

T.R.

ISTANBUL SABAHATTIN ZAIM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**EFFECTS OF FOCUSED WRITTEN CORRECTIVE
FEEDBACK ON ESSAY WRITING SKILLS: A CASE STUDY
OF UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
ISTANBUL**

MA THESIS

Ali ARSALAN

Istanbul

June, 2025

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June, 2025

This study has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MA Degree in English Language Education.

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DECLARATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS AND ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that this MA thesis titled “Effects of Focused Written Corrective Feedback on Essay Writing Skills; A Case Study of University Preparatory School Students in Istanbul” is my work. I have acted according to scientific ethics and academic rules while producing it. I have collected and used all information and data according to scientific ethics and guidelines on thesis writing of Sabahattin Zaim University. In the text and bibliography, I have fully referenced all direct and indirect quotations and sources I have used in this work.



Ali ARSALAN

Istanbul, June 2025

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Finally, I dedicate this work to everyone who has contributed, in big or small ways, to completing this thesis. Your support has meant the world to me.

Ali ARSALAN

Istanbul, June 2025

ABSTRACT

**EFFECTS OF FOCUSED WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK
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M.A., Department of English Language Education

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Abdül Kasım VARLI

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This research study aims to determine the effects of focused written corrective feedback on the essay writing skills of university preparatory schools in Istanbul, Türkiye. For this purpose, the study was conducted with 74 A2-B1-level students at a preparatory school in Istanbul at a private and public university. The study entails a mixed method. As a data collecting instrument, SPSS 29 was employed to collect data from the experimental and control groups before and after the treatment phase. Next, a Paired Samples T-Test was utilized for the data analysis procedure. According to inferential statistics, the T value is -8.818, which indicates that the post-test is greater than the pre-test. We can also see that the mean value, which is

-6296 is statistically significantly different from zero, specifying that the post-test was effective. The findings reveal that focused written corrective feedback significantly affects the participants' essay writing skills. This study discovered that focused written corrective feedback on essays written by university preparatory schools has a positive effect on their performance. In other words, receiving focused written feedback on essays may positively influence the university preparatory school students' writing, since the students outperformed in the post-test compared to the pre-test. As a result, the outcomes of this investigation promote the implementation of focused written corrective feedback on essays in the university preparatory schools.

Key terms: Focused written corrective feedback, essay writing skills

ÖZET

ODAKLANMIŞ YAZILI DÜZELTİCİ GERİ BİLDİRİMİN MAKALE YAZMA BECERİLERİNE ETKİLERİ: İSTANBUL'DAKİ ÜNİVERSİTE HAZIRLIK OKULU ÖĞRENCİLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

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Bu araştırma çalışmasının amacı, İstanbul'daki üniversite hazırlık okullarında odaklanmış yazılı düzeltici geri bildirimin (focused written corrective feedback) öğrencilerin kompozisyon yazma becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koymaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda çalışma, İstanbul'da bir devlet ve bir vakıf üniversitesinin hazırlık okulunda öğrenim gören A2-B1 seviyesindeki 74 öğrenci ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma karma yöntem yaklaşımını içermektedir. Veri toplama aracı olarak, deney ve kontrol gruplarından, uygulama öncesi ve sonrası veriler elde etmek amacıyla SPSS 29 programı kullanılmıştır. Çıkarımsal istatistiklere göre T değeri -8.818 olarak bulunmuş, bu da son testin ön testten daha yüksek olduğunu göstermektedir. Ortalama fark değeri olan -6.296 da sıfırdan istatistiksel olarak anlamlı şekilde farklıdır ve bu durum son testin etkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bulgular, odaklanmış yazılı düzeltici geri bildirimin katılımcıların kompozisyon yazma becerileri üzerinde anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, üniversite hazırlık okullarında yazılan kompozisyonlara verilen odaklanmış yazılı geri bildirimin öğrencilerin performansı üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Başka bir deyişle, kompozisyonlara odaklanmış yazılı geri bildirim alan üniversite hazırlık öğrencileri, ön test sonuçlarına kıyasla son testte daha başarılı olmuştur. Sonuç olarak, bu araştırmanın bulguları üniversite hazırlık okullarında kompozisyon yazımında odaklanmış yazılı düzeltici geri bildirimin uygulanmasını desteklemektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Odaklanmış yazılı düzeltici geri bildirim, makale yazma becerileri



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FWCF	Focused Written Corrective Feedback
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WCF	Written Corrective Feedback
ZP	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

It is widely recognized that acquiring or mastering English as a foreign language (EFL) is very hard. Certain scholars have even proposed that proficiency in a foreign language within educational contexts is exceedingly challenging (Krashen, 1981; 1982). The complexity of this process primarily arises due to a multitude of variables, including motivation, age, learner preferences, aptitude, instructional approach, the nature of the language itself, and more.

Amidst this challenging journey, expecting flawless and precise performance from EFL learners overnight appears unrealistic. It is highly likely that some instances of “missteps” will emerge along the way. Ferris (2002) presents three insights for EFL educators in light of this reality:

- 1) Anticipating flawless written output from students devoid of errors is not a realistic expectation.
- 2) Rapid enhancements in accuracy should not be assumed to occur overnight.
- 3) EFL students, distinct from native speakers, require fitting feedback, including corrective measures, and suitable instructional methods.

Mistakes made by EFL learners have commonly been regarded as an inherent aspect of the foreign language learning process by most researchers in investigating foreign language learning.

Learning a second language is a dynamic and ongoing process in which a learner gradually develops the ability to speak and write in the new language. Learners' L2 is produced according to the rules of the phonological norms that they internalize (Hendrickson, 1980). learning a second language is also characterized as the “development of understanding about the L2 and its accurate use” (Bitchener & Storch, 2016, p. 2).

When learners have much command and control over these rules and their application, it is seen that L2 output follows both grammatical structures. Although if learners assume the rules of a language, then we sometimes see it as a flawed system, which

sometimes seems incorrect, they might produce certain incorrect expressions (Hendrickson, 1980).

Ferris (2010) perspective is worth mentioning in this context, she believes that WCF can be effective in specific contexts, its impact depends on various factors, including the type of feedback provided, the characteristics of the learners, and the nature of the writing task. She further argues that WCF has the capability to improve students' writing accuracy and language proficiency. She identifies the importance of providing learners with explicit correction and guidance to help them develop their writing skills.

On the other hand, there is debate about the most effective types of WCF, including direct vs. indirect feedback, focused vs. unfocused correction, and metalinguistic explanations. Different scholars argue about the dominance of specific feedback strategies.

Focused written corrective feedback (FWCF) has been a topic of great significance in L2, with research focusing on specific error correction to enhance learners' language accuracy and proficiency. The concept of focused WCF caught people's attention in the late 20th century as scholars began to explore more targeted approaches to error correction in written language production.

Researchers tried to explore specific linguistic forms or structures that were troublesome for learners. Studies done in the 1990s, such as Lyster and Ranta (1997), played the role of a steppingstone in examining the effectiveness of focused WCF in second language writing instruction.

Since then, focused written corrective feedback has seen many ups and downs; it is evolving in this modern era, and FWCF is still seen as one of the most critical factors in analyzing students' writings. Researchers have shed light on pedagogical implications for integrating focused WCF into writing instruction, highlighting the importance of specific feedback to address learners' needs. Research on (FWCF) continues to be a dynamic area of inquiry in second language writing.

A recent work (Lee, 2018) delves into the connection between learners' language aptitude and understanding of FWCF. Lee explores the wavering responses of learners with varied levels of language ability to focused correction and the outcome effects on their language proficiency advancement (Lee, 2018).

This study aims to investigate the effects of FWCF on the Essay writing skills of university preparatory school students. In the past few years, a rapid growth in the field of FWCF has been observed. Undoubtedly, FWCF has gathered the attention of practitioners and researchers in the last few decades. Assessment of learners' writing skills is pivotal in English language teaching. Therefore, the significance of written corrective feedback cannot be denied for students and teachers. To examine the effects of FWCF on university preparatory students' essay writing skills, the study will seek answers to some questions, and a survey will be conducted on a sample group of students of university preparatory schools in Istanbul, Turkey.

1.2. Research Problem

FWCF is important in ELT and English as a non-native or foreign language. A significant body of research has inquired into this phenomenon in the past few decades. Research has been done in the field of written and oral corrective feedback.

Identifying students' errors in writing is of great importance for students and teachers. Students learn from their errors and try to improve their writing performance. On the other hand, it is beneficial for teachers, too, because teachers can notice whether or not students are learning from their errors and improving their performance. It helps the instructors to derive effective strategies for the future.

1.3. Rationale of the Study

Writing in a second or a foreign language is quite challenging in the case of an academic context, students are supposed to express their thoughts in a very accurate and precise way. Regarding the variegated aspects of second language acquisition (SLA), writing is one of the most complicated skills to learn, generally requiring high syntactic, lexical, and organizational levels of competence (Hyland, 2003). Therefore, students from university preparatory schools, particularly those planning to continue with an English-medium academic environment, must develop strong writing skills to match academic expectations. Given that, feedback in writing instruction is essential, particularly written corrective feedback (WCF), which provides feedback for learners' errors in a written text.

Additionally, the writing skills of Turkish students at university preparatory schools in Istanbul usually vary according to their different educational backgrounds. The need

for systematic and practical instruction in writing is becoming more pronounced as the students move from general English proficiency to academic English proficiency.

Provided that corrective feedback is written and especially specific, it can indeed be the scaffolding these learners need to increase accuracy and fluency in academic essay writing. The effect of these focused WCF on the essay writing development of such students and the resulting impact on their growth as academic writers is explored in this study.

Corrective feedback in language learning is about how teachers respond to students about whether their language use is correct, if it is grammatically correct, and has appropriate vocabulary and structure (Ellis, 2009). It is a crucial pedagogical tool that helps learners reveal and correct linguistic mistakes.

Researchers differentiate several types of written corrective feedback in the written domain: direct, indirect, metalinguistic, focused, and unfocused feedback (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Here, focused written corrective feedback refers to targeted errors of certain types, like articles, verb tenses, or prepositions, instead of responding to all errors in a text. In contrast, the second one is unfocused feedback, which simultaneously tries to correct all error categories. Supporters of focused WCF assert that if teachers restrict the correction domain, learners can identify the patterns in their mistakes and internalize the correct forms better (Sheen, 2007).

This kind of feedback may help students in academic preparatory settings where students are under pressure to meet and progress on specific language proficiency benchmarks by giving them an easier and more precise pathway to improvement. There is much debate, however, about the effectiveness of WCF, as some studies have shown that it can work, although other studies suggest little or delayed effect (Truscott, 2007). As such, this study takes part in this ongoing debate by assessing how focused WCF influences the writing skills of the Turkish university prep students over a determined period.

WCF is mainly based on SLA theories, especially the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), claiming that for any progress to be made, learners should first notice the gap between their interlanguage and the target language. This noticing is facilitated by written corrective feedback, especially when it is focused and systematic. Teachers

can direct learners' attention to the specific linguistic forms that must be improved by focusing on certain errors.

DeKeyser (2007) also employs Skill Acquisition Theory to indicate that practice with feedback facilitates the proceduralization of declarative knowledge through practice and error correction. From their sociocultural perspective, feedback is seen as a mediational tool for learning in the zone of proximal development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

In the case of the student from Istanbul, for example, with limited English exposure outside of any class, teacher feedback becomes a critical source of input and reflection. Focused WCF is well aligned with the curriculum objectives of rapid improvement of academic English in university preparatory schools, where instruction tends to be intensive and time-bound.

This case study aims to provide an empirical investigation of the theoretical foundations of EFL pedagogy in practice by examining how students view, react to, and benefit from a targeted program of WCF in developing their essay writing skills.

English is taught as a foreign language in Turkey and the level of English proficiency of the students entering the universities preparatory schools may vary from student to student depending on their previous school. They are one-year programs, 'prep' schools, which are supposed to fill the gap between high school English and English, as applied in English medium instruction in a university setting.

However, studies highlight that most Turkish students struggle with writing tasks for academic purposes, such as argumentative and analytical essays. Problems organizing their ideas, composing coherent arguments, and using correct grammatical structures are widespread among students. However, cultural emphasis on teacher authority and correctness in Turkish classrooms may also affect how feedback is provided to and taken in by students. Therefore, written feedback is not merely yet another tool for correcting mistakes but is also an integral part of instructional discourse.

In this particular domain, focused WCF may be a well-suited pedagogically efficient strategy focusing on the most frequent or pedagogically essential errors. Based on a case study approach, this study falls within the Turkish university prep context to discuss how focused WCF interventions over multiple drafts and assignments affect students' writing development.

