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Effects of error feedback in second language students writing in
a private language institute in Loja

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to God and San Judas Tadeo due to they have guided me spiritually since I always felt blessed throughout this process. Besides of that, this research study is dedicated to my brother Bryan Saca, my sister Silvia Saca, and my nephew Martin Lopez because they were a great emotional support during my adverse problems. Furthermore, I thank my friend Cristina Ontaneda since I count on her advices and support and she guided me to achieve my new academic goals; but above all, I thank my boyfriend and best friend Kevin Medina who has been my inspiration and has been in the best and worst moments. He has always given me his encouragement and correct words to get up and continue fighting. For these reasons, I want to tell all of them that this achievement is for them.

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Abstract

The research study focused on error feedback in second language students writing in a private language institute. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of direct and indirect feedback in second language writing, related to morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors. The sample was based on 18 students from intermediate level and a total of 1 teacher in a private language institute in Loja city. The Qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for obtaining results and determining teachers and students' perceptions about feedback effect. For this purpose, students were asked to write different paragraphs and correct them after receiving their teacher's comments; at the end, both teacher and students answered a survey. As a result, the findings showed that direct feedback is the most efficient feedback used for correcting and improving student's writing errors especially syntactic errors; besides, students stated their preference towards direct feedback while the teacher mentioned indirect feedback could be more beneficial for students as they are supposed to recognize their mistakes and correct them.

Keywords: direct feedback, syntactic errors, error feedback.

Resumen

Esta investigación pretende determinar el tipo de retroalimentación más efectiva para corregir tres tipos de errores de escritura. El propósito del estudio fue examinar la retroalimentación directa e indirecta en la escritura, relacionada con errores morfológicos, semánticos y sintácticos. La muestra se basó en 18 estudiantes de nivel intermedio y 1 profesor en un instituto de idiomas de la ciudad de Loja. Los enfoques cualitativos y cuantitativos se usaron para obtener resultados y determinar las percepciones de profesores y estudiantes sobre el efecto de retroalimentación. Para ello, los alumnos escribieron párrafos y los corrigieron después de los comentarios del maestro; al final, tanto el maestro como los estudiantes respondieron a una encuesta. Finalmente, los hallazgos mostraron que la retroalimentación directa es más eficiente para corregir los errores de escritura, especialmente los sintácticos; además, los estudiantes expusieron su preferencia hacia la retroalimentación directa, mientras que el maestro mencionó que la indirecta podría ser más beneficiosa, ya que se reconocen sus errores y los corrigen.

Palabras clave: retroalimentación directa, errores sintácticos, retroalimentación incorrecta.

Introduction

Feedback helps English high school learners avoid the same writing errors over and over again which causes frustration on both, teachers and learners. It helps learning by being part of a dialogue that supports shared conceptualizations of learning objectives and allows students to take more responsibility for learning. In other words, feedback is an essential part of the learning process because it aids students develop their understanding and improve their performance. According to Hyland and Hyland (2019) feedback concerns to provide comments or expresses a judgment of the learners' writing. It is an important part for teachers and learners who develop the writing skill during their whole career or profession. There are two ways educators use to provide feedback which are the following: (1) direct feedback with the direct response of the teacher; (2) indirect feedback that indicates the error but without providing the correct solutions.

Even though feedback is elemental in order to elaborate excellent written compositions, it is not always applied appropriately or it is not taken into account by EFL teachers when students produce a written product. As a result, written texts have morphological, semantic and syntactic errors and, therefore, a poor-quality writing is produced due to wrong grammatical structures. For these reasons, this research study focuses on discovering the effects of error feedback in second language students writing in a private language institute. Obtaining information about direct and indirect feedback with an emphasis on morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors is the fundamental purpose of this study research; therefore, it is very necessary to obtain an answer to the following questions: What are the effects of direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors? What type of feedback do students prefer?

This research study is supported by relevant information that has been obtained from pedagogical studies around the world. The first study was conducted by Aisyah and Luan (2018) who investigated the factors that contributed to the accurate use of the past tenses resulting from direct and indirect feedback. As a result, the researcher showed the importance

of exposing students to different strategies which are applied when giving feedback and the need for the teachers to implement direct and indirect feedback in their teaching-process.

Additionally, Rahmawati (2017) carried out a study which analyzed the impact of direct and indirect corrective feedback to improve EFL students' writing skill. The researcher found that indirect corrective feedback was more effective than direct corrective feedback since this type of feedback provided learners the opportunity to do self-correction taking into account the teacher's directions.

The last study was done by Thao and Anh (2017) who explored two factors in the teaching and learning environment of a university in Vietnam since error analysis and correction is essential in order to enhance the writing skills of EFL learners. The study showed that teachers have academic knowledge on feedback; however, they mainly depend on their own experience throughout the teaching-learning process.

This research study is divided into three important chapters. The first chapter which is about literature review consisted of highlighting the relevant information about feedback to support the scientific character. The second chapter contemplates the method which is formed by the participants, as well as, the process followed by the researcher to develop this research study. Finally, the third chapter includes the analysis of the results taken from the collected data besides the conclusions and recommendations.

Private language institutes, teachers, and English high school learners will have great benefits by this research study due to the correct type of feedback has an important impact on the development in students' writing. Furthermore, this research will demonstrate educators to apply more strategies and techniques to provide feedback in order to get better academic results focus on writing skill. Moreover, private language institutes, teachers, and learners will know the great impact that feedback has in writing; as a result, feedback will be used to correct all writing assignments.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Error feedback in ESL writing has provided both teachers and students with diverse and valuable information about what they are actually doing well and what needs to be improved. In order to achieve the aim of the study, theoretical information has been included, which contributes to obtaining a deeper understanding on the effects of error feedback in second language students' writing.

