-2019)

- try not to start sentences with But.
- You explain your opinion in a well leveled way. You draw some conclusions of your opinions along with suggestions.
- You are relatively formal in your language
Is Brexit really worth the risk of war?

Brexit will affect a lot of countries in the world, with a lot of different aspects. One could be economic, education, free movement and so on. But another big discussion is the conflict between Ireland and Northern Ireland. In 1998 an 30 year old violent conflict was brought to an end because of the border being opened between the two countries. Brexit will mean that the border will close again, and the old conflict could blow up again. The conflict in Northern Ireland has political and religious roots that are centuries old. The violence started in Northern Ireland where thousands of people died in different attacks by both sides. People who believed that Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom was mainly the protestant unionist community; the ones who wanted to leave the UK was mainly the catholic nationalists. In 1999 counter-protests from citizens who are loyal to the british crown started; these protests spiralled into brutal and homicidal. Around 3,600 people died during the 30 year war between the two sides. If the United Kingdom leave the European Union it may lead to the conflict to start again. Is brexit worth more than the lives of innocent people?

It is crazy that England can leave the European Union with a good concussions! Perhaps the government should look back and see the consequences the conflict had on the people living in the countries. People living close to the border had to be aware of the hazards of living there constantly! No one should ever feel scared when they are at home. Under these 30 years, bombs and other violent actions were made from both the catholics and protestants. Citizens close to the border and in UK, Northern Ireland and Ireland will feel frightened. They don’t know when or where the next attack will happen, you should feel safe and secure in your home. Not scared and frightened that one in your family or yourself could pass away in a tragic manner.

If there is no hard-Brexit the chances are big that old enemies will begin to argue, but not only that, they will use violence to try to control each other and this will affect innocent people exactly as much as the people involved in the organisations who create the disorder. This struggle will disturb the peace we’ve had now for almost 30 years! Why repeat the past again? We want peace, not war. Can’t we solve this in another way than to try to kill one another? Have peaceful demonstrations and state your opinion in a peaceful way, don’t bomb houses with opposing viewpoint.

Politicians in United Kingdom think twice before you leave the EU. Is Brexit really worth the risk of war? Think about the lives of innocent people who can lose their relatives because you wanted the benefits that comes with being a member of the European Union without being a member. People of Europe, let’s get together and preserve the peace between Ireland and Northern Ireland, let’s state our opinion in an calm and harmonious manner! A non-violent manner.

Reference list:

BBC, 2019. Quick guide: Northern Ireland conflict. (online). Available at:
You define the conflict of the Irish border in a simple but easy to read kind of way.

Your opinions are clear but you could go deeper into your explanations of why you have this opinion (välgrundad och nyanserad redogöra för...)

You are vaguely discuss your opinion but you do not draw conclusions of what could happen based upon your solution.

You have some problem with missing or using the wrong word. Also consider how you use your tense. You go back and forth a bit in time on your verbs.
Feedback 1

Hey John Doe,

Nice job with this, and I think this gives us a solid example of your strengths and weaknesses so that you can move forward knowing what things to focus on.

What I'm quite happy with is your tone while you write, and that you have used linking words and phrases to help structure and add flow in your writing! These things are important so keep up the good work in this regard.

Overview:

Your introduction works well and has the funnel shape we discussed — well done!

Your summary represents the episode well, yet it is slightly on the long side. This is not a deal breaker for me, but consider how you could condense the episode even more, or give the same information in less words. As I said earlier, the writing flows well and I’m happy about that.

You have done well referring to articles in your response! Moving forward, do your best and even make it a general rule to comment on and develop the information that you have brought in. Here, you have mentioned the articles and have given a short representation of their points as you should, but then moved on without discussing.

Grammatically, you have a few reoccurring mistakes that will need some deliberate studying and practicing to fix:

- Verbs: verb forms & subject verb agreement (check mistakes marked in [red] and consider improvements)
- Commas: unnecessary commas & comma splices
- Articles: a/an

If you were to go through the subject-verb agreement, commas, and comma-splice exercises at https://chomchomp.com/exercises.htm you would come out an expert.

