



Learners' Attitudes Towards Electronic Model Texts as a Feedback Tool

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Abstract

The use of model texts as a feedback tool in English as foreign language (EFL) writing has gained increasing attention in the last two decades. While model texts have been empirically linked to improved writing outcomes, existing research remains limited, largely conducted in Europe and Asia with primary learners and focused on narrative writing. Moreover, learner attitudes have been largely overlooked.

This study addressed these gaps by exploring the attitudes of 31 third-year Algerian undergraduate EFL students regarding the use of electronic model texts as a feedback tool. The research also examined their willingness to revise drafts using these exemplars. A descriptive mixed-methods design guided the study, employing a student questionnaire. Results indicated that students held generally positive attitudes, recognising model texts' value for revision, self-assessment, and performance benchmarking. However, reluctance to revise was observed, and was attributed to learners' concerns about impersonal feedback and rigid application highlighting the need for more personalised and flexible support. The results contribute to the understanding of an under-researched area in EFL writing by revealing connections between feedback effectiveness and learner attitudes. The study highlights the importance of blending model texts with personal feedback and adapting them to learners' needs and level.

Keywords: attitudes; descriptive study; EFL learners; model text feedback; writing

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1. Introduction

Recently, researchers have become increasingly interested about model texts as a feedback tool (MTFT) in EFL writing. Charney and Carlson (1995) defined model texts as “a text written by a specific writer in a specific situation that is subsequently reused to exemplify a genre that generalizes over writers in such situations” (p. 90). Model texts enable EFL learners to not only notice and implement new vocabulary, grammar and expressions when comparing them against their own writings, but also to extend their original ideas by alternative content involved in the texts (Kang, 2020). Numerous empirical studies have proved MTFT's effectiveness in supporting writing development with varying outcomes across contexts.

In narrative and descriptive writing, studies (e.g., Hanaoka, 2007; García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Lázaro-Ibarrola, 2021b) reported that model texts improved learners' noticing and incorporation of lexical features, with limited improvements in grammar. Results also revealed that guided approaches and collaborative settings generated mixed impact. Comparing self-assessment with model-based revision, Criado et al. (2022) noted fluency gains in both groups, with self-editing outperforming model-text use in certain contexts. In argumentative and expository writing, findings from Kang (2020), Wu et al. (2023), Nguyen et al. (2024b), Nguyen et al. (2024c) and Nguyen and Vu (2024a) indicated that MTFT enhanced vocabulary, content, and organisation, with uptake of discourse features stronger among higher-proficiency or analytically skilled learners. Even in non- EFL contexts, such as Strobl's (2015) study with Belgian German second language (L2) learners, model texts improved summary quality in content selection, coherence, and rephrasing, demonstrating cross-context effectiveness.

Beyond cognitive engagement, researchers explored affective responses to MTFT, revealing overall positive attitudes, tempered by challenges related to task difficulty and engagement. The results reported that many learners value model texts for improving vocabulary, content, and coherence (Kang, 2020; Nguyen & Vu, 2024a; Nguyen et al., 2024b; Nguyen et al., 2024c), though low-proficiency students often face texts' comprehension challenges and express a need for explicit feedback. Many studies reported a frequent motivation decline between the comparison and revision stages (García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021a), particularly when texts are perceived as lengthy, advanced, or cognitively demanding. In non EFL contexts, resistance was noted among learners unfamiliar with reflective or constructivist feedback, who mistrusted model-text efficacy and preferred graded correction despite the cognitive gains of the practice (Strobl, 2015). In their systematic review, Nguyen et al. (2024c) confirmed that positive attitudes correlates with greater noticing and incorporation of features, especially lexical, and that engagement directly impacts cognitive gains and writing quality.

Despite this growing body of research on MTFT in various contexts, little attention has been paid to learners' attitudes towards electronic MTFT. This scarcity of research limits understanding of how attitudes relate to feedback effectiveness because feedback, via model texts particularly, depends not only on learners' ability to implement it, but also on their willingness to. Consequently, this study aimed at exploring learners attitudes towards electronic MTFT, and aimed also at investigating their motivation to revise paragraphs using model texts. The following research question (RQ) and sub question guided this study:

RQ1. What are students' attitudes towards MTFT?

RQ2. Does students' use of MTFT reflect their reported attitude?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Background for the Use Model Text as a Feedback tool

The use of model texts shifted from being a teaching material to becoming integral to formative assessment practices. For instance, Hyland (2003) conceptualised model texts as a stage in the teaching-learning cycle, positioning them before guided and independent writing. In fact, model-based feedback research traces back to early reformulation and noticing studies. Qi and Lapkin (2001) studying two Mandarin-speaking English L2 learners in a three-stage picture-based narrative task, reported that native-speaker reformulated texts led to reflect on gaps between current and desired performance.