These mixed results [of previous studies on WCF] align with other findings, suggesting that WCF may be effective depending on the feedback, target error type, and learner's proficiency (Ferris, 2011). For example, Bitchener and Knoch (2008) demonstrated that learners' accuracy persistently improves if WCF is focused on articles and prepositions. The same is also true when Sheen (2007) found that focused WCF on articles affected the subsequent writing tasks of learners.

On the other hand, Truscott (2007) has it that correction is, on the whole, ineffective and can even be detrimental because it may induce anxiety or stimulate avoidance tactics by the learners. Such divergent findings call for further empirical research, especially into contexts not yet studied, namely, those of Turkish prep schools.

In addition, there have been few studies on how learners emotionally and cognitively respond to feedback, which may be quite influential in its effectiveness. Under preparatory conditions, comprehension of focused WCF, or non-WCF, when stakes are high and academic standards must be met rapidly, is vital. This study aims to fill this gap by concentrating on the quantitative changes in writing scores and the students' perceptions of the feedback received.

Writing an essay (an extended discourse) requires a combination of skills, including organizing, making it coherent, presenting an argument, and grammatical accuracy. For university preparatory students, especially in contexts where they are studying English for Academic Purposes (EAP), the essay is one of the most significant genres of writing they must complete to demonstrate their readiness for university studies. However, essay writing is uncharacteristically difficult for many learners, and they repeat mistakes in the areas of tense consistency, subject-verb agreement, article usage, and sentence boundaries (Hyland, 2004).

Moreover, this is the kind of error WCF is meant to resolve. Teachers who keep bringing students' attention to particular error categories can help learners gain more grammatical control and rhetorical awareness. In practice, focused WCF can comprise underlying, marking, or providing metalinguistic explanations of only the target error types without marking other errors.

Even more importantly, this selective approach (1) helps manage teacher workload and (2) avoids cognitive overload for the learners, allowing them to focus on a smaller set of related linguistic issues. Writing essays is an integral part of academic

achievement, and the focused WCF impacts students' capability of writing clearly and accurately, making it necessary to conduct extensive and comprehensive research about the benefits of applying the focused WCF.

The study is based on a case study framework that permits a deep analysis of how focused WCF works in practice in a real classroom. What these university preparatory schools in Istanbul signify, too, academically and linguistically, is the choice of Istanbul for such an educational setting. The case study methodology is ideal for such research because it allows in-depth research on teaching practices, student responses, and contextual factors (Yin, 2014).

The study gathers both qualitative and quantitative data through observations, writing samples, and interviews to provide a comprehensive picture of the intervention's impact. The study deals with a sample of students who participate in regular focused WCF on specific grammatical features over ten weeks.

They are followed through successive essay drafts with interviews and questionnaires that shed light on how the students experience and respond to the feedback. This mixed methods research approach not only evaluates the extent of measurable change but also identifies and assesses the use of measurable and unmeasurable aspects of feedback utilization, such as cognitive and affective.

In addition, it examines how learners' differences (including motivation, language awareness, and feedback experience) affect the application of focused WCF. Correction may be taken well by some learners who consider it a learning aid. In contrast, it may be taken negatively by some other learners as it discourages or confuses them if enough explanation or practice does not accompany the feedback. This demonstrates that for learners, feedback should be centered on the learner, not the act of the instructor. Learners are not passive recipients of coursework, but active participants in the revision process if content is presented in various ways.

This study analyzes students' attitudes and reactions to focused WCF by interviewing them to identify the conditions under which focused WCF is most likely to lead them to meaningful improvement. Such context-sensitive insights are especially valuable in a city like Istanbul, which is diverse and has a wide variation in its educational traditions and learner expectations. This knowledge enables teachers to train and

design curricula in similar EFL contexts to know what kinds of feedback preparatory students need.

Ultimately, this study seeks to bring theory and practice closer together in second language writing instruction. Despite much written on the merits of corrective feedback, there have been fewer studies into its application in the classroom, especially within high-stakes, time-constrained environments such as university prep schools.

The Istanbul case study presents an exceptional opportunity to see how the focused WCF works in an abstract pedagogical concept and practice as it is infused with institutional realities, teacher choices, and learner responses. Therefore, the findings of this research may have implications beyond the immediate setting and could be related to how to increase the effectiveness, sustainability, and learner-friendliness of feedback in diverse academic settings.

The research concludes with an attempt to ground the study in both SLA theory and empirical classroom data so that it can present a model for how similar feedback interventions can be designed and evaluated in this type of EFL context.

1.4. Research Aims, Objectives, and Research Questions

The main objective of this research is to know about the effects of focused written corrective feedback on the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students and to investigate potential differences in their writing performance using the FWCF technique.

Corrective feedback, whether verbal or nonverbal, holds significant importance in English language instruction, particularly for second or foreign language learners. In recent years, extensive research has been conducted into the usefulness of focused and unfocused corrective feedback.

A recent work (Lee, 2018) delves into the connection between learners' language aptitude and understanding of FWCF. Lee explores the wavering responses of learners with varied levels of language ability to focused correction and the outcome effects on their language proficiency advancement (Lee, 2018). Instructors can devise more effective strategies for future teaching endeavors.

This study tries to discover the effects of FWCF on the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students. To this end, the study will look for the answers to the following research questions:

- 1) To what level does focused written corrective feedback affect the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students?
- 2) What negative or positive effects does FWCF have on the writing performance of university preparatory school students?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is of enormous significance for students, practitioners, and teachers. Firstly, it would help them to understand the importance of FWCF, especially for university preparatory school students. Secondly, it would allow them to derive better and efficient strategies. Thirdly, it would help to derive a better and more efficient approach for correcting the errors made by students. Fourthly, there might be many studies on the effects of focused written feedback. However, there are no studies when we particularly talk about the effects of FCWF on university preparatory school students in Istanbul, Turkiye. It would be the first study of this kind. There are not enough studies done before on the effects of FWCF, making this study worth doing. Considering the above characteristic, this study is unique from previous studies on FWCF.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

Every research study has its limitations, and this study is also not an exception when it comes to limitations. This study also has some limitations that need to be considered, as it cannot be generalized to all contexts. First, the research study is limited to FWCF for university preparatory school students. Secondly, it is done in one public and one private university preparatory school in Istanbul, Turkiye, with a limited number of participants. Therefore, results may include limited evaluations and conclusions. However, it would contribute to future research to be conducted in the field of FWCF.

1.7. Structure of the study

Chapter 1, Introduction, provides a brief introduction to the reader, discussing the general background of the effects of written corrective feedback while focusing on written corrective feedback, specifies the aims of the study, the significance of the research, and presents the research questions. Chapter 2, Literature Review, presents

a review of the relevant literature on the effects of focused written feedback on essay writing skills of university preparatory school students. Chapter 3, Methodology, gives an overview of the methods and procedures employed in the study to gather the necessary data. The chapter also presents the statistical tests the study will use to analyze the collected data. Chapter 4, Findings and Discussion, presents and interprets the study's findings. Chapter 5, Conclusion and Recommendations, summarizes the study's main findings and recommendations.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Written corrective feedback has been thoroughly researched and argued since Truscott (1996) raised serious issues regarding grammar correction in writing. Despite much study in this field, there is no conclusive outcome about the accuracy of written corrective feedback on language learners. This study addressed the lack of conclusive evidence, namely the usefulness of several types of written corrective feedback.

This chapter begins with an overview of several sorts of corrective feedback and then progresses to exploring the many types relevant to the current topic. In short, it includes direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metalinguistic corrective feedback, and focused and unfocused feedback.

The preceding section also reviews and evaluates past research in the aforementioned topics. The nature and impact of focused written corrective feedback are also examined, as this hypothesis is relevant to the current investigation, which focuses on the effects of focused written corrective feedback.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Acquiring or mastering English as a foreign language (EFL) is widely acknowledged as a complex and challenging process. Certain scholars have even proposed that proficiency in a foreign language within educational contexts is exceedingly difficult (Krashen, 1981; 1982). The complexity of this process primarily arises due to a multitude of variables, including motivation, age, learner preferences, aptitude, instructional approach, the nature of the language itself, and more. Amidst this challenging journey, expecting flawless and precise performance from EFL learners overnight appears unrealistic.

Ferris (2002) presents three insights for EFL educators in light of this reality. Anticipating flawlessly written output from students without errors is not a realistic expectation. Rapid enhancements in accuracy should not be assumed to occur overnight.

EFL students are distinct from native speakers, requiring fitting feedback, including corrective measures and suitable instructional methods. Mistakes committed by EFL learners have commonly been regarded as an inherent aspect of the second language acquisition process by most researchers investigating second language acquisition.

Acquiring a second language (L2) is a unique and continuous journey where learners generate spoken and written expressions in a non-native language. Learners' L2 production is based upon the language system rules they take on (Hendrickson, 1980). L2 learning can also be characterized as the "development of understanding about the L2 and its accurate usage" (Bitchener & Storch, 2016, p. 2).

Given the inherent nature of second language acquisition, the anticipation of error-free oral or written communication in any L2 needs to be revised. Consequently, avoiding errors during L2 acquisition is implausible (Hendrickson, 1980; Polio, Fleck & Leder, 1998). In essence, errors in the second language are anticipated occurrences and are usually recognized as an inherent facet of acquiring a second language, which both L2 educators and critics acknowledge.

2.2. Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory, founded by Lev Vygotsky, emerged in the early to mid-20th century and has since become a prominent framework for understanding human development and learning. Here is a brief history of sociocultural theory:

A Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, laid the foundation for sociocultural theory in the 1920s and 1930s. He proposed that connections among people and cultural backgrounds greatly influence cognitive development. Vygotsky pioneered concepts (ZPD), scaffolding, and the role of cultural tools in mediating cognitive processes. (Vygotsky, 1978). There have been different critiques of sociocultural theory since its emergence:

Critics argue that the sociocultural theory, in its attempt to simplify the cultural-cognition relationship, emphasizes how culture dictates behavior, yet ignores cultural diversity and personal initiative (Cole, 1996). Nevertheless, the point of view of other scholars was that sociocultural theory portrays culture as deterministic, and thus, paying less attention to the diversity of cultural experiences and individual agency has highly oversimplified the relationship between culture and cognition (Cole, 1996).

On the contrary, some scholars suggest that sociocultural theory disregards individual differences in the rates of learning, cognition, and backgrounds of the society. As a result, it tends to treat everyone the same way (Ratner, 2000).

2.3. Interactionist Theory

As an opposing idea to behaviorist and nativist ideologies in language development, the interactionist approach was brought into discussion in the 1970s for the first time. Thinkers like Michael Halliday, Jerome Bruner, and Lev Vygotsky used a mutual ground to base their theory on the interactionist theory, which gave importance to social interaction in language acquisition (Halliday, 1975).

The interactionist theory goes back to when it first appeared in public. Merrill Swain proposed the concept of "comprehensible output," which sheds more light on language production's function in language acquisition (Swain, 1985).

While we are in the digital age, every time new digital technologies emerge and most online communication platforms are just out there for the user to turn to, interactionist theory can also be studied this way. Today, researchers take computer-mediated communication, virtual learning environments, and corpus linguistics into consideration in order to get a clear picture of the technology-mediated interactions and their role in the learners' outcomes.

2.4. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF)

The concept of errors, such as written error correction, written error feedback, or written corrective feedback, is thoroughly described in the journal by Bitchener and Storch (2016). At the same time, the WCF refers to detecting and addressing language structural issues in L2 learners' written assignments. The fundamental objective of WCF is to rectify such inaccuracy and either redact the statement of accuracy or locate the system bug while explaining the cause and providing a guide on correcting these errors.

Dialogue between teachers or instructors of English and language learners is an inseparable part of second language learning or writing instruction. Thus, R. D. F. (2003) states that direct corrective feedback is where the teacher apologizes for the

student's errors in their written work, points out specific mistakes, and provides an accurate version of it. It tends to expose and correct the faults in the language by the way it precedes.

Subsequently, Bitchener (2005) defines it as explicitly correcting linguistic errors in a student's written work. The correction generally focuses on grammar and syntax. On the other hand, Hyland & Hyland (2006) believe that adding comments or annotations directly to the student's written document highlights and corrects errors. This method aims to provide a tangible record of corrections for the student.

2.4.1. Indirect Corrective Feedback

It provides signals or hints about the presence of errors without explicitly correcting them. It encourages students to identify and correct mistakes independently, promoting a more reflective learning process (Sheen, 2007). Van Beuningen et al. (2012) believe that indirect corrective feedback guides students in understanding and correcting errors in their writing. This indirect correction error involves a process in which critical thinking and self-reflection are the most integral parts for students. Sheen (2007) interpreted indirect corrective feedback differently; in her opinion, it involves indirectly addressing errors and explicitly stating them.

