EFL SECONDARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADVANTAGES AND DIFFICULTIES OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK BY QUESTIONING IN WRITING

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Abstract:

This paper reports a descriptive study to enquire into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) secondary and high school (K-12) students' perceptions about the advantages and difficulties of written feedback by questioning in writing. This paper draws on the data collected as part of a larger project including questionnaires and focus-group interviews. The findings reveal that students held positive perceptions about the impact of written feedback by questioning in writing, particularly on motivation, writing skills, and attitudes and preferences.

Keywords: EFL K-12 students, perceptions, written feedback by questioning, writing, Vietnam

1. Introduction

Research on giving written feedback by questioning in writing has mentioned its role and positive impact on students' writing learning in recent years. There are many authors and researchers who have studied the benefits and challenges of feedback by questioning. For example, Chandler (2003) made a study on the efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing; Omer Hassan (2011) investigated a study about EFL students' affective reactions to and perceptions of their teachers' written feedback; and Napaporn (2012) conducted a study to discover teacher written feedback for L2 learners' writing development. With the function of facilitating the improvement of students' writing skills, giving written feedback by questioning in writing has been applied in teaching and learning writing foreign languages like English.

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However, very few studies have been conducted to investigate the perceptions of students about giving written feedback by questioning in writing, especially in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam and K-12 level. The study aimed to examine students' perceptions of the advantages and difficulties that they perceive of this method. As a result, the research question is as follows: What advantages and difficulties do EFL secondary and high school students perceive about the written feedback by questioning in writing? The study procedures and findings are reported in this paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Perceptions

Like most concepts within the social science disciplines, perception has been defined in a variety of ways. According to Lindsay and Norman (1977), perception is the process by which organisms interpret and organize sensations to produce a meaningful experience of the world. Rao and Narayan (1988) interpret that perception as the process whereby people select, organize, and interpret sensory stimulations into meaningful information about their work environment. In addition, Wang (2007) defines perception as a set of internal sensational cognitive processes of the brain, relates, interprets, and searches for internal cognitive information in the mind.

However, in this study, the term perception is defined as a set of internal sensational cognitive processes of the brain, relates, interprets, and searches for internal cognitive information in the mind (Wang, 2007). Also, the term perception is used to refer to a person's perceptual experiences at a higher level of information processing.

2.2 Writing

Writing is one of the communication tools. Writing is a combination of process and product. For Nunan (1989), writing is an extremely complex cognitive task where the writer is expected to demonstrate control of variables altogether. Similarly, White and Arndt (1991) take writing as far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own right. It is a permanent record, as a form of expression and as a means of communication. Nunan (2001) says writing is a process and it focuses more on various classroom activities which are believed to promote the development of skilled language use. Besides, Brown (2001), writing is a process of generating ideas, organizing them coherently, using discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, revising text for clearer meaning, editing text for appropriate grammar and producing a final product. Linse (2005) states that writing is an integral skill of successful second language learning.

In this paper, writing is a process of generating ideas, organizing them coherently, using discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, revising text for clearer meaning, editing text for appropriate grammar and producing a final product (Brown, 2001).

2.3 Written Feedback

According to Parks (2006), there are three categories of teacher written feedback that is often used: form-focused feedback, content-based feedback and integrated feedback. Form-focused feedback or feedback on students' grammar, is one of the most often employed strategies in the past. This feedback focuses primarily on the student's grammatical knowledge, and teachers solely fix grammatical features. It is thought that during the feedback process, L2 students become aware of the kind of grammatical errors they frequently make and acquire grammar rules, allowing them to avoid making the same mistakes in later compositions. Truscott (1996) argued that grammar correction in L2 classrooms should be abandoned because it is not effective thanks to previous studies of grammar correction in L1 and L2 classrooms. Content or meaning-based feedback deals with the quality of the content and organizational features in students' composition. Teachers will comment on elements of the work that do not make sense without pointing out specific grammatical problems in this form of feedback (Park, 2006). According to Park (2006), integrated feedback is the combination of grammar correction with content-related feedback. This type of feedback is to make an attempt to address the drawback associated with using only one type of feedback.

2.3.1 Benefits of Written Feedback

According to Sommer (1982) who states that written feedback writing enhances students' language learning and development of their writing skills as it offers them the opportunities to notice, discover, negotiate, discuss, and interact. This type of feedback is required for the development of students' writing abilities (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990). Thanks to written feedback, students reinforce what they have learned while also assisting them in learning new structures, vocabulary, principles, and methods for organizing and developing the content of their written compositions. Students are cognitively challenged to reflect on the clues provided by the teacher, who functions as a reflective agent (Pollard, 1990), providing meaningful and appropriate guidance to students' cognitive structuring skills deriving from students' prior experience, through written feedback. Furthermore, written feedback is information given to a student with the goal of helping them improve their performance (Ur, 1996). In terms of advantages, according to Cooper (2000), written feedback is the most useful form of feedback and it is helpful and useful in revision which promotes self-regulated learning. Hyland (2006), feedback is usually regarded as an important technique for improving students' writing abilities. It is believed that written feedback encourages students to develop their writing and consolidate their learning (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Students can then apply these hints to the context in which an error exists, establish the error's location, and repair the problem using their newly acquired knowledge. Also, Wiggins (2012) states that feedback will provide the learner with a better understanding of what to do in order to make their writing skills proficient.