Writing in the efl context

Suleiman (as cited in Hosseini et al., 2013), explains artfully that writing is a core element of language, in which multidimensional writing's nature in instructional practices, assessment processes, and language development should be considered in every reading and language art program. The examination of multidimensional writing's nature widens current knowledge of writing fundamentals.

According to Hand et al. (2007), no matter how skilled the teacher is with technology if he or she does not possess solid communication skills the writing process will not be successful. This issue has posed questions regarding the advancement of ESL directions from oral communication to written prose.

In this regard, Raimes (as cited in Nasser, 2015), underlines that writing reinforces grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary. In addition, opportunities to be creative with language and to go beyond what they have just learned are provided to students. Furthermore, when students write, they necessarily get involved with the language; the effort to express ideas and the constant use of eyes, hands, and brain help in the learning reinforcement.

Similarly, Rao (2007) perceives the value of writing in English as a foreign language (EFL). It is emphasized that writing stimulates thinking, forces students to concentrate and organize their ideas, and thus be able to summarize, analyze, and criticize. Additionally, learning, thinking, and reflecting on the English language learning are reinforced.

Moreover, Harmer (2007) states that writing allows students more opportunities for language processing since more thinking time is given. The author mentions that language

processing means basically thinking about the language that is why two distinctions are drawn: writing-for-learning and writing-for-writing. Writing-for-learning is an enabling activity in which writing is employed as a practical tool to reinforce students' knowledge of the language they have been studying. An example of this is to ask students to write sentences following a given structure. On the contrary, writing-for-writing focuses on developing learners' skills as writers. This implies that the writing activities should be centered on increasing students' writing skills, text construction, layout, style, and effectiveness. Thus, the way of providing feedback and corrections to learners depends on the kind of writing tasks they are involved in.

It is known that writing is a difficult skill to master, in which multiple types of errors can occur during this process. Errors prevent students for having accurate conversations or writing meaningful texts.

Spratt et al. (2011) mark a distinction between errors and slips. Errors arise when learners try to say or write something that is beyond their current level of knowledge or language processing. When learners are still processing or do not know some specific part of the language, they are not able to correct the errors on their own. Whereas slips are the result of temporary emotions or circumstances influencing students, which cause a lack of concentration on what they are saying or writing. These slips can be corrected by learners themselves when the mistake is noticed.

It is being stated that most of English as a Foreign Language learners face writing difficulties and the major one is connected to English language grammar (Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017). It is also said that the lack of grammatical knowledge is causing students' shortcomings in English. Grammar is regarded as the way words are organized and how the form of words is changed to give meaning to what is said or written. Additionally, Cam and Tran (2017) mentioned that grammar should be mastered in order to improve writing. According to Albery (2012), a sentence must follow this structure: word order (syntax), how individual words are formed (morphology), and the meaning sentences have (semantics).

Morphological errors.

As Albery stated: “Knowledge of morphology helps us understand that a word is plural, or is in the past, or is a subject, an object, an adverb and so on” (Albery, 2012, p.51). The major reason why students might understand both “her birthday presents or she birthday presents” is because the morphology is correct; reordering words is all it takes (Albery, 2012). That is why, Zaid et al. (2017) claim that morphological errors are made when morphological aspects of grammar are misused. Morphology implies the relation of how words are formed and how they fit together. When these rules are erroneously applied by second language learners, morphological errors are made even if prior knowledge of the rules exist.

Two main sources of morphological errors in a new language learning have been excerpted from Brown (2007), these are interlingual and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors derive from the first language interference. Evidently, English as the target language is the interfered language while Spanish is the one that interferes. Nevertheless, as language learners produce the language using their own creativity, intralingual errors may occur. As mentioned by Richard (as cited in Widodo, 2018), intralingual errors are the most frequent type of errors, being distinguished into four types: (i) overgeneralization in which the rule of the target language cannot be used correctly by students. The rule is applied to inappropriate situations. (ii) ignorance of rule restriction, exception of rules is not applied by students. This is closely related to overgeneralization. (iii) incomplete application of the rule, linguistic rules are omitted in the target language production. (iv) false concept hypothesis, the target language rule is misunderstood by students who misuse it.

Trianingsih (2010) lists three essential causes of morphological error in second language learning: transfer; analogical; and teaching induced errors. Transfer morphological errors occur early in the second language learning process. The first language interferes with the second language, as the native language is the only source of background information regarding the language. Therefore, students mainly refer to their native language and apply the rules of the first language to the second language. Likewise, analogical morphological errors are produced after learners have mastered the rules of the target language, but cannot

adapt the errors correctly in the appropriate formations and categories. Lastly, teaching induced morphological errors are center on the errors made by the students due to the induced teaching process. This is likely caused by the strategies and materials used by teachers.

Morphological errors are classified into four types: omission, addition, misinformation and disordering (Yakub and Hossain, 2018). Omission ones focuses on errors that occur due to the removal of certain necessary items by second language learners. Omission occurs in the early stages of second language acquisition, albeit tertiary level students also produce this type of error as their knowledge is defective. Omission of auxiliary 'Be', of other auxiliary verbs, of prepositions, of plural marker 's' or 'es', of personal pronouns, of articles, of past and past participle marker 'ed', of apostrophe 'S'/possessive 'S', and of third-person singular marker 's' and 'es' have been identified.

Addition errors approaches to the usage of any item that is unnecessary. These elements are not desired in a sentence. Addition of singular/ plural form of a morpheme, of auxiliary 'Be', of other auxiliary verbs, of prepositions, of personal pronouns, of articles, of past and past participle marker 'ed', of apostrophe 'S'/possessive 'S', and of third-person singular marker 's' and 'es' have been recognized.