2.4.2. Peer Feedback

Peer feedback refers to feedback in which two students correct each other's mistakes to improve their writing. Research shows that such feedback helps students improve because students do not hesitate while friends correct each other's mistakes. It gives them a comfort zone, which is not usually seen in teachers' feedback.

Lee believes that the execution and effectiveness of peer feedback in second language writing classrooms is of great importance and benefit because it digs into the outcome of peer feedback on learners' writing skills. It also sheds light on the uniqueness of peer interactions and the potential benefits of this collaborative approach (Peer feedback in second language writing classrooms, 2008).

On the other hand, in Cho et al.'s point of view, peer corrective feedback is of enormous importance in improving writing skills as it contributes to creating a

community among students and helps improve other English language skills. Lastly, another aspect of peer feedback is that peer-written corrective feedback helps boost confidence among students, and as a result of revision, students perform better in their writing tasks (Yu, 2018).

2.4.3. Metalinguistic Written Feedback

Metalinguistic written feedback is also integral to understanding students' writing performance. In the past, scholars defined metalinguistic feedback in different, unique ways. Metalinguistic feedback involves explaining the grammatical or linguistic rules underlying errors in a learner's written or spoken language, aiming to enhance the learner's understanding and self-correction abilities (Bitchener et al., 2009).

On the contrary, metalinguistic feedback provides students with detailed insights into structure and grammar rules, connecting with students' errors, and hence helps them understand language more accurately and effectively. Consequently, it helps them write better than ever (Ellis, 2008). The provision of hints or explanations that draw attention to the linguistic aspects of errors, assisting learners in understanding the underlying principles and encouraging self-correction (Sheen, 2008).

We can also find one unique observation about metalinguistic feedback in the article, which says such feedback can bring long-term improvement if learners can process and understand the corrective information provided (Russell & Spada, 2006). Metalinguistics refers to understanding and analyzing language beyond its surface-level use, including grammar, syntax, semantics, and discourse. When considering the effects of written corrective feedback (WCF) from a metalinguistic perspective, several explanations can be offered:

2.4.4. Increased Awareness of Linguistic Structures

WCF often highlights specific errors or language features that need attention. Through this process, learners become more aware of their linguistic structures and the rules governing them. This heightened awareness can lead to improved language proficiency as learners pay closer attention to the mechanics of their writing.

Effective WCF provides explicit instruction by pointing out errors and explaining the correct usage. This explicit instruction contributes to metalinguistic development by

helping learners understand the underlying rules and principles of the language. As learners internalize these rules, they become better equipped to apply them in their writing independently.

2.4.5. Error Analysis and Reflection

Learners receiving WCF are prompted to analyze their errors and reflect on why they occurred. This process encourages metalinguistic thinking as learners consider the grammatical rules or language conventions they violated. By reflecting on their mistakes, learners gain insight into their language production processes and can consciously avoid similar errors in the future.

2.4.6. Enhanced Metalinguistic Awareness

WCF can contribute to developing metalinguistic awareness, which involves understanding language as a system with rules and patterns. Through exposure to corrected language forms and explanations of errors, learners develop a deeper understanding of the structures and conventions of the target language. This metalinguistic awareness allows learners to monitor and self-correct their writing more effectively.

2.4.7. Transfer of Knowledge

Metalinguistic knowledge gained through WCF can transfer to other language skills and contexts. For example, learners who better understand grammatical structures through WCF may apply this knowledge when speaking or listening in the target language. Similarly, metalinguistic awareness gained in writing tasks can benefit learners in reading comprehension and language production in various contexts.

2.4.8. Development of Editing Skills

WCF allows learners to practice editing their writing. As learners revise and correct their errors based on feedback, they develop metalinguistic skills related to editing and proofreading. Over time, these skills become more refined, improving self-editing

abilities and overall language proficiency. A literature review on methods of explicit correction in language teaching and learning reveals various approaches, considerations, and discussions surrounding the effectiveness and implications of providing direct and overt correction to language learners.

Meanwhile, Ferris (2006) defines written corrective feedback as a phenomenon explicitly offering an accurate version of a student's error. This correction can manifest in multiple ways, firstly, striking out unnecessary words or phrases, adding missing elements, or placing the accurate word or form adjacent to the incorrect one (Ferris, 2006, p. 83). In addition to direct WCF, educators can enhance it by providing metalinguistic explanations in written or oral form, elucidating the reasons behind specific errors, and clarifying the correct usage. WCF can be divided into many types; Ellis (2009b) classifies different types of WCF provided by teachers in his typology:

2.4.9. Focused WCF

Correcting specific error types or linguistic aspects in second language acquisition is characterized by being more discerning and thorough (Sheen, 2007; Bitchener, 2008; Ellis et al., 2008). FWCF pays particular attention to errors, as the name suggests.

2.4.10. Unfocused or Inclusive WCF

It corrects all errors in writing without being discriminatory or prioritizing (Sheen, 2007; Bitchener, 2008; Ellis et al., 2008). UFCF involves comprehensive error correction regardless of any specific kind of error. Ferris (1999) further divided the errors into two more types.

2.4.11. Treatable Error

Treatable errors are those errors that follow some rules of grammar, such as subject-verb agreement, tense form, or article. It is easy for students to find a solution to these errors using grammar books or some other helpful tools (Ferris, 1999).

2.4.12. Untreatable Errors

These errors are not rule-governed. Instead, they are meaning-governed. More than grammar rules are required to overcome such mistakes. These errors include sentence structure, wrong choice of words, etc. This study aims to ascertain the positive or negative effects of FWCF on the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students.

On the contrary, Lantolf emphasizes the importance of unattained errors as indicators of learners developing interlanguage systems and evolving communication competence. He does view it as mere linguistic accuracy, but he also believes it sheds light on learners' cognitive processes and language development (Lantolf, 2000).

Ellis also acknowledges the challenges posed by untreatable errors but emphasizes the role of corrective feedback in promoting learners' awareness of language norms and facilitating error reduction over time. He also suggests that targeted feedback and explicit instruction can help learners identify and address problematic areas in their language use (Ellis, 2008).

These scholars offer diverse perspectives on untreatable errors, highlighting the complexities of language learning and the importance of understanding learners' interlanguage development. By considering these viewpoints, educators can adopt more informed approaches to error analysis, corrective feedback, and language instruction to support learners' ongoing language development effectively.

2.4.13. Perspectives of WCF

There are different perspectives on written corrective feedback that are worth mentioning. Some of them are as follows:

2.4.13.1. Cognitive Perspective

The cognitive perspective delves into the impact of written corrective feedback on learners' cognitive functions, encompassing attention, memory, and language acquisition mechanisms. It examines how feedback fosters error recognition and reshapes learners' interlanguage systems (Schmidt, 1990).

2.4.13.2. Sociocultural Perspective

The sociocultural perspective underscores the importance of the social and cultural context surrounding written corrective feedback. It scrutinizes how feedback exchanges are shaped by cultural standards, power dynamics, and social roles and how these elements mold learners' reactions to feedback (Lantolf et al, 2006).

2.4.13.3. Feedback Processing Perspective

Feedback Processing Perspective centers on the mechanisms by which learners interpret and internalize written corrective feedback, considering variables like attention, motivation, and the effectiveness of feedback. It explores cognitive and affective processes implicated in how learners interact with feedback (Van den Broek & Kendeou, 2008).

2.4.13.4. Effectiveness Perspective

The Effectiveness Perspective assesses the efficacy of various written corrective feedback methods and approaches in enhancing language learning achievements. It takes into account factors like the timing, frequency, and mode of feedback delivery, as well as learners' proficiency levels (Bitchener et al. 2012).

2.4.13.5. Motivational Perspective

The motivational perspective focuses on analyzing the effects of written corrective feedback on learners' motivation and emotional reactions in language learning. This viewpoint explores how the manner and content of feedback delivery can affect learners' sense of self-efficacy, independence, and enthusiasm for participating in language learning activities (Dörnyei, 2009).

Explicit correction involves directly pointing out and addressing errors made by language learners. This can be achieved through various methods, each with advantages and limitations. Scholars in the past decades have offered multi-dimensional perspectives on explicit correction methods, highlighting the range of

approaches available to language teachers and researchers. By considering these views, educators can make informed decisions about the most effective strategies for supporting language learning and development in their classrooms.

Ellis advocates for focused and explicit correction methods, emphasizing the importance of providing learners with direct feedback on specific linguistic errors (Ellis, 2017). Ellis also suggests corrective feedback during teacher-led activities, where mistakes are addressed and explained to learners. On the contrary, Truscott challenges the efficacy of explicit correction, arguing that it may have limited impact on language learning outcomes and could impede fluency development (Truscott, 1996).

The debate does not stop here, as Sheen also spoke in favor of the idea, as she believes that a balanced approach to explicit correction integrates focused feedback with opportunities for learner self-correction and reflection. She instead talks further on this method and proposes methods such as providing explicit error correction in written feedback, followed by self-correction tasks where learners revise their errors independently (Sheen, 2007). Lastly, Ferris focused on integrating explicit correction with implicit feedback strategies to provide learners meaningful contexts for error correction (Ferris, 2011).

2.4.14. Types of Explicit Correction

2.4.14.1. Metalinguistic Feedback

Scholars like Lyster and Ranta (1997) emphasize the importance of metalinguistic feedback, where teachers explicitly provide information about the linguistic form without directly giving the correct answer. This approach is believed to promote learners' noticing of errors.

2.4.14.2. Direct Correction

Researchers like Ferris (2006) argue in favor of direct correction, where instructors provide the correct form immediately after an error. The efficiency of this method depends on learners' readiness to accept and incorporate the correction.

2.4.14.3. Explicit Correction in Written Feedback

Ellis (2009) and Truscott (1996) explore the role of explicit correction in written feedback, discussing whether written corrections are more effective than oral corrections and considering factors such as timing and frequency.

2.4.15. Effectiveness of Explicit Correction

2.4.15.1. Negotiation of form: Studies by Sheen (2007) and Mackey and Goo (2007) delve into the negotiation of form during interaction, highlighting the potential benefits of explicit correction in fostering collaborative discourse and mutual understanding.

2.4.15.2 Noticing Hypothesis: Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1995) argues that explicit correction contributes to the learners' awareness and noticing of linguistic features, facilitating their integration into the interlanguage.

2.4.16 Factors Influencing Explicit Correction

2.4.16.1. Learner Variables: Li (2010) examines how individual learner characteristics, such as motivation and language proficiency, can influence the effectiveness of explicit correction.

2.4.16.2. Cultural Considerations: Li (2013) discusses the cultural dimension of explicit correction, exploring how cultural factors may impact learners' attitudes towards correction.

2.4.16.3. Comparison with Implicit Correction: Researchers such as Panova and Lyster (2002) compare explicit correction with implicit correction strategies, discussing when one approach might be more suitable based on learners' needs, proficiency levels, and the nature of the task.

2.4.17. Teacher Feedback Strategies

The literature also addresses effective strategies for providing explicit correction, considering issues such as correction timing, balancing positive and negative feedback, and maintaining a supportive learning environment.

2.5. Previous Work on FWCF and Unfocused Written Corrective Feedback

In 2008, Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, and Takashima studied the efficacy of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This research aimed to address a gap identified in previous studies by Sheen (2007) and Bitchner (2008), which solely focused on examining the effects of focused corrective feedback. Ellis et al. (2008) formulated two primary research inquiries: firstly, to ascertain whether written corrective feedback facilitates improvement in the utilization of English indefinite and definite articles among Japanese learners, and secondly, to investigate potential disparities in the effectiveness between unfocused and focused corrective feedback approaches.

In their study, forty-nine intermediate-level English proficiency learners were recruited and assigned to one of three experimental groups:

- The FWCF group
- The unfocused corrective feedback group
- The control group

Within the focused corrective feedback group, consisting of eighteen participants, corrections were targeted explicitly towards errors related to the usage of articles during the first and second mentions. In contrast, the unfocused corrective feedback group, comprising eighteen participants, received correction addressing a broader spectrum of linguistic errors, including those about articles.

The control group, consisting of thirteen participants, received no feedback. Both experimental groups demonstrated significant improvement from pre-tests to post-tests and exhibited enhanced ability to rectify article errors within sentences compared to the control group. These findings show that providing corrective feedback helped the learners build meta-linguistic awareness regarding article usage.

The other research question examined whether a distinction exists between the efficacy of focused and unfocused feedback. Findings revealed no significant disparities between the focused and unfocused groups, suggesting both to be equally beneficial in the immediate context.

However, Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, and Takashima noted that, in the long term, focused corrective feedback may be more beneficial. This observation may be attributed to the focused group receiving a higher total number of corrections compared to the unfocused group. Notably, many learners in the unfocused group committed only one or two article errors, resulting in minimal correction provided for any such misuse.

In 2009, Sheen, Wright, and Moldava conducted a study regarding the effects of focused and unfocused correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms. The primary purpose of the research was to find out whether teachers should provide feedback on the essay writing of ESL students.

The questions to be examined were whether there was a difference in the impact of focused and unfocused error correction on adult ESL learners' correct use of English articles. Secondly, they attempted to determine whether written narrative tasks without error correction on the proper use of grammatical features affected writing performance.

The data was collected from six intact language classrooms in a pre-academic non-credit ESL program at a US college in Washington. Five native English teachers and 80 intermediate-level students participated in the research. The students differ in terms of age, ethnicity, and educational background. The pupils were separated into one control group and three experimental groups.

The result of the study showed that focused CF is beneficial for students in noticing their errors in written work, and students positively engage in hypothesis testing. On the other hand, unfocused CF risks providing CF in a confusing, inconsistent way, thus overburdening the learners.

In 2014, Fateme Saeb conducted a study on the efficacy of written corrective feedback in increasing the grammatical accuracy of novice EFL learners. Three intact classes of 79 female EFL students from high schools participated in the study. They were in the age range of 14 to 15. The students attended English classes three hours a week, although some students took extra classes.

Two main research questions were studied; the first was whether CF helped beginner EFL students become more accurate regarding the third-person singular 's' morpheme for verbs. The second research question was about the differential effect of focused and unfocused CF on using third-person singulars for verbs.

The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental design with a pretest and posttest design. There were two experimental and one control group. While the unfocused group received corrections for all errors, the focused group only received corrections on the mistakes involving the use of third-person singular 's' morpheme, all three groups took an error correction test as the pretest and posttest.

Results of the study showed that learners improved when it comes to accuracy, and the difference between focused and unfocused groups was not significant. The results also suggested that providing CF, whether focused or unfocused, improved learners' accuracy.

In 2020, Icy Lee, Na Luo, and Pauline Mak investigated teachers' attempts at focused written feedback. The study aimed to determine how the ecological approach helps improve the students' writing accuracy. Two research questions were under investigation: firstly, the teacher's attempt to implement focused written corrective feedback within the classroom, and secondly, to determine students' performance concerning written accuracy and revision. Two teachers and 63 students participated in the study.

The student data encompassed pre- and post-study individual interviews conducted with the six focal students, pre- and post-study writing assessments administered to the entire cohort of 63 students instructed by Jane and Steve, and the annotated texts of the focal students derived from continuous writing assignments, along with the feedback forms provided by the instructors.

The findings of the study show that, firstly, the feasibility of employing a less exhaustive approach to written corrective feedback (WCF) within authentic classroom settings. This extends beyond traditional WCF research paradigms, encompassing WCF targeting a limited number of predetermined error types and teachers' ongoing selective application of WCF tailored to individual student requirements.

Secondly, the implementation of focused WCF has the potential to catalyze revisions to feedback practices and broader pedagogical reforms by instructors, which could yield advantageous outcomes for student writing proficiency.

Specifically, providing focused and individualized WCF may enhance students' written accuracy concerning target language elements. This pedagogical approach, complemented by additional instructional support, holds promise for strengthening overall written accuracy and encouraging students to actively engage with teacher feedback actively, thus facilitating effective writing revision processes.

2.5.1. Critiques on Previous Research

The studies discussed in the previous paragraph regarding corrective feedback research are critiqued in this section. The commonality among all those studies was their research methodology. One of the common characteristics of the above studies was that they were each designed with a control group, which is a strength of research design.

According to Bitchener & Knoch (2009), when no control group exists, it would be difficult to determine if improvements lie in written corrective feedback. Secondly, in all the above studies, we can see that the focus is either English articles or accuracy; the WCF study would be much generalizable if the choice of errors studied were broader.

2.6. Related Studies

Focusing on the effects of focused written corrective feedback (WCF) on essay writing skills revealed in the educational research, this topic features enormous attention in English as a foreign language (EFL). The systematic perspective was used by Adzhar & Sazalli (2024) to analyze teachers' beliefs, students' perceptions, and preferences towards WCF. These scholars find that educators approve focused feedback, meaning that focused, specific correction results in more effective learning outcomes.

According to their analysis of fourteen scholarly articles, they found that students favored relevant and constructive feedback. Students were motivated to write further based on this, and as such, supported a targeted approach to feedback, as when

feedback was purposeful and directed towards their writing challenges, it increased students' motivation and engagement with the writing task.

As these implications stand, educators must understand the students' view of WCF to improve the writing environment. This point is mirrored throughout many of the aforementioned studies regarding the importance of students' preferences for instructional strategies.

Gao (2021) investigated the quality of an automated writing evaluation system, Pigai, which immediately corrects students' written tasks while examining the technology-mediated context. Although the students enjoyed that such a system could handle word errors very accurately, they found that such systems fail to help students in their broader writing competence at the sentence level.

This reveals an essential aspect of WCF: while technology can assist in error correction, it can be limited in the levels of feedback provided. According to Gao (2021), the research also indicated that most of the opportunities for self-correction were mainly situated at the level of the superficial details, ignoring the whole picture regarding coherence and organization of content.

Therefore, the literature recommends that relying on automatic systems alone might be insufficient for all aspects of writing improvement, and that the participation of human feedback, which gives more strategic advice besides correction, is still critical for cultivating writing skills nuanced enough to support expressive writing.

As with these findings, Rashtchi & Bakar (2019) investigated the learner preferences in the Malaysian context and reiterated the importance of written corrective feedback to improve the students' writing skills. They found that students tend to accept corrective feedback, which aligns with what will work best for their learning.

However, they determined that students preferred direct feedback methods that supplied explicit correction of their errors. This result implies that students choose a focused rather than an exhaustive feedback input. This is in line with Lee's principles of formatted feedback. Lee (2019) also states that a strategy focused more on quality than quantity in corrective feedback can have a more effective impact and provide greater learner satisfaction.

For these reasons, the direct feedback model presents a balanced direction in improving EFL learners' writing ability by streamlining the focus on the areas that require improvement without overloading the students.

In addition, Hanan et al.'s (2022) study on adapting the feedback method of English lecturers during the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the interplay between instructional strategies and technology use. It pointed out that although educators looked online to deliver feedback, the strategy differed, revealing the character of the educator's environment.

In particular, the study showed how instructors changed approaches to more concise and clear comments for the young audience grown up on digital media, creating a better connection with the students. The results indicate that the optimal feedback strategies depend on immediate learning needs and the nature of the crisis. These strategies should be adapted for student engagement in times of crisis. As such, flexibility in feedback methodologies, that is, online interactive platforms, greatly fits into student needs for clarity and focus, which the literature on feedback proposes to be necessary to support improved essay writing performance.

To further distill the importance of focused WCF, Guo (2023) mentioned second language writing when categorizing corrective feedback strategies. The results reflected in the study were the results of the synthesis of various research efforts that noted WCF as critical to students' writing.

According to Guo, there is a difference between direct and indirect feedback, and only the focused ones result in more radical revolutions in writing fluency and complexity. Educational practices that are evidence-based and sensitive to the cognitive load of students are emphasized through the amount and quality of the feedback given and maintained in a balance. Synthesizing this study reveals that although feedback frequency is essential, the contextual application of such feedback in advancing writing skills is of greater significance.

Shintani & Ellis (2013) compared direct WCF to metalinguistic explanations for the same purpose, concerning learners' understanding of some English grammar, i.e., the English indefinite article. Results of their work corroborated that direct WCF yielded greater immediate usability in increasing grammatical accuracy over other methods.

In particular, this inquiry focuses on explicit and implicit knowledge gain when learners receive direct corrections, and their further results demonstrate the efficacy of focused corrective feedback. This supports the notion that WCF has a fundamentally practical aspect to it, and that when you provide feedback on specific structures of language, this resonates more powerfully, and therefore efficiently acts as feedback for learners who have an understanding of what those structures look like, which will lead to particular benefits in their writing.

In addition, from Lee's (2019) perspective, a far more important point is that 'less can be more' in the case of guiding students to correct writing errors via feedback. Though Lee ultimately stands by his claim that an overload of feedback is counterproductive, he clarifies that a corrective methodology can improve student outcomes, but specifically one method focused on correcting.

It stands in line with evidence that has been generated in studies over time that corroborates the notion that too many corrections can make their users feel exasperated and hence, disengage. Feedback should be focused and educators should give limited feedback on aspects that need to be improved rather than giving multiple negatives. Therefore, it becomes necessary to comprehend the subtlety around gauging the amount of feedback in order to create a more conducive learning environment for improving writing skills.

According to Behroozi & Karimnia (2017), when it comes to EFL instruction, the role of educational contexts can hardly be ignored in determining teachers' corrective feedback preferences. Qualitative research done found that teachers adopted different forms of feedback as per their understanding of the students' specific educational contexts and experiences. In this regard, it appears that a one size fits all approach in EFL settings may not be as effective as contextualizing feedback might be better suited to meeting learner needs.

Literature that underscores the influence of teacher perceptions on instructional outcomes underscores the insights about such perceptions. This, therefore, means that the learners' background can help to adapt feedback strategies to make them relevant and applicable.

Mulyati and Hadianito (2023) explored the concept of peer feedback on argumentative writing and its efficacy via an online peer feedback mechanism. Their study showed how peer-generated input benefited students and added value to their writing by helping them identify strengths and weaknesses in their work. It also provided a sense of community and collaborative learning.

This positive correlation between peer feedback and writing quality indicated that peer feedback could provide thoughts that somehow ring differently than teacher feedback. As such, this practice illustrates how utilizing a wide range of feedback ecosystems, by incorporating the instructor and peer insights, can end up possessing superior writing outcomes.

Similarly, Sadiq (2023) offered valuable insight into its usefulness in developing writing competence among EFL learners at TISHK International University. The case study helped understand how the electronics platform can facilitate the feedback process and make it accessible and instant for the students.

The results show that electronic feedback impacts many aspects of students' writing ability, especially their ability to revise and revise quickly. This should move pedagogy towards using digital tools for writing instruction. The combination of technology and feedback strategies holds potential for revolutionizing the teaching of writing.

Likewise, Singhkum (2023) examined the role of electronic feedback in EFL contexts and the negative impacts and positive ones of electronic feedback. They showed how electronic feedback gives timely and organized critique, but where employees do not engage or understand. The learners would particularly prefer methods of feedback that were typical for more complex writing assignments.

The underlying point lies in the continuing debate about whether electronic feedback is more effective than traditional feedback, suggesting that while innovative technology is essential, it is more important to establish and build on these traditional feedback methods. It is vital to balance both approaches to hone one's writing skills.

AbdAlgane (2023) contributed to the broader discourse on feedback methods to discover preferred corrective feedback modalities for EFL learners in Saudi universities. Notably, their research emphasized that a diverse approach involving metalinguistic feedback and immediate corrective measures greatly benefited students' phonological skills.

Additionally, this study highlights the cooperative use of various kinds of feedback and the necessity of choosing corrective methods to promote more effective learning. This aligns with other studies that recommend multi-faceted feedback strategies incorporating several modalities to better cater to learners' diverse needs to develop writing competencies.

In their study, Razali et al. (2021) are interested in the particulars of the written feedback practices that these ESL teachers in Malaysia did. The teachers preferred particular feedback types in their study, which correlated very well with how lessons are conducted in Malaysian classrooms. The feedback significantly contributed to the student's writing development by correcting the student's writing, focusing on form or content.

The findings further imply that not only do teaching practices impact how feedback strategies are used, but also that a specific application of feedback can lead to better writing behaviors on the part of learners. Additionally, the study restated that knowledge of pedagogical frameworks helps scaffold students' writing efforts in different educational environments.

Lee (2019) has critically examined the focus of written corrective feedback (WCF) and demonstrated that less is more in written corrective feedback for learners. Lee made his point concerning his position paper, which argued that feedback becomes excessive. Instead of fostering the learner's development, it overwhelms it with global feedback and does not point to a specific, recurrent error type.

He identified five essential obstacles to teachers providing extensive corrections, showing that reducing the amount of feedback could enhance internalization as well as writing competence in general. The importance of detailed but concentrated feedback on learners' ability to focus on the fundamental issues is accentuated. The cognitive load is avoided, and the deeper pattern of processing of the corrective information is encouraged, as per Lee.

