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Error Analysis and Corrective Feedback Focused on ESL/EFL Writing Skills

Trabajo de titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación en Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

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Resumen

Esta investigación explora las diferentes implicaciones del uso de la retroalimentación correctiva enfocada en la escritura. Se realizó una investigación bibliográfica de 15 estudios para la recopilación de datos. Los resultados revelaron los diversos beneficios que la retroalimentación correctiva ofrece. Además, esta investigación permitió identificar cuáles son las preferencias de los estudiantes y los profesores. Por lo tanto, proporciona información valiosa que puede ser utilizada por los docentes de inglés a la hora de brindar retroalimentación correctiva a sus alumnos en el ámbito de la escritura. Esta investigación responde a las preguntas con respecto a cuáles son las ventajas de la retroalimentación correctiva, y cuáles son los tipos de retroalimentación correctiva más útiles. Adicionalmente nos proporciona información de cuáles son las preferencias de los estudiantes a la hora de recibirla. Se propone realizar investigaciones más profundas con respecto a los elementos emocionales que podrían influenciar en los resultados de la retroalimentación correctiva.

Palabras clave: Retroalimentación correctiva. Escritura. Inglés como lengua extranjera. Inglés como segunda lengua.

Abstract

This research explores the different suggestions for the use of focused corrective feedback in writing. An exploratory bibliographical research of 15 studies was carried out for data collection. The results revealed the various benefits that corrective feedback offers. In addition, it was possible to correctly identify the preferences of students and teachers. Therefore, this study provides valuable information that can be used by English teachers when providing corrective feedback to their students. This research answers the questions regarding the advantages of corrective feedback, and the most useful types of corrective feedback, and it additionally provides us with information on the characteristics of the students' preferences when receiving it. Further research that addresses the relationship between emotional factors and the results of corrective feedback is suggested.

Keywords: Corrective feedback. Writing,. English as a foreign language. English as a second language.

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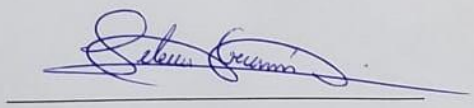

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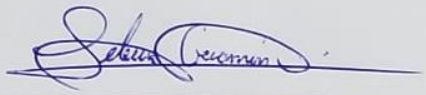

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Introduction

The use of corrective feedback is an important aspect of EFL and ESL teaching because mistakes are natural and very common during the process of learning a new language; however, teachers must be prepared to offer feedback to their students. Irons (2008) states that feedback is every information, process, or activity that is done to accelerate student's learning based on related commentary with the material itself. Consequently, students must receive corrective feedback on each activity that requires it, and teachers must be ready to provide them with good feedback.

The present study thus attempts to find the most relevant information which could help to better understand what are the benefits that corrective feedback offers us and how we can take advantage of them. To be able to achieve it three research questions were established:

- Which are the advantages of using correct strategies to correct students' writing mistakes?
- What methods of written corrective feedback are the most useful to employ in an ESL/EFL class?
- Which forms of written corrective feedback do students find useful in their process of learning English as a second/foreign language?

In order to answer the research questions, 15 studies were collected, categorized, and analyzed. Therefore, this study consists of six chapters. The first chapter presents the description of the research which consists of the background, statement of the problem, justification, the research questions, and the objectives. Then in the second chapter there is a theoretical framework which states various definitions and key terms. The third chapter consists of a literature review and has all the relevant papers.

Moreover, the fourth chapter contains the methodology and the fifth chapter includes the analysis of the results obtained from the deep research. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations are both placed inside the sixth chapter.

Chapter 1

Description of the Research

1.1 Background

From the 1960s to the1990s, behaviorist instructors saw errors as factors that could be prevented through intensive modeling and eradicated through rigorous drilling (Akhter, 2007). Consequently, teachers were expected to teach their students to communicate in the second language (L2) accurately without making errors. Accordingly, it had been a common practice for teachers to correct students whenever they made mistakes (Akhter, 2007).

However, nowadays teachers see errors as reflections of a learner's stage of inter-language development. Indeed, they use error making as an indicator of the natural progress of second language learning (Akhter, 2007). Moreover, the literature in the field shows that there are many types of corrective feedback (CF) that can be used by teachers to respond to the students' errors (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Therefore, Lewis classified the purposes for corrective feedback into four categories:

1) It provides students with advice about learning and supports them in acquiring language input as they learn vocabulary and structures in context.

2) It provides information for both teachers and students as it covers ways for teachers to describe their learners' language, and for learners to be assessed with more precision than marks or grades.

3) It is a form of motivation as it can encourage learners to improve their performance.

4) It is one step forward towards self-reliance as students may start detecting and correcting their own mistakes (as cited in Al-Faki, 2013, p. 224).

As it has been stated, corrective feedback offers different benefits for both teachers and students, but it is especially essential for teachers to know when and how to use corrective feedback. Correspondingly, Martinez (2013) suggests that the corrective feedback that teachers provide to their students causes feelings and attitudes that can be negative, especially if students are unable to understand teachers' comments, which are often ambiguous and unconscious. Thus, the objective of this study is to provide information about what has been reported on the different types of corrective feedback as well as what the students' preferences are: that is, what is the type of corrective feedback that is most useful to them in the language learning process.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The English language has become one of the most important languages around the world as it is a fundamental tool that offers many opportunities to achieve personal and professional goals in life. That is why Education Departments all around the world are working hard to improve English language learning in their schools (Glisan, Uribe & Adair-Hauck, 2007). Additionally, error making is stated to be an inevitable and necessary part of second language learning as it is a sign that the learner develops and assimilates the rules of language (Hendrickson, 1978). Moreover, errors help teachers become aware of the characteristics of the language which cause students learning problems and show them how far towards the goal learners have progressed (Corder, 1967).

On the other side, when students receive feedback that is not suitable, it can cause them to feel angry or embarrassed, and it may difficult their learning process. In fact, some authors argue that error treatment is harmful rather than helpful. Hence, when feedback is given at the wrong moment, it harms the students' learning process rather

than improves it (Krashen, 1982; Schwartz, 1993). Additionally, according to the results obtained from an observation carried out by Sagñay (2019) to 30 students in a public school in Riobamba-Ecuador, the strategies of written corrective feedback used by the teacher to correct students' writing in the class were generally the same, and it caused a lack of interest and willingness to learn and practice the English language. Also, the teacher did not give the students the opportunity to reflect on their writing performance and the process of correcting feedback was mechanical. For instance, when the students received direct corrective feedback from their teacher since he corrected the errors by just re-writing the words appropriately, they did not comprehend the correct way of writing. As a result, after that correction, the students were not capable to recognize their mistakes, and in the following classes, they did not make any effort to try to correct them before the teacher did it for them.