The feedback that helps students understand where they go wrong is the most helpful, presumably in part thanks to its benefits. Firstly, it encourages students to do the

right acts by rewarding their original ideas, well-organized written works, and correct and appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. This would give students more confidence in their ability to use these concepts and frameworks in their future writing (Ellis, 2009). Moreover, written feedback can help students improve their writing skills by pointing them in the direction of tools and techniques that can help them better their written texts' language, organization, and content. Finally, whenever students discover their writing performance is not good enough, written feedback can be a guide to help them to make their writing better and improve their writing performance (Elshirbini & Elashri, 2013). They can be elicited with the good and not good points in their writings so that they orient or plan the upcoming writing learning path.

Written feedback, according to Ferris and Roberts (2001), is a very beneficial method for helping students recognize and rectify their faults on their own rather than playing a passive role in error correction. In addition, students feel that written feedback is useful in encouraging them to reflect on aspects of their writing and to develop improvements (Miceli, 2006). Written feedback forces students to engage in guided learning and problem-solving, which encourages the type of reflection, observing, and attention that leads to long-term learning (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). According to Lewis (2002), giving feedback entails informing students about their accomplishments as well as pointing out areas where they might improve. Peterson (2010) points out that teachers provide feedback on students' writing to support students' writing development and nurture their confidence as writers. The teacher can use feedback to assist students in comparing their writing to the ideal draft and identifying their own strengths and faults (Srichanyachon, 2012).

According to Chandler (2003), the majority of students prefer that their writing be checked and corrected by the teacher, and that receiving feedback from the teacher by underlining the problem with description is the best method to learn not to repeat errors in the future. Students believed that receiving written feedback made them more independent and helped them understand things better. Ferris and Roberts (2001) back up this argument by stating that written feedback is an effective method for long-term learning. Brookhart (2010) states that written feedback provides students with the information they require to understand where they are in their learning and what steps they should take next. Written feedback, students believe, is helpful in encouraging them to reflect on aspects of their writing and make adjustments (Miceli, 2006). The findings of Rizki (2019) also reveal three benefits of written feedback that are; improving writing quality and language skills, encouraging critical reasoning, and promoting learning autonomy. Lalande (1982) recognizes the significance of self-discovery and its impact on long-term, sustainable writing improvement when giving written feedback to students writing.

2.3.2 Challenges of Written Feedback
Freedman (1987) states that written feedback sometimes leads to the misunderstanding of written responses in their subsequent compositions. In addition, Leki (1990) believes

that students only focus on spelling and grammatical errors while they ignore the content and organization of their writing while Truscott (1996) mentions that some of the students do not understand teachers' questions. In addition, Hyland (1998) discovered that the less capable student lost confidence and was unwilling to revise independently, preferring instead to rely on teacher comments. According to Hyland and Hyland (2008), written feedback given by the teacher to the students is almost always misinterpreted or misunderstood by the students and they barely put it into practice. Students feel that they spend a lot of time correcting their errors but they are not sure whether their correction is correct or not (Hamouda, 2011).

2.4 Questioning

The questioning technique is one of the techniques in prewriting that can help the writer to explore ideas and focus their thoughts. By asking questions, it can help the writer identify and develop their ideas in writing. Questioning is one type of top-down processing activity (Ajideh, 2006). Besides, questioning is one of the most conventional classroom activities used to scaffold students' learning processes to facilitate explanation construction, planning, monitoring, and evaluating, and making justifications (Ge & Land, 2003). Teachers use questions to promote students' knowledge construction and reflection (King, 1994), reasoning (McDaniel & Donnelly, 1996), problem-solving (King, 1991), and metacognition (Chen & Uden, 2009). Questioning is used as a tool of teaching, learning and assessing students' comprehension of texts (Durkin, 1978; Presley, 2000). As Nazario, et al (2010) claims that the questioning technique asks the writer to take a journalist's approach in gathering information. Besides that, questioning techniques reveal a wealth of details for enriching the paragraph. This process is particularly productive to stimulate active thinking and help students to generate and focus on specific ideas in writing (Liu, 2006). As Gatz (2004) mentions, questioning is designed to help students to generate and focus on specific ideas while writing. According to Ryoo (2011), the questioning technique is an effective way of teaching English writing for English as Foreign Language college students. This technique helps students generate ideas to write down with a sense of direction or organization in their writing. Furthermore, Laneaux (2009) states that the questioning technique consists of relevant questions about the topic that can lead to ideas. By asking the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the topic, it can help the writer to explore the topic deeper into what the prompt may be asking. Yang (2008) states that praise, question and advice are ways to develop a critical approach that can be used in future writing in order to achieve a general guideline for writing constructive comments.