Moreover, the study found that teachers perceive focused WCF as more sustainable and less time-consuming, a condition of importance in the high-demand context of education. That is why Lee's (2019) study calls for thoughtful feedback design informed by the learners' particular needs, balancing the precision of corrections with

the requirement for manageable input, for improving the quality of learner writing in EFL classrooms.

The presented approach positions focused WCF as an effective tool for error correction and development of metalinguistic awareness and learner autonomy (the way for more efficient error internalization processes, as proven by the following research in the educational field), thus contributing to a more efficient EFL learning process.

An interesting perspective was provided by Benson and Dekeyser (2018), who investigated how written corrective feedback relates to individual differences in language aptitude regarding the accuracy of verb tense. Instead, they examined which learner differences (i.e., language analytic ability, measured by LAA) served as mediating variables in the effect of explicit written corrective feedback on verb tense accuracy in student essays.

In their study, learners were assigned to groups that received focused corrective feedback on particular verb tense errors or constituted a control group, which received general content commentary. The results showed that learners with high language aptitude improved more significantly in verb tense precision than learners overall, with a focus on feedback.

In the research of Benson and Dekeyser, their rigorous design also indicated that it is necessary to tailor the feedback to particular individual user capabilities, and that the effect of the feedback is affected by one's cognitive and linguistic predispositions.

In summary, this study contributes to a more general understanding of considering learner variability in optimizing focused WCF in EFL writing classrooms and refining instructional strategies to address student needs. Ultimately, the study demands differentiated approaches to instructional feedback, so that only those learners who are relatively prone to language analytic ability can benefit maximally from the provided targeted error correction (Benson & DeKeyser, 2018).

The study presented by Kim and Bowles (2019) investigated the depth of processes that second language learners engage in when exposed to different types of written corrective feedback to understand better learners' interaction with feedback at multiple linguistic levels. Their research focused on discovering if learners are more likely to process sentential and paragraph-level errors versus surface-level errors, but only when reformulated, as opposed to direct, feedback is supplied.

They found that when learners received reformulated feedback, they were inclined to address the wider structural and content-related aspects that further improved their writing proficiency. On the other hand, direct corrections most frequently caused the learners to look at the surface errors, such as spelling and punctuation, instead of internalizing the deeper grammatical or syntactic structures. The nuance of how forms of feedback affect learner engagement is emphasized in this study, and through this, the evidence that different error types demand different feedback approaches is supplied.

Kim & Bowles (2019) argued that these differential effects highlight the complexity of feedback processing in L2 learning environments and that a one-size-fits-all feedback approach was inadequate. Thus, their work supports a more individualized feedback mechanism than only the type of error. Still, additionally, the depth of cognitive processing brought about by the mistake promotes a more comprehensive acquisition of writing skills (Kim & Bowles, 2019).

Khadawardi (2020) examined the influence of implicit corrective feedback on the writing skills of international second language learners, particularly the slight yet significant effects of less direct methods. Khadawardi's study investigated whether implicit corrective feedback, i.e., it sneaks in the needed correction, could help learners of complex linguistic features involved in writing.

In an educational setting, the study showed that learners given implicit feedback gained a better grasp of the whole aural processing of grammatical structures since the implicit nature of correction required students to examine their own internalized knowledge of the language. It was found that this method substantially increased their ability to self-correct in subsequent writing tasks without recourse to overt instructor cues.

Khadawardi compared the outcomes of implicit feedback to what she got from more direct correction methods, and found that although direct feedback made the rules visible immediately, implicit feedback promoted better rule internalization. It is proposed that the implications of this study show that combining implicit corrective feedback with more explicit forms would create a balanced approach and thus enhance the students' attainment of greater linguistic autonomy. The research rationale is that context-sensitive feedback strategy is significant in second language writing instruction (Khadawardi, 2020).

A comparative study was conducted by Iqbal and Saad (2023), which evaluated the relative effectiveness of focused as compared to comprehensive written corrective feedback on writing accuracy. They wanted to see if highlighting just a subset of error types on their chosen areas of error (focused feedback) could improve writing accuracy more effectively (than providing feedback for all the errors present in a text, commonly known as comprehensive feedback).

In the study methodology, learners were divided into two groups; one of the groups received focused corrective feedback only, while the other received comprehensive feedback for all identified errors. According to the findings, learners given focused feedback did a better job of learning about specified error patterns, and these patterns led to better and more lasting improvements in accuracy over time.

Iqbal and Saad argued that feedback given in focus can reduce the cognitive overload experienced by students, who are not overwhelmed by a flood of corrections for multiple errors. Instead, they can focus on mastering a small set of error types. It seems particularly helpful to provide corrective feedback in line with EFL learners' current linguistic proficiency and the developmental needs of EFL students. The study's outcomes play a key role in helping educators adopt specific feedback strategies that engage learners and empower them to make incremental improvements in accuracy of their writings (Iqbal & Saad, 2023).

Utilizing feedback as a scaffolding technique to follow up and improve students' writing skills, Razali et al. (2021) analyzed the practice of written corrective feedback among Malaysian ESL teachers. The study gave a full account of how feedback is built into the curriculum, according to the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the new Standards based English Language Curriculum (SBELC).

They discovered that the process writing approach, which is highly dependent on iterative feedback, is the key to improving students' writing. The range of feedback that teachers used in the study included form and structure feedback focused on the form and structure, and content feedback focused on content.

Teachers regarded comprehensive feedback as being positively multifaceted; however, Razali et al found that in practice, significant trend was for focused corrective feedback as a consequence of time constraints and workload considerations.

Tailored feedback becomes thus a powerful scaffolding tool that not only helps student's correct surface level errors, but promotes engagement with the content organization, coherence and thematic development. Razali et al. (2021) suggested that their findings help to align the larger discussion of writing instruction to demonstrate that the strategic choice of and use of corrective feedback leads to measurable gains in students' academic writing proficiency.

In the article published by Altamimi & Masood (2021), they explored some of the emerging trends of electronic written corrective feedback (WCF) and the evolution of technologically mediated feedback in the ESL contexts has been investigated. They pointed out that as digital platforms are more frequently used to give timely and accurate rectification, they have advantages of electronic tool in complementing traditional teacher feedback.

But, as Altamimi and Masood point out, while there were some initial difficulties with electronic feedback being too impersonal, teachers and students both have commented that writing accuracy improves when electronic WCF is married to direct human insights. For their study, *Study Windows into the Mind: Profiling the Process Knowledge of Expert Students through Think Aloud Problem Solving*, they examined various electronic feedback methods, including automated correction systems and hybrid models that utilize a combination of machine and teacher input, and found that students benefited from the immediacy and accessibility of feedback.

Furthermore, the research also highlighted the need to continue nuanced and context sensitive qualities of traditional feedback formats of electronic feedback. Altamimi and Masood stressed that further research should push for the improvement of digital interfaces to fit better with diverse error patterns and learning styles of the students. On the basis of their findings, Altamimi & Masood (2021) advocate for the effective use of electronic WCF to have the potential to revolutionize the way feedback is delivered in a scalable and sustainable manner for broader classroom applications.

In the context of tertiary education in Oman, Bahrouni and Tuzlukova (2019) investigated the teachers' and students' perceptions of written corrective feedback. They sought to understand the divergent opinions and experiences that university-level students and their instructors have with WCF.

The research results showed that although teachers gave special attention to the feasibility of detailed corrective feedback for identifying linguistic inaccuracy, learners often favor less elaborate and straightforward feedback, which implies a mismatch between pedagogical aims and learner reception.

Here, Bahrouni and Tuzlukova contend that this perceptual difference between individual students and learning mechanisms underscores the need for balance in feedback and suggests that instructional strategies should comply with students' experiences and preferences.

The study also emphasized cultural context and educational norms that impact feedback practices, such as teachers' authority and students' deference, which might influence how feedback is perceived and responded to. They find that their results indicate that the best way to mitigate gaps in students' writing performance is to tailor the corrective feedback to the teachers' expertise and individuality of learners.

Thus, this research contributes to the broader understanding of the WCF effectiveness by arguing that, in addition to accuracy in error correcting strategies, feedback strategies must be adapted to the cultural and educational landscape where they are applied (Bahrouni & Tuzlukova, 2019).

Geçkin (2020) in his research on students' responses to the written corrective feedback provided for multiple essay drafts in an EFL setting, examined differences between proficiency levels. In his study, several students from four language proficiency groups were utilized, and he discovered that all groups could see the importance of feedback in increasing writing quality.

However, higher proficiency students were more capable of working with the feedback and found ways to internalize the feedback received. Geçkin discovered that advanced learners were more sensitive to teacher corrections and more willing to request other feedback on grammar, lexis, and structure than other groups.

In addition, the study found that lower proficiency groups tended to direct their attention to surface errors and frequently requested further feedback, so feedback strategies might have to be adjusted to match different proficiency levels to be most effective. Consequently, this research emphasizes the need to fit the depth and complexity of feedback to those learners' Latin abilities when aiming to develop writing enhancement protocols.

On the other hand, Geçkin's (2020) empirical data suggests that writing performance can be significantly improved in different EFL settings when adaptive feedback is considered, which considers learner proficiency.

Other than that, Syafitri and Setiani (2024) showed the effects of various types of written corrective feedback on the students' academic writing assignments at the tertiary level regarding distributions and the perceptions of different kinds of corrective approaches.

The type of feedback employed by lecturers was varied. It comprised a range of feedback, including direct, indirect, focused, and unfocused corrective feedback, and they studied the varied frequency with which the lecturers utilized each type of feedback. The detailed analysis showed that focused corrective feedback was more consistently used than unfocused feedback. At the same time, Syafitri & Setiani (2024) found that WCF, which applies a structured approach by concentrating on the repetitive error types, tended to reveal more significant progressions in students' writing.

The findings reveal that the students prefer specific, well-defined, and tractable corrections as these allow students to identify recurrent concerns and take a systematic approach to improvement. Similarly, the study pointed out that the feedback process must incorporate student perceptions, since teachers can tailor feedback strategies to match learners' preferences.

For this reason, this research gives strong support to the argument that systematic selection of various focused feedback types adds a significant amount to the success of corrective practices in the EFL academic writing instruction and plays a vital role in the advancement of EFL pedagogy (Syafitri & Setiani, 2024).

Rahim et al. (2023) identified the challenges and potential improvements in error correction strategies as they investigated L2 learners' preferences and opinions regarding teachers' written corrective feedback in multicultural classrooms. Through quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with students of various cultural backgrounds, the study attempted to determine how different feedback methods may or may not impact their writing development.

However, Rahim et al. discovered that although many learners enjoyed receiving comprehensive feedback on various types of errors, there was a universal tendency to

prefer specific feedback that concentrated on the most recurrent mistakes in the learners' writing. The study also showed that the cultural context affected how feedback was perceived; some students found the direct criticism distracted them from their sense of self-efficacy, while others valued the clarity and specificity of such feedback.

The authors argued that the feedback framework needs to be more culturally responsive by balancing detailed error correction and positive reinforcement. Their finding about the cultural variable as a critical factor in the effectiveness discussion of corrective feedback contributes to the discourse by showing that cultural factors determine how learners receive corrective feedback and progress with their writing improvement.

The current research contributes to a growing corpus of research encouraging such an adaptive feedback strategy, designed wisely for L2 learners' linguistic and cultural needs (Rahim et al., 2023).

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, a theoretical background of written corrective feedback was demonstrated. Next, some theories relevant to this research were expanded; the sociocultural theory was elaborated as a subdivision of written corrective feedback. Further, the interactionist theory was discussed in length since it is highly related to the current study. Lastly, empirical research studies that utilized focused and unfocused written corrective feedback and other studies worldwide about the current study were reviewed. The methodology used in this research will be outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the study's research design, methods, setting, participants, data collection instruments, processes, and steps involved in data analysis. The current research examines the effects of written corrective feedback on university preparatory school students in Istanbul, Türkiye.

The main aim of this research is to find out about the effects of focused written corrective feedback on essay writing skills of university preparatory school students and to investigate potential differences in their writing performance using the FWCF technique.

3.2. The Research Design

The study aims to investigate the effects of focused written corrective feedback on Essay writing skills of university preparatory school students in Istanbul, Türkiye. The study follows an experimental research design and the quantitative research approach. The study adopted a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design with a control group, which allowed the researcher to explore causal relationships without random assignment. This design is particularly suitable for classroom-based interventions where accurate experimental control is challenging (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The design included two groups: an experimental group receiving FWCF and a control group receiving no feedback. The feedback was strictly focused, targeting specific grammatical features: article usage, spelling, and prepositions. These structures were chosen based on their frequent occurrence in EFL writing and varying degrees of rule-governedness. The design enabled the researcher to isolate the effect of FWCF on those targeted features, thus minimizing confounding variables such as task type, instructor influence, and topic familiarity. The pretest-posttest research design was followed in the study, and the two essay drafts written by the participants were analyzed using SPSS 29 and Paired T-Test. The errors considered included spelling, article, and preposition, as it was FWCF, so detailed error corrections were not

considered. The data collection process was carried out for two weeks during the third module in the spring semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

Before the implementation of the study, it was ensured that the subjects were exposed to the same course topics and course loads. They had an idea about what they would do in the research. The researcher obtained written permission from the school and teachers, who also participated in the research process.