Furthermore, the findings of various studies show that in order to achieve the desired result in the process of learning a second/foreign language, learners' errors should be responded properly (Nicholas, 2013). For this reason, it is important for teachers to provide adequate feedback to their students; that is, teachers should know when and how mistakes can be corrected. Therefore, this study aims to review what has been researched in the literature about error analysis and corrective feedback focused on written skills to determine the most suitable methods to correct students’ mistakes. Thus, this information will be focused on convenient error correction and corrective feedback methods and procedures that teachers should follow when working with their students.

1.3 Rationale

Corrective feedback has been defined as, “any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance” (Chaudron, 1977, p. 31). Additionally, providing feedback and correcting students’ errors in their performance are important aspects of EFL and ESL teaching. Akhter (2007) has pointed out that correcting errors and giving feedback to students not only help teachers know how well students perform but also helps teachers motivate learners. Consequently, students can achieve a better learning environment in the classroom; notwithstanding, it is difficult for teachers to know how and when to carry out error correction. Furthermore, some researchers and educators have been paying close attention to corrective feedback; however, they frequently disagreed on what errors should be corrected, how they should be corrected, and when they should be corrected (Hendrickson, 1978).

There are many researchers such as Hernández, Cruz, and Del Rosario (2012) that have investigated the teachers’ preferences of error correction and corrective feedback in their classes. Nonetheless, Kagimoto and Rodgers (2008) state that only a “few studies have sought to investigate student preferences toward different types of feedback, particularly in terms of error correction in the classroom” (p.869). Hence, these authors suggest that students’ preferences should also be taken into account. Moreover, teachers can consider some methods as useful; nonetheless, they may not cause the same impressions to students, who can consider them useless or intimidating. For instance, they have found that students’ recasts are the most frequent type of feedback used by teachers in the second or foreign language classroom (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Nevertheless, some researchers have claimed that learners do not perceive recasts as corrective feedback; instead, they see recasts as simple repetitions of their utterances

due to their implicitness and ambiguity (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Such differences between students' and teachers' expectations and views about feedback can result in inadequate learning (Katayama, 2007).

In addition, Hattie (2009) stated that research has already established the merits of feedback on learning. However, Rowe and Wood (2008) indicated that research looking into students' beliefs about corrective feedback is still lacking in comparison to the amount of research available from teacher perspectives on feedback. For this reason, one of the purposes of this study is to take into account the students' preferences when they receive feedback, as well as the error correction and feedback methods that they consider as the most useful. Furthermore, this research synthesis is aimed to determine the most useful methods of corrective feedback that have been used to provide teachers with a better understanding of how and when they should apply them.

In addition, Ellis (2009) argues that corrective feedback has a vital role in the second language (L2) learning and language pedagogy. It is important to distinguish between English as Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL). ESL is when English is learned in a country where English is widely spoken as a native language while EFL is when English is learned in a country where English is not the native language. Therefore, the research synthesis is relevant because it will help to determine the effectiveness of the different types of corrective feedback in ESL and EFL environments. Besides, this research synthesis might be useful for English teachers who need to use corrective feedback to correct students' writing, and thus develop and improve their accuracy. This is why it is beneficial for them to know what are the best corrective feedback methods, the students' preferences, and the correct application of corrective feedback strategies to meet students' needs.

1.4 Research Questions

This proposal is an attempt to contribute to know which are the most appropriate corrective methods that have been reported in existing published research, as well as which is the correct way to use them in the classroom.

Accordingly, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- Which are the advantages of using correct strategies to correct students' writing mistakes?
- What methods of written corrective feedback are the most useful to employ in an ESL/EFL class?
- Which forms of written corrective feedback do students find useful in their process of learning English as a second/foreign language?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

- To examine what methods of written corrective feedback are the most useful to be applied in an ESL/EFL class.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

- To analyze the students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards the different types of corrective feedback.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the different methods of written corrective feedback.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

Errors are natural things that are very common to find in the learning process (Tornberg, 2005). Although mistakes are seen as part of the process of learning a new language, when students make a mistake, teachers are expected to offer some type of feedback that helps them understand and correct their errors. Otherwise, students will internalize the error into their language and will always use it wrongly (Amri, 2006). Consequently, this theoretical framework will review what error correction means, what corrective feedback is, the types of corrective feedback, the use of corrective feedback in classrooms, and the possible complications of using corrective feedback.

2.1 Error Correction

Errors provide feedback; they tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of their teaching material and their teaching techniques. Also, they show instructors what parts of the syllabus have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention (Corder, 1975). Additionally, errors are evidence of student development, and making mistakes is an inevitable part of learning a language. For this reason, teachers must learn to deal with them effectively because this will help students have a better understanding of why they make the mistake and learn how to fix it. Moreover, the role of corrective feedback has been a matter of debate, and according to Krashen (1982), corrective feedback cannot help students acquire the correct form if they are not ready to learn. However, if the teachers choose not to correct an error, the rest of the students may consider it to be correct, which would cause the students to internalize incorrect forms. That is to say, teachers must be prepared to handle the mistakes that may occur in this process.

2.2 Corrective Feedback

Feedback is a very important part of education. Irons (2008) states that feedback is every information, process, or activity that is done to accelerate student's learning based on related commentary with the material itself. Students should receive feedback after an exam, an assignment, a presentation, or any other activity that requires it. The word feedback means to comment on others' activities, so feedback is visible and comprehensible thinking of a teacher on students' activities. Ur (1996) says that "in the context of teaching in general, feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance" (p.242).

Feedback can be negative or positive. It is positive when it is given because the student has answered correctly, and it is negative when it is given because the student has made a mistake. In the words of Li (2013), corrective feedback refers to teacher and peer responses to learners' erroneous second language production. Corrective feedback is part of the negative feedback group. It takes the form of a response to a learner utterance containing a linguistic error. The response is another initiated repair and can consist of (1) an indication that an error has been committed, (2) provision of the correct target language form, (3) metalinguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006).

This research is focused on written corrective feedback; for this reason, it is important to know what Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is. According to Truscot (1996), WCF, which is also called error correction or grammar correction, refers to the "correction of grammatical errors for the purpose of improving a student's ability to

write accurately" (p.329). Consequently, WCF has been regarded as a normal way of improving students' writing accuracy and a necessary part of the writing curriculum.