In this paper, the questioning technique is used as a written feedback method in writing classes by EFL teachers.

3. Materials and Methods

To address the research question, this paper was a descriptive design using a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative data (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

In particular, quantitative data was used to generalize the findings while qualitative data was designed to provide a comprehensive explanation for the initial quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the use of both approaches helps the researcher to fully understand the problem of the study based on the analysis of both statistical data and in-depth views from interviews.

For quantitative data, a questionnaire was utilized to assemble data about the benefits and challenges of EFL secondary and high school students' perceptions about the written feedback by questioning in writing. Next, for qualitative data, a focus-group interview was used to know about the students' perceptions of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. From the focus-group interview, deep insights into participants' perceptions about giving written feedback by questioning their learning were explored.

The questionnaire includes two main parts on the benefits and challenges of written feedback by questioning. In terms of benefits, there were five clusters of advantages with 33 items. They are writing skills with 14 items, motivation for writing with 4 items, attitudes and preferences with 7 items, independent learning with 6 items and time with 2 items. The challenge also has five clusters with 13 items. They included writing skills with 4 items, motivation with 2 items, attitudes and preferences with 3 items, knowledge with 2 items and time with 2 items. After the questionnaire was designed, it was checked by the supervisor. Then, it was piloted with 43 EFL secondary and high school students who shared the same learning context with the target participants. The pilot questionnaire was conducted via Google form. After the participants had completed it, the researcher ran SPSS version 22.0 to check the reliability of the collected data from the pilot questionnaire. The reliability of the pilot questionnaire was high (α = .74). Which meant that the questionnaire was reliable for official questionnaire administration. The contents of the official questionnaire would not change.

The participants of the pilot study were excluded from the official research. The survey was conducted on Google Forms. After one week, 136 responses from the students were returned through Google Forms (students of grades 8 and 9, and students of grades 10, 11 and 12).

The two focus-group interviews were conducted with six students per group. These students were recruited based on 2 criteria. The first criterion was the grades (group 1 was secondary students and group 2 was high school students). The second criterion was based on the English grade point average (GPA) of students (some had the high GPA – above 6.5 and some had low ones – below 6.4). The participants were asked similar questions to those in the questionnaire. All the questions were about the benefits

and challenges of giving written feedback by questioning their learning writing, and what they did to overcome these difficulties. The researcher used some sub-questions when necessary to elicit participants to answer as well as to go deep into a discussion for more insights.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of students' information for focus-group interviews. The table indicates students' pseudonyms, grades and English GPA.

Table 3.1: Students' Information for Focus-group Interview

	Pseudonyms	Grades	English GPA
Group 1	Olive	8	8.3
	Tina	8	7.4
	Kris	8	4.8
	Kevin	9	8.4
	Kyo	9	6.2
	Nina	9	5.2
Group 2	Tom	10	9.1
	Mary	10	5.3
	Thomas	11	8.5
	Lee	11	5.6
	Leo	12	8.8
	Ivan	12	4.2

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results from the Questionnaire
4.1.1 EFL Secondary and High School Students Perceive the Advantages of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

For the advantages of written feedback by questioning in writing, this questionnaire consists of 33 items. The result of the reliability scale test for this part indicated high reliability (α=.98). A Descriptive Statistics Test was run on the total mean score of the students' perceptions of the advantages of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The result was shown in 4.1.

Table 4.1: Students' Overall Perceptions of the Benefits
of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing (N=136)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Benefits	1.00	5.00	4.10	.71

As observed in Table 4.1, it can be seen that the mean score of the students' perceptions about the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing was high (M = 4.10).

The first 33 items aiming to find out EFL secondary and high school students' perceptions about the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing consisted of five clusters including (1) writing skills, (2) motivation for writing, (3)

attitudes and preferences, (4) independent learning and (5) time. Table 4.2 shows the results of the students' perceptions of each cluster from the highest mean score to the lowest mean score.

Table 4.2: Students' Perceptions of Particular Benefits
of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing (N=136)

Clusters	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Motivation	1.00	5.00	4.24	.79
Writing skills	1.00	5.00	4.23	.82
Attitudes and preferences	1.00	5.00	4.23	.82
Independent learning	1.00	5.00	4.21	.82
Time	1.00	5.00	2.12	1.1

From Table 4.2, it can be seen that among five groups of benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing, students perceived more advantages with motivation than in other areas including writing skills, attitudes and preferences, independent learning and time. The mean score of motivation (M=4.24) is higher than that of writing skills (M=4.23), attitudes and preferences (M=4.23), independent learning (M=4.21) and time (M=2.12). As a result, EFL secondary and high school students perceived the most benefit of using written feedback by questioning in writing in terms of motivation and the least benefit of using written feedback by questioning in writing from students' perceptions in terms of time.

A. Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Motivation

As shown in Table 4.2, cluster Motivation took the highest mean score (M=4.42, SD=.82). A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Motivation gained a high level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Students' Perceptions of Benefits of Giving Written
Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Motivation (N=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
15. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing gives students opportunities to revise, rethink and rewrite their ideas.	1,00	5,00	4,3971	,80073
17. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing promotes students' self-regulated learning.	1,00	5,00	4,2353	,92884
16. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students more motivated to write.	1,00	5,00	4,1691	,89901
18. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing stimulates students to work hard to internalising the correct forms	1,00	5,00	4,1471	1,07861

As can be seen in Table 4.3, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing gives students opportunities to revise, rethink and rewrite their

ideas (M=4.40, SD=.80). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing promotes students self-regulated learning (M=4.24, SD=93). In addition, giving written feedback by questioning in writing is believed to make students more motivated to write (M=4.1, SD=.900). Finally, the students also believed that this technique stimulates them to work hard for internalising the correct forms (M=4.15, SD=1.08). In short, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing gives students opportunities to revise, rethink and rewrite their ideas.

B. Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Writing Skills & Attitudes and Preferences

As shown in Table 4.2, clusters Writing Skills (M=4.23, SD=.79) & Attitudes andPpreferences (M=4.23, SD=.82) took the second place. A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Writing Skills & Attitudes and Preferences gained a high level of agreement. The results are presented in Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 below

Table 4.4: Students' Perceptions of Benefits of Giving Written
Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Writing Skills (N=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
6. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to express their ideas more clearly in writing.	1,00	5,00	4,3162	,86669
9. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to learn new vocabulary.	1,00	5,00	4,3088	,98518
10. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to improve the accuracy of vocabulary use in writing.	1,00	5,00	4,3088	,92308
8. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is very helpful for correcting spelling errors.	1,00	5,00	4,2647	,91275
12. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to improve the grammatical accuracy of their written texts.	1,00	5,00	4,2647	,91275
14. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students more confident in using structures in their future writing.	1,00	5,00	4,2647	,89637
11. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to use a wide range of vocabulary.	1,00	5,00	4, 2279	,91057
4. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete their paragraphs in the correct format.	1,00	5,00	4, 2206	,96372

13. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to learn new structures.	1,00	5,00	4,2059	,93585
3. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete all the required content points.	1,00	5,00	4,1912	,96236
5. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to notice problems of organization.	1,00	5,00	4,1912	,97003
2. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete the task with the teacher's support.	1,00	5,00	4,1691	,98549
7. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to use linking words exactly.	1,00	5,00	4,1618	,98297
1. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to present the ideas in logical order.	1,00	5,00	4,1471	1,00760

As can be seen in the Table 4.4, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to express their ideas more clearly in writing (M=4.31, SD=.87). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to learn new vocabulary (M=4.31, SD=.99). Giving written feedback by questioning in writing is believed to help students to improve the accuracy vocabulary use in writing (M=4.31, SD=.92). The participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is very helpful for correcting the spelling errors (M=4.26, SD=.91). Giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to improve their grammatical accuracy of their written texts, the students believed (M=4.26, SD=.91). The students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes them more confident for using structures in their future writing (M=4.26, SD=.90). In addition, the students stated that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete their paragraph with the correct format (M=4.22, SD=.96). They also thought that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to use a wide range of vocabulary (M=4.23, SD=.91). The participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to learn new structures (M=4.21, SD=.94). They also stated that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete all the required content points (M=4.19, SD=.96). The students believed that this technique helps them to notice problems of organization (M=4.20, SD=.97). Further more, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to complete the task with teacher's support (M=4.17, SD=.99). They also believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to use linking words exactly (M=4.16, SD=.98). Finally, the students also believed that this technique helps them to present the ideas in logical order (M=4.15, SD=1.01). In short, the students believed that giving written

feedback by questioning in writing helps students to express their ideas more clearly in writing.

Table 4.5: Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback
by Questioning in Writing on Attitudes and Preferences (N=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
19. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses.	1,00	5,00	4,3309	,87817
23. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing builds a supportive classroom climate.	1,00	5,00	4,2574	,94278
25. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing gives students the opportunity to actively participate in the problem-solving within the writing learning process.	1,00	5,00	4,2500	,83222
20. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing can shape students' thinking, attitudes and behaviors to achieve the purpose of writing learning.	1,00	5,00	4,2426	,86492
21. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students feel less threatened, friendlier and more supportive.	1,00	5,00	4,2132	,99932
24. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing provides opportunities for interaction between teachers and students.	1,00	5,00	4,1912	1,02931
22. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing stimulates students' interest and motivates their enthusiasm in the study.	1,00	5,00	4,1691	,93139

As can be seen in Table 4.5, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses (M=4.33, SD=.88). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing builds a supportive classroom climate (M=4.26, SD=.94). The participants agreed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing gives students the opportunity to actively participate in the problem solving within the writing learning process (M=4.25, SD=.83). The participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing can shape students' thinking, attitudes and behaviors to achieve the purpose of writing learning (M=4.24, SD=.86). The participants stated that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students feel less threatened, friendlier and more supportive (M=4.21, SD=1.00). The students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing provides opportunities for interaction between teachers and students (M=4.19, SD=1.03). Finally, the students also believed that this technique stimulates students' interest and motivates their enthusiasm in the study (M=4.17, SD=.93). In short, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses.

C. Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Independent Learning

As shown in Table 4.2, clusters Independent learning (M=4.21, SD=.82) took the third position.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Independent learning gained a high level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback
by Questioning in Writing on Independent Learning (N=136)

Statements	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
26. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing leads students to long-term learning.	1,00	5,00	4,3456	,86392
29. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to solve problems by themselves.	1,00	5,00	4,3088	,86508
28. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to refer to the feedback again and again and continue to learn from it.	1,00	5,00	4,2647	,96021
31. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to accomplish proofreading more attentively.	1,00	5,00	4,1544	,90985
27. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing leads students to be responsible for their writing.	1,00	5,00	4,1250	,97705
30. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to improve students critical thinking skills.	1,00	5,00	4,0515	1,10433

As can be seen in Table 4.6, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing leads students to long-term learning (M=4.35, SD=.86). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to solve problems by themselves (M=4.31, SD=.87). Giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to refer to the feedback again and again and continue to learn from it (M=4.26, SD=.96). The participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students to accomplish proofreading more attentively (M=4.15, SD=.91). The participants stated that giving written feedback by questioning in writing leads students to be responsible for their writing (M=4.13, SD=.98). Finally, the students also believed that this technique helps students to improve students' critical thinking skill (M=4.05, SD=1.10). From the items above, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing leads students to long-term learning.

D. Students' Perceptions about Benefits of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Time

As shown in Table 4.2, clusters Independent learning (M=2.12, SD=.11) took the lowest place.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Time gained a low level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Students' Perceptions of Benefits of Giving
Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Time (N=136)

Statements	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
33. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students have time to study on their own	1,00	5,00	2,1324	1,14056
32. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps teachers save time correcting errors in class.	1,00	5,00	2,1103	1,20291

As can be seen in Table 4.7, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps students have time to study on their own (M=2.13, SD=1.14). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helps teachers save time correcting errors in class (M=2.11, SD=1.20).

In order to compare the perceptions of the secondary school students (grades 8 and 9) and high school students (grade 10, 11 and 12) about the advantages of using written feedback by questioning in writing, an Independent Samples T-test was run to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of their perceptions. The findings are summarized in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: Secondary School Students' and High School Students' Perceptions
about the Benefits of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

	Grades	N	Mean	SD	P (value)
Benefits	8,9	60	4.20	.61	.40
	10,11,12	76	4.03	.78	

As shown in Table 4.8, the results signified no difference between the two groups of students' perceptions in general about the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

The Independent Sample T-test detected no significant difference in the mean scores of the two groups of students' perceptions in terms of the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing (P=0.40>0.05).

In conclusion, the findings indicated no statistically significant differences between the two groups of students' views on the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

In order to compare the perceptions of the K-12 students with different English GPA levels about the benefits of using written feedback by questioning in writing, an Independent Samples T-test was run to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of their perceptions: group 1 included students with English GPA above 6.5 – good and excellent students and group 2 consisted of students

with English GPA under 6.5 – fair and weak students. The findings are summarized in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: K-12 Students Whose English GPA about the Benefits of
Using Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

	English GPA	N	Mean	SD	P (Value)
Benefits	From 6.5 to 10	92	4.13	.73	.71
	From 3.5 to 6.4	44	4.03	.66	

As shown in Table 4.9 the results signified no difference between the two groups of students with different English GPA levels regarding the advantages of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The Independent Sample T-test detected no significant difference in perceptions between the two groups of students with different English GPA levels in terms of the advantages of giving written feedback by questioning in writing (P=0.71>0.05). In conclusion, the findings indicated no statistically significant differences between the two groups of students with different English GPA levels on the advantages of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

4.1.2 EFL K-12 Students Perceive the Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

This section would present the results from the questionnaire about the students' perceptions of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The overall perceptions of students are provided, and then the comparisons of their perceptions according to clusters and gender are offered.

Thirteen items have checked the reliability via IBM SPSS Ver. 22. The result showed that the reliability of this section was (α=.94), which means that this section of the questionnaire was highly reliable.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run on the total mean score of the students' perceptions of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The result was indicated in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Students' Perceptions of the Challenges
of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing (N=136)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Challenges	1.00	4.92	2.34	1.13

As observed in Table 4.10, it can be seen that the mean score of the students' perceptions of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing was low (M = 2.34). In other words, the students did not perceive many challenges or difficulties when their teachers of writing used this feedback technique.

The 13 items aiming to find out EFL K-12 students' perceptions about challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing consisted of five clusters including (1) time, (2) knowledge, (3) attitudes and preferences, (4) writing skills and (5) motivation.