3.2.1. Nature of the Research

The study followed the mixed technique approach. Mixed methods incorporate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques within a single study or research project. These methods make it possible to examine the main topic and triangulate various data sources thoroughly. The mixed methods research often involves a systematic way of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data; in this way, the researchers can focus more on the advantages of each method while addressing the weaknesses of the other methodology (Creswell et al. 2017).

According to Bryman (2016), quantitative research is a systematic approach using numerical data and statistical analysis for knowing, explaining, or forecasting. It provides structured data through surveys, experiments, or observations, and the data collected in this way is then converted into numbers. This data is then analyzed using statistical techniques to discover patterns, associations, or coherence in it.

On the other hand, Neuman, believes that quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of data that can be quantified and measured. It focuses on objective, observable phenomena, aiming to generate numerical data that can be statistically examined to test hypotheses and draw conclusions (Neuman 2013).

3.2.2. Sampling of the Study

Population is defined as an entire group of individuals or cases in which researcher is interested in. It is the larger group to which the findings of a study are intended to be generalized (Babbie, 2015).

Consequently, sample of a population can be described as the individuals or objects from a population that are selected for a research study. The characteristics of the sample are then used to make inferences about the population (Trochim & Donnelly 2008).

The sample was selected from two different public and private universities preparatory schools in Istanbul, Türkiye. The total number of samples was 74 including male and female participants. Convenience sampling technique was used for data collection purpose; time constraint, budget and accessibility were the main reasons behind choosing convenience sampling.

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method utilized by researchers to select individuals or cases that are readily accessible and conveniently available. This technique is favored for its practicality and expediency, enabling researchers to swiftly gather data with minimal exertion (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

3.3. Data Collection

The following section will describe the data collection procedures that were opted while conducting this study. This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures to gain a holistic understanding of the effectiveness of Focused Written Corrective Feedback (FWCF) on student writing. The integration of these two methods was not only intended to measure linguistic outcomes statistically but also to understand student engagement and instructional context in a real-world EFL classroom.

Participants were chosen from A2 and B1 levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This selection was intentional for several pedagogical and theoretical reasons:

Firstly, as we know that students at A2-B1 level are in a critical transitional phase where they are moving from learning basic sentence structure, grammar to more complex writing skills. They are linguistically ready to benefit from focused written corrective feedback.

Secondly, research has shown that students at the A2-B1 level usually exhibit frequent mistakes in articles, prepositions, and spelling. It makes them ideal candidates for focused written corrective feedback (Ferris, 2011; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010)

3.3.1. Data Collection Tools

Quantitative data were gathered through writing tasks administered as pre-tests and post-tests to the experimental and control groups. In both phases, students were asked to write a 250–300-word essay on a standardized topic. The topic remained the same across drafts to isolate the FWCF variable and ensure the comparability of responses. Each writing sample was assessed using error frequency analysis focused on three grammatical areas: article usage, spelling, and prepositions. Different data collection tools were used to collect the data. Firstly, the data was collected from university preparatory school students during pre-test and post-test.

3.3.2. Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized convenience sampling to select easily reachable students at two university preparatory schools in Istanbul. This strategy was chosen for logistical reasons, such as institutional access and course scheduling. Although not probabilistic, this method is widely accepted in classroom-based educational research, where random assignment is frequently difficult (Neuman, 2013; Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The students were instructed to write the essay under the supervision of their teachers, and then the data collected was shared via email with the researcher. The data collection process was explained to teachers as well as participants so that the data collection process would go smoothly. To deal with generalizability issues, participants were selected from two separate institutional settings to provide greater diversity in learner backgrounds, potentially expanding the interpretive range of the findings. Both schools used identical curriculum structures, and teachers with equal degrees and experience taught pupils.

3.4. Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, it was analyzed using SPSS 29 and a paired sample t-test. SPSS was used for descriptive statistics, while a paired sample t-test was used to see the difference between the two drafts of the essay.

3.5. Limitations of The Study

This research has some limitations that need to be considered, as it cannot be generalized to all contexts. First, this research is limited to focused corrective feedback for university preparatory school students. Secondly, it is done in university preparatory schools in Istanbul, Turkiye, with a limited number of participants. Therefore, results may include limited evaluations and conclusions. However, it would contribute to future research in the field of focused written corrective feedback.

3.6. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we have discussed the research methodology in detail. It starts with the introduction, then research design, nature of research, data collection tools, and data collection procedures are discussed. In the end, limitations of the study are also discussed in detail.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design in detail. Information about the research approach, participants, data collection instruments and procedures, and data analysis and interpretation is provided within this context. This study investigates the effect of targeted written corrective feedback on improving overall writing performance and aims to address the following research questions:

- RQ 1 To what extent does focus written corrective feedback affects essay writing skills of university preparatory school students?
- RQ 2 What negative or positive effects does FWCF have on the writing performance of university preparatory school students?

4.2. Research Method

A mixed-methods research strategy, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches, was selected for this study. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) characterize mixed methods research as an investigation wherein the researcher gathers and analyzes data, synthesizes findings, and formulates inferences employing qualitative and quantitative methodologies within a single study or inquiry program.” (p.4).

A quasi-experimental study was conducted with three participant groups to address the initial research topic. The investigation was carried out using convenience sampling. While the experimental groups received FWCF in pre-test and post-test stages, the control group received no feedback. This is a standard and traditional method of providing FWCF in pretest and posttest research designs.

The purpose of pre-tests and post-tests was to measure the effects of FWCF on the writing performance of preparatory school students. The results of the pre-tests and post-tests aimed to analyze improvement in the participants’ overall writing performance.

To answer the second research question, the researcher also used a quasi-experimental study conducted with three groups of participants, including two experimental groups who participated in a pre-test and a post-test. In contrast, the third group, the control group, received no FWCF on their writings.

4.3. Participants

The current study involved seventy-four university students participating in a General English preparatory program at the School of Foreign Languages at one private and one public institution in Istanbul, Turkey. The current study involved three distinct categories of participants allocated to A2-B1 level lessons.

The researcher, a student from Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, employed convenient sampling to conduct the research. At the study's outset, the experimental groups comprised 55 students, while the control group comprised 19 students. Upon completion of the treatment, data from 55 students in the experimental group and 19 students in the control group were available for the study. The experimental group had 24 male and 36 female individuals aged between 19 and 27. Thus, the control group comprised six males and eight females, aged between 19 and 24. The experimental group received FWCF via error correction codes, whereas the control group received no feedback.

Before data analysis in detail, it was essential to discuss the demographic representation of the participants because it plays a key role in data analysis. The demographic representation of the participants is shown in the figure below:

Table 4.1: Male and female

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	30	40.5	40.5	40.5
Female	44	59.5	59.5	100.0
Total	74	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author,2025

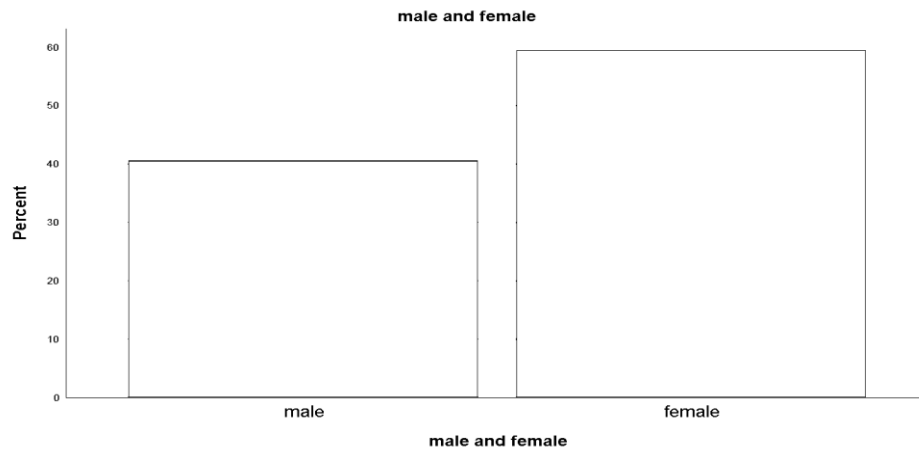


Figure 4.1: Bar Chart Representing Gender

Source: Author,2025

As we can see in the diagram above, thirty males and forty-four female students participated in the survey. When we talk about their percentage in numbers, it is evident that 40.5% of participants were male, while 59.5% were female.

The main reason for the greater number of females in the data is that more female students study in university preparatory schools than male students. This is the only reason we see more female students compared to males.

The second important factor that needs to be considered in the research is the age of the participants. The students who participated in the survey were between 18 and 27. We can see the distribution of age in the diagram below:

Table 4.2: Age of Participants 18 To 27

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18.00	2	2.7	2.7	2.7
19.00	7	9.5	9.5	12.2
20.00	3	4.1	4.1	16.2
21.00	5	6.8	6.8	23.0
22.00	15	20.3	20.3	43.2
23.00	11	14.9	14.9	58.1

24.00	10	13.5	13.5	71.6
25.00	10	13.5	13.5	85.1
26.00	8	10.8	10.8	95.9
27.00	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
Total	74	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author,2025

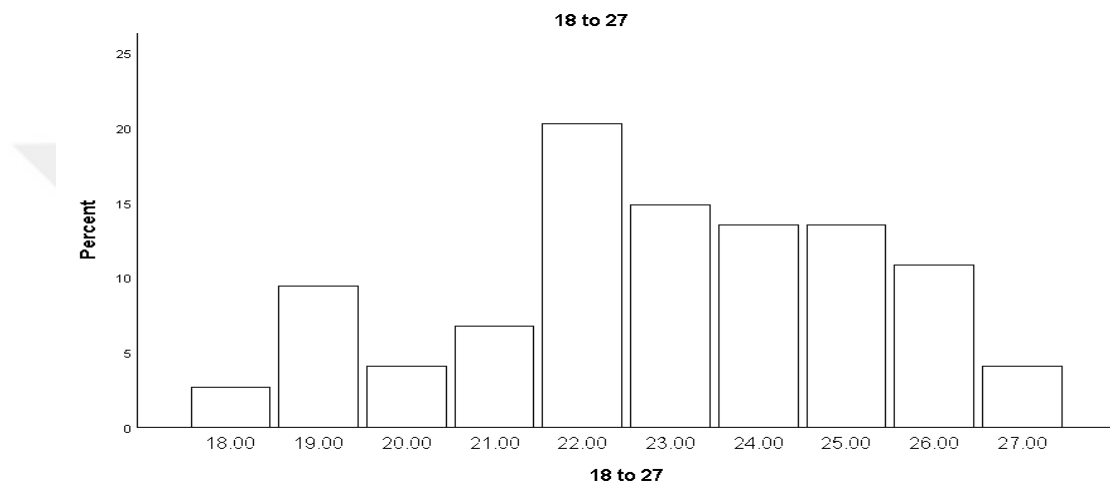


Figure 4.2: Clustered Bar Graphs for Age Group

Source: Author,2025

As we can see in the diagram above, participants were from different age groups; some were between the ages of 19 and 21, while others were between the ages of 22 and 27. When we see the diagram carefully, we can observe that most of the participants were of 22-23 years old. On the contrary, there were a smaller number of participants who were of 18 and 20 years old.

When we closely analyze the percentage of the participants, we can clearly see that maximum of participants were 22 years old and when we calculate them in percentage, it is more than 20% of total population.