2.2. Genre-Based Empirical Studies

2.2.1. *Narrative and Descriptive Writing*

A growing body of research has investigated model texts within narrative and descriptive writing contexts. Hanaoka (2007) pioneered the integration of model texts in feedback using a four-stage narrative task involving two native-speaker model texts with 37 Japanese EFL learners. Participants engaged in self-initiated noticing during writing and prompted noticing during comparison. Using a note-taking sheet, Hanaoka (2007) reported that uptake was strongest for lexical features, with grammar less frequently noticed or successfully revised. Building on this, García Mayo and Labandibar (2017) worked with 60 Basque-Spanish adolescent EFL learners in a three-stage descriptive writing task. Using guided and unguided note-taking sheets, they found that model texts enhanced noticing and incorporation of lexical features, particularly among lower-intermediate learners. Interestingly, unguided noticing yielded better results for elementary-level students, while guided tasks produced mixed outcomes.

In a primary school setting, Lázaro-Ibarrola (2021b) involved 33 Spanish EFL learners in an individual and collaborative three-stage narrative writing task. The authors reported that lexical features were frequently noticed and incorporated with no significant difference between the two groups, while grammar and syntax improvements were limited. Holistic draft quality improved, particularly in collaborative settings, though no significant gains in complexity or fluency were observed. Other studies examined model texts as a feedback tool without relying on the noticing hypothesis. For example, Criado et al. (2022) studied 18 Spanish primary EFL learners in digital pairs completing a three-stage picture prompt task. Comparing a model-text group to a self-editing group, they found fluency improved across both, but the self-editing group performed better overall.

2.2.2. *Argumentative and Expository Writing*

Other researchers shifted to another genre in model-based feedback. For instance, Kang (2020) examined the impact of model-text-based feedback in a three-stage argumentative writing task with 40 Korean secondary EFL students. Compared to self-assessment group, learners in the model text group showed significant gains in vocabulary and content, outperforming controls in post-tests. Notably, higher-proficiency learners noticed and incorporated discourse-level features more effectively. Similarly, Wu et al. (2023) studied 60 Chinese second-year undergraduate EFL learners engaged in a four-stage argumentative task. They reported that model texts served as effective positive feedback tool, enhancing writing quality and self-assessment skills. Analytically strong learners benefited most, incorporating more features in delayed post-tests.

Extending this research, Nguyen et al. (2024b) examined 68 Vietnamese undergraduate EFL learners in a three-stage expository writing task. Using one model text and Hanaoka's note-taking framework, they observed that both control and experimental groups initially focused on lexical issues. However, the experimental group shifted toward content and organization, with more than half of noticed features successfully incorporated. Using Kang's (2020) analytical rubric, the study confirmed that the experimental group scored better in content, coherence, and vocabulary in post-test. Nguyen and Vu (2024a), in a parallel study with 35 Vietnamese EFL learners, adapted the note-taking process to include understanding, similarities, differences, and useful features. Most learners focused on content and organisation, mirroring Nguyen et al.'s (2024b) findings. Although vocabulary and grammar gains were minimal, the model group outperformed controls in content and organisation quality.

2.2.3. *Summary Writing in Non-EFL Contexts*

The effectiveness of model texts also extended to non-EFL contexts. Strobl (2015) conducted a pre-post study with 38 Belgian German L2 learners using an online summary-writing module. The task blended instructivist and constructivist feedback using model texts and guiding questions. Model texts, positively impacted learners' writing development as almost half of the learners showed improved summary quality regarding content selection, coherence, and rephrasing.

2.3. Affective and Motivational Perspectives

Several studies have incorporated affective dimensions of using model texts. For instance, García Mayo and Labandibar (2017) reported that while Basque-Spanish EFL learners rated model texts as useful, many found the tasks lengthy and tedious. Learners appreciated new vocabulary but struggled with overly advanced texts, which affected their motivation during rewriting. Importantly, positive attitudes were more strongly linked to feature incorporation than feature noticing. Kang (2020) reported that most Korean students viewed model texts as helpful, especially for vocabulary and content development. However, low-proficiency learners found the models difficult to comprehend and preferred explicit feedback. Likewise, Nguyen and Vu (2024a) and Nguyen et al. (2024b) reported strong learner engagement, with most Vietnamese EFL learners perceiving model texts as useful for improving content, coherence and vocabulary. A few participants, however, noted confusion or disappointment during the comparison and rewriting stages.

