



Hacettepe University Journal of Education

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi

e-ISSN: 2536-4758



EFL Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Corrective Feedback on Their Written Tasks*

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Received:</i> 10.08.2020</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> 06.04.2021</p> <p><i>Online First:</i> 08.04.2021</p> <p><i>Published:</i> 31.07.2022</p>	<p>The study aimed to reveal the intermediate-level English language learners' perceptions of the usefulness of the feedback on the different aspects of their paragraphs (e.g., content, organization, language use, etc.) and the usefulness of various types of direct and indirect feedback. The study also aimed to explore their perceptions of the usefulness of writing in a process approach (i.e., outlining-first draft- revision- final draft) and determine students' preferences for the amount of feedback on their written works. The writing instructor of 48 of them was Turkish instructors of English (TIE), whereas 36 of them had international instructors of English (IIE). After students completed five structured paragraph writing tasks, a survey was implemented on 84 volunteer students. Descriptive statistics and non-parametric test Mann Whitney's U test were used to analyze questionnaire responses and compare students' perceptions who were trained by TIE and IIE. Open-ended responses were analyzed in MAXQDA to determine the frequencies of codes. The results indicated that both groups of students rated the usefulness of the feedback they received quite high for almost all components of their paragraphs. However, there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their perceptions of the usefulness of the indirect feedback with comments or error codes and process approach to writing. Students also reported that they wanted all errors in their written work corrected regardless of how they feel.</p> <p>Keywords: Corrective feedback, indirect feedback, written feedback</p>
doi: 10.16986/HUJE.2021068382	Article Type: Research Article

Citation Information: Gedik Bal, N. (2022). EFL students' perceptions of the effectiveness of corrective feedback on their written tasks. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, 37(3), 1116-1129. doi: 10.16986/HUJE.2021068382

1. INTRODUCTION

Hyland (2003) lists different orientations to writing instruction such as structure, function, creative expression, genre, expressivist, content, and process. In the structural orientation, the focus is on form, and writing is considered as a product created via writers' grammatical and lexical knowledge. In the functional approach, the emphasis is on language use, and the aim is to teach learners to write different types of paragraphs with the generation of topic sentences and supporting sentences. In the creative expression approach, writing is considered a creative act of self-discovery; therefore, the focus is on the writer. In the content orientation, the content or the theme is the organizing principle of writing classes, so the focus is on the subject matter. Genres are goal-oriented and achieve a communicative purpose. The genre approach involves discourse and contextual aspects of language use. Therefore, the emphasis is on text and context. In the process approach, the teacher is a guide that helps learners to acquire some strategies for generating ideas, drafting, and revising rather than focusing on the form only. Thus, the emphasis is on the writer. In view of these various orientations to writing instruction, it was emphasized that many teachers benefited from a combination of these in writing courses rather than choosing only one approach (Hyland, 2003).

Apart from the general orientation to writing instruction, the view on error correction on learners' written products has changed substantially for the last two decades. Whereas errors were deemed to be corrected to have grammatically perfect products in the past, errors are seen as a part of language development and regarded more positively at present. The focus has been given to more on fluency and the text's communicative function rather than the accuracy in time. Nonetheless, corrective feedback still remains a common practice in second and foreign language writing classes despite the fact that the debate between Truscott (1999) and Ferris (1999) concerning corrective feedback of written work led to critical questioning of its effectiveness. The necessity of written corrective feedback (WCF) by many scholars as it promotes students' development in writing and accuracy in language use regardless of types of corrective feedback (Ashwell, 2000; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010;

* The ethics committee approval was received from the Social and Human Sciences Research and Scientific Publication Ethics Committee of the university where the research was carried out (Decision no: 4629, Date: 06/07/2020)

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Chadler, 2003; Diab, 2005; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Kisananto, 2016; Rummel & Bitchener, 2015; Sheen 2007).

Types of errors and problematic areas that teachers give feedback in students' written paragraphs vary. Some aspects such as organization and style may not be prioritized as much as mechanical errors like grammar and vocabulary. Being informed about students' preferences in relation to the types of errors they need feedback on is crucial for the teachers. In some studies (Chiang Kwun-Man, 2004; Salteh & Sadeghi, 2015; Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010), students preferred grammar and vocabulary errors to be corrected more than the other types of errors. Mahfoodh and Pandian (2001) also concluded that students preferred their teachers to work on all facets of their written texts but with more emphasis on grammar.

In modern language classes, WCF might be direct and indirect. Ellis (2009) indicates that feedback is direct when errors are identified and corrected, and indirect when they are only identified. Some studies (Abedi, Latifi & Moinzadeh, 2010; Eslami, 2014; Jamalinesari, Rahimi, Gowhary & Azizifar, 2015) concluded that indirect feedback resulted in higher development in writing than direct feedback. However, in some other studies (Hashemnezhad & Mohammadnejad, 2012; Kisananto, 2016), direct feedback had a more positive impact on students' accuracy than indirect feedback.