2.2.1 Types of Corrective Feedback

When corrections are made to the student, the type of error they are committing must be known to select the appropriate type of feedback. Mackey and Gass, and McDonough and Nishita (as cited by Yoshida, 2008) have categorized the errors as

1. Morph syntactic error: Errors about the incorrect use of word order, tense, conjugation, and articles.

2. Phonological error: Learners mispronounce words.

3. Lexical error: Inappropriate use of vocabulary or code-switching to their first language because of their lack of lexical knowledge.

4. Semantic error, misunderstanding of a learner's utterance, although there is not any grammatical, lexical, or phonological error.

As it was mentioned above, taking into account the type of error is necessary to choose the right type of feedback. Since, when we talk about the different types of corrective feedback from which we can choose, we find several categorizations. However, we are going to mention only two; namely, Lyster and Ranta's (1997) categorization and Sheen's (2011) categorization. First, Lyster and Ranta (1997) divide the types of corrective feedback into six, while Sheen (2011) tells us about seven different types of corrective feedback. Therefore, the content is similar but the categorization is different; however, they share a common purpose which is to represent

the different types of corrective feedback used by teachers in the classroom. According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), there are six different types of corrective feedback.

1. Explicit correction: Indicating that the students' utterance was incorrect; the teacher provides the correct form.

2. Recast: Without directly indicating that the student's utterance was incorrect; the teacher implicitly reformulates the students' error or provides the correction.

3. Clarification request: By using phrases like 'Excuse me?' or 'I don't understand', the teacher indicates that the message has not been understood or that the students' utterance contained some kind of mistake and that a repetition or a reformulation is required.

4. Metalinguistic clues: Without providing the correct form; the teacher poses questions or provides comments or information related to the formation of the students' utterances.

5. Elicitation: The teacher directly elicits the correct form from the student by asking questions (e.g., How do we say that in Spanish?), by pausing to allow the student to complete the teacher's utterance (e.g., It's a....) or by asking students to reformulate the utterance (e.g., Say that again.). Elicitation questions differ from questions that are defined as metalinguistic clues in that they require more than a yes/no response.

6. Repetition: The teacher repeats the student's error and adjusts intonation to draw the student's attention to it.

On the other side, Sheen (2011) proposes an approach that combines and alters the categories slightly.

1. Direct non-metalinguistic written correction: Consists of simply providing the student with the correct form; for example, crossing out the error and replacing it with the correct word or adding something that is missing.

2. Direct metalinguistic written correction: Explained as providing the student with the correct form and giving a written explanation of some sort. For instance, by numbering the errors and giving the answer with an accompanying explanation at the end of the page.

3. Indirect written correction (non-located error): Explained as providing the student with an indication that an error has occurred but not locating or correcting it. These indicators appear only in the margin.

4. Indirect written correction (located error): This type only differs from the previous one in that it is located. The teacher provides the student with an indication of an error and its location but does not correct it.

5. Indirect written correction using error codes: When providing an explicit comment on the "nature" of the error (e.g. "sp" for spelling or "voc" for wrong word choice), but not giving the correct form.

6. Indirect metalinguistic written correction: This type is similar to the direct metalinguistic written correction in that it gives a metalinguistic explanation to the error, but is different in that it withholds the correct form. For example, "What tense does the main verb always have in a passive construction?"

7. Reformulation: This type consists of a provision of a complete reformulation of the erroneous part in the text. This does not only address the linguistic errors; it also

indicates and addresses form problems and aims to improve the overall accuracy of the text.

Reformulation can be considered a form of direct corrective feedback because it provides learners with the corrections. However, learners have to carry out a comparison of their own and the reformulated text, which places the burden of locating specific errors on them (Shen, 2011).

2.3 Corrective Feedback in the Classroom

Despite many years of research, inconsistencies in research still make it unclear what role Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) should play in the classroom. Some authors as Bitchener and Knoch (2009), Chandler (2003), and Ellis, Erlam, and Loewen (2006) believe WCF is necessary and support it; however, other authors as Kepner (1991), Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986), and Truscott (2007) consider it unnecessary and have argued against it. Although an agreement has not yet been reached, it is necessary to mention some studies that deal with the effect of some types of corrective feedback in ESL writing.

Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) mention that they already know that indirect corrective feedback is more effective than direct one to improve writing accuracy. However, for the corrective feedback to be effective, after applying the indirect method and the student improves their writing accuracy, the direct oral corrective feedback must be applied in combination with the direct written corrective feedback. They demonstrated that the combined feedback facilitates the improvement in the students' writing. They also consider that teachers should discuss with their learners which linguistic errors should be focused on.

In the same way, Lindqvist (2012) mentioned in his study that the type of corrective feedback that teachers choose the most is indirect corrective feedback, but he advises that in addition to using the indirect corrective feedback, teachers should also explain why the form the student has supplied is wrong, what the correct form is and what rules govern it. In other words, he suggests that indirect corrective feedback could be replaced by indirect metalinguistic corrective feedback.

As we can see, with the help of these concepts and studies, it is possible to determine some of the most appropriate methods of corrective feedback to use in the classroom, which is very helpful for teachers.

2.4 Possible complications of using corrective feedback

The purpose of corrective feedback (CF) is to help improve student writing; however, its use in the classroom could create some difficulties. An issue with indirect CF is that it can lead to complications in interpreting the codes and hints (Westmacott, 2017). In the same way, Corpuz (2011) considers that students sometimes experience difficulty in understanding the corrective feedback that their teachers give them. On the other hand, teachers encounter complications because the codes for making feedback are limited, and they have difficulties in applying them. Similarly, Carr and Weinmann (2016) found that sometimes teachers misunderstood the participant's intended meaning and consequently requested corrections that misrepresented their opinion. In contrast, Corpuz (2011) establishes that to avoid this, it is necessary to know when to apply the different types of feedback. For example, he mentions that teachers prefer to provide explicit written feedback strategies during the early stages of the language course and move to a more implicit strategy of providing written error correction to facilitate language learning.

Truscott (1996) also proposed some arguments against corrective feedback. He considers that WCF is counterproductive since it takes a lot of time and energy that could be used in other activities. He also considers that it causes stress and anxiety to students, which could cause demotivation to learn. On the other side, Ferris (1999) strongly criticizes Truscott's arguments because he considers that his conclusions are made based on limited and incomplete data. He also considers that although implementing corrective feedback represents a challenge, it is all a matter of preparation, practice, and prioritization. In the same way, he establishes that the provision of corrective feedback is positive and increases motivation in students, especially in those who are seeking to obtain high scores. As we can see, there are some complications when implementing this method, but studies have shown that complications can be solved, and so it can be confirmed that the use of corrective feedback is helpful for students.