In a study by Lázaro-Ibarrola and Villarreal (2021a), 24 Spanish primary EFL learners were divided into a model group (MG) and a task repetition group. Although motivation was initially high in both groups, MG students reported a decline during the rewriting phase due to task difficulty. Despite the motivation drop, MG students valued the learning experience, particularly during model comparison. Motivation varied both between and within student pairs, highlighting its dynamic and individual nature. Resistance to model texts was more pronounced in Strobl's (2015) study, which involved L2 learners unfamiliar with reflective feedback approaches. Students expressed mistrust in the efficacy of model texts and preferred direct, graded feedback. This was attributed to mismatches in learner expectations and the constructivist model demands, particularly regarding self-evaluation and the focus on higher-order skills over linguistic accuracy.

Finally, a systematic review by Nguyen et al. (2024c), covering 25 studies, confirmed overall positive attitudes towards model texts, with students valuing models' effectiveness in improving writing. The authors noted that positive learner attitudes correlated with increased

noticing and successful incorporation, especially of lexical items. However, motivation often declined between the comparison and revision stages, influencing the uptake rate. Importantly, learners' engagement was closely tied to cognitive outcomes and consequently to draft quality.

3. The Present Study

A considerable amount of research examined printed model texts, relying heavily on quantitative measures and producing few qualitative insights about learners' attitudes towards MTFT. Most previous studies were quasi-experimental, predominantly conducted in Europe and Asia with primary school learners, using native-speaker-authored texts, note-taking sheets, and classroom-based writing tasks. Furthermore, prior research focused on narrative paragraph writing. In contrast, this study employed model texts written by native students, delivered electronically to third-year undergraduate Algerian EFL learners, and accompanied by a checklist-based self-assessment tool. This approach targeted purposefully expository introductions and conclusions, offering rich qualitative data on learners' engagement with model texts. The study addressed research gaps, expanding model-text's research scope into more authentic, diverse, and digitally mediated contexts.

4. Methodology

4.1. Design

Unlike previous research on MTFT which followed predominantly a quasi-experimental design, this study adopted a descriptive mixed-methods design with triangulation to first quantify learners' attitudes and then explore them in depth through qualitative responses, providing a comprehensive understanding of perspectives on model texts.

4.2. Context and Participants

The study was conducted at an Algerian university with 31 third-year undergraduate EFL learners (aged 21-23), native speakers of Arabic or Amazigh, with approximately 10 years of French as a L2 and least nine years of EFL study and with females outnumbering males. In secondary school, they received a basic introduction to academic writing focused primarily on reorganising ideas. At university, all participants were enrolled in the same academic writing class, taught by the teacher-researcher where they first encountered systematic essay writing. Participation in the online questionnaire was entirely voluntary, and a verbal consent was obtained prior to participation. The study was part of regular classroom practice, using model texts for evaluative rather than instructional purposes. Participants were assured confidentiality, anonymity, that no harm would result from their involvement, and that the data would be used solely for research.

4.3. Research Materials and Instruments

4.3.1. *Materials*

The research materials in the present study were two model texts (see Appendix A) and a checklist (see Appendix B). Each model text has the introductory and concluding paragraphs from essays on academic failure. The first set of paragraphs was taken from 'Flunking out of college' by Arthur Amann (Lone Star College website), and the other from 'Causes of academic failure in college' (MyCustomEssay.com). The second introductory

paragraph was shortened to balance paragraph length. Word counts were 172 and 157, respectively. Following prior studies (e.g., García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Kang, 2020; Wu et al., 2023), two texts were used per paragraph type to avoid a prescriptive feedback and texts' imitation. The texts, representing expository writing, contained concrete vocabulary and complex sentence structures which increased the texts' lexical density and aligned with intermediate and upper-intermediate learners. The second research material was a 13-item yes/no checklist which guided students in reviewing introductory and concluding paragraphs' content, structure, and mechanics. The review criteria reflected standard paragraph structures in expository writing (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2008; Oshima & Hogue, 2006) and were communicated in class before being emailed to students with the model texts. The checklist substituted the note-taking sheets and reflective questions in previous studies and aimed to support revision as it consolidated the texts' evaluative nature, while the texts concretised the checklist items.