The scope of feedback is also a fundamental aspect of WCF. According to Ellis's (2009) typology for WCF, unfocused corrective feedback refers to extensive feedback where the teacher corrects almost all errors in written work, whereas in focused corrective feedback, specific errors are determined to be corrected, and others are avoided. Some scholars (Ferris, 2002; Lee, 2019, Ur, 1996) are in favor of focused feedback as unfocused feedback might be demotivating for students (Ur, 1996) and time-consuming, exhausting, and emotionally draining for the teachers (Lee, 2019). However, in many studies (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Diab, 2005; Ghazal, Gul, Hanzala, Jessop, & Tharani, 2014; Hamouda, 2011; Jodaie, Farrokhi & Zoghi, 2011; Kahraman & Yalvaç, 2015; Lee, 2004; Lee, 2005; Oladejo, 1993; Zhu, 2010) students and teachers were in favor of correction of all errors.

Rummel and Bitchener (2015) found that students' beliefs and preferences of corrective feedback greatly impacted the efficacy of the feedback in terms of reducing the errors in the following writing tasks. Therefore, students' preferences, experiences, and approaches to various types of feedback might be very important in evaluating the effectiveness of the feedback strategies applied by the instructors in specific contexts.

In the Turkish context, university entrance exams include questions related to vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills, but writing skills are not tested. Because of this backwash effect, writing skill is generally neglected in language programs in state schools. However, the students studying at an English medium university need training on writing skills to survive in their departments. Preparatory programs at universities provide the opportunity for learners to develop their writing skills with different teaching strategies, yet this process sometimes ends up with frustration. Students do not believe in the benefit of feedback provided, and they give up revising and working on their tasks further. Specifically, some students have certain biases regarding the variability of Turkish and international instructors' feedback. Their assumption is that native English-speaking teachers and international instructors are more effective in speaking courses or General English courses, whereas Turkish instructors are more knowledgeable of grammar and better at providing feedback in writing classes. In fact, the quality of writing instruction and feedback might depend on the types of error correction provided by the instructors and many other factors interfering during the writing process; however, in this particular context, both Turkish instructors and international instructors apply exactly the same procedure of giving feedback with multiple drafts and identification of errors with error codes. This study is expected to provide some insight into such an assumption or previously mentioned biases. Therefore, the study aimed to test the variable of being trained by Turkish and international instructors, which was not studied in earlier WCF studies.

In the Turkish context, the research on students' preferences regarding WCF is also scarce (i.e., Atmaca, 2016; Bozkurt & Acar, 2017; Kahraman & Yalvaç, 2015). Language learners' experiences in L2 writing, preferences, and the reasons for their choices might also be very illuminating and promising for FL writing classrooms and shape in-service language teachers' classroom practices even though there may not be a specific method that fits all the students.

As such, this study aimed to determine English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' perceptions regarding the indirect feedback they received on different aspects of their paragraphs, the development of their paragraphs in a process approach to writing, and their perceptions and preferences regarding the amount of feedback as well as other types of direct and indirect feedback strategies. The study also aimed to reveal any possible differences between the perceptions of students trained by Turkish and international instructors. Therefore, the research questions were:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the usefulness of the feedback they received for different aspects of their paragraphs (i.e., content, organization, grammar, etc.) Why?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the usefulness of the indirect feedback they received and other types of direct and indirect feedback? Why?
3. What are the students' perceptions of the usefulness of the process approach to writing (outlining-first draft- revision-final draft)? Why?

4. What are the students' perceptions and preferences regarding the amount of feedback? Why?
5. Do the perceptions of the students of TIE and IIE differ significantly?

1.1. Relevant Studies

Research on corrective feedback has primarily compared the effectiveness of various feedback types and examined student and teacher preferences regarding all facets of feedback. Since this study's focus is the perceptions of learners regarding the usefulness of the feedback they received, the review presented here involved studies focusing on learners' perceptions and preferences in relation to WCF from different aspects.

Considering the studies on the preference of direct and indirect feedback, Amrhein and Nassaji's (2010) study was comprehensive as it investigated both ESL students' and teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of different types and amount of feedback in Canada. The findings illustrated that most students opted for direct error correction and error correction with a comment. Another study on the preferences of high school students and teachers also had similar findings, and both groups favored direct and comprehensive feedback (Jodaie et al., 2011). Similar results were obtained in another context, and Chung (2015) revealed that Korean EFL learners preferred direct feedback and did not favor identifying the error without giving any explanation. However, in Ji's (2015) investigation on Chinese college EFL learners' preferences, the students preferred indirect feedback where teachers underlined and indicated the type of errors. The results were similar to the study conducted by Halimi (2008) in the Indonesian context. In the Turkish context, Bozkurt and Acar (2017) conducted a study on secondary school students' WCF preferences. Learners indicated their preference for explicit feedback more than implicit feedback. In a Turkish state university, Kahraman and Yalvaç (2015) found that freshmen preferred indirect feedback, i.e., identifying errors and providing clues.

Concerning the amount of feedback, language learners primarily preferred unfocused feedback in many studies even though the effect of focused and unfocused feedback on the consistent use of articles in subsequent writing tasks did not vary in Ellis, Sheen Murakami, and Takashima's (2008) study. Diab (2005) conducted a case study in which one instructor and two students revealed their preferences. Students preferred correction of all errors in their writing. Lee's (2005) study with students at secondary school in Hong Kong also revealed that students favored correction of all errors. In Amrhein and Nassaji's (2010) study, the amount of WCF preferred by the students was to correct as many errors as possible. Similarly, Jodaie et al. (2011) also revealed the preferences for comprehensive feedback by intermediate high school students in the Azerbaijan province of Iran. Hamouda (2011) also explored Saudi EFL learners and teachers' perceptions, and students preferred correction of all errors. Interviews with 15 postgraduate students in a private university revealed that students appreciated clear and comprehensive feedback more than anything else (Ghazal et al., 2014). Kahraman and Yalvaç's (2015) study with first-year students at a state university also supported the previous findings in other contexts, and learners opted for correction of all errors.