For verb tenses and articles I suggest you review and take the quizzes found at https://www.englishpage.com/index.html
Social lessons from Black Mirror

Technological development has changed how people interact and communicate with each other. Through the invention of smartphones, social media and the Internet, we encounter thousands of strangers who we think we know, just from their posts. The episode Accessed directed by Joe Wright for the series Black Mirror (2016) touches on the topic of social media and tells us a story about the future where, along with a technologically modernized society, people’s activities and engagement are mainly revolving around their reputation on their digital lifestyle. It is also showing a concept for a rating system of people (similarly to rating places on Google Maps) and its consequences. In this essay I’m going to summarize the most important points of the episode’s plot and then do a response to it, trying to find what’s relevant from the episode in our real world.

In the episode we follow Lacie Pound, a woman obsessed with using social media and therefore, creating an artificial life she’s living in, in order to obtain a high social score. The community Lacie is living in has a ranking system, where people can rate each other based on how well they behave in society. Based on how high their ranking is, they’ll get certain benefits like access to certain places or more ways to travel.

Lacie tries to get a new apartment in a certain area, however, she can’t access a special program to get a discount on the rent, in order to be qualified to that program, she needs to have a certain ranking score. She seeks help in company specializing in social rankings, where she gets told that in order to get a high ranking in a short period of time, she needs to get it from people that are already high ranked in the community. One of them is Naomi, an old college friend of Lacie that invites her to her wedding (as a Maid of Honour), where high rated people are going to be. Lacie sees it as a great opportunity to boost her ranking.

However, the trip to Naomi doesn’t go as planned and due to a sequence of events, Lacie lowers her score so she can’t access the flight to Naomi’s. She attempts to hitchhike and a truck stops and a woman with a very low score invites Lacie to ride with her, which she reluctantly accepts. Here we start to follow Lacie’s transformation and her frustration about the ranking system.

During their ride, the woman told Lacie her story about how she once had a high rating and how she lost her husband to cancer, because he hadn’t had a rating enough to get a special...
treatment. At the end of the trip, the woman tells Lacie to be herself. Sooner, Lacie gets another phone call from Naomi, where she says that she doesn't want her at the wedding, which makes Lacie very angry. When she finally gets to the wedding and instead of her planned speech, she tells the guests how she was used by Naomi in college. Eventually she gets arrested and freed from her phone. Later, she encounters a man from a cell next to her and unable to rate him down, she starts an offensive dialogue, releasing her true emotions and herself.

Personally, I can relate to the topic concerning the addiction of social media, especially the act of making your life seem good in front of others. Things like Lacie biting of the cookie and not eating it, just to take a good picture or her preparing for the conversation with Naomi in the chaotic real life, is similar to what I often see on social media. Just the act of making every aspect of someone's life perfect seems like something that is doomed to fail, because life can be (if we want it or not) quite messy, that it makes it impossible to just ignore and move on.

In an article about why we are addicted to the likes of social media, it was stated that the structure of today's social media is very similar to what Lacie experienced while trying to acquire her “boost”, that you need to have an dedicated group of people liking your posts in order to maintain the high status (Reo, 2018).

Another interesting theme throughout the episode is the process of dehumanization people with low ranking and not looking for their real skills. Imagine a world where you, having great skills in woodworking, can't get a job at the furniture store, because your social score does not meet the store's criteria, just because you called someone a bad word. It changes the way people see each other and personally, I think that the whole rating system could be implemented maybe as a test, because for me, that could entirely change how we communicate in society. However, according to an article on an American business site, China is already implementing an rating system, similar to the one in the episode where similarly, people would get punished for doing bad things in society and therefore, lower their ranking that would disable some perks, for example: ways to commute, good jobs or acceptance into university, all to glorify idea of being trustworthy (Ma, 2018).
In conclusion, Nosedive, shows an interesting concept of digital media having a real impact on society, where people’s morals, actions and even their lives are controlled by how the society rates you. I think however that that the director’s premise was to put this idea in an exaggerated world, with the oversaturated colours and the sets where everything is brutally modern and clean, almost cold. Lacie’s “digital” persona seems to be exaggerated though, just in the way she acts in front of the mirror, laughing or being very overenthusiastic while talking to Naomi and other people. However, I think that this was the directors idea to present the impact of society to change your own lifestyle and fake your emotions.

Sources


Hey John Doe,

Strong language and grammar!