4.3.2. Instruments

The study involved two data collection tools; a questionnaire (see Appendix C) and writing prompt (see Appendix D). The seven minutes online questionnaire, designed using Google Forms, contained 19 items on attitudes towards MTFT. It was piloted with five students; no modifications were necessary. Out of 55 students, 31 completed it. The items were developed by the teacher-researcher based on relevant literature and reviewed for content validity. They included 16 Likert-type items (3-point scale: 1 = 'Disagree' to 3 = 'Agree'), one categorical item, and two nominal items with items 4 and 9 reverse-coded. Descriptive statistics revealed a median score of 2.62, and interquartile range (IQR) of 0.25, indicating general agreement and low variability in responses. Cronbach's alpha was 0.80, reflecting good internal reliability (George & Mallery, 2019). The items covered four areas: online practice (Items 1–3), feedback practice (Items 5–8, 10–11), resource function (Items 12–14, 16), and moral support (Item 15). In addition, a prompt selected from academic writing textbooks, ensured content validity. Students were required to write only the introductory and concluding paragraphs on the causes of academic failure. A familiar topic intended to focus practice on the paragraphs writing without being distracted by body paragraphs or restricted in generating ideas.

4.4. Procedure

Over three weeks, students were introduced to introductory and concluding paragraph writing through in-class activities. After the lesson, they brainstormed the topic for five minutes (Kang, 2020), and were instructed to submit it via email. Fifty-five students received four model texts, two per paragraph type, with the checklist via email for self-evaluation and revision. Students were prompted to read their own paragraphs, compare them to model texts, evaluate them then revise them if necessary. No explicit revision guidelines were given to trigger self-reflection. In the third week, students received a questionnaire in google form format via email. Out of the 55 students, 31 completed it, and 10 students also submitted the second drafts of their initial productions.

4.5. Data Coding and Analysis

The data involved a questionnaire with three-type items (3-point Likert scale items, categorical item and two open-ended items). The data were analysed descriptively due to the small, non-normally distributed sample (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Medians, modes, and interquartile ranges (IQR) were used for Likert items (Boone & Boone, 2012); percentage summarised categorical responses; thematic analysis with data-driven codes was applied to

nominal items, and Table 2 presents the coding criteria with an example from students' responses. Forty-five comments were coded into positive (n=38) and negative categories. Likert-scale data were processed in Excel and analysed using *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows* (Version 28.0; IBM Corp., 2021).

5. Findings

This section presents the research findings ordered according to the following primary and secondary RQs.

RQ1 What are students' attitudes towards model texts as a form of online feedback?

RQ2 Does students' use of MTFT reflect their reported attitude?

5.1. Students Attitudes Towards Model Texts as a Form of Online Feedback

5.1.1. Quantitative Results

To answer RQ1, a descriptive analysis was carried out. The overall arithmetic median (Mdn) was 2.62 indicating a slightly positive attitude and general responsiveness towards electronic MTFT. While respondents were positive, some were neutral on some aspects. Nevertheless, the score still fell within positive attitudes.

For Items 1 and 3 (see Table 1), the median and mode were both 3, indicating recognition of electronic model texts as prompt feedback. For Item 2, students had a neutral attitude (Mdn = 2) towards accessibility compared to paper documents, with many scoring it negatively (Mo = 1). Items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 (see Table 1) also indicated a positive attitude (Mdn = 3, Mo = 3). Respondents valued exemplary texts for comparing their texts, identifying strengths and weaknesses, revising drafts, self-assessment, recognising mistakes, and developing a mental blueprint for structuring introductions and conclusions. Positive attitudes (Mdn = 3) were also recorded for Items 10, 11, 12, 13, and 16 (see Table 1). Respondents appreciated the texts for offering alternative vocabulary, correct sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and as a support tool alongside lectures, and checklists. Regarding Item 15 (Mdn = 3), respondents agreed that model texts help reduce writing anxiety. For the negative Items 4, and 9, students displayed a neutral stance (Mdn = 2) and most scored the perceived model texts' incompatibility and prescriptive nature negatively (Mo = 1).

Table 1

Students Attitudes Towards Electronic Model Texts as a Feedback Tool

Item	N	Mode	Median
1 Model texts sent to you via email helped you to read them rather than ignore them	31	3	3,00
2 Model texts provided to you online are more accessible than model texts provided in face-to-face classrooms	31	1	2,00
3 Model texts sent via email were effective as they were an immediate/instant form of feedback	31	3	3,00
4 Model texts unmatched your interest, level and need	31	1	2,00
5 Model texts served you as a corrective feedback tool	31	3	3,00
6 Model texts made you contrast them with your own writing to identify strengths and weaknesses in introduction and conclusion writing	31	3	3,00
7 Model texts encouraged you to revise your own draft and make self-	31	3	3,00