Chapter III

Literature Review

This research synthesis analyzes methods of corrective feedback (CF) and error correction to provide teachers with a better understanding of how and when they should use them. The studies have been classified according to their approach and purpose. The following classification has been considered: the need and effectiveness of corrective feedback in second language acquisition (SLA), students' attitudes regarding corrective feedback, direct versus indirect corrective feedback, and students' preferences against teachers' preferences.

3.1 The need and effectiveness of corrective feedback in SLA

Students can demonstrate what they have learned by speaking or writing, and it is very important the role that the teacher takes at the moment to correct students' production of the language. This is why English teachers have a relevant role in this process since they have to help students acquire the skills to communicate effectively in the English language. Nevertheless, how to do it in the best way represents a challenge (Corpuz, 2011).

Some studies have been conducted to investigate whether corrective feedback is necessary for the SLA process. Maleki and Eslami (2013) directed an investigation about the effects of written corrective feedback techniques on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. They stated that providing corrective feedback is a useful way to preserve the knowledge about grammatical features in long-term memory. In their study, they employed two tests to evaluate the participants of the study, 90 EFL

learners. Likewise, Karami and Sedighi (2015) in their study about the effectiveness of using corrective feedback in an EFL context, concluded that the students believed that the feedback that they had received had a positive effect on their learning process. To obtain these results they applied a questionnaire to 36 participants. Lindqvist (2012), in his research about the use of written corrective feedback, which investigated feedback through the perspective of the Sociocultural Theory, strengthened the notion of feedback as a communicative tool. Thus, this device is important to facilitate a higher level of proficiency and as a way for teachers to construct a relationship between themselves and their students. This study had a sample of 100 students to whom a questionnaire was applied to obtain the results mentioned above. These studies made remarkable the effectiveness of the use of corrective feedback in SLA.

3.2 Students' Attitudes Regarding Corrective Feedback

Feedback is needed so the students can feel motivated. This is usually accomplished depending on the degree of attention that the teacher gives to the task. The feedback that is given to students has the ability to lift the levels of proficiency when given as a genuine response to the students' work, but at the same, it should be recognized as a communicative tool (Lindqvist, 2012).

Thao (2017) in his investigation about Teachers' Corrective Feedback on English Students' Writing found that giving feedback helped the students have more motivation and make remarkable progress when they learn a specific skill. In contrast, after applying a questionnaire he also found that 60% of teachers emphasized correcting most of the major errors. Consequently, marking all errors in the students' writing product made students more passive in their learning process. Hence, most teachers

should pay more attention to correcting the errors in a way that teachers might not reduce students' motivation in producing their written texts.

Similarly, Kekic (2015) in his study about teachers' and students' beliefs about the effectiveness of written feedback, suggested that students had positive perceptions towards the teacher's way of correcting their writing. In addition, he established that students could take advantage of the teacher's help to revise their papers to achieve progress. Although the students expressed a positive attitude towards written feedback, they indicated their preference only for certain techniques. These studies indicated that students' attitudes toward corrective feedback are positive, as long as it is provided correctly.

3.3 Direct against Indirect Corrective Feedback

Although it has been shown that corrective feedback is a very useful tool to improve student accuracy, there is still considerable uncertainty about what kind of feedback can be more effective. Ferris and Roberts (2001) distinguished two modes of corrective feedback; direct and indirect. *Direct Corrective Feedback* (DCF) is a strategy that consists of providing the student with the correct form of their error directly. Conversely, *Indirect Corrective Feedback* (ICF) is also an important element in the process of learning a second language; ICF consists in indicating that an error exists but not providing the correct form.

There are some studies in which the effectiveness of *Direct and Indirect Corrective Feedback* on student writing quality has been investigated. In Zareil and Rahnama's research (2013) about the effect of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) modes on EFL learners' grammatical and lexical writing accuracy, they divided the 164 participants into four different groups. Each group of learners was randomly assigned to

one of the four groups: one group received direct corrective feedback, the second one was given coded corrective feedback, the third group received uncoded corrective feedback and the fourth group did not receive any type of CF. They found that in terms of grammatical accuracy, the participants were able to achieve better performance with the support of DCF. Likewise, the findings showed that uncoded CF, which is a kind of indirect feedback, had more remarkable importance in improving the learners' lexical accuracy in their writing tasks. Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) conducted a survey on the effect of *Direct and Indirect Corrective Feedback* on the learners' written products. Two experimental groups were formed with two kinds of CF: DCF and ICF respectively. The findings showed that the learners in the DCF group were able to acquire knowledge of grammatical points profoundly. In the same way, they found that indirect corrective feedback also played an important role in improving learners' proficiency level in writing an essay or composition. These studies do not show any notable difference between the effectiveness of these two types of corrective feedback. However, they confirm the usefulness of using corrective feedback in SLA.

3.4 Students' Preferences against Teachers' Preferences

Thao (2017), in his study about Teachers' corrective feedback on English students' writing, in which he applied questionnaires to five professors and 58 students from Dong Tap University, concluded that students and teachers have a positive attitude towards corrective feedback, and both teachers and the students were willing to provide and receive corrective feedback in students' writing. Nonetheless, something essential is that the feedback from the teacher must be given properly. A difficulty that can occur is that the type of feedback that the teacher frequently uses is not the most appropriate for the students. Nanni and Black (2017) in their study about teachers' and students' preferences regarding WCF found that these perceptions impact instruction, particularly

when they are not aligned. Students may believe that their teachers have failed to address the most crucial errors in their writing. Conversely, teachers may believe that students have disregarded important feedback.

Fatemipour, Safivand, and Sanavi (2010), after employing an attitudinal survey to find out how teachers and learners felt about different types of CF, proposed that teachers are more into the direct form of correction by indicating and locating the errors in their learners' written piece, while the learners seemed to favor metalinguistic types of feedback. On the contrary, Kekik (2015) in his study about teachers' and learners' perceptions towards written corrective feedback, in which twenty students and three teachers participated, showed students' preference for direct and focused written corrective feedback. Oppositely, students found metalinguistic feedback difficult for understanding the nature of their errors. Also, they disagreed with using indirect and unfocused written feedback. Similarly, teachers' responses showed a preference for direct and focused written corrective feedback and share the thought that metalinguistic feedback is difficult for students' understanding of the errors. Finally compared to students' perceptions who preferred only the correction of selected errors, teachers preferred correcting all and selected errors in written work. This research, found some differences between teachers' preferences and students' preferences as well as similarities. However, a limitation of the study is that the number of participants is too small to generalize these results.