Summary: the length is fine – some important details are left out while less important events are explained more comprehensively – see comments

Nice work with sources – the quotes are on the long side. 4 or more lines should normally become block quotes, so consider using both paraphrasing and chunks of the quotes worked into and blended with your own words.

Great conclusion!
A summary and response on Black Mirror: Nosedive

As technology continues to develop, identifying with your culture and family has turned to individualism. By using the internet, you have access to everything you need to build perspective regarding individuals. Constantly being at display for other people has made the person you show online more important than the person you are. For example, some people prefer to look successful rather than being successful, to make their image look acceptable. Unfortunately, that’s the state of mind people have. The episode of Black Mirror called Nosedive is a satirical depiction of our need to display ourselves in a certain way in order to be accepted, in a world where people live their lives entirely through social media. In this essay I shall discuss the effect of social media on the modern world by analyzing the message of Nosedive.

The episode was about a woman named Lacie, and a society that was obsessed with an application that rated people on a scale of one to five. As Lacie went to work, at the beginning of her day she constantly tried to get to know people better, only for the sake of getting a higher score. Lacie later went to a real estate agent and was interested in buying an apartment. But unfortunately, she didn’t have enough money to make the purchase. Then the realtor offered her a discount, only with a certain rating. Lacie knew that she had a friend named Naomi with a good rating and saw that as an opportunity to get the rating that’s required for the discount. She played a part of a dog, and expects her friend to respond, since the dog is in a mutual childhood memory of theirs. As Naomi responded to her post, Lacie also got an invitation to her wedding. She couldn’t be more excited to travel, but that excitement transformed into misfortune since the way to the wedding didn’t go as planned. Lacie runs into a lot of hindrance on her journey to Naomi’s wedding. Starting with that she got in trouble at the airport, rented a car that ran out of electricity and barely joined a random group of people in their car. Lacie got a call from Naomi, who asked her why she’s late to the wedding. As Lacie tried to explain herself, the people in the car seemed overheard the call and realized that Lacie was taking advantage of them. They locked her out of the vehicle in the middle of the street and Lacie now had to find another way to Naomi. A truck driving woman suddenly offered her a ride to the location of the wedding. As Lacie arrived at the destination, uninvited, she got herself in trouble and locked up in jail.

As the audience of Nosedive, we relate to the subject matter of the episode, despite the exaggerated presentation. This could be the future that awaits us. We already live in a world where social media monitors every day of our life. If current trends persist, Nosedive could become reality. A society built on people who would rather create a non-genuine image of themselves than being what they really are. Social media may feel like a way to increase your self-confidence by getting recognizable, but that boost is temporary. This is not likely to be a long-term solution for all of us, as Erin Brown in her article regarding this topic: “Study after study has found that when we engage with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, we may feel a temporary boost from likes or favorites, but there’s absolutely no link between social media use and long-term happiness. Some research suggests the opposite, in fact, that social media use is linked with an increase in negative feelings.” (Biansuno, Insider, 2016). The problem isn’t that people don’t know how temporary this boost is, but as people strive for recognition and status, they make social media the go to. As social media
keeps growing in number of users in combination with developing technology, upcoming generations will prioritize and sacrifice their life for it.

The main thing that will bother the older generations is how much time of their real lives the youth misses out on. Seeing young people do conventional things, such as playing football or taking a walk, may not be as normal in the future. In fact, a group called Marketing 91 has written about this manner: “People of today’s generation give so much importance to social media nowadays that it has become their priority. They love being in the social media sites and forget about all the things that should come first for them like family, sports and schools.” (Marketing 91, 2016). If social media companies started taking responsibility and limited how much time a user can spend on their platform, social media could cease to be an unhealthy aspect of many people’s lives.

I have come to the conclusion that social media does have many negative aspects and is unhealthy to the young people in our society. While originally used as a tool, and a way of connecting the world, it later became the main way for us to evaluate and judge ourselves and others. Furthermore, it’s not even an evaluation of each other, but rather of each other’s façades. It’s a charade that we’re all way too emotionally invested in. All this time wasted on social media could be spent with friends and loved ones. It could be spent pursuing a passion, or on education. We will have to reevaluate if we don’t want Nosedive to become a reality.

Sources