In a process approach to writing, the steps such as brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and evaluating are needed. There are very few studies on learners' perceptions of the process approach to writing. These studies generally reflected learners' perceptions of keeping portfolios. Ghooerchaei and Tavakoli (2020) investigated students' perceptions of portfolio assessment as a process-oriented assessment. The results showed that learners had positive attitudes and perceived the development in different aspects of their writing skills. Lam (2015) also conducted a study in a process-oriented writing course and found that learners' writing motivation and engagement increased. He concluded that process writing which emphasizes self-regulation, might develop learners' uptake of composing strategies.

Overall, different studies focused on various aspects of corrective feedback. However, there was a tendency to prefer direct feedback with error correction and comments, and unfocused feedback i.e., correction of all errors. This study specifically aimed to find the preferences of language students in the Turkish context.

2. METHODOLOGY

As the paradigm of this particular research, the researcher chose Pragmatism. Patton (2014) indicates that pragmatism focuses on the useful answers to practical questions. There is a concern with what works and solutions to the problems rather than the methods in a pragmatic worldview. This worldview also assumes that there are multiple realities, and these realities can be explored with the integration of different methods. With this aim, the researcher preferred any method that answers the research questions. The aim was to determine how students rated the effectiveness of the feedback they received and their perceptions regarding a diverse range of feedback types, and their rationale for their perceptions. Different research questions required a distinctive data collection means (i.e., quantitative or qualitative), the data collection was concurrent, and a qualitative instrument (open-ended questions) was embedded in the questionnaire, which mainly consisted of quantitative means, ratings. Therefore, the study's design can be regarded as an embedded mixed-method design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The preference for such a design stemmed from the desire to 'use secondary results to enhance planning, understanding, or explaining a primary strand (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p.75).

2.1. Research Context

The research context was the English preparatory school of a state university. The program's goal is to equip learners with language skills; thereby, they manage to complete their studies at their departments. It is necessary to have 75 out of 100 in the in-house assessment exam, which evaluates learners' both receptive and productive skills. Students can also get an equivalent score from an internationally recognized language test in order to study in their departments. At the beginning of the year, students are placed in different levels based on an international placement test. Later, they have a two-month-period of instruction. If they are eligible, they pass to upper levels.

In elementary and pre-intermediate levels, there are not any specific writing classes where they learn structured paragraphs or essays. Learners' errors in writing tasks are corrected in their free writing tasks, and they do not have a process approach to writing. However, at the intermediate level, three lessons out of 25 were devoted to the writing courses per week. Writing instructors deliver these courses. This is the policy for writing instruction and corrective feedback in the school curriculum.

In intermediate writing courses, students are first instructed on how to write a developed paragraph (i.e., brainstorming, outlining, topic sentence, major ideas and supporting details, and concluding sentence), and they do some practice on error codes and get informed about the rubric that is used to evaluate their papers in the first two weeks of the term. In the following six weeks, they learn a range of paragraph organization such as opinion paragraph, cause or effect paragraph, advantage or disadvantage paragraph, and problem solution paragraph. They are given a topic and asked to develop an outline and write their first drafts in the classroom. Instructors provide written feedback on students' written works in two days. After that, students revise their papers for the final draft. The same language instructors score students' paragraphs based on an analytical rubric with components such as content, organization, language use (grammar), and language use (vocabulary).

2.2. Participants

At the beginning of the year, students were placed in different levels based on an international placement test. In this study, intermediate-level students exposed to the process approach and indirect feedback system for the first time were chosen as the participants. Therefore, the sampling was purposeful. When these students were in pre-intermediate level, they did not use to write a structured paragraph, and they had neither process approach to writing nor error codes on their tasks. They used to have free writing activities, and the instructors used to correct students' mistakes rather than identifying mistakes with error codes.

In this study, there were six writing classes in total. Three of these classes were taught by Turkish instructors of English (TIE), whereas the others were taught by international instructors of English (IIE). Demographics of students can be examined in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Distribution of Students by Groups and Gender

Gender	Students' of Turkish Instructors	Students' of International Instructors	Total
Male	19	8	27
Female	28	20	48
No indication	1	8	9
Total	48	36	84

As can be seen in Table 1, there were 27 male and 48 female students. Nine students did not indicate their gender, which did not cause any problem as gender was not a variable in this study. Students' ages ranged between 18 and 20 as they were preparatory school students; however, there were also a few older than 20.

2.3. Data Collection Tools, Procedures and Analysis

The survey implemented to the students included questions that asked learners to rate the usefulness of the feedback they received on their paragraphs. Some questions of the survey were adapted from Amrhein and Nassaji's (2010) study. The questionnaire was implemented in Turkish, which was the mother tongue of language learners, to avoid any language-related problems that might influence data quality. The questions were piloted with three students for face validity and comprehensibility. In open-ended questions, learners indicated the reasons for their perceptions and their preferences for the amount of feedback. Apart from open-ended questions, there were 17 items. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the questionnaire was .78. Some sample statements for each section are provided in Figure 1 below.