Table 4.11 shows the results of the students' perceptions of each cluster from the highest to the lowest mean score.

Table 4.11: Students' Perceptions about Particular Challenges of
Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing (N=136)

Clusters	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Time	1.00	6.00	2.43	1.11
Knowledge	1.00	5.00	2.43	1.32
Attitudes and preferences	1.00	5.00	2.35	1.23
Writing skills	1.00	5.00	2.29	1.19
Motivation	.09	.45	.21	.11
Total Mean = 2.34				

From Table 4.11, it can be seen that among five challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing, students perceived more challenges with time and knowledge than other areas including motivation, writing skills, attitudes and preferences. The mean score of time is the same as knowledge (M=2.43) is higher than that of attitudes and preferences (M=2.35), writing skills (M=2.29) and motivation (M=0.21). As a result, EFL K-12 students perceived the most challenges of using written feedback by questioning in writing in terms of time and knowledge and the least challenge of using written feedback by questioning in writing from students' perceptions in terms of motivation.

D. Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Time and Knowledge
As shown in Table 4.11, cluster Time (M=2.43, SD=1.11) and cluster Knowledge (M=2.43, SD=1.32) took the low mean score.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Time gained a low level of agreement. The result is presented in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 below.

Table 4.12: Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving
Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Time

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
45. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing often takes a lot of time for students to correct their mistakes.	1,00	11,00	2,4559	1,55334
46. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes teachers spend a lot of time questioning.	1,00	5,00	2,4044	1,35744

As can be seen in Table 4.13, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing often takes a lot of time for students to correct the mistakes (M=2.46, SD=1.55). Next, students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes teachers spend a lot of time questioning (M=2.40, SD=1.36).

Table 4.13: Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written
Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Knowledge (N=136)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
43. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is difficult for students to understand the teacher's questions.	1,00	5,00	2,4265	1,35882
44. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students not sure of the accuracy of students' correction.	1,00	5,00	2,4265	1,35882

As can be seen in Table 4.13, students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is difficult for students to understand the teacher's questions (M=2.43, SD=1.36). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes them not sure of the accuracy of students' corrections (M=2.43, SD=1.35).

E. Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Attitudes and Preferences
As shown in Table 4.11, cluster Attitudes and preferences took the low mean score (M=2.35, SD=1.23).

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Attitudes and Preferences gained a low level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written
Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Attitudes and Preferences (M=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
41. I believe that students are not familiar with the giving written feedback technique.	1,00	5,00	2,3971	1,31813
40. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is extremely stressful for some students.	1,00	5,00	2,3309	1,28844
42. I believe that students will show negative emotional reactions such as frustration and dissatisfaction when receiving written feedback by questioning in writing.	1,00	5,00	2,3235	1,28168

As can be seen in Table 4.14, students believed that the students also believed that they are not familiar with the giving written feedback technique (M=2.40, SD=1.32). Next, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing is extremely stressful for some students (M=2.33, SD=1.29). Finally, the students also believed that they will show negative emotional reactions such as frustration and dissatisfaction when receiving written feedback by questioning in writing (M=2.32, SD=1.28).

F. Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Writing skills

As shown in Table 4.11, cluster Motivation took the low mean score (M=2.29, SD=1.19).

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Writing skills gained a low level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written
Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Writing Skills (N=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
39. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students ignore the organization of the written text.	1,00	5,00	2,5221	1,41404
38. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students ignore the content of the written text.	1,00	5,00	2,3088	1,39052
36. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students focus only on grammatical errors	1,00	5,00	2,1765	1,22252
37. I believe giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students focus only on spelling	1,00	5,00	2,1397	1,21212

As can be seen in Table 4.15, the students believed that this technique makes them ignore the organization of the written text (M=2.52, SD=1.41). Next, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students ignore the content of the written text (M=2.31, SD=1.40). The participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students focus only on grammatical errors (M=2.18, SD=1.22). Finally, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students focus only on spelling (M=2.14, SD=1.20). In short, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing makes students ignore the organization of the written text.

G. Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Motivation

As shown in Table 4.11, cluster Motivation took the lowest mean score (M=.21, SD=.11). A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to examine which items of Motivation gained a low level of agreement. The result is presented in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16: Students' Perceptions about Challenges of Giving
Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing on Motivation (N=136)

Statement	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
35. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing overwhelms students.	1,00	5,00	2,3088	1,33619
34. I believe that giving written feedback by questioning in writing discourages students	1,00	5,00	2,2500	1,28091

As can be seen in Table 4.16, the participants believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing overwhelms students (M=2.31, SD=1.34). Next, the students believed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing discourages students (M=2.25, SD=1.28).

In order to compare the perceptions of the secondary school students and the high school students about the challenges of using written feedback by questioning in writing, an Independent Sample T-test was run to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of their perceptions. The findings are summarized in Table 4.17 below.

In the table, there are two groups of students. Group one is for secondary school students (grades 8 and 9), and group two is for high school students (grades 10, 11 and 12).