Misinformation refers to the identification of any incorrect form of morpheme. Seventy percent of morphological errors are errors of misinformation. Spelling, misinformation of auxiliary 'Be', of other auxiliary verbs, of prepositions, of plural marker 's' or 'es', of personal pronouns, of articles, of past and past participle marker 'ed', of apostrophe 'S'/possessive 'S', of third-person singular marker 's' and 'es', and miscellaneous morphological misinformation related errors have been found.

Disordering occurs when a morpheme is incorrectly placed. The number of disordered morphological errors is much less compared to other types of errors. However, most of these types of errors are syntactic; while some others are both. A morphological error leads to a syntactic error. *Oh, may you go now*, is a clear example evidenced in disordering morphological errors (Yakub and Hossain, 2018).

Semantic errors.

Semantic is seen in a wide sense as “the study of meaning in language” (Hurford et al., 2007, p. 1). Semantics' essential purpose is to clarify and understand the nature of meaning. In the sense of the intention to transmit, the term meaning is applied to people who use the language. Such distinction is known as speaker meaning. In comparison, the same term is also applicable to words and sentences in different senses; it indicates what counts as the equivalent of in the target language. This distinction is known as sentence meaning (Hurford et al., 2007).

According to Hiladi (2018), when the rules of the meaning of language are wrongly transmitted, semantic errors are made. To illustrate this point, an example sentence is given: *My refrigerator just drove a car to Chicago*; through this sentence can be noticed that the sentence meaning is incorrect, although the syntax is perfectly accurate. Communication between people is not possible by the inappropriate use of the logic of language, thus using sentences whose meaning is somewhat problematic.

Semantic errors are categorized into three wide categories; these are lexical, collocation and lexical grammatical (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

Llach (2005) explains that a lexical error is “the wrong word use of a lexical item in a particular context by comparison with what a native speaker of similar characteristics as the L2 learner (age, educational level, professional and social status) would have produced in the same circumstances” (p.49). Lexical error is the incorrect use of a lexicon (word) in a sentence (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani (2012), distinguish six categories of lexical errors, specifically: assumed synonymy, derivativeness, confusion of binary terms, paraphrase, idiomacity, and similar forms. Assumed synonymy relies on the number of words in a language that has the same meaning. The presence of other languages implies that English is full of synonyms. In semantics, it is argued that there is no real and exact synonym between two or more words since they can be synonyms because of their similar meaning or a related one,

but when the implication is considered, the matter differs. *Your sound is nice like that of singers. (voice)* through this sentence synonymy is crystallized.

In the same way English words derive from almost most nouns, adverbial adjectives, etc., whereas derivation in other languages takes a different approach. *Students take a decision (make)*, this sentence exemplifies derivativeness in EFL learners where *take* substitutes the verb *make* since in Spanish *take* is also used in the sense of *make*. The key approach of confusion of binary terms lies in those errors which are made when students are confused with lexical elements, generally classified as relational opposites or binary terms.

For instance; *I looked happy yesterday. (felt)*. Likewise, paraphrase centers on errors committed due to the absence of an exact word in EFL learners' lexicon and, therefore, they try to express themselves in such contexts using the paraphrase strategy erroneously. *Two rooms in our house are for sleeping. (bedrooms)*, in this sentence it is clearly seen that the word *bedroom* is unknown for students which leads them to paraphrase its meaning. Correspondingly, because of their complexity, idiomatic expressions are extremely difficult to learn for all EFL students. The meaning they convey is contextualized and cannot be composed of the sum of the meanings of each word in isolation but as a whole as a component.

Students unaware of the idiomatic expression attempt to find an equivalent to the expression in their L1, leading them to commit lexical errors in semantics. In this sentence *When I get up I change my clothes. (get dressed)*, students unaware of the idiomatic expression *get dressed*, try to come up with an equivalent to the expression in their mother tongue. Eventually, in similar forms, the lexical errors result from confusion between the incorrect and correct words to be used in which words' forms and uses are not differentiated. *And it was the reason of the lost of my ambition. (loss)*, through this sentence, an incorrect choice of a word similar to the one intended can be observed and, therefore, a semantically lexical error occurs. Confusion arises as a result of rough similarity, whether graphical or phonetic.

Collocations errors are defined as combinations of words which often occur together (O'dell and McCarthy, 2008). Collocate choice, contextualization, and wrong forms are classified as three types of collocation errors (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

Collocate choice errors distinguish two subtypes; (i) collocate incorrect in which one of the two collocates is inaccurate, creating a wrong collocation; and (ii) both collocates incorrect where the two collocates constituting the collocation are incorrect and, therefore, result in a semantic collocation error. *After every lecture, I used to make my homework. (do)*, It is visible in the sentence that only one component of the collocations is incorrect since make cannot be collocated with homework. This example is an illustration of the first subtype of collocation errors. It is seen through this another example *I will save my word to get my great ambition. (keep my promise)* that both collocates cannot be collocated with one another in each collocation.

On the other hand, contextualization focuses on clarifying that in sentences, there is nothing in grammatical and semantic terms wrong, but the context in which collocations results are used leads to these errors. *My sister brings a boy this time. (gives birth to a boy)*, it is notable that the sentence is linguistically correct but it is only the context in which the collocation is employed that makes it semantically deviant.