Next, we will be able to notice that the differences between the preferences of the students and the preferences of the professors not only occur in the type of feedback that should be given, but also in the aspects that should be corrected. For instance, Nanni and Black (2017) in their study about teachers' and students' preferences regarding WCF, in which 262 students and 21 teachers participated, stated that the

teachers perceived organization and content to be more useful than grammar and vocabulary, while students perceived grammar and vocabulary to be more useful than organization and content. In contrast, Fatemipour, Safivand, and Sanavi (2010) in their analysis about corrective feedback strategies and learners' and teachers' preferences, in which they had a sample of 92 students and 12 teachers, suggested that pragmatic errors were the types of errors that students thought teachers should most attend to. However, the most important type of error that teachers thought they should attend to was the sociocultural ones.

The previous research regarding student beliefs towards language learning and error correction suggests that students may have widely differing views from teachers regarding how errors should be corrected in the classroom. For this reason, Kagimoto and Rodgers (2008) in their research about students' perceptions of corrective feedback hold the position that teachers need to pay more attention to explicit forms of feedback in the classroom. Additionally, they suggested that in order to accommodate students' preferences and increase motivation towards language learning, it may be necessary to reconsider feedback types used in classrooms and seek ways to provide students with a more balanced variety of corrective feedback types. They reached these conclusions after applying a survey to 139 university students in Japan.

Chapter IV

Methodology

According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), corrective feedback has an important role in facilitating the process of second/foreign language learning. Hence, this study consists of a research synthesis that analyzes several studies on the field. A research synthesis, according to Cooper and Hedges (2009), can be defined as the combination of a particular set of literature review characteristics, which attempts to integrate empirical research for the purpose of establishing generalizations. Accordingly, the design of the research is exploratory, considering 15 studies from 2000 until now, to answer the proposed research questions. This implies the analysis of different research studies to collect valuable information about the most appropriate type of feedback to correct the students' written errors in English as a second or foreign language.

To develop this research synthesis, the articles which were selected had to be related to corrective feedback focused on writing skills. The criteria for selecting the articles were the following: First, the studies had to be articles that were reviewed and published in academic journals or books. However, if necessary and relevant information for the study was found in theses, such papers were taken into account as well. Second, studies could be guided by quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches. Third, all contexts and participants were considered. To collect those relevant studies, online databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and Research Gate were used. Journals like the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *Language Learning*, and *Modern Language Journal* were taken into account. The keywords used to get the articles were related to research and they included written

corrective feedback, error correction, English as a second or foreign language, teachers' preferences, students' preferences, attitudes, and perceptions about CF.

Once the gathering process was finished, these articles were clustered around similar emphases. For instance, they were grouped by taking into account alike advantages, disadvantages, effectiveness as well as student’s and teacher’s perceptions. Afterward, the compiled research papers were compared and contrasted more in-depth to analyze and inform their results. Finally, this comparison was used to draw up conclusions about the use of corrective feedback.

Chapter V

Results

5.1 Analysis of the Results

For the present research synthesis, 15 studies were gathered from different sources. The studies were directed to respond to the research questions stated in the first chapter. Accordingly, the studies were coded in the next sections: the advantages and disadvantages of written corrective feedback, the effectiveness of the different types of written corrective feedback, students' preferences towards different types of written corrective feedback, drawbacks of using corrective feedback, and the effects of written corrective feedback.

5.1.1 The advantages and disadvantages of written corrective feedback

Table 1

The advantages and disadvantages of the different types of corrective feedback

Advantages	N° of Studies	Authors
Improve students' writing	14	Amrhein & Nassaji (2010); Bitchener, Young & Cameron (2005); Carr & Weinmann (2016); Corpuz (2011); Fatemipour, Safivand, & Sanavi (2010); Hashemnezhad & Mohammadnejad (2012); Kagimoto & Rodgers (2008); Karami & Sedighi (2015); Kekic

		(2015); Lindqvist (2012); Maleki & Eslami (2013); Nanni & Black (2017); Sivaraman & Devarajoo (2005); Thao (2017); Zareil & Rahnama's (2013)
Encourage students learning	1	Maleki & Eslami (2013)
Students become more independent	3	Corpuz (2011); Kekik (2005); Thao (2017)
Improve classroom environment	2	Lindqvist (2012); Thao (2017)
Disadvantages	N° of Studies	
It is very time-consuming	1	Corpuz (2011)
Difficulty in understanding	1	Corpuz (2011)
Misconstruction	1	Carr & Weinmann (2016)

N=14 Some studies were used more than once

After analyzing the 14 studies, it was found that the use of written corrective feedback was undoubtedly effective. We can classify the studies according to four main advantages that were the most relevant in the studies. The first is that the use of written corrective feedback significantly improves student writing; for instance, Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) established that providing precise and accurate feedback resulted in positive responses from the students in the subsequent drafts. In the same way, Karami and Sedighi (2015) found that most of the pupils believed that the feedback that they had received had a positive effect on their learning process and around 80% of them claimed that "Overall, this class and the feedback I received increased my language proficiency" (p.16). Likewise, another study by Carr and

Weinmann (2016) confirmed that the use of corrective feedback is effective since it found that all participants described direct WCF as easy to understand and helpful. Similarly, Kekik (2005) established that most of the students agree that using written corrective feedback can help them to be more accurate and fluent in their writing. On the other hand, it is important to mention that students' and teachers' preferences can affect effectiveness when students and teachers value specific categories of WCF differently (Nanni & Black, 2017). However, Zareil and Rahnama (2013) emphasize that the use of any type of feedback is more effective than the no corrective feedback condition.

In addition, Maleki and Eslami (2013) mentioned that the use of corrective feedback would push the learners towards noticing the linguistic problems they are struggling with and that sometimes they take for granted. In other words, providing corrective feedback would prompt the learners to try and modify their developing interlanguage system in line with the feedback provided. Furthermore, another feature that is also mentioned is that it helps students develop skills so that they can later correct themselves and thus avoid making the same mistakes again. Additionally, Thao (2017) claimed that with the use of written corrective feedback, students would be more independent in looking for the appropriate data to correct their errors. In the same way, Corpuz (2011) argued that teachers believe that providing written error correction helps students improve their proofreading skills in order to revise their writing more efficiently. As well as, Kekik (2005), who established that students recognized the benefits of using written corrective feedback because when their errors were corrected, they would not repeat them in their writing. This is supported by Sivaraman and Devarajoo (2005). Their students claimed that the WCF from their teachers improved their writing as they were able to identify mistakes in their future writing tasks.