Table 4.17: K-12 Students' Perceptions of The Challenges of
Using Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

	Grades	N	Mean	SD	P (Value)
Challenges	8,9	60	2.25	1.13	.87
	10,11,12	76	2.42	1.12	

As shown in Table 4.17 the results signified no difference between the K-12 students' perceptions in general about the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

The Independent Sample T-test detected no significant difference in the mean scores of the K-12 students' perceptions in terms of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing (P=0.87>0.05).

In conclusion, the findings indicated no statistically significant differences between the two groups of students' views on the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

In order to compare the perceptions of K-12 with English GPA levels about the challenges of using written feedback by questioning in writing, an Independent Sample T-test was run to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of their perceptions. The findings are summarized in Table 4.18 below. The table indicated that there were two groups of students. Group 1 had an English GPA from 6.5 to 10 and group 2 had an English GPA from 3.5 to 6.4.

Table 4.18: K-12 Students' Perception with GPAs about the
Challenges of Using Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

	Mean scores	N	Mean	SD	P (Value)
Challenges	From 6.5 to 10	92	2.28	1.14	.79
	From 3.5 to 6.4	44	2.47	1.11	

As shown in Table 4.18 the results signified no difference between the two groups of students's perception of the challenges of using written feedback by questioning in writing. The Independent Sample T-test detected no significant difference in the English GPA of the two groups of students' perception with different English GPA levels in terms of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing (P=0.79>0.05). In conclusion, the findings indicated no statistically significant differences between the two groups of students' perception ư on the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing.

4.2 Results from the Interviews
4.2.1 EFL High School Students Perceive the Advantages of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing
Two focus-group interviews were employed and they provided more insights into the students' perceptions of the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The participants were recruited based on the class they studied and their English GPA levels. Below were the results from the interviews about specific areas of advantages, which students perceived.

a. Motivation
When being asked in the interviews, the students also believed that giving feedback by questioning in writing made them more motivated to study.

> "*I feel more motivated to write, sir.*" (Student Olive, grade 8, English GPA 8.3)

> "*Because sometimes I also argue the answer with Tom, teacher.*" (Student Leo, grade 12, English GPA 8.8)

b. Writing Skills
Although there were differences in grade levels and English GPA, most of the students from the two groups agreed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing had its benefits. For instance, thanks to this technique, the students could write correctly and avoid using the wrong structures. Moreover, they stated that they could learn vocabulary and remember the structures better. They also said that they remembered the lessons well. This view is illustrated in the following extracts.

"Yes, I find this method helps me spell correctly, limiting the use of wrong structures." (Student Olive, grade 8, English GPA 8.3)

"Yes. I remember the lessons longer. If there is a spelling mistake, I know how to correct it." (Student Mary, grade 10, English GPA5.3)

c. Attitudes and Preferences

The students from two interview groups stated that they had positive attitudes and preferences when this technique was applied in their classes. They said that they liked writing more and had a better relationship with their classmates.

"At that time, I was afraid to write, but now it's better." (Student Kyo, grade 9, English GPA 6.2)

"Yes, I like writing more and I'm less afraid of being wrong." (Student Leo, grade 12, English GPA 8.8)

d. Independent Learning

There was a similarity between the two interviewed groups. The students stated that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helped them with independent learning. Actually, they themselves could study by asking their classmates or using the Internet to find out the answers to their mistakes. They also mentioned that this technique made them more active in learning. It can be shown in the following extracts.

"Yes, because I find the answer myself. I can ask my classmates and if the question is too difficult, I will ask the teacher." (Student Kyo, grade 9, English GPA 6.2)

"Yes, I also think so because I often go online to find difficult answers if I don't know, teacher." (Student Tom, grade 10, English GPA 9.1)

In conclusion, the results in the questionnaire and in the interview were similar. The students perceived that they had benefits in giving written feedback by questioning in writing including motivation, writing skills, attitudes and preferences, and independent learning and cluster time is not considered as a great benefit.

4.2.2 EFL K-12 Students Perceive the Challenges of Giving Written Feedback by Questioning in Writing

The students' perceptions of the challenges of giving written feedback by questioning in writing were investigated by the focus-group interviews to gain insightful information. Two focus-group interviews with six participants for each group were carried out to answer the second question.

The two interview groups said that they faced challenges of giving written feedback by questioning writing about writing skills, time and knowledge. In spite of differences in English GPA and grade levels, they had similar views as follows

a. Time

"I find it time-consuming to correct the mistakes myself." (Student Kyo, grade 9, English GPA 6.2)

"I find it time-consuming to correct. I think the teachers also take the time to comment on us." (Student Thomas, grade 11, English GPA 8.5)

b. Knowledge
Regarding knowledge about written feedback, the students shared their opinions.