Section	Sample questions	Scale
Different Aspects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How useful was the feedback on the CONTENT of your paragraph to improve writing skills? Why was it useful? / Why wasn't it useful? How useful was the feedback on VOCAB USE (e.g., wrong word, wrong form, etc.) to improve writing skills? Why was it useful? / Why wasn't it useful? 	1: Not useful at all 11: Very useful
Direct-indirect Feedback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How useful was the indirect feedback (not correcting the errors directly but providing only codes such as WW, WF, and SP) How useful do you think the following types of feedback are? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher corrects the error. Example: Since I arrived in Victoria, I am very lonely. (have been) The teacher comments or writes code but does not correct the error. Example: Since I arrived in Victoria, I am very lonely. (wrong tense / WT) Which of the above is the most useful one? Why is that? 	1: Not useful at all 11: Very useful
Process approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How useful was it to follow a process-oriented approach (first draft-feedback-correction-final draft) in the writing course? How much did your paragraph improve from the first draft to the last draft? 	1: Not useful at all 11: Very useful 1: it has not improved at all 11: it has improved a lot
Amount of feedback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How did you feel when your instructor marked all the errors in your paper? Do you think the teacher should mark all the mistakes in the paragraph? Why? 	

Figure 1. Sample questions from the survey

The data was collected after students completed their fifth (final) writing task. They were provided with a consent form where they were informed about the study and the fact that responding to the questionnaire was a voluntary task and their details would be kept confidential. Students were also reminded that they had the right to stop filling it anytime if they did not volunteer to contribute. The ethics committee approval was received from the Social and Human Sciences Research and Scientific Publication Ethics Committee of the university where the research was carried out (Decision no: 4629, Date: 06/07/2020).

Descriptive statistics were used to detect the demographics of the learners and to check normal distribution. The samples (students of TIE and IIE) were not normally distributed, i.e., the number of the participants was not equal in each group. Non-parametric test Mann Whitney's U test in SPSS IBM Version 20 was used to compare perceptions of students who were trained by TIE and IIE for each research question. In addition, open-ended responses were analyzed in the MAXQDA program. Descriptive coding was implemented, and learners' direct utterances were turned into noun forms. A colleague was asked to code the data to calculate intercoder reliability. However, there were no discrepancies or conflicts between the codes. Some of the second coder's codes were broader though they were represented with two different codes in the authors' coding scheme. Revisions were done, and the frequencies of codes were presented in tables. Sample statements were translated into English, and a crosscheck for the translation was carried out by a colleague, who is also an English language instructor and a native speaker of Turkish.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Research Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of the Feedback on Their Paragraphs

Students rated the usefulness of the feedback on their written tasks. Students' perceptions of the usefulness of the feedback they received were given in Table 2.

Table 2.
Students' perceptions of the usefulness of the feedback they received

	Students of Turkish Instructors of English (N= 48)		Students of International Instructors of English (N= 36)		Z score	P
	Mean	Mean Rank	Mean	Mean Rank		
Feedback on content	9.57	42.02	8.88	37.03	-0.98	.33
Feedback on organization	9.60	42.38	8.71	35.13	-1.43	.15
Feedback on grammar	9.80	42.76	9.03	34.81	-1.61	.11
Feedback on vocabulary	9.68	43.69	8.91	35.95	-1.52	.13
Feedback on spelling	9.49	40.40	9.19	37.03	-1.52	.50
Feedback on punctuation	9.06	43.48	8.09	37.39	-1.17	.24
Feedback on capitalization	8.22	39.22	8.29	37.45	-0.35	.73

Note. 1=Not useful at all, 11=Very useful, *p<.05

Students found the feedback on different components of their paragraph quite useful. Specifically, the feedback on grammar and vocabulary was rated highly useful by both groups of students. Mann Whitney U, a non-parametric test, was used to identify any significant difference between the mean ranks of the groups. There was no significant difference between the perceptions of students of TIE and IIE.

Table 3.
Students' Rationale for Their Perceptions of Usefulness of the Feedback They Received

	Noticing mistakes and areas that need to be developed		Correcting mistakes		Preventing future mistakes		Developing paragraph in terms of different components	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Content	14	34	0	0	4	25	13	36
Organization	4	10	0	0	0	0	14	39
Grammar	9	22	8	26	4	25	0	0
Vocabulary	3	7	3	10	3	19	9	25
Spelling	5	12	5	16	3	19	0	0
Punctuation	6	15	10	32	0	0	0	0
Capitalization	0	0	5	16	2	13	0	0
Total	41	100	31	100	16	100	36	100

Students were asked the reasons why they considered the feedback on their paragraphs useful. Noticing mistakes (f=41), correcting their mistakes (f=31), preventing future mistakes (f=16), and developing their paragraph (content, organization, and language use) in general (f=36) were common reasons indicated for feedback on each component as can be seen in Table 3 and exemplified in the excerpts below.