Finally, the use of corrective feedback serves to improve the classroom environment, including a better relationship between the students and their teacher. Consequently, Thao (2017) mentioned that the use of corrective feedback would contribute to a better and more active atmosphere in the classroom. That way, the students would be more interested in the learning process. Similarly, Lindqvist (2012) claimed that corrective feedback is a communicative tool that helps to facilitate a higher level of proficiency, and it is a way for teachers to construct a relationship between themselves and their students.

Regarding the disadvantages, Corpuz's (2011) study shows that students sometimes experience difficulty in understanding the written corrective feedback that teachers provide, while the teachers show dissatisfaction because providing written error correction is time-consuming. Also, teachers find difficulties because error correction codes are limited and cannot adequately represent the variety of written errors that their students make. In the same way, Carr and Weinmann (2016) reported that sometimes teachers misunderstood the participant’s intended meaning and consequently requested corrections that misrepresented their opinion. This situation also involves a disadvantage.

Although some disadvantages were found; fpr example, feedback can be difficult to understand or it requires a very long process, we could infer that written corrective feedback is effective. In fact, corrective feedback has proven to be very effective- It offers us advantages such as improving the classroom environment, helping students improve their self-correcting skills, which can also help them to help their peers, and finally, the most important benefit is that it helps students improve their writing.

5.1.2 Effectiveness of the different types of Corrective Feedback

Table 2

Effectiveness of the different types of Corrective Feedback

Type of feedback	Studies	Authors
Support direct WCF	7	Amrhein & Nassaji (2010); Carr & Weinmann (2016); Hashemnezhad & Mohammadnejad (2012); Kekic (2015); Lindqvist (2012); Thao (2017); Zareil & Rahnama's (2013)
Support indirect WCF	5	Bitchener, Young & Cameron (2005); Corpuz (2011); Karami & Sedighi (2015); Maleki & Eslami (2013); Sivaraman & Devarajoo (2005)
Support metalinguistic WCF	2	Fatemipour, Safivand, & Sanavi (2010); Kagimoto & Rodgers (2008)

N=14

Fourteen out of the 15 studies were analyzed for this category. The study carried out by Nanni and Black (2017) was excluded as it did not support the effectiveness of any specific method, rather it stated factors that may influence the effectiveness of the different types of written corrective feedback. Among the 14 studies that did

specifically support one type of written corrective feedback as the most effective, direct corrective feedback stands out with 7 studies supporting it. First, Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) stated that the two kinds of corrective feedback, direct and indirect, had a positive effect on students' target language accuracy but direct feedback was much more effective than indirect feedback. Similarly, Thao (2017) established that giving specific corrections is really of great help because making comments about errors without correction also provides a little help in the students' writing, but no feedback on an error or a personal comment on the writing content is not a useful way in writing feedback. Additionally, we found a similar result in Lindqvist's study (2012) in which he mentioned that direct corrective feedback is more effective since in this way students can more easily understand what mistakes they made. Zareil and Rahnama (2013) also assured that regarding grammatical writing accuracy, it can be concluded that direct corrective feedback was the most effective on the participants' performance, whereas the control condition, in which the participants did not receive any corrective feedback, was shown to be the least conducive. Furthermore, in the study by Kekic (2015), direct corrective feedback was found to be the most effective since indirect feedback is difficult to understand. Similarly, Carr and Weinmann (2016) found in their study that all participants described direct WCF as easy to understand and helpful because direct WCF requires very little autonomy and accordingly was implemented successfully by all participants. In the same way, Kekik (2005) considers direct WCF the most effective because an explanation of the error helps students to understand why and where they make a mistake, and being provided with the correct form helps them to improve their writing.

In addition, we find that after direct corrective feedback, there is indirect corrective feedback with 5 studies that support it. Among them, it can be observed the

study by Maleki and Eslami (2013) which established that the indirect feedback group acted significantly better than the other two groups on the delayed post-test. Suggesting the lasting effectiveness of the indirect WCF over direct red pen feedback, this implies the superiority of the indirect method of error correction over time. Also, they affirmed that using indirect feedback strategies has a more lasting effect and may be suggested for the later stages of learning. However, the authors mentioned that applying indirect methods of error correction would necessarily call for sufficient linguistic knowledge possessed by students to self-correct errors and also self-edit their texts. Likewise, the study by Karami and Sedighi (2015) established that indirect corrective feedback allows students the opportunity to self-correct, which would result in better learning. Similarly, Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) also found that indirect WCF is more effective than direct feedback in helping learners improve the accuracy of their writing; Sivaraman and Devarajoo (2005) had very similar findings. Finally, we have the corrective metalinguistic feedback, which is supported only by two studies Kagimoto and Rodgers (2008) and Fatemipour, Safivand, and Sanavi (2010) who mentioned that the use of Metalinguistic WCF is the most effective since it is a mixture between the direct and indirect corrective feedback. So, by this method, both benefits could be obtained.

Although the direct WCF is apparently more effective, this is because it is an easy technique to apply and understand, but in reality, both techniques are effective. It is only important to know when to use them. Corpuz, (2011) mentioned that teachers prefer to provide explicit written feedback strategies during the early stages of the language course and move to a more implicit strategy of providing written error correction to facilitate language learning. This is something that is supported by other studies since they mostly prefer direct WCF because it is very difficult for students to

understand indirect WCF. However, if they already receive direct corrective feedback it will be easier for them to understand indirect corrective feedback in the future.

5.1.3 Student's preferences

Table 3

Student's preferences regarding different types of corrective feedback

Type of feedback	Studies	Authors
Direct WCF	*9*	Bitchener, Young & Cameron (2005); Carr & Weinmann (2016); Corpuz (2011); Kagimoto & Rodgers (2008); Kekic (2015); Lindqvist (2012); Maleki & Eslami (2013); Thao (2017); Zareil & Rahnama's (2013)
Indirect WCF	*3*	Amrhein & Nassaji (2010); Karami & Sedighi (2015); Sivaraman & Devarajoo (2005)
Metalinguistic WCF	*1*	Fatemipour, Safivand, & Sanavi (2010)

N=13

In this category, it was necessary to set aside two studies; the first carried out by Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) is irrelevant for this category, as it only mentions that the direct WCF is more effective and does not reveal to us what the preferences of the students are. On the other hand, in the study of Nanni and Black

(2017) even though they mention the preferences of the students, they just mention the type of errors that the students prefer to be corrected and they don't mention the type of WCF that students prefer. Regarding the 13 studies analyzed, they show notably the preference that students have for direct WCF. First, Thao (2017) says that students prefer direct feedback with comments; in this way in terms of students, they will be more independent in looking for the appropriate data to correct their errors. Consequently, they will have a great understanding of the errors and make and improve their writing. In addition, Kekic (2015) states that students' responses show their preference for direct and focused written corrective feedback, because they prefer being provided with correct form and that selected errors are corrected by teachers. On the other side, students find metalinguistic feedback difficult for understanding the nature of their errors. Carr and Weinmann (2016) established that all participants prefer direct WCF as it is easy to understand and helpful. The author believes that it is because direct WCF requires very little autonomy and accordingly was implemented successfully by all participants.