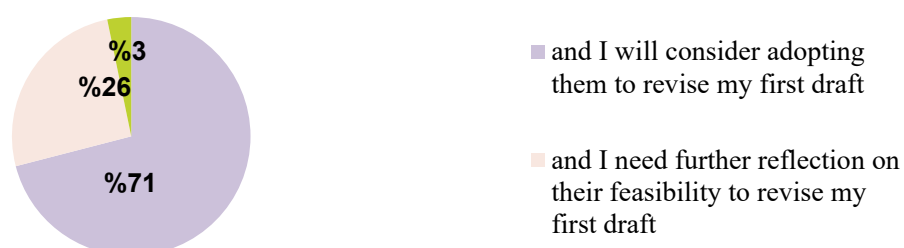
assessment			
8 Model texts encouraged you to actively attempt to identify and understand your mistakes	31	3	3,00
9 Model texts were prescriptive; they denied your individual voice and creativity	31	1	2,00
10 Model texts helped you to add alternative vocabulary, grammar to your second draft	31	3	3,00
11 Model texts helped you in incorporating appropriate expressions to your second draft	31	3	3,00
12 Model texts enabled you to use the checklist provided at the end of the texts	31	3	3,00
13 Models texts supplemented the lecture of introduction and conclusion writing	31	3	3,00
14 Model texts helped you to create a mental model for the introduction and conclusion writing	31	3	3,00
15 Model texts lowered your apprehension / anxiety about introduction and conclusion writing	31	3	3,00
16 Model texts served as a sample for future production	31	3	3,00

5.1.1.1. Overall Attitude of Students Towards Electronic Model Texts as a Feedback Tool.

Descriptive statistics were calculated to present students' overall attitude towards the use of electronic MTFT. The majority of respondents ($n = 22$, $f = 71\%$) decided to adopt them to revise their first drafts, followed by a minority ($n = 8$, $f = 26\%$) who required further reflection on their use, and one respondent (3%) decided not use them.

Figure 1

Overall Attitude Towards Electronic Model Texts as a Feedback Tool



5.1.2 Qualitative Results

To collect more nuanced insights, a qualitative probing was added to the questionnaire on the most and least appealing aspects of electronic MTFT. Out of 31 respondents, 21 students (68%) generated 38 positive and seven negative comments (see Table 2).

Table2

Codification of Students' Answers to Open-Ended Questions Positive attitudes (a) Overall

Category label	N	%	Criteria
General	3	7%	Refers to general/overall comment about model texts without any reference to a specific theme. e.g. All of it; I really liked them.
Accessibility	2	4%	Refers to a comment about the model text being easily reached. e.g. They are instant, you can reach them in any time
Comfort	1	2%	Refers to a comment about the model text being a sense of ease. e.g. [...] as I had enough time to read and understand the text and answer

Efficiency	1	2%	without pressure. Refers to a comment about the model text being convenient for the reader. e.g. Way too easier to read them and not a time consuming.
(b) Revision			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Revision aid	10	22%	Refers to a comment about the model text being a blueprint of the revised draft. e.g. It is effective to guide you to a better and final draft; [...] It help [helps] me to add a new vocabulary and grammar to my second draft.
(c) Self-Correction			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Perceptual feedback	9	20%	Refers to a comment about the model text being a sensory input for students to make self-assessment. e.g. Model texts give the direct and the correct answer; [...] it helps me to correct my mistakes and wrong ideas about how to write a successful introduction and conclusion; [...] it shows me what exactly the topic is about.
(d) Learning aid			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Resource	13	29%	Refers to a comment about the model text being an aid to understand course input and emulate for subsequent drafts. e.g. They simplified the idea of writing [writing] the introduction and the conclusion; I take them as standard to write my essay; [...] were helpful and gave a clear image of what the elements of the paragraphs look like.
Negative attitudes			
(a) Soft copy			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Hard copy	1	2%	Refers to a comment about preference of physical document over digital one. e.g. I prefer papers rather than digital forme [form].
(b) Impersonal feedback			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Interactive feedback	1	2%	Refers to a comment about a preference for oral feedback e.g. It would be better when we least [have at least] feedback at zoom.
Teacher's feedback	1	2%	Refers to a comment about a desire for teacher's evaluation e.g. The absence of teacher's opinion.
Personalised feedback	1	2%	Refers to a comment about a desire for focused feedback. e.g. It give [gives] general feedback; I hope it will give feedback about my mistakes.
(c) Prescribed content			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Alteration of original texts	2	4%	Refers to a comment for a concern about the originality of the first draft e.g. Sometimes, they don't aim correct to [to] your text/ideas [ideas], they change it completely; Students focus a lot for the topic's answers that gave to them.
(d) Abundance of input			
Category label	N	%	Criteria
Excess of ideas	1	2%	Refers to a comment about the inability to manage and integrate ideas into their own writing. e.g. They gave me more ideas that I couldn't incorporate in my paragraphs.