Thanks to the feedback, I realized my shortcomings and the issues I need to improve. (Feedback on Content, P59)

because it provides an opportunity to see and correct my mistakes. (Feedback on Content, P56)

It was very useful because faulty organization wasted all my efforts. Upon learning this, I was able to write a well-developed paragraph with fewer errors. (Feedback on Organization, P67)

I generally used to use the wrong form. Thanks to the feedback, the rate of making mistakes has decreased. (Feedback on Vocab, Participant 72)

I did not repeat the same mistakes (Feedback on Grammar, P80)

The feedback I received prevented me from repeating my mistakes. (Feedback on Content, P66)

Being informed about my mistakes causes it to become permanent in my mind and I am careful not to make the same mistake. (Feedback on Spelling, P60)

I was using the punctuation marks as I used in Turkish when I was writing, but I noticed that this was wrong and I learned, for example, to use a comma after some special patterns (Feedback on Punctuation, P69)

Few students also indicated why they did not find the feedback on their paragraphs not very useful, which can be examined in Table 4.

Table 4.

Students' Rationale for Their Perceptions of the Uselessness of the Feedback They Received

	Not understanding the feedback		Lack of examples/explanations		Considering mistakes trivial	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Content	4	50	3	18	0	0
Organization	2	25	2	12	0	0
Grammar	2	25	2	12	0	0
Vocabulary	0	0	4	24	0	0
Spelling	0	0	0	0	4	44
Punctuation	0	0	2	12	2	22
Capitalization	0	0	4	24	3	33
Total	8	100	17	100	9	100

The reasons included not understanding the feedback (f=8), lack of examples, explanations, or feedback (f=17), and considering mistakes trivial and no need for feedback (f=9), as exemplified in the excerpts below.

Sometimes I don't understand the feedback. (Feedback on Content, P3)

No detailed explanation is given about supporting sentences and details. (Feedback on Content, P29)

I request the provision of the correct versions of the words that I used wrong (Feedback on Vocabulary, P24)

Because I did not understand what my mistake was in the organization and how it was scored (Feedback on Organization, P33)

3.2. Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Direct and Indirect Feedback

Students were asked how useful the feedback with error codes on their written tasks was. Table 5 demonstrates the mean ranks and the significant difference.

Table 5.

Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of the Indirect Feedback They Received

	Students of Turkish		Students of International		Z score	P
	Instructors of English (N= 48)		Instructors of English (N= 36)			
	Mean	Mean Rank	Mean	Mean Rank		
Indirect feedback with error codes (students received)	8.30	44.13	6.77	33.81	-2.02	0.04*

Note. 1=Not useful at all, 11=Very useful, *p<.05

As shown in Table 5, students of TIE rated the usefulness of the indirect feedback they received higher than the students of IIE. A Mann Whitney's U test results indicated that this difference was significant ($U(N_1=48, N_2= 36) = 553.000, z= -2.020, p=.04$). On the other hand, some students indicated some concerns regarding having written feedback from IIEs. These were generally about the students' difficulty in understanding their instructors' feedback.

Since our teacher is a native speaker (of English), I sometimes find it difficult to understand what he means. It is very useful to have native teachers in our classes except for writing feedback and grammar instruction. (P24)

I do not understand my mistakes very well because s/he is a native teacher. (P31)

I want our writing teachers to be especially Turkish. (P28)

Students were asked why the feedback was useful or useless, and the codes were listed in Table 6 below.

Table 6.

Students' Rationale for Their Perceptions of the Usefulness/Uselessness of the Indirect Feedback They Received

Categories	Codes	f	%
The usefulness of indirect feedback with error codes	encouraging self-correction/discovery	8	35
	providing permanent learning	4	17
	being simple, clear, and effective	4	17
	saving time/being practical	4	17
	noticing the mistakes	3	13
	Total		23
The uselessness of indirect feedback with error codes	difficulty in understanding the codes	22	81
	inability to remember the codes	3	11
	having no contribution/being very superficial	2	7
	Total	27	100

They valued the feedback with error codes as it encouraged self-correction and discovery besides providing permanent learning, as exemplified in the excerpts below.

It encourages research. (P35)

Learning by research is more permanent. (P50)

I corrected my own mistake seeing where I am wrong. (P71)

It was beneficial not to correct the mistake directly, because when we find the right form by working on the correct word, there is a more permanent learning but we sometimes find it difficult to find the right form (P77)

However, some students complained that they had difficulty understanding the codes. It was hard to remember their meanings. Some statements of students can be seen in the excerpts below.

Some of them were incomprehensibly complicated. (P18)

It sounds complicated and incomprehensible; I can't keep their meaning in my mind. (P27)

We have to look through the paper all the time and we don't know what some of them mean. (P14)

I did not understand some codes and abbreviations and I could not realize what my mistake was. It might not be sufficiently explanatory to understand the errors. (P79)

Students were given a list of different WCF types and rate the usefulness of each, which can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7.

Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of the Different Types of Direct and Indirect Feedback

	Students of Turkish Instructors of English (N= 48)		Students of International Instructors of English (N= 36)		Z score	P
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
Instructor guides the students to correct their errors	8.31	40.01	8.32	39.99	-0.01	.99
Instructor underlines the error but does not correct it	6.72	44.34	5.56	35.31	-1.73	.08
Instructor corrects the error and comments on it	8.04	38.80	8.94	43.89	-0.99	.32
Instructor corrects the error	6.67	38.57	7.13	40.84	-0.44	.66
Instructor comments or write a code but does not correct the error	8.59	45.32	7.03	32.59	-2.47	.01*
Instructor provides no feedback on the errors	1.79	40.09	1.71	44.61	-1.26	.21
Instructor comments on the ideas but does not correct the errors	3.74	43.62	2.76	36.06	-1.51	.13

Note. 1=Not useful at all, 11=Very useful, *p<.05

As shown in Table 7, whereas students of TIE rated the usefulness of indirect feedback with error codes and comments the highest, students of IEE rated the usefulness of correction of errors with comments higher than the other kinds of WCF. Moreover, students of TIE rated the usefulness of indirect feedback with error codes and comments higher than the students of IEE, and this difference was significant according to Mann-Whitney's U test findings ($U(N_1=48, N_2=36) = 514.500, z=-2.47, p<.05$). Overall, students favored error correction with comments and error identification with comments or codes more than the other feedback types. The least useful feedback types included no feedback on the errors and teachers' comment on the ideas without correcting the errors.

Students were also asked which of these was the most useful one. Twenty-seven students preferred 'Instructor corrects the error and comments on it,' 14 students preferred 'Instructor comments or write a code, but does not correct the error'; nine students chose 'Instructor guides the students to correct their errors'; six preferred 'Instructor underlines the error but does not correct it' and two preferred 'Instructor corrects the error.'

3.3. Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Process Approach to Writing

Students were asked to rate the usefulness of the drafting system they were exposed to, and the findings can be examined in Table 8 below.

Table 8.

Students' perceptions of the usefulness of process approach to writing

	Students of Turkish Instructors of English (N= 48)		Students of International Instructors of English (N= 36)		Z score	P
	Mean	Mean Rank	Mean	Mean Rank		
Usefulness of process approach	10.30	46.85	9.03	33.31	-2.74	.01*
Development from the first to the final draft	9.16	37.80	8.44	33.07	-0.96	.34

Note. 1=Not useful at all, 11=Very useful, *p<.05

Table 8 demonstrates that both groups of learners found this system quite useful, although there was a significant difference between the ratings of the students of TIE and IIE ($U(N_1=48, N_2= 36) = 536.000, z= -2.74, p.01$). Students of TIE found the process approach more useful than the students of IIE, as shown in Table 8. However, both groups of students indicated that their paragraphs developed from the first to the final draft. Students also expressed why they thought this process approach to writing was effective, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9.

Students' Rationale for Their Perceptions of the Usefulness of Process Approach to Writing

Categories	Codes	f	%
The usefulness of process approach to writing	an opportunity to correct and revise the paragraphs	12	43
	noticing mistakes	8	29
	developing oneself & noticing the development in their paragraphs	6	21
	preventing future mistakes	2	7
	Total	28	100
Development from the first to final draft	correcting mistakes/making fewer mistakes	10	43
	noticing mistakes	6	26
	improvement in the use of vocab and linkers	3	13
	learning paragraph organization	2	9
	improvement in the use of grammar and sentence structures	2	9
Total	23	100	
Lack of development from the first to the final draft	Limited development	3	60
	Lack of explanations and not understanding the feedback	2	40
	Total	5	100

The rationale provided was mainly related to students' seeing it as an opportunity to revise their written work and their feeling of achievement. They also indicated that they corrected their mistakes and improved their language use.

Now my organization (of the paragraph) is good, I think I can convey what I think better. (P60)

It developed in terms of the variety of words that I use. Now, I use a range of words. (P78)

When I compare, I think I have made great progress in terms of word usage and grammar. (P2)

Seeing my mistakes and rewriting the paragraph helped me practice and improve my skills. (P49)

It has improved because I have always noticed the mistakes I made with the feedback given by my teacher. (62)

I think I have improved because I learned the paragraph organization, corrected my mistakes and made my learning permanent. (P53)

3.4. Students' Preferences Regarding the Amount of Corrective Feedback

Students were asked how they felt when all of their errors were identified. Table 10 illustrates the affective reactions of the learners.

Table 10.

Students' Feelings and Perceptions When All Errors were Identified/Corrected

Codes	f	%
feeling that they need to study harder	17	18
feeling good/happy	15	16
considering it necessary/useful	13	14
feeling bad	11	12
feeling inadequate	9	10
feeling nothing	9	10
noticing the mistakes	8	9
feeling sad	7	7
feeling angry	3	3
feeling worried	2	2
Total	94	100

As shown in Table 10 , most of the students expressed that they felt the requirement of much harder work. Some also noted their feeling of sadness and inadequacy; however, they believed this correction of all errors was either necessary or useful for improving their writing skills.

The findings regarding the preferred amount of feedback showed that 71 students favored the correction or identification of all errors (unfocused feedback) and considered it very useful, whereas four did not support the idea. Nine students did not write anything regarding this question. When students were asked why all the errors should be identified, they indicated the reasons listed in Table 11.

Table 11.

Students' Rationale for Their Desire to Have Unfocused Feedback

Codes	f	%
to notice their mistakes	28	37
to correct their mistakes	20	26
not to make any mistakes in the future	14	18
to develop their writing skills in general	14	18
Total	76	100

They must be marked because I don't realize that I am making mistakes. (P16)

It should be marked because I believe that learning from mistakes is more permanent. (P35)

Yes, they must be marked because we must notice our mistakes and we must correct them. (P 8)

They should be marked because if we do not see our mistakes, our writing skill won't improve. (P64).