As we could notice, there is a notable preference of the students towards the direct WCF, and as we mentioned previously, this is because it is easier to understand since it does not require a very high level of knowledge to do it. It is important to mention that for Corpuz (2011) the preferences of students regarding written error correction have adapted towards the methods employed by their respective teachers, and whatever written error correction their teachers employed is what the students found to be useful and helpful in revising their written more effectively. From this result, it can also be inferred that regardless of the disadvantages of providing written error correction, the preferences of students will adapt accordingly. On the other hand, according to Nanni and Black (2017), the difference in preferences between students

and teachers can affect the effectiveness of different types of WCF, so students' attitudes must always be taken into account. In this way, it will be possible to take greater advantage of the benefits offered by the use of WCF in the classroom.

5.1.4 Drawbacks of using corrective feedback.

Table 4

Drawbacks of using corrective feedback

Problems	Studies	Authors
Differences between preferences	*12*	Amrhein & Nassaji (2010); Bitchener, Young & Cameron (2005); Fatemipour, Safivand, & Sanavi (2010); Hashemnezhad & Mohammadnejad (2012); Kagimoto & Rodgers (2008); Karami & Sedighi (2015); Kekic (2015); Lindqvist (2012); Nanni & Black (2017); Sivaraman & Devarajoo (2005); Thao (2017); Zareil & Rahnama's (2013)
Difficult understanding	*3*	Carr & Weinmann (2016); Corpuz (2011); Maleki & Eslami (2013)

N=15

In this category, all studies were analyzed in search of the possible complications that the use of corrective feedback may entail. After analyzing the 15 studies, it was found that among the possible complications of the use of corrective feedback, it was found that differences between the preferences of students and teachers and the level of students can negatively affect the effectiveness of feedback.

Fatemipour, Safivand, and Sanavi (2010) suggest that there is almost always a mismatch between the learners' and their teachers' preferences. Similarly, Nanni and Black (2017) in their study concluded that student and teacher preferences can impact effectiveness when students and teachers value specific categories of WCF differently. They consider that these differences of perceived value may lead to teachers' frustration when their students fail to engage with their feedback. Likewise, it may also lead to students' disappointment when teachers fail to provide feedback that is most meaningful to them.

Additionally, Thao (2017) showed that the preferences of students and teachers can vary even in the amount of feedback that they consider correct. In his study, students prefer to receive as much feedback as possible because this will be a sign that teachers pay attention to their texts. Then, their errors will not occur in the following writing assignments. However, there is also a drawback. If there are excessive corrections in the students' writing, they will discourage them. As a consequence, this will not allow students to improve. In sum, in terms of teachers' views, they claim that most of the form errors should be corrected. Besides, teachers should consider the errors related to the ideas since the ideas also play a vital role in the students' works.

However, Zareil and Rahnama's study (2013) suggested that although there might be a degree of mismatch between learners' perceived effect and the actual effect of the various modes of corrective feedback on grammatical and lexical writing

accuracy, the kind of feedback teachers give to learners' writing does influence in a good way the learners' lexical and grammatical writing accuracy. In the same way, Kekic (2005) concluded in his study that despite the differences between students and teachers, they show that every type of written corrective feedback is useful for students' writing.

In addition, students experience difficulty understanding their teachers' corrective feedback. Thus, Corpuz's (2011) findings are related to this difficulty. Because of this, teachers allocate additional time during class to explain the written feedback they have provided. He believes that in addition to the difficulty of understanding that it represents for students, it also causes teachers to work longer becoming a time-consuming activity.

However, these problems seem to arise especially when the method of corrective feedback that teachers apply is the indirect one. Maleki and Eslami (2013) found that applying indirect methods of error correction would necessarily call for sufficient linguistic knowledge possessed by students to self-correct errors and also get used to self-editing their texts. Carr and Weinmann (2016) mentioned that students' understanding problems are sometimes caused by teachers' misunderstanding because if teachers misunderstood the participant's intended meaning, they consequently requested corrections that misrepresented their opinion.

These results show that the choice of feedback can be influenced by various factors, such as student expectations, students' level, and students' and teachers' preferences. Despite the results, it is important to mention that even though these difficulties occurred, corrective feedback helped students to improve their writing. So, feedback can be considered an important tool for improving students' proficiency levels

in writing and we can conclude that feedback would then be seen as a constructive part, or as an instrument that can either make the student rise or make progress.

5.1.5 The effects of written corrective feedback

Table 5

The effects of written corrective feedback

Effects	N° of Studies	Authors
Positive	15	Amrhein & Nassaji (2010); Bitchener, Young and Cameron (2005); Carr & Weinmann (2016); Corpuz (2011); Fatemipour, Safivand, and Sanavi (2010); Hashemnezhad & Mohammadnejad (2012); Kagimoto & Rodgers (2008); Karami & Sedighi (2015); Kekic (2015); Lindqvist (2012); Maleki & Eslami (2013); Nanni & Black (2017); Sivaraman & Devarajoo (2005); Thao (2017); Zareil & Rahnama's (2013)

N=15

The analysis of the studies revealed that 100% of the effects of written corrective feedback are optimistic. Many authors agreed on its positive effects. First, Maleki and

Eslami (2013) mentioned that there seems to be a strong bond between providing language learners with error feedback and their writing accuracy. Additionally, Zareil and Rahnama (2013) showed that both coded and uncoded corrective feedback modes are more effective than no corrective feedback conditions. Moreover, they stated that generally receiving any type of corrective feedback is better than receiving none because, in their study, the group who did not receive any corrective feedback showed the least conducive performance. Likewise, Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) established that providing precise and accurate feedback resulted in effective improvement of students in their subsequent drafts. Similarly, in Karami and Sedighi's (2015) study, most of the students believed that the feedback that they had received had a positive effect on their learning process, and around 80% of them claimed that "Overall, this class and the feedback I received increased my language proficiency" (p. 16). In addition, Kekik (2005) found that most of the students and teachers agree that using written corrective feedback can help them to be more accurate and fluent in their writing. Students recognized the benefits of using written corrective feedback because they would not repeat their errors in their writing. Moreover, Corpuz (2011) suggested that teachers regarded the practice of written error correction as important in improving students' written accuracy. Teachers believed that providing written error correction helped students improve their proofreading skills to revise their writing more efficiently.