Finally, wrong forms collocation errors refer to the usage of one or more collocates whose grammatical form or category is not correct and therefore the consequence of such collocation is wrong. *It is difficult to get marriage because of high dowry. (get married)*, the students' error in not using the proper grammatical form of a collocation is denoted through the sentence, in which a well-formed collocation was not obtained (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

According to Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani (2012), lexicogrammatical errors are the incorrect usage of words from a particular grammatical category instead of another grammatical category. This is a vital skill that requires students to distinguish between a verb, a noun, an adjective, an adverb, and so on; also including the capability to differentiate how, when, and why a particular grammatical category should be used in its correct position in a

sentence. Lexicogrammatical errors are made up by four major groups: adjectives in place of nouns, nouns in place of adjectives, adjectives in place of adverbs, and adverbs in place of adjectives (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

First, adjectives in place of nouns: It involves the erroneous placement of adjectives instead of nouns. *There is no happy in this life. (happiness)*, errors in this sentence clearly demonstrate students' errors in substituting adjectives for nouns. Second, nouns in place of adjectives: It is stated that these types of errors are the opposite of the previous one. The non-use of adjectives required by the context shows the lexicogrammatic errors that students are making. *She is not very beauty. (beautiful)*, through this example it is evidenced that pupils are unable to distinguish between the forms of a word (noun, verb, adjective, adverb).

Third, adjectives in place of adverbs: Adjectives are used incorrectly in place of adverbs. *I run to school quick. (quickly)*, in this sentence, it is visible that such error is the result of the lack of knowledge about where an adjective or an adverb should be used. Fourth, adverbs in place of adjectives: Unlike the group discussed above, students find it difficult to use adjectives where they erroneously use adverbs. *You look sadly today. (sad)*, through this sentence the wrongly use of adverbs instead of adjectives is exemplified (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

Syntactic errors.

It is asserted that "syntax is concerned with the relationship between words in constructions and the way these words are put together to form sentences" (Jackson and Zé Amvela, 2007, p. 11). Also, Miller (2002) holds that syntactic errors are the breach of the syntax or grammatical rules of a language. A syntactic error in written English is contained in the subsequent sentence, *I is going to the concert tonight. Likewise*, a lack of understanding of L2 is the explanation attributed to the syntactic errors made by the students (Al-Badawi, 2012).

In accordance with Hafiz et al. (2018), eight syntactic errors are recognized in writing; copula, concord, tense/aspect, adjective - word order, prepositions, infinitival 'to', articles, and conjunction. The word that links or tie the subject of a sentence with a predicate (subject

complement) is known as copula. It is often a verb that is sometimes called a copulative or copular verb. Most languages have a main copula, although some have more than one, and others have none. These facts imply that in some languages, the omission of copulation occurs within a particular grammatical context. Through the following sentence, the omission of a verb in English sentences is notable, this is a common practice for students of English as a foreign language. *My friend name Osman* (Hafiz et al., 2018).

Studies carried out by Hafiz et al. (2018), describe concord as an agreement between the subject and the verbs, as well as other elements of the sentence structure. The concord in English grammar states that an English sentence is correct and meaningful if its constituent parts (i.e. subject, verb, object, adverb) are in accord with the other words to which they are related. *My friend go shopping*; on account of this sentence it is seen one of the most common syntactic errors for a non-native learner, the verb does not agree in number with the subject.

The idea of what tense and aspect referring to comes from the work of Hafiz et al. (2018), which explains that tense is the form, and a verb takes to show the time it happened. Aspect implies the degree of completeness of an action or state. Regarding the terms of aspects, it is considered as the main issue whether an action is completed, partial, ongoing, or has not yet occurred. *Ahmed is study in Arts College; I drank milk usually*. The first sentence is exemplifying an aspect error where the action is ongoing but instead, the action is supposed to always be true. On the other hand, through the second sentence the students' misunderstanding arises in tense, using the past simple for the present simple.

An adjective is a word that describes or modifies a noun or noun phrase. In English, an adjective is placed before the noun it modifies. However, in other languages, adjectives go after the noun. How EFL learners are affected by this order difference can be find in the following example: *My hobby favorite is swim* (Hafiz et al., 2018).

As put forward by Chaudhary and Zahrani (2020), learners make prepositions errors because of the lack of knowledge of English prepositions. It leads to a negative transfer from their mother language, ommiting, adding and misinformed the prepositions under the effect of

L1. *You can join with the college bus; I studied a medical college in another city...*, both clauses have demonstrated the addition and omission of the preposition in sentences.

As mentioned by Hafiz et al. (2018), infinitive is understood as a grammatical term that refers to certain verb forms existing in many languages, usually used as non-finite verbs. In many other languages, the infinitive is a single word, often with a characteristic inflective ending. Some languages, however, have no forms that can be regarded as infinitive. Through the following example this type of syntactic error is evidenced: *I want become good doctor.*

A 11.6% of errors in the use of articles were found in Liu and Xu (2013) study. They define article errors as the wrong use of them, the lack of using a, an or the, or any other determiners before a noun. For example: *A lecture from / a famous writer Yu Hua, This film tell us a interesting story.*

According to Liu and Xu (2013) study, errors in coordinating and coordinating conjunctions occur when the writer wrongly use words or phrases to connect two clauses, or write a grammatically complete sentence. In addition, an error of run-on sentences is considered when the lack of necessary conjunctions takes place. This error is demonstrated by the following case: *In a word, this book is not only well written and inspires us to think more.* It should be “..., *this book is not only well written but (also) inspires us to think more*”

WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON EFL LEARNERS

Feedback is described as input provided by teachers on the students' homework or the learning process. Its purpose is to help to bridge the void between what students actually understand and what is eventually supposed to be understood (Hattie and Timperley, 2007).

Ellis (2008) has provided a quick overview of all the different types of corrective feedback (CF) that are used in EFL and ESL writing. The types of written corrective feedback used in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a Second language (ESL) classes are discussed in Table 1.