The data was collected from two different universities' preparatory schools in Istanbul, and the data can be divided into public and private university students. The total number of participants was 74, including students from one public and a private university. The data distribution is described in the table below:

Table 4.3: Public and Private University Preparatory School Students

Private and public universities	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Private	35	46	46.6	46.6
Public	39	52.7	53.4	100.0
Total	74	98.6	100.0	
Total	74	100.0		

Source: Author,2025

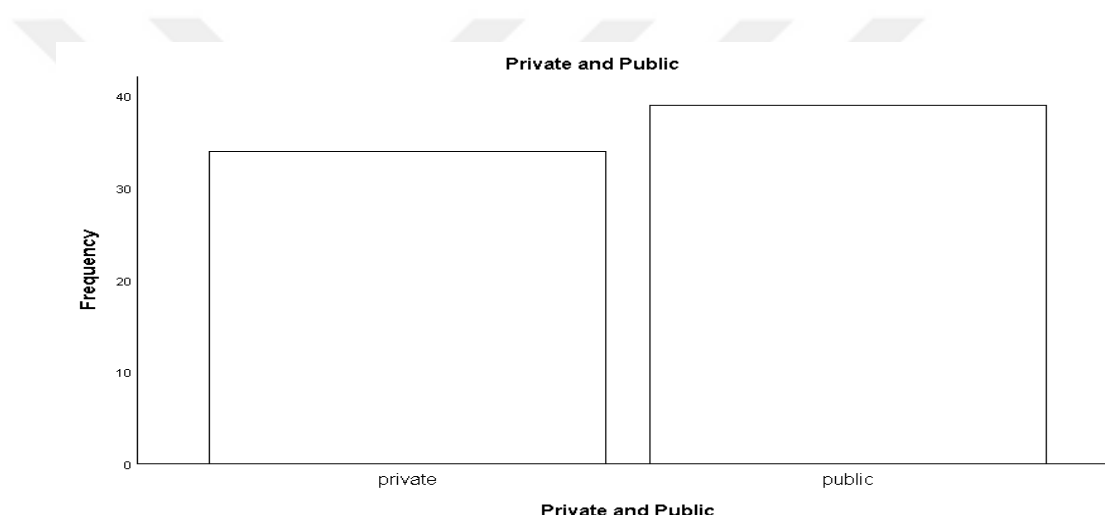


Figure 4.3: Bar Graph Representing Private and Public Universities

Source: Author,2025

The figure illustrates the distribution of survey participants based on their affiliation with either public or private universities. Among the respondents, 39 students were affiliated with public institutions, while 35 students participated from private universities. The data indicates a relatively balanced representation of students from both sectors. However, it is noteworthy that the slight predominance of public university students can be attributed to their greater accessibility for survey recruitment compared to students from private institutions.

Upon examination of both variables, it is evident that minimal disparity exists between the proportions of preparatory school students affiliated with private and public

universities. Specifically, approximately 46% of the surveyed students were associated with private institutions, while 54% were linked to public universities.

RQ 1 To what extent does focus written corrective feedback affects essay writing skills of university preparatory school students?

To address the initial research inquiry, it is imperative to delineate the distribution of participant groups to analyze essays written by students attending university preparatory schools. Delving deeper into this analysis necessitates an examination of the diagram outlining the experimental and control groups. Participants were tasked with composing an essay spanning 250-300 words on the effects of smoking, subsequently evaluated by the primary researcher and two colleagues. Assessment criteria encompass error detection, including articles, spellings, and prepositions.

Notably, the survey comprised 74 participants, although not all contributed in the pre-test and post-test phases. Of these, 55 students composed essays for both pre-test and post-test evaluations. Conversely, individuals constituting the control group were exempt from the post-test evaluation, as it did not align with the fundamental requisites of the research design.

Table 4.4: Experimental and Control Group

Groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Experimental	54	73.0	73.0	73.0
Control	20	27.0	27.0	100.0
Total	74	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author,2025

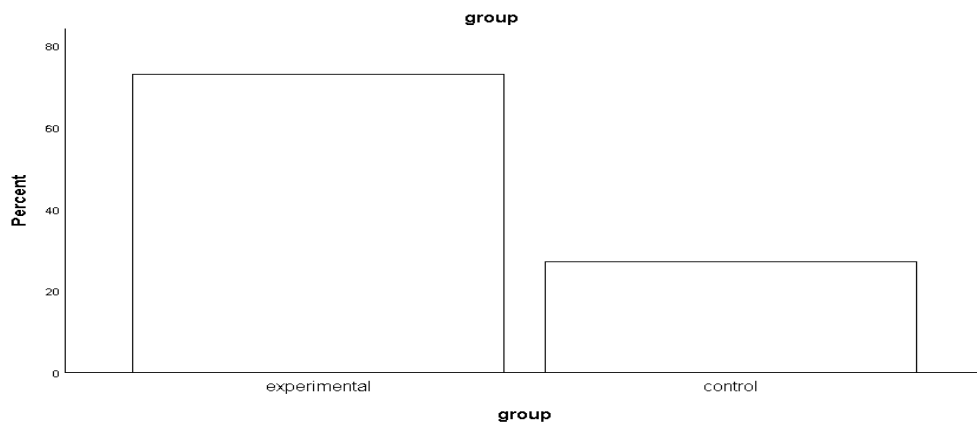


Figure 4.4: Experimental and Control Group

Source: Author,2025

The data presented above indicates the involvement of both an experimental and a control group in essay writing. However, a crucial distinction highlighted in the diagram is that only the experimental group engaged in pre-test and post-test activities. In contrast, the control group solely partook in the pre-test, aligning with the research protocol's specifications. The experimental group comprised 73% of the total students, whereas the control group constituted 27%.

To find out the difference between the first draft and the second draft of the essay, the scores of both the essay drafts were compared using a Paired T-test. Sasthi results of the test are mentioned below:

Table 4.5: T-Test for essay drafts 1 and 2

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Draft1	7.7500	54	.66411	.09037
Draft2	8.3796	54	.62143	.08457

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Significance One-Sided p	Significance Two-Sided p
Draft1 & Draft2	54	.669	<.001	<.001

Paired Samples Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	t	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Draft1 - Draft2	-.62963	.52472	.07141	-.77285	-.48641	-8.818	53	<.001

Paired Samples Effect Sizes

	Standardizer	Point Estimate	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Cohen's d	.52472	-1.200	-1.547	-.846
Hedges' correction	.53229	-1.183	-1.525	-.834

a The denominator used in measuring the effect size

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference, plus a correction factor.

Source: Author,2025

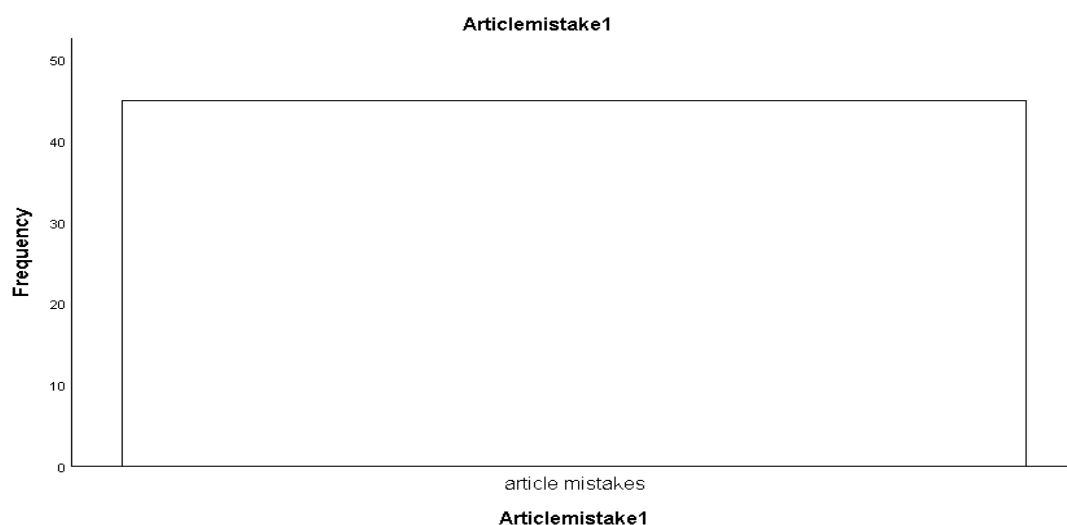
The paired sample t-test was carried out to see the difference between the Essay written in the pre-test stage and the post-test stage of the thesis. We can see from the test results that the T value is greater than the critical value, which shows that the mean difference is statistically significantly different from zero. We can assume from the result that the difference is effective.

Secondly, according to inferential statistics, the T value is -8.818, which indicates that the post-test is greater than the pre-test. We can also see that the mean value of -.6296 is statistically significantly different from zero, which also specifies that the post-test was effective.

The T-value tells us how much the pre- and post-test scores deviate from zero regarding standard error. -8.818 means the difference is very significant. The negative value tells us the direction in which the post-test scores are greater than the pretest scores. In short, we can assume that intervention or treatment has a powerful effect.

Thirdly, another crucial criterion suggesting the effectiveness of the T-test, rather than being null, pertains to the difference's upper and lower 95 % confidence intervals. If both the lower and upper values are negative, it indicates a significant disparity between the pre-test and post-test results.

Furthermore, finding errors relating to articles, prepositions, and spellings is essential. The diagrams below show the differences between the pre-test and post-test essay drafts. The research aimed to determine the effects of Focused Written Corrective feedback, which is why only major mistakes, including articles, spellings, and prepositions, were analyzed.



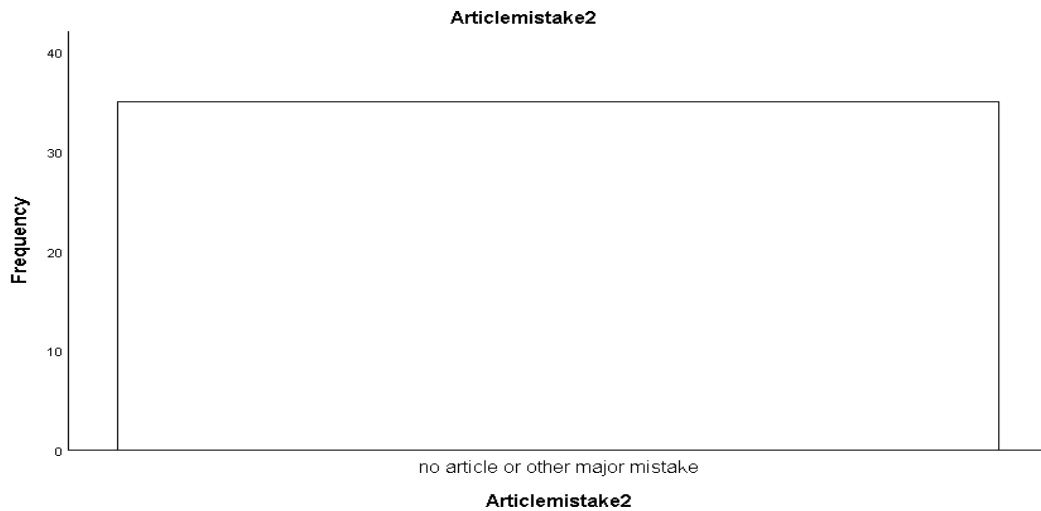


Figure 4.5: Article Mistakes in First and Second Drafts

Source: Author,2025

The above diagrams show us the article mistakes in the first draft of the essay submitted by the participants, as we know that there were more than 50 participants in the experimental group, so when we look at the diagram carefully, we can see that more than 80 % of participants had articles mistakes like a, an and the in their essays.

Alternatively, upon meticulous examination of the second draft, a noticeable reduction in article errors is evident compared to the initial draft submitted by participants. A comparative analysis of both essays shows that students have learned from their errors, manifesting in a diminished frequency of mistakes after receiving targeted written corrective feedback from instructors.





Figure 4.6: Spelling Mistakes in First and Second Drafts

Source: Author,2025

According to pre-test draft findings, we can observe many spelling mistakes in the first draft of the essay before focused corrective feedback. Spelling mistakes in the first draft constituted more than 70%, which is significant. However, there was an apparent decrease in spelling mistakes in the second draft. There might be more than one reason for this decrease. First of all, most of the students' mother language is Turkish, and they do not have much exposure to a foreign language, making them make many spelling mistakes. Secondly, they are not exposed to writing a lot. Generally speaking, much emphasis is given to speaking skills in preparatory classes. It can be inferred from the results that students can gradually improve their writing if more attention is given to writing skills.