In addition to the positive results in students' writing, studies showed positive attitudes of teachers and students towards corrective feedback. For instance, Kekik (2015) mentioned that in addition to the improvement that students presented in their writing after receiving feedback, teachers and students demonstrated positive attitudes towards corrective written feedback. In the same way, Sivaraman and Devarajoo (2005)

investigated the students' feelings when teachers provide WCF, and their most frequent response was a sense of happiness as students were able to correct their mistakes. Similarly, Lindqvist (2012) found that students considered feedback as useful and necessary. He also considered that corrective feedback is a communication tool between students and teachers, which is important to facilitate a higher level of proficiency and as a way for teachers to construct a relationship between themselves and their students. In the same way, Thao (2017) found that both teachers and students were willing to provide and receive corrective feedback in their writing. Also, teachers focused on students' performance. Therefore, this situation generated an active and comfortable atmosphere in the classroom so that students became more interested in the learning process.

These studies show that corrective feedback, in addition to helping to improve students' writing, has positive effects for teachers and for students, such as improving communication or facilitating the learning process. In conclusion, both students and teachers have positive attitudes towards corrective feedback. This demonstrates that, in addition to being a very useful tool, corrective feedback is a very versatile device that favors various aspects of teaching.

Chapter VI

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize and synthesize the results obtained from the analysis and to answer the research questions. In addition to a reflective discussion of these findings, this chapter also presents some pedagogical implications and provides suggestions for further research.

This study aimed to answer three questions: Which are the advantages of using correct strategies to correct students' writing mistakes? What methods of written corrective feedback are the most useful to employ in an ESL/EFL class? Which forms of written corrective feedback do students find useful in their process of learning English as a second language?

Through the analysis, it was found that the use of corrective feedback offers advantages such as improving the classroom environment, making students more independent, and most important helping students improve their writing. These results are supported by Bitchener and Knoch (2009) and Chandler (2003), who argue that the use of corrective feedback is not only useful in teaching a second language, but it is also necessary to implement it since its use offers many advantages.

It was also considered important to analyze the disadvantages that the use of feedback can entail. One study conducted by Corpuz (2011) established that teachers found that WCF is time-consuming, while for students it can be very difficult to understand. However, Corpuz (2011) clarified that despite these difficulties, the use of WCF significantly helped students improve their writing, especially in grammar. These results are in line with what Maleki and Eslami (2013) proposed. They stated that providing corrective feedback is a useful way to preserve the knowledge about

grammatical features in long-term memory. After analyzing the studies which contain some of the advantages and disadvantages that both teachers and students can find in the use of written corrective feedback, it can be concluded that although some disadvantages were found, these are minimal compared to the large number of advantages that written corrective feedback offers.

Regarding the second research question, the effectiveness of the most common WCF methods was analyzed. Half of the studies considered direct corrective feedback as the most effective. The studies conducted by Carr and Weinmann (2016), Kekic (2015), and Lindqvist (2012) agree that this is mainly because this method is easier for students to understand. After all, an explanation of the error helps students to understand why and where they make a mistake, and being provided with the correct form helps them to improve their writing. On the other hand, indirect corrective feedback is considered the most effective (Karami & Sedighi, 2015; Sivaraman & Devarajoo, 2005) because it has a more long-term effect, and it helps students to be able to identify their mistakes by themselves in the future. These results coincide with Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005), who found that indirect WCF is more effective than direct feedback in helping learners improve the accuracy of their writing. Finally, other authors (Fatemipour, Safivand, & Sanavi, 2010; Kagimoto & Rodgers, 2008) considered that metalinguistic feedback is the most effective because they stated that using this method the benefits of both, direct and indirect corrective feedback could be obtained.

As mentioned above, there was a notable preference in the studies analyzed for direct corrective feedback; however, the study conducted by Corpuz (2011) mentions a very important piece of information. He claims that teachers prefer to provide explicit written feedback strategies during the early stages of the language course and move to a

more implicit strategy of providing written error correction to facilitate language learning. This information is similar to the one mentioned by Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005), who established that for the corrective feedback to be effective, the direct method should be applied in lower levels, and when the student improves their writing accuracy, the indirect corrective feedback must be applied in combination with the direct written corrective feedback. They demonstrated that the combined feedback facilitates the improvement in students' writing. Another important aspect to consider is that both techniques can be effective; it is only important to know when to use them. This is something that is supported by other studies since they mostly prefer direct WCF because it is very difficult for students to understand indirect WCF; however, if they already receive direct corrective feedback, it will be easier for them to understand indirect corrective feedback in the future.

Regarding the third question, the perspectives of the students were analyzed. It was found that most students prefer the use of direct corrective feedback because it is easier to understand. The reason why it is easier to understand is that direct WCF includes an explanation about students' mistakes; this leads to a clear understanding of their errors and an improvement in their writing. These results are similar to the ones that Kekik (2015) found in his study, in which students show a preference for direct and focused written corrective feedback.

6.2 Recommendations

As for recommendations regarding the practical aspect of corrective feedback, the following can be suggested. After analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of WCF it could be concluded that corrective feedback can improve the learning process, but teachers must be aware of selecting appropriate feedback for learners. The findings

of this study could be useful for teachers to adopt the most effective strategies and methods for providing corrective feedback. It could also contribute to our current knowledge of written corrective feedback because students' preferences regarding the different types of WCF could help teachers decide which type of corrective feedback they should employ in their classes. Also, after analyzing student preferences regarding written corrective feedback, it is recommended that teachers involve the students in the process of giving feedback. Teachers should not let students react passively to the feedback. It means that teachers can request students to give their ideas about their friends' works.

Regarding future research, it is suggested to carry out a deeper investigation about the emotional and external factors that could influence both the students' preferences and the results of corrective feedback. This suggestion is made because during the development of the analysis it was found in some studies (Nani & Black, 2017; Thao 2017), that there are external and emotional aspects that can affect the results of WCF. However, it was difficult to find more information about it.

On the other hand, although the number of studies related to this topic was considerably broad, the majority of them have been conducted in Asia, Europe, and Oceania. For this reason, another recommendation is that more studies should be carried out in this regard in our continent since written corrective feedback is a very relevant issue.

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