Table 1*Types of Written Corrective Feedback*

Type of CF	Description
1. Direct CF	The teacher provides the student with the correct form.
2. Indirect CF	The teacher indicates that an error exists but does not provide the correction.
A: Indicating + Locating the error	This takes the form of underlining and use of cursors to show omissions in the student's text
B: Indication only	This takes the form of an indication in the margin that an error or errors have taken place in a line of text.
3. Metalinguistic CF	The teacher provides some kind of metalinguistic clue to the nature of the error
A: Use of error	A: Use of error code Teacher writes codes in the margin (e.g. ww = wrong word; art = article).
B: Brief grammatical	Description Teacher numbers errors in text and writes a grammatical description for each numbered error at the bottom of the text.
4. The focus of the feedback	This concerns whether the teacher attempts to correct all (or most) of the students' errors or selects one or two specific types of errors to correct. This distinction can be applied to each of the above options.
A: Unfocused CF	Unfocused CF is extensive.
B: Focused CF	Focused CF is intensive
5. Electronic feedback	The teacher indicates an error and provides a hyperlink to a concordance file that provides examples of correct usage.
6. Reformulation	This consists of a native speaker's reworking of the students' entire text to make the language seem as native-like as possible while keeping the content of the original intact.

Source: (Ellis, 2009, p.98)

Ferguson (2011) firmly holds that feedback is a vital approach to facilitate the development of students as independent learners and of tracking, assessing, and controlling their own learning.

When students get a written work covered in red-ink, underlined, and crossed-out, most of them find it daunting to correct it. Over-correction can have a demotivating effect on students that is why a balance must be struck between being accurate and truthful, on the one

hand, and treating students with sensitivity and sympathy, on the other hand. Thus, the use of feedback is one way to avoid over-correction as a demotivating factor (Harmer, 2007).

Diab (2006) underlines the idea of how to respond to students' writing is considered as a controversial issue in teaching writing in a second language. The effects of various types of teacher feedback on students' writing skills have been thoroughly investigated, whereas, little research has explored instructor and student preferences for feedback and error correction. Preferences are important because if teachers and students both understand the purpose of certain correction techniques and concur on their use, the feedback is more likely to be productive. Conversely, if teachers and students have mutually exclusive ideas regarding correction techniques, the result is likely to be ineffective and, at worst, discouraging feedback for students who are learning to write on a second language.

It is claimed by Hyland and Hyland (2006) that feedback is generally seen as a central issue to encourage and consolidate learning. Its importance is recognized in process-based classrooms, where it is a key element to help students increase control over their writing skills, and encourage teachers to use genre-oriented and scaffolding learning techniques.

A distinction between direct and indirect feedback is made since the different effects of these two types of feedback is what is aimed to be inquired in this research study. Direct feedback is being reported that direct or explicit feedback occurs when an error is identified by the teacher and the correct form is provided (Bitchener et al., 2005).

Chandler (2003) concludes that although direct feedback allows students to immediately internalize the appropriate form as provided by their instructor, learners whose errors are fixed implicitly do not realize if their own corrections are accurate. This delay in accessing the target form could level out the potential benefit of the additional cognitive effort associated with indirect feedback. Additionally, Bitchener and Knoch (as cited in Hosseiny, 2014) indicate that the kind of explicit information that is needed to evaluate hypotheses about the target language is given only through direct feedback.

Three appropriate ways to use direct feedback have been drawn from Ferris (as cited in Hosseiny, 2014); these are: (i) for beginning students; (ii) when errors are intractable, i.e.

errors not susceptible to self-correction, such as sentence structure and word choice, and (iii) when teachers want to draw students' attention to other error patterns that require correction from students.

As stated by Bitchener et al. (2005), indirect feedback refers to situations in which the teacher points out that an error has been made, but no correction is provided, so the student must find the error on its own and correct it.

Indirect feedback is based on cognitively challenging students in order to make them reflect upon the clues given by the teacher, who acts as a reflective agent who provides practical and relevant guidance to the cognitive abilities of students that have emerged from their previous experience. Students can then relate these clues to the context where an error exists, determine the area of the error, and correct it on the basis of their informed knowledge. In addition, the commitment and attention of the students improve and allow them to solve problems perceived as beneficial for the improvement of their long-term learning (Nematzadeh and Siahpoosh, 2017).

Similarly, as O'Sullivan and Chambers have highlighted (2006), indirect feedback has the greatest potential to help students improve their second language skills and metalinguistic knowledge as well as several benefits over direct feedback on students' long-term development, especially for the most advanced students.

Additionally, studies examining the effect of indirect feedback have often tended to differentiate between people who use or do not use a code (Bitchener et al., 2005). Also, coded feedback points the precise position of an error, and the sort of error involved is shown by a code (for example, PS means an error in the usage or form of the past simple tense). In the other hand, uncoded feedback refers to instances where an error is underlined, circled, or placed tally in the margin by the teacher, in each case the student himself makes his own diagnosis and corrects the error (Bitchener et al., 2005).

There are some studies focused on the detailed examination of the effects of error feedback on second language learners' writing, more specifically on the effects of direct and

indirect feedback. It is essential to consider these studies and their main findings that have attempted to examine this issue.

Truscott and Hsu (2008) addressed a study at a public university in Taiwan, whose purpose was to investigate the difference between revision accuracy and writing skill accuracy through the application of feedback. A sample of forty-seven EFL students was selected, randomly divided into two groups, as control and experimental groups. The control group did not receive any feedback while the experimental group had their errors underlined as help in their drafts. One kind of instrument was used for the development of this study, a writing task; and the mentioned study was also carried out in two parts. The results indicated the existence of significant differences in favor of the experimental group. The conclusion of the first part of the study supported the idea that receiving feedback was beneficial for students' revision accuracy. After one week, a new writing task was provided where both groups had almost an identical error rate. They could conclude that feedback is effective in assisting students rewrite their written works, but it does not demonstrate any enhancement for writing accuracy for longer (one week) learning.

Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2008) conducted an experimental study aimed to investigate the long-term effects of direct and indirect feedback on Dutch second language learners. The sample was made up of three classes with a total of 62 students which were divided into four groups. Afterwards, teachers gave students a test in order to start the study. The first group received direct feedback and the second group obtained indirect feedback. On the other hand, the third group received no feedback and only new writing tasks were practiced rather than revisions of their first texts, whereas the last group was required to revise their texts but without receiving any type of feedback.

The findings showed that student's accuracy in writing can be effectively improved by corrective feedback. It was also found that both the direct and indirect feedback groups have short-term effects on students. Significant long-term effects, on the other hand, were only observed in the direct feedback group measured on a completely new writing task. Although the three groups with an opportunity to revise their texts produced fewer errors in their revised

texts than in the original writing, only the direct and indirect feedback group showed significant accuracy effects on the new writing. Furthermore, all four groups had to take an initial test which revealed no substantial variations between the groups, so prior knowledge had no direct impact on the outcome of this study.

Another study was undertaken by Nematzadeh and Siahpoosh (2017) in order to investigate the effectiveness of different types of teacher's feedback (direct and indirect feedback) on students' writing performance in an EFL context. There was an initial sample of 73 female Iranian EFL learners in the study who voluntarily took a homogeneity test. Subsequently, after taking the exam, a new sample of 45 intermediate students was selected based on their scores; and randomly divided into three groups, namely a direct feedback group, an indirect feedback group, and a non-feedback group (each group of 15 students). Participants received a treatment period in ten continuous sessions, attending the class two days a week, and lasting 90 minutes each session in all groups.

The instruments used during the development of this study were: (i) the Preliminary Test of English (PET) with the aim of knowing the students' general proficiency in English, (ii) the previous test of writing to ensure that the ability of writing of the participants at the beginning of the study of the new sample was the same, and (iii) the subsequent writing test to verify the development of the writing of the students. Furthermore, the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed the fact that both types of teacher feedback improved student performance in writing and no statistically meaningful difference between the direct and indirect groups was found.

Throughout a different study, Westmacott (2017) examined which type of corrective written feedback (direct or indirect) is most effective in the written work of intermediate students. Undergraduate students in a variety of programs taking an optional one-year English course at a university in northern Chile participated in the development of this action research. The class consisted of ten students, six of whom completed the course and participated in this study. The sample was made up of female students in their twenties and whose first language

was Spanish. The teacher switched from providing direct to indirect coded comments and explored the responses of six students to the two types of comments.

To collect data different instruments were exerted: (i) a questionnaire was used to obtain a general idea of the students' responses, in case they could not participate in the interviews, and finally to simplify answer comparisons; (ii) semi-structured interviews were administered to probe the students' responses in the questionnaires; (iii) a diary was immediately applied when indirect feedback was used to record the observations of the students' responses; and (iv) second drafts of the trials were analyzed to assess whether the students were actually using indirect feedback to modify their trials. Further data collected supported how learning context and individual differences affected responses.

The findings revealed that the majority of students in this EFL setting claimed that indirect feedback was more helpful, as it promotes deeper cognitive processing and learning. In addition, it can also help reinforce grammatical knowledge and promote autonomous learning behavior.

Almasi and Nemat Tabrizi (2016) conducted a quasi-experimental study that investigated the effect of different types of corrective feedback written by teachers on the writing accuracy of Iranian EFL students. Participants in this study were eighty Iranian English learners. Both were male and female and were selected from 120 with an age range of 18-30 from a total population of 250 students studying English translation at Islamic Azad. They were then assigned to three groups of direct corrective feedback (DF), indirect corrective feedback (IF), and no feedback (NF).

During eight sessions, students in the direct and indirect treatment groups received direct or indirect corrective feedback, while the control group received no feedback. The instruments adopted in the study were: (i) The NELSON test that was used to homogenize future students for the study; and (ii) pre and post-test of writing, the first test was used to identify how well familiar students were with the concept of writing before applying the treatment, the post-test, on the other hand, to know how effective the use of direct and indirect feedback to improve EFL students' writing accuracy was. After 10 treatment sessions, the

post-writing test was administered to verify the students' writing development. The results of this study support the idea that the direct feedback group significantly outperformed the other two groups.

Ahmad (2019) conducted research aimed at discovering the effectiveness of written corrective feedback to improve the accuracy of past tenses in the written work of ESL students. A sample of forty-one Year 6 students were chosen from a primary school located in the Klang Valley in Malaysia. The sample was divided into two groups and a pre and post test were used. However, from the initial sample, only thirty students (15 in each class) were selected for the study due to their absence.

Participants were given two treatment sessions and two posttests. They received written corrective feedback on three trials under two treatment conditions: group (1) received direct written corrective feedback and group (2) received indirect written corrective feedback on specific grammatical errors. With the purpose of collecting quantitative and qualitative data, descriptive writing which involved picture compositions and face-to-face interviews were the instrument applied for this study. Quantitative results showed that students who received direct written corrective feedback outperformed students who received indirect written corrective feedback in terms of writing accuracy. , In the same way, it is underlined that ESL teachers are given better insights on which written corrective feedback could be used in students' writing. However, the evidence gathered from this study suggests that the findings cannot be generalized across all schools in Malaysia because the data was collected from only one school in Selangor.

Chapter Two

Method

Setting and participants

This study was carried out in a private language institute from the city of Loja. The research study was developed with two groups of students. The total number of the sample consisted of 18 students, 11 females and 7 males corresponding to Intermediate level of English as a foreign language. The age of learners ranged from 12 to 17 years old. In the same way, in the sample, there was also 1 teacher, her age is twenty-five years old.