They should be marked because if I don't know my mistakes, I might keep making the same mistakes (P49)

All mistakes should be marked because if they are not marked, I cannot correct them in my future works. (P46)

I think the instructor should mark all the errors because we are trying to learn the correct version by checking these mistakes and such feedback helps us to write a much better paragraph. (P69)

As can be examined in Table 11 and the excerpts above, students preferred unfocused feedback and wanted all errors to be marked by their instructors. Students noted that this is necessary to notice their mistakes, correct them, and not to make them in the future. Students also believed that if the errors were marked, learning would be more permanent, and they would develop their writing skills.

4. DISCUSSION

Considering the findings of the present study, it mainly supported the previous studies investigating students' perceptions, attitudes, and preferences of WCF in terms of various issues such as feedback on different aspects of written work, error identification or correction, and amount of feedback which were mainly explored in this study.

The first research question tried to reveal students' perceptions of the feedback's usefulness on different aspects of their paragraphs. The results indicated that students appreciated feedback on all aspects of their paragraph comprising of language use, content, and organization. However, feedback on grammatical errors and vocabulary errors was considered slightly more useful when the mean scores were considered. This finding was in line with Amrhein and Nassaji's (2010) study in which students considered almost all types of errors useful, and they found correction of grammar and vocabulary errors more useful. In Mahfoodh and Pandian's (2011) study, students also preferred teachers to work on all facets of their written tasks with more emphasis on grammar. Moreover, Chiang Kwun-Man (2004) and Salteh and Sadeghi's (2015) study found similar results, and students considered grammar and vocabulary errors more important. Open-ended questions also revealed that students considered feedback on various aspects of the paragraph useful because they noticed their mistakes and the areas

needed to be developed. They also corrected their mistakes and prevented future mistakes by eventually improving their writing skills. Nonetheless, one-tenth of learners believed feedback on spelling, punctuation, and capitalization mistakes were not very useful as they occurred because of time limitation, and they were not serious mistakes which were similar to the findings of Kahraman and Yalvaç (2015). Some students also found the feedback on content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary unclear and expressed the need for more explanation or details. Thus, teachers should be informed about learners' needs and preferences for feedback on their written works (Armhein & Nassaj, 2010; Diab, 2005) maybe via a quick, anonymous online survey and consider problems regarding different aspects of written work while providing feedback. Negotiation of the classroom's common mistakes might also give learners a chance to articulate what they think about the feedback, especially in terms of clarity and comprehensibility. Teachers might even choose to neglect some mechanical errors like capitalization or punctuation if the mistakes are local (i.e., they do not cause miscommunication).

In the second research question, the purpose was to find out the students' perceptions of the usefulness of the indirect feedback they received and other types of direct and indirect feedback options, and if there is a significant difference between perceptions of students of IIE and TIE. The results demonstrated a significant difference between the two groups' perceptions of the usefulness of indirect feedback with comments or error codes. Students of TIE rated the usefulness of indirect feedback with error codes and comments significantly higher than students of IIE. In addition, students of TIE rated the usefulness of indirect feedback with comments or error codes the highest, whereas students of IIE rated the usefulness of direct error correction with comments highest. Overall, participants rated the usefulness of these two different feedback types (i.e., error correction with comments and error identification with comments or error codes) higher than the other feedback types. Error identification by underlining without any codes or comments and only correcting errors directly were not rated as high as these. These findings suggest that although two groups had different perceptions regarding the usefulness of error identification or correction, both favored comments in addition to the error identification or correction. In this aspect, the quality of the comments should also be considered. Instructors should be more elucidative even when they appreciate students' works. Solely putting a comment like 'good job' might not be very impactful on learners' development or motivation. Learners should be informed about which aspects or parts of written work they were good at or need further development. When the most useful feedback type was asked in open-ended sections, error correction with comments had the highest frequency, which was similar to the previous research (Armhein & Nassaji, 2010; Jodai et al., 2011; Chunk, 2015) and error identification with comments or codes was the second most useful one. Whereas indirect feedback with error codes was not favored and preferred by learners and teachers in previous research (Armhein & Nassaji, 2010; Jodaie et al., 2011; Chunk, 2015), this study revealed that participants, especially students of TIE favored it, which was similar to the findings of Halimi (2008) and Ji (2015). Open-ended sections revealed why many students found the indirect feedback highly useful, such as encouraging self-correction and making learning permanent. Therefore, error code practice might still be preferred in the research context to facilitate learners' autonomous writing skills development. However, some did not favor indirect feedback with error codes. They thought that the codes or abbreviations were not sufficiently clear and they were hard to remember. Though these codes were explained and hung on the classroom billboards, students needed more familiarization with these codes.

Regarding the students' perceptions of the process approach's effectiveness, both groups of students agreed that it was quite useful as they corrected their mistakes, improved their language use, and developed their paragraph organization. However, students of TIE rated the usefulness of this process approach significantly higher than the students of IIE, and students of TIE rated the development of their paragraphs from the first to the final draft higher than the students of IIE, although this difference was not significant. The reason might stem from students' perceptions of lack of understanding from IIE's feedback or IIE's focused feedback on students' paragraphs. As Lee (2019) pointed, an overall impression regarding WCF is that the more WCF, the better the teacher, so students might be biased. However, further inquiry is required to explore, validate or refute such assumptions. For the research context, the author suggests that instructors have some sharing sessions where they discuss how they view the process approach to writing and the most effective feedback strategies they presume based on their experiences in writing courses. The institution has documented some guidelines and policies for the instructors regarding writing courses; however, such gatherings would yield much sharing, understanding, reflection, and revision in policies or practice if necessary and contribute to learners' overall development of writing skills.