A minority of comments ($n = 7$, $f = 15\%$) were about overall aspects such as general, accessibility, comfort and efficiency. Almost a third of students' answers ($n = 13$, $f = 29\%$)

highlighted benefits as a learning resource. Approximately 22% ($n = 10$) emphasised their use as a revision aid, noting that the accompanying checklist helped improve stylistic or linguistic features. A further 20% ($n = 9$) viewed them as a tool for self-assessment, enabling recognition of mistakes and prompting comparison with native-speaker-authored examples. Furthermore, respondents had a few concerns ($n = 7$, $f = 15\%$) about electronic MTFT. One student preferred printed copies over electronic ones. Three respondents (7%) expressed concerns about impersonal feedback, while others criticised the prescriptive nature of the model texts for potentially altering original work. Another comment noted that the abundance of ideas in the model texts could be overwhelming (see Table 2).

5.2. Students' Observed Attitude Towards Revision Based on Electronic Model Texts

The secondary RQ2 of this study aimed to examine students' willingness to revise drafts using electronic MTFT. The model texts were emailed to a 55 third-year students, of whom 10 (18 %) submitted their drafts.

To sum up, students generally demonstrated a positive attitude towards model texts as a feedback tool, particularly for self-assessment, revision, learning support, and developing a mental blueprint for writing. Most respondents reported willingness to adopt model texts, while only a few remained neutral or sceptical. Observational data showed that, after receiving electronic exemplars, 10 out of 55 students (18%) submitted revised drafts. Although some concerns were raised about impersonal feedback, prescriptive nature, and accessibility, the majority acknowledged the evaluative role of the model texts.

6. Discussion

6.1. Students' Attitudes Towards Electronic Model Texts as a Feedback Tool

The primary aim of this research was to explore students' attitudes towards electronic model-based feedback. Questionnaire results showed that students responded favourably to electronic MTFT, indicating a receptive stance to this feedback approach. This is consistent with Kang's (2020) and Nguyen et al. (2024b), whose participants also perceived model texts as helpful in improving their writing, and with Nguyen and Vu (2024a), who reported high affective engagement with MTFT. Furthermore, Likert scale data supported the categorical responses. 71% of participants had a responsive attitude towards electronic MTFT, while less than a third adopted a defensive stance. These findings contrast with García Mayo and Labandibar (2017), where 62.5% of the participants preferred not to receive model-text feedback. They are also dissimilar to Strobl (2015) whose participants expressed mistrust towards self-assessment with model texts despite a progress in summary writing. However, this pattern of result is consistent with Nguyen and Vu's (2024a) participants who were highly willing and excited while using MTFT.

Importantly, students in this study perceived the texts as contextualised feedback rather than generic exemplars. Tailored to their drafted paragraphs, the texts addressed specific weaknesses, making the introduction and conclusion writing process less challenging. The electronic format was also appreciated, viewed as an instant feedback source in a context lacking automated evaluation systems and with limited teacher feedback capacity. While students were neutral about accessibility, this may reflect their limited prior experience with digital feedback. Furthermore, participants valued model texts for enabling comparison, evaluation, and self-assessment, echoing findings from Nguyen and Vu (2024a) and Strobl (2015). Previous studies (e.g., García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Wu et al., 2023) similarly found that comparing one's work to exemplars helped learners identify gaps and solutions. In

this study, model texts served as benchmarks and sensory inputs, prompting error detection and alignment with established standards.

Participants also valued model texts as complementary, a finding consistent with prior research across genres (e.g., Nguyen et al., 2024b; Kang, 2020; Strobl, 2015). These studies reported improvements in content and organisation when learners integrated features they had not initially noticed as problematic. Model texts in the present study triggered learners to notice new expressions and become familiar with the organisational structure of introductory and concluding paragraphs. In the current context, respondents acknowledged the usefulness of model texts in conjunction with checklists and lecture content. Model texts clarified abstract evaluation criteria by providing concrete examples, enabling students to use the checklist effectively for revision and self-editing, and complementing lesson objectives with tangible representations of concepts.