"I'm not very good, so sometimes I don't understand the question. So sometimes ask the teacher again or ask Nina for clarification." (Student Olive, grade 8, English GPA 8.3)

"I find that if the teacher's question has a strange word, I don't understand it." (Student Ivan, grade 12, English GPA 4.2)

The questionnaire results indicated that time and knowledge about giving written feedback by questioning in writing were the most challenges when giving written feedback questioning in writing. It was confirmed in the interview. The students shared their challenges as they lacked time and knowledge about written feedback

4.3 Discussion
This study indicates that the participating students held positive perceptions about the benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing. The following section discusses the findings from this study in relation to the research question on the advantages and difficulties EFL K-12 students perceive about written feedback by questioning in writing.

In terms of benefits, the students achieved five main benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing according to the study. The result consisted of some advantages with Hyland (2006), Sommer (1982), Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) and Ur (1996).

First of all, the first benefit of this study was motivation. The teachers and the students shared that the students could promote students' self-regulated learning. It was similar to the findings of Cooper (2000), which showed that written feedback is the most useful form of feedback and it is helpful and useful in revision which promotes self-regulated learning.

The second benefit of this study was improving and developing students' writing skills. This advantage consisted of the finding of Hyland and Hyland (2006), in which students reinforce what they have learned while also assisting them in learning new structures, vocabulary, principles, and methods for organizing and developing the content of their written compositions. In this study, the teachers and the students agreed that giving written feedback by questioning in writing helped students present the ideas in a logical order and make students more confident in using structures in the future. Also, Wiggins (2012) stated that feedback would provide the learner with a better understanding of what to do in order to make their writing skills proficient. Similar to Ferris and Roberts (2001), they stated that written feedback forces students to engage in guided learning and problem solving, which encourages the type of reflection, observing, and attention that leads to long-term learning.

The third benefit when giving written feedback by questioning was students' attitudes and preferences. This finding is in line with Ferris and Roberts (2001), written feedback by questioning was a very beneficial method for helping students recognize and rectify their faults on their own rather than playing a passive role in error correction.

In this study, the finding pointed out that written feedback could lead students to long-term learning. This finding is in line with the prior study in the literature (Ferris and Roberts, 2001) written feedback forces students to engage in guided learning and problem-solving, which encourages the type of reflection, observing, and attention that leads to long-term learning.

In terms of challenges, the findings revealed that written feedback by questioning took the students a lot of time to correct the mistakes. This finding was in line with Hamouda (2011) students feel that they spend a lot of time correcting their errors but they are not sure whether their correction is correct or not. Moreover, from this finding, students stated that they did not understand the teachers' questions. This was similar to Hyland and Hyland (2008), written feedback given by the teacher to the students is almost always misinterpreted or misunderstood by the students and they barely put it into practice. And Freedman (1987) states that written feedback sometimes leads to the misunderstanding of written responses in their subsequent compositions.

Lastly, this study revealed that students focused on grammatical errors and spelling. This was in line with the prior study by Leki (1990) that stated that students only focus on spelling and grammatical errors while they ignore the content and organization of their writing.

5. Recommendations

This section discusses the practical implications of this study. From the findings, we recognized that the role of administrators was so essential to provide training to EFL K-12 teachers before applying to give written feedback by questioning in writing in certain K-12s.

Firstly, EFL K-12 teachers should survey the topics students like to write about besides the topics in the textbook. Secondly, EFL K-12 teachers should give suggestions/ prompts/ hints clearly as scaffolding so that K-12 students can easily understand what they will do with the assignments, which brings the best results. Moreover, it is suggested that educational leaders and policymakers should make necessary changes or support to motivate both teachers and students to use this method in writing classes to help students achieve the best learning results. Also, school authorities should provide support to teachers by organizing training programs or seminars on this strategy in teaching writing. EFL K-12 teachers should give encouragement policy. For example, teachers give high or bonus marks whenever students do the task well. Thanks to these, students will be motivated to participate in activities in their learning. Besides, EFL K-12 students are advised to be well-prepared for new lessons before coming to the class. They should be active to participate in correcting the errors and feel comfortable asking teachers if they do not understand the questions. Finally, this research investigated the benefits and challenges of giving written questioning in writing, so further research should explore the strategies that EFL K-12 teachers and students can use to overcome the challenges when they apply this method in their teaching and learning.

6. Limitations

Although the current study has reached its aims, it has certain limitations. Firstly, this study was conducted with only students at a private school in the Mekong Delta, for a limited time of 16 weeks. Therefore, the result cannot be generalized to all EFL K-12 students in Vietnam.

Moreover, the study results are based on the self-reported information from the students who participated in the research. There were not any observations or other methods to check the self-reported data.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the objectives of the study have been accomplished. The benefits of giving written feedback by questioning in writing about motivation, writing skills, attitudes and preferences, independent learning, and time were highly valued by the students. Students had certain difficulties with time management, knowledge, attitudes and preferences, writing skills as well as issues with motivation. The students stated that they want to keep giving written feedback by questioning in writing in the future. Hopefully, the research will shed light on how to improve the quality of EFL writing teaching and learning at public and private schools in the Mekong Delta.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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