Procedure

In this research study, the researcher picked up relevant and specific information in order to develop the literature review. The information was compiled from various sources such as internet, journals, electronic books, and scientific studies. The literature review covered two specific topics which are the following: writing in the EFL context which involves the importance of writing in the EFL students and the most common and frequent written errors: morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors; written corrective feedback on EFL learners which explains the importance of feedback and types of WCF (Written Corrective Feedback): direct and indirect. Once collected the information that involve the literature review, the field research was carried out to obtain specific information about the topic using the following instruments: handwriting activities, students' and teacher' survey, and observation sheet. Moreover, the methods used in this research study were quantitative and qualitative.

The three handwriting activities were applied in two experimental groups which consists of two activities, the first activity was considered as a draft and after receiving direct or indirect feedback, the participants presented the final work. The students' survey consisted of twenty-two questions focused on feedback preferences, the effects of direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors, the type of feedback that EFL students prefer. Teacher' survey consisted of twenty-five questions focused on the effects of providing direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic, and syntactic students' errors, and the type of feedback that she provides with English high school students. The last

instrument was an observation sheet which consisted of twenty-seven questions related to the type of feedback teacher uses most commonly in English classes and the type of feedback students prefer that teacher uses to correct writing errors.

Once all the instruments were applied, the handwriting activities were analyzed to detect the effect of direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic and syntactic errors. The information collected was ordered taking into account the effect of direct and indirect feedback considered within this research study and morphological, semantic and syntactic errors were classified in relation to their rules and usages. After, the data obtained was tabulated using excel charts to do the corresponding analysis.

For the analysis of the results, which is the last stage, it was very important to take into account the topic, the general objective, and the research questions. Four tables were designed for analyzing the effect of feedback in English high school students. The first chart included information about the effects of indirect and direct feedback on morphological, syntactic and semantic errors committed in paragraphs. And the last three charts included information about the impact of direct and indirect feedback on morphology, semantic, and syntactic errors that English high school students made in their paragraphs and these errors were classified in the types of errors according to the rules. The results of all this charts allowed knowing the percentage in each variable and the most effective feedback. Finally, the research questions that were formulated to the development of this research were considered for obtaining vital information to write the conclusions and recommendations.

Moreover, the analysis of the students' and teachers' survey and observation sheet consisted of reviewing what each student and teacher have answered in each question. Then, some statements were compared with the handwriting to make sure what type of feedback English high school students prefer. The results from students and teachers' survey and observation sheet were helpful for analyzing deeply each aspect.

Chapter three

Results and Discussion

Description, Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

This chapter presents, describes, interprets and analyzes the results gathered from students' handwriting, teachers' and the students' surveys and teachers' observation sheet. Furthermore, this section conducts the field study on direct and indirect feedback and the analysis of its established research questions: *What are the effects of direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors? What type of feedback do students prefer?* In other words, it contains the breakdown on the effects and preference of the participants' responses.

The effects of direct and indirect feedback on morphological, semantic and syntactic errors.

The way of providing feedback and corrections to learners depends on the kind of writing tasks they are involved in. Feedback is described as input provided by teachers on the students' homework or the learning process. Its purpose is to help to bridge the void between what students actually understand and what is eventually supposed to be understood (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). Consequently, analyzing English high school students' writing remarks, great difficulties are evidenced such as vocabulary, punctuation but above all grammar. That is why it is important to provide correct feedback in order to help English high school learners avoid the same writing errors repeatedly which causes frustration on both, teachers and learners.

Table 2

The effects of indirect and direct feedback on morphological, syntactic and semantic errors.

		DIRECT FEEDBACK				INDIRECT FEEDBACK			
		MOR	SEM	SYN	TOTAL	MOR	SEM	SYN	TOTAL
Drafts	Mean	81	36	70	187	83	65	66	214
	SD	10,16	4,52	3,78	23,46	3,93	3,07	3,12	10,12
Final work	Mean	23	19	12	54	61	41	49	151
	SD	2,37	1,96	1,24	5,57	4,07	2,73	3,27	10,07
Change	Mean	58	17	58	133	22	24	17	63

Note. This is the information obtained from the students' handwritings in both groups.

In Beuningen et al. (2008) experimental study, significant long-term effects on writing tasks were only observed in the group who received direct feedback. In the same way, in both Almasi and Nemat Tabrizi (2016) and Ahmad (2019) studies, the results showed that students in the groups who were given direct corrective feedback significantly outperformed the students who received indirect corrective feedback in terms of writing accuracy.

Similarly, in this study, once all the data from the written works of the students was collected, it is shown on chart two that students corrected their morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors in a better way when they received direct feedback. They argued that they felt comfortable receiving explicit comments because this way they paid more attention to the teacher and understood better where they were failing and how they could improve after the correct observations.

As chart two illustrates, a brief comparison was first conducted between the two drafts of paragraph 1 to see how students performed after receiving two different types of feedback. Group A received direct feedback with errors marked and corrected. The total number of errors went from an average of 23.46 per 300 words on the first draft to 10.12 on the final work. There was a reduction of 13.34 errors per 300 words in total. The number of morphological errors went from 81 per 300 words on the first draft to 23 on the final work. The average reduction was 58 morphological errors per 300 words. The number of semantic errors went from 36 per 300 words on the first draft to 19 on the final work and the average reduction was 17 per 300 words. The number of syntactic errors went from 70 per 300 words on the first draft to 12 on the final work and the average reduction was 58 per 300 words.

On the other hand, Westmacott (2017) found in her study that the majority of EFL students considered indirect feedback more helpful, as it promotes deeper cognitive processing and learning.