6.2. Students' Observed Attitude Towards Revision Based on Model Texts as a Feedback Tool

The secondary aim of this research was to examine students' willingness to revise drafts, and to determine whether their actual use aligned with their reported attitudes. Only about a fifth of the participants revised their paragraphs being triggered by the electronic model texts, despite clear errors noted by the teacher-researcher and sufficient time allowed for revisions. This unanticipated finding is inconsistent with Wu et al. (2023) who claimed that MTFT typically prompt learners to redraft after comparing their work to the models. One reason for this discrepancy may be that most prior MTFT research (e.g., Hanaoka, 2007; Kang's, 2020; Nguyen & Vu, 2024a; Strobl, 2015; Wu et al., 2023) was conducted in contrived atmospheres; therefore, the three-stage process; writing, comparing, and redrafting was more a structured procedure rather than a natural classroom practice.

The participants' reluctance to revise contrasts with their overall responsive attitude but reflects the defensive attitudes reported in many reviewed studies. This reluctance might be attributed to several factors already expressed in students' neutral and negative stances towards electronic MTFT, and to plausible reasons from related studies. For instance, many participants were neutral towards the texts' alignment with their interests, needs and level, similar to Kang's (2020) participants who avoided unfamiliar expressions from model texts. Others viewed the models as overly prescriptive, overwhelming them with ideas that could not fit their drafts and which denied their individual voice; a concern also reported by Nguyen and Vu (2024a) as information overload. Moreover, participants of the present research described model-based feedback as impersonal, preferring interactive or personalised input such as teacher comments or tailored suggestions echoing kang's (2020) finding that explicit feedback was more helpful despite the lexical and content gains of models. The self-assessment format of the revision task may also have contributed; Strobl (2015) claimed that model texts do not provide knowledge of results which can confuse novice self-assessors. The decline of motivation between comparison and revision stages, frequently reported by researchers, (García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021a; Nguyen et al., 2024b) may have also impeded revision. In addition, limited metacognitive and linguistic skills likely hindered revision. Without adaptive scaffolding (Wu et al., 2023), learners failed to transfer the knowledge from the model texts into substantial edits. Besides, their prior writing courses had emphasised surface-level changes, making content-level revision an unfamiliar and challenging task.

7. Conclusion

The primary aim of this research was to explore students' attitudes towards electronic MTFT. Questionnaire data indicated a predominantly responsive attitude towards model texts, aligned with qualitative findings that highlighted exemplars' role in revision, self-assessment, and benchmarking performance. Two-thirds of respondents assured that they would use exemplary texts for future draft revision. Despite these positive attitudes, answers to probes revealed concerns about impersonal feedback, prescriptive tendencies, and difficulties in integrating model-based suggestions. The secondary aim examined whether these attitudes were reflected in practice. Only a fifth of students revised their drafts using electronic model texts which corresponded with their concerns reported. The gap between attitudes and actual practice may be attributed also to factors reported in related literature, such as a decline in motivation and limited metacognitive and linguistic skills.

7.1. Implications and Pedagogical Recommendations

This research contributes to an under-researched area on electronic MTFT in the Algerian EFL classrooms, offering qualitative insights into learner attitudes and their potential influence on teaching and learning. Based on the findings, some pedagogical implications can be made. Electronic model texts can foster self-assessment in assigned work, particularly in large classes where prompt personalised feedback is impractical. Their effectiveness, however, depends on raising learners' awareness of their evaluative role, providing training for novice writers, and selecting texts suited to learners' needs, interests, and proficiency levels while avoiding prescriptive models that hinder individual voice. Combining model texts with personalised comments, is recommended, as it responds to diverse preferences and targets specific weaknesses, while encouraging learners to adapt rather than replicate exemplar patterns. Designing clear evaluation checklists before feedback can enhance metacognitive awareness and self-regulation. Methodologically, this study shows that checklists offer a practical, classroom-based self-assessment alternative to other laborious tools.

7.2. Limitations of the study

Every research has limitations, and this study is no exception. First, participants had a single first-time exposure to model texts, which may have influenced their responses. The relatively small sample size, the use of a single writing genre, and focus on a specific task type limit the generalisability of the findings. Additionally, the study employed only one checklist format, preventing comparisons with alternative designs, and its descriptive nature restricts the ability to draw causal inferences about the impact of model-based feedback.

7.3. Suggestions for Further Research

Future research should examine students' attitudes towards model texts after repeated exposure which might yield more stable or nuanced results. It is also recommended to conduct comparative studies investigating the effects of different feedback modes; for instance, contrasting model texts combined with teacher feedback, model texts accompanied by a checklist, and a no-feedback condition, while also comparing affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to personal and impersonal feedback. Future research could also compare between detailed and a basic checklist's impact on revision's depth and final draft's quality.