In relation to the amount of feedback that students preferred, the findings of the questionnaire indicated that regardless of how they felt (e.g., feeling sad, incompetent, etc.), 84.5 % of the students preferred correction of all errors (i.e., unfocused feedback) because of the desire to notice and correct their mistakes, avoid future mistakes and develop their writing skill. The survey findings were non-contradictory with the previous studies (Armhein & Nassaji, 2010; Diab, 2005; Ghazal et al., 2014; Hamouda, 2011; Jodaie et al., 2011; Lee, 2005; Salteh & Sadeghi, 2015; Zhu, 2010). To conclude, instructors sometimes avoid identifying all errors in the belief that this would hurt students' feelings, and they will have less time to focus on the other aspects such as content and organization of the paragraph. Some scholars also defend that extensive error correction does not contribute much to overall writing accuracy, and focused WCF is much more effective than unfocused WCF (Lee, 2019). Nonetheless, as revealed in this research context, students preferred identifying all errors regardless of their feelings. Thus, instructors can negotiate the amount of the feedback with their students, consider their proficiency level and their preferences of feedback and adapt their feedback strategies accordingly or they might have a small chat with their students about why they, as instructors, specifically avoid marking certain errors and choose a focused feedback approach for their

benefits. They might even inform them about why specific errors were chosen to mark, which might foster communication and understanding among students and instructors, and increase their motivation in writing courses.

All in all, the study shed light on certain issues regarding the feedback on Turkish foreign language learners' writing, mainly in the light of students' experiences in an L2 writing course and their perceptions of WCF in general, and the findings were coherent with the studies conducted in other contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to reveal students' perceptions of the indirect feedback's effectiveness with error codes on their written works and the process approach that was implemented. The study also aimed at learners' perceptions of specific types of feedback strategies and the reasons for their choices. The study's findings indicated that learners found the process approach to writing quite useful, and they valued the indirect feedback with error codes on their written tasks. Concerning their WCF preferences, students rated the usefulness of error correction with comments and error identification with comments or codes higher than other WCF types. They wanted all of their errors identified in the paper. In terms of different aspects of a paragraph, almost each error type and aspect of the paragraph was considered useful to mark in students' written work. Regarding the biases of language learners in relation to the usefulness of Turkish instructors' and international instructors' feedback, the study demonstrated that being guided by instructors from different cultural backgrounds might also be a variable that needs to be investigated further. The findings demonstrated a significant difference between the perceptions of students of Turkish instructors and students of international instructors.

Regarding the study's implications, the study provided insights for practitioners in FL writing classes in the light of students' experiences and perceptions. First, students' preferences and needs should be considered while providing feedback. Besides, negotiation of these feedback strategies and their impact on their learning might also raise students' awareness regarding teachers' choice of feedback strategies (Ashwell, 2000; Diab, 2005). This can also prevent demotivation among learners and negative reactions to writing (Armhein & Nassaji, 2010). As a second step, teachers should identify their agendas considering all aspects of giving feedback i. e focus, amount, and drafting, according to the learners' needs and the context. Process writing with multiple drafts should be prioritized. Not just mechanics but errors in organization, content, and style should be given importance in WCF. For the amount of feedback, teachers should consider students' beliefs and preferences in addition to the affective reactions to the written work and shape their strategies accordingly. To avoid students' differentiation of Turkish vs. native or international teachers, in-house gatherings where instructors from various backgrounds share their knowledge, expertise, and experience regarding WCF can be organized, and students can be informed about the selection and implementation of specific WCF types by the instructors. Finally, in this specific context, to facilitate the process, instructors might spare more time on codes before each writing session instead of having only one error code practice at the beginning of the period. They can even spare five minutes of each session for a pairwork where students discuss their common problems by checking the error codes on their classmates' papers.

There were certain limitations of the study. Firstly, it only reflected students' experiences, preferences, and perceptions; however, teachers' experiences, preferences, and perceptions regarding various types of feedback should also be studied in the Turkish context. Secondly, the study specifically focused on one EFL learning context at a state university. Therefore, it cannot be generalized to other universities or high schools. More research is needed in different contexts, such as private universities and secondary schools in Turkey. Some longitudinal studies can also be conducted to gauge certain feedback types' effectiveness, not just focusing on grammar accuracy but other aspects of written texts like organization, style, and content. Moreover, more qualitative inquiry might be carried out to reveal the rationale for the differences between students' perceptions guided by Turkish and international language instructors.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The ethics committee approval was received from the Social and Human Sciences Research and Scientific Publication Ethics Committee of the university, where the research was carried out with decision no 2020/4629.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The study was conducted by a single researcher.

Acknowledgment

I thank all the participants who volunteered in the study. Without their time and effort, this study would not be complete. I would also like to thank anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback and Herbert Mehmet Stevenson, university language editor, for his proofreading.

Statement of Interest

There is no conflict of interest for this study.

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