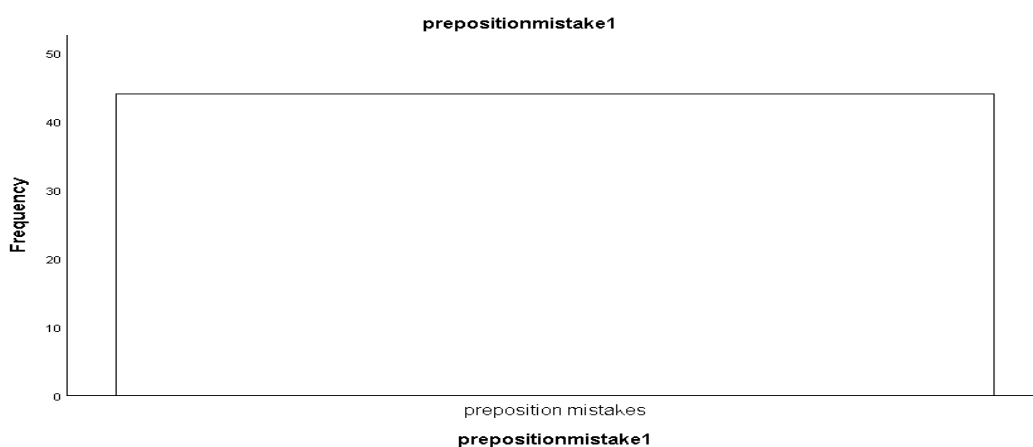




Figure 4.7: Preposition Mistakes in First and Second Drafts

Source: Author,2025

Another essential aspect analyzed was the difference in the preposition mistakes between the first and second drafts of the essay. The research question was to determine how focused written corrective feedback has affected student essay writing skills. The above diagrams show that there isn't much difference between the first and second drafts when discussing preposition mistakes. We can observe many preposition mistakes in the first draft, but we also don't see much difference in the second draft. There are multiple reasons for this phenomenon.

First, mastering prepositions presents a greater challenge than acquiring proficiency in spelling and articles. Consequently, it can be inferred that prepositions represent the most formidable aspect of language learning. The consistent prepositional errors in initial and subsequent drafts evidence this difficulty.

Secondly, achieving competence in the use of prepositions necessitates extensive practice. The complexity of mastering prepositions renders it impractical to expect substantial improvement within one week. This constraint is a primary contributing factor to the suboptimal performance of students in utilizing prepositions effectively.

RQ2 What negative or positive effects does FWCF have on the writing performance of university preparatory school students?

The second question that needed to be addressed was about the positive or negative effects of FWCF on the writing performance of university preparatory school students; we need to take help from the diagram to determine whether there was a significant difference in the essay writing performance.

First of all, we need to analyze the difference between students' first and second drafts. When we look into article mistakes, we can see that most students have performed well in their second essay draft compared to the first draft without any corrections.

In terms of percentage, more than 70% of students made article mistakes in the first draft, but in the second draft, the percentage decreased to above 60%. We can assume that participants have learned from their mistakes and performed better in the second essay draft after receiving focused, written corrective feedback from the instructor. It shows that in terms of articles, we have seen a positive change in essays.

Secondly, spelling errors were noted in both the pre-test and post-test assessments. Many mistakes were evident in the initial draft preceding the Formal Written Correction Feedback (FWCF). Subsequently, a slight reduction in errors was observed in the second draft. While the disparity between the drafts was not deemed statistically significant, it is notable that participants demonstrated improved performance compared to their initial attempt.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter encompasses the descriptive analysis of the overall findings of the data collected after the first and second drafts of the essays. The results from data obtained from the participants were analyzed quantitatively on SPSS v.29. Paired Sample T Tests and Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the present study's two research questions.

The first research question aimed to investigate the extent to which FWCF affects essay writing skills of university preparatory school students, and secondly, what positive or negative effect FWCF has on essays. After getting instructor feedback, the results obtained for the first study question demonstrated that the participants performed significantly well in spelling and article mistakes. However, they could not perform that well in improving mistakes regarding prepositions, even after feedback.

On the other hand, the second study question was concerned with the positive or negative effects of FWCF on essays. The statistical findings showed that it positively impacted the participants' writing performance, and no adverse effect was observed during analysis.

Overall, post-test results indicated that the FWCF on students positively impacted their writings, and they learned from their mistakes and performed better in the second draft of the essay. The following chapter discusses the findings, future implications, suggestions, and the conclusion.



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the analysis of the FWCF responses. Additionally, it encompasses the future implications regarding the relevant body of research. Next, it mentions the limitations of this study and gives some suggestions for further research. Finally, a conclusion is provided to the current investigation.

5.2. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the effects of focused written feedback on the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students. More specifically, it was intended to explore the influence of a focused written corrective feedback technique on the participants. Henceforth, two research questions were posed for this inquiry. The first research question examined how FWCF affects essay writing skills. In contrast, the goal of the second study question was to evaluate the positive or negative effect of focused written corrective feedback on students' essay writing skills.

To reveal the effect of FWCF on the essay writing skills of university preparatory school students, the subjects in the experimental and control groups wrote an essay on the impact of smoking. Both groups wrote an essay in the pre-test, but in the post-test, only the experimental group wrote an essay.

The first draft of the essay was returned after focused correction, and after a two-week interval, participants in the experimental group were asked to write the same essay again. The reason for writing the same essay was to see whether the FCWF given on the essays affected their writing performance and to what extent. To provide an answer to each research question, the researcher analyzed the data using SPSS 29.

The statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test findings showed a significant difference between the learners' first and second drafts of the essay. As it was focused on written feedback, articles, spelling, and preposition errors were only analyzed. The results of the Paired Sample T-test show that the T value is greater than the critical value, which shows that the mean difference is statistically significantly different from zero. We can assume from the result that the difference is effective.

Secondly, according to inferential statistics, the T value is -8.818, which indicates that the post-test is greater than the pre-test. We can also see that the mean value of -6296 is statistically significantly different from zero, specifying that the post-test was effective.

Thirdly, another crucial criterion suggesting the effectiveness of the T-test, rather than being null, pertains to the difference's upper and lower 95% confidence intervals. If both the lower and upper values are negative, it indicates a significant disparity between the pre-test and post-test results.

Moreover, it was essential to discern articles, prepositions, and spelling discrepancies. The research aimed to ascertain the impact of Focused Written Corrective Feedback; hence, only significant errors, encompassing articles, spellings, and prepositions, were scrutinized.

We observed many preposition mistakes in the first draft, but we also didn't see much difference in the second draft. There are multiple reasons for this phenomenon. First, mastering prepositions poses a greater challenge than acquiring proficiency in spelling and articles. Consequently, it can be deduced that prepositions represent the most formidable aspect of language acquisition. The consistent occurrence of prepositions-related errors in initial and subsequent drafts evidences this challenge.

Secondly, attaining competence in the use of prepositions requires extensive practice. The complexity of mastering prepositions makes it impractical to anticipate significant improvement within two weeks. This limitation primarily contributes to students' suboptimal performance in effectively utilizing prepositions.

The most significant finding is the statistically measurable improvement in the writing performance of the experimental group. These results connect us to previous studies (Bitchener & Knock, 2010; Sheen, 2007), which exhibit that FWCF improves grammatical accuracy over time.

The improvement was particularly evident in the areas where rules are more discrete and treatable, such as article use and spelling. This supports (Ferris 1999), who differentiates treatable errors from untreatable ones. Treatable errors are referred to as rule-governed, while untreatable errors consist of context and style; this reflects that FWCF is more beneficial for the former.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies

The current research aims to provide helpful insight into the effects of focused written corrective feedback on essay writing skills. Specifically, the preposition mistakes in the first and second drafts are worth mentioning. Students did not show much improvement in the second draft, although it was assumed that all the mistakes, whether in articles, spelling, or prepositions, would have the same effect.

After analyzing the data, it is suggested that, students need to have more practice and exposure to their mistakes related to prepositions because prepositions are not easy to learn and memorize as compared to article or spellings. It would be help for the students if special attention is given to preposition mistakes and they get continuous focused written corrective feedback on prepositions. In this way, students will learn from their mistakes quickly.

The current study has some limitations as all the research studies because we cannot generalize any study. Firstly, the treatment period was only two weeks. We might have received better results in terms of preposition mistakes if we had more sessions. Therefore, it can be claimed that the lower performance in preposition could be associated with time constraint.

It is also suggested that in the future studies researcher should explore different proficiency level students to see how they respond to FWCF while they have different proficiency levels within the same group of participants.

In addition, given that time was limited in this research, a delayed post-test could not be applied to investigate the long-term effects of FWCF. Utilizing a delayed post-test might provide more accurate outcomes.

Another limitation can be sample size of the study and proficiency level of the participants. The number of students who participated in the study was 74 and their level was A2-B1 according to CEFR. The bigger sample and more proficient participants might provide better outcomes.

When all the aforementioned limitations are taken into account, future studies with larger size and more treatment time might be helpful for better results. It could be argued that these issues are worth examining to shed more light on the effects of focused written feedback.

5.4. Conclusion

This study explored the effects of Focused Written Corrective Feedback (FWCF) on the essay writing skills of university preparatory students in Istanbul, Türkiye. It includes a quasi-experimental design entailing both pretest and post-test stages with experimental and control groups, the research tried to assess whether FWCF could lead to measurable improvements in specific error categories—especially articles, spelling, and prepositions.

The findings of the investigation disclosed statistically significant improvements in students' writing proficiency with respect to article usage and spelling after receiving FWCF. Although, the effect on errors containing prepositions was notably constricted. This finding underscores the differentiated efficacy of FWCF depending on the linguistic target. The better results with articles and spelling reorient with prior research indicate that focused written corrective feedback is more efficacious for rule-governed errors with limited variation. In contrast, the less obvious gains in prepositional accuracy could be attributed to the complexity, contextual reliance, and semantic diversity of prepositions in English, which are much harder for EFL learners to achieve perfection within a short experiment period.

While analyzing the results strengthens the argument that FWCF must not be viewed as a universally applicable solution for all linguistic inaccuracies. Rather, it may be more effective when strategically targeted at specific grammatical structures that lend themselves to discrete correction. Furthermore, the results bring into focus the importance of error type, treatment duration, and learner exposure as critical variables influencing the success of corrective feedback interventions.

Theoretically, the findings supported the interactionist and sociocultural theories of second language acquisition (SLA), highlighting the role of feedback, scaffolding, and zone of proximal development (ZPD) in facilitating learner progress. The improvement in article and spelling usage can be interpreted as evidence that FWCF provides the scaffolding for learners to internalize linguistic forms.

Nevertheless, this study is not without limitations. The relatively short treatment duration (two weeks), small sample size, and the particular focus on three error categories restrict the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the absence of a delayed post-test means that the long-term retention of corrected forms remains

unexplored. Future research should address these limitations by combining longitudinal designs, bigger sample populations, and qualitative analyses that evaluate how students cognitively process and internalize FWCF.

In conclusion, while the data confirm the efficacy of FWCF in fostering immediate gains in specific areas of L2 writing, they also caution against overgeneralizing its effectiveness. A more differentiated, sustained, and learner-responsive approach is essential if FWCF is to be optimally leveraged in academic writing instruction for EFL students.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Essay writing task

Instruction

Please write an essay on the topic of effects of smoking (250-300) words. The data will only be used for research purposes.



APPENDIX B

Essay Rubric

Areas of assessment	Beginner	Capable	Expert
Organization	Essay had no style	Essay was written in an interesting style	Essay was written in an extraordinary style
Grammar, Usage	So many spelling, punctuation and verb errors	A number of spelling, punctuation or verb errors	Very less spelling, punctuation or verb errors.

Cox, Janelle. (2020, August 26). Sample Essay Rubric for Teachers. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/essay-rubric-2081367>

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ali Arsalan

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To be a responsible team member for a growth oriented organization by virtue of hard work. I have an ability to learn and improve my professional skills and use them for the progress of organization and my own future.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Degree/Certificates	Session	University/Institution
MA (English Language Teaching)	2021-2023	Istanbul Zaim University
MS (Media Studies)	2015-2017	Riphah International University, Islamabad
BSML (French and English)	2010-2013	NUML
F. A	2008-2009	KRL Model College, Kahuta, Rawalpindi
Matric (Science Group)	2006-2007	KRL Model College, Kahuta, Rawalpindi

EXPERIENCE

- Taught English to under privileged students at Jamia Ahsan Ul Uloom, Pakistan
- Worked as an English Teacher at The Educators, Islamabad (August 2015-March 2018)

- Performance in Theatre of Oppressed on Freedom of Expression and Privacy Rights Online (PNCA Islamabad)
- Worked at The Play School, Islamabad
- Worked as Sub Examiner in federal board
- Tutor at Minister's Enclave Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Worked as CSR in Touchstone communications, Islamabad
- Worked as Customer Sales Assistant at Tixee International, Maslak, Istanbul.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Merit Certificate in French language speaking competition.

Second position in boy's race in Fazaia degree college Rafiqui.

Pakistan Red Crescent Blood donation certificate.

Sultana foundation blood donation certificate.

Performance in Theatre of Oppressed on Freedom of Expression and Privacy Rights Online (PNCA Islamabad)

Appreciation certificate on best performance in extracurricular and academics (The Educators, Islamabad)

IELTS Academics

IELTS General

➤ COURSES

➤ Diploma in French language from NUML.

➤ Continuous Professional Development Program (English Development Program)

➤ Turkish language Course(March to date)