Appendices

Appendix A. The model texts

Model Text a

Introduction

College is a fun, exciting, and challenging experience for most students, but for some, it is simply too much to handle. Few high school students are aware of what college life is like. Unlike in high school, college classes usually require a lot of efforts done outside class, and some students do not understand the importance of this. A surprisingly large number of college freshmen have extremely poor time-management skills, which can lead to more time spent partying than studying, which is the main cause of failing tests.

Conclusion

College is a new and challenging experience for all incoming students. Few high school students are aware of what college life is like, and some are totally unprepared to meet the demands of college life since most classes require a significant time investment outside of school. Poor time management and heavy partying lead to failing tests, which ultimately can cause the student to flunk out of college. Nobody wants to fail college, but some students simply do not realize what is necessary to pass.

Model text b

Introduction

Joining college is a major milestone for many young people. College gives students new experience especially when they are away from home for a long period of time. In addition, being away implies that there is no any form of parental supervision and individuals are responsible for their decisions and actions. This is the period when most students fail academically in college because of lack of determination and preparedness, missing classes or poor attendance, and poor time management.

Conclusion

The three main causes of academic failure in college include lack of determination and preparedness, missing classes or poor attendance, and poor time management. Lack of preparedness demotivates students because of the unexpected challenges that they come across while in college. Poor attendance results in students missing class and homework assignments, and critical discussions in class. Poor time management is characterised by students spending more time in other activities while ignoring critical academic activities that require concentration and determination.

Appendix B. The checklist

- ☐ -Do the introduction & conclusion paragraphs answer the question of the essay prompt?
- ☐ -Does the introduction involve the three required elements?
- ☐ -Does the hook invite the reader to finish the rest of the essay?

- ☐ -Does the background present the reader with common information to connect him to the topic?
- ☐ -Does the thesis state the focus of the essay?
- ☐ -Does the conclusion start with a restatement of the thesis statement?
- ☐ -Does it summarise and synthesise the major details?
- ☐ -Does it end with an impressive comment that makes the reader think that the essay was worth reading ?
- ☐ -Is your conclusion similar in length to the introduction?
- ☐ -Do your paragraphs respect cohesion?
- ☐ -Are all your sentences well structured?
- ☐ -Are your paragraphs written with a good form?
- ☐ -Are your paragraphs indented?

Appendix C.

Students Questionnaire

Dear student,

Thank you for agreeing to answer my 7 minutes' questionnaire. I am, Ms.Yasmina Chorfi, on a quest to explore your attitudes towards the model texts I sent you via email to revise your first draft. Be assured about your responses' confidentiality, and I guarantee you that answers gathered from the questionnaire will only be used for the purposes of my research.

I. Determine your level of agreement with the following items: Agree if you have a positive attitude towards the behaviour; Neutral if you have neither a positive nor a negative response; Disagree if you have a negative attitude towards the behaviour.

1 Model texts sent to you via email helped you to read them rather than ignore them

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

2 Model texts provided to you online are more accessible than model texts provided in face-to-face classrooms

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

3 Model texts sent via email were effective as they were an immediate/instant form of feedback

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

4 Model texts unmatched your interest, level and need

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

5 Model texts served you as a corrective feedback tool

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

6 Model texts made you contrast them with your own writing to identify strengths and weaknesses in introduction and conclusion writing

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

7 Model texts encouraged you to revise your own draft and make self-assessment

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

8 Model texts encouraged you to actively attempt to identify and understand your mistakes

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

9 Model texts were prescriptive; they denied your individual voice and creativity

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

10 Model texts helped you to add alternative vocabulary, grammar to your second draft

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

11 Model texts helped you in incorporating appropriate expressions to your second draft

12 Model texts enabled you to use the checklist provided at the end of the texts

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

13 Models texts supplemented the lecture of introduction and conclusion writing

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

14 Model texts helped you to create a mental model for the introduction and conclusion writing

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

15 Model texts lowered your apprehension / anxiety about introduction and conclusion writing

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

16 Model texts served as a sample for future production

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

II. Answer the following questions by choosing an option for the multiple-choice items and by adding a further advantage and/or a disadvantage about model texts

Model texts as an electronic feedback practice are currently used in the writing class,

☐ and I will consider adopting them to revise my first draft

☐ and I need further reflection on their feasibility to revise my first draft

☐ but I will NOT consider them in revising my first draft

a. Other than the aforementioned options, what did you like the most about model texts as a form of feedback?

.....

b. Other than aforementioned options, what did you like the least about model texts as a form of feedback?

.....

Appendix D. Writing Prompt

Homework Assignment

Write an introductory and a concluding paragraph to the following prompt.

A high percentage of university students leave University and are often dissatisfied with this experience because of academic failure. Why do college students experience academic failure?

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