In this study, Group B received indirect feedback on their writing assignments. That is to say, the teacher only underlined the errors. The total number of errors went from an average of 10.12 per 300 words on the first draft to 10.07 on the final work. There was a reduction of 0.05 errors per 300 words. The number of morphological errors went from an average of 83

per 300 words to 61. There was a reduction of 22 errors per 300 words. The number of semantic errors went from an average of 65 per 300 words to 41, with a reduction of only 24 errors. The number of syntactic errors went from an average of 66 per 300 words to 49, with a reduction of only 17 errors.

Regarding the standard deviation of the data, there is a notable variation between direct and indirect feedback. For instance, the errors embedded in the morphological content showed a standard deviation of 2,37 in students who received direct feedback and 4,07 in students who received indirect feedback in their handwriting. With respect to semantic errors, there is 1,96 difference among the final works of the students who obtained direct feedback and 2,73 with indirect feedback. The same happens with the syntactic errors, there is a quite noticeable contrast concerning the errors made by the students who received direct feedback obtained 5,57 in their handwritings as opposed to those who obtained indirect feedback achieved 3,27 deviation in their works.

Table 3

The effects of indirect and direct feedback on morphological errors.

MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS	INDIRECT FEEDBACK				DIRECT FEEDBACK			
	First draft		Final work		First draft		Final work	
Omission	22	27%	15	18%	20	25%	5	6%
Addition	16	19%	8	10%	17	21%	5	6%
Misformation	25	30%	20	24%	25	31%	7	9%
Disordering	20	24%	18	22%	19	23%	6	7%

Note. This is the information obtained from the students' handwritings in both groups.

Morphology implies the study of how words are formed, the structure of them and how they fit together. Morphological errors are committed when a foreign language learner erroneously apply these rules. As it is clear in the chart three concerning the morphological errors, it can be seen that the participants made of omission, addition, misinformation and disorder that did not allow them to do a good job due to the confusion of the linguistic form of

the subject matter. That is why, Zaid et al. (2017) claim that morphological errors are made when morphological aspects of grammar are misused.

Regarding the omission errors, students omitted some important words within their paragraphs in both, draft and final version. For example, students wrote sentences in the first draft such as *"I sleeping and my friends making noise outside house because they found a family of little birds"*, and in the final work *"I was sleeping and my friends were making noise outside house because they found a family of little birds"*. As it is displayed, even though students received indirect feedback, they were confused, they forgot to add (had) to correctly form the past perfect and the article (the) before *house*. According to Yakub and Hossain (2018), omission focuses on errors that occur due to the removal of certain necessary items by second language learners. They also argue that omission occurs in the early stages of second language acquisition, albeit tertiary level students also produce this type of error as their knowledge is defective.

However, as you can see from the direct feedback part, students who get this kind of feedback can better understand their mistakes and do a good job correcting them because in this case they reduce a lot of omission errors. Similarly, in the students' survey, they argue that prefer to receive direct comments due to the attention the teacher pays in their work. For instance: in the first draft the students wrote *"Anabelle went play volleyball with childhood friends"*, and after the direct feedback was given, they corrected *"Anabelle went to play volleyball with her childhood friends"*.

Regarding addition errors, students did not make many mistakes in the first and final work; however, those who showed some of these errors were confused by adding verbs with the third person singular or plurals and the past tense. As stated by Yakub and Hossain (2018), addition is a type of errors which are characterized by the presence of an item that is unnecessary, which would otherwise not appear in a well-formed element in English utterances. These are some examples of students' work: *"We went to the lake with my family and caught a lot of fishes..."*, *"Then, my boyfriend calleded me to hang out..."*.

In the case of addition errors, it is easy to interpret that indirect or direct feedback has been good for getting students to recognize their errors because after they received the corresponding indications, they understood and corrected the mistakes. In both types of feedback, students significantly reduced their errors and those were immediately changed, *"We went to the lake with my family and caught a lot of fish..."*, *"Then, my boyfriend called me to hang out..."*. Likewise, in the survey, students stated that they improved their writing skills either by receiving direct or indirect feedback.

The number of misinformation errors was the highest among the morphological ones due to the fact that students did not understand the grammatical functions correctly. In the words of Yakub and Hossain (2018), misinformation refers to the use of incorrect forms of certain morphemes or structures. Below are some examples taken from the students' activities: *"We should studying tonight for the math test"*, *"... and I understood the course"*, *"I taken the book yesterday...."*. Similarly, to the other errors, after the students received indirect feedback, they did not figure out how to write them correctly as it could be evidenced in the final work in which most of the students repeated the errors once more: *"We should study tonight for the math test"*, *"... and I understood the course"*, *"I taken the book yesterday...."*.

In contrast, students who received direct feedback understood better the corrections and reduced the majority of these mistakes. This was supported with the answers in the students' survey, they exposed that direct feedback let them get explicit information about the correct linguistic form and that it was easier to recognize the right and the wrong form of their tasks.

Lastly, students have dealt with "disordering errors;" in this regard, Yakub and Hossain (2018) mention that this type of error occurs when someone comes across an utterance where a morpheme or a group of them is incorrectly placed. The findings in indirect feedback showed that some students have had trouble recognizing the word order. Here are some examples: *"We when arrived to Cuenca, we went shopping"*, *".... and my friend wondered what was I doing there"*. More exactly, it could be seen that the students did not change their mistakes

completely when they were corrected indirectly; however, direct feedback resulted more effective as the improvement on the students' assignments was very notable due to the decrease in the number of these mistakes. Below a sample, *"When we arrived to Cuenca, we went shopping", "... and my friend wondered what I was doing there"*. As it is evident, the students also preferred to receive direct feedback in "disordering errors" because they comprehended better the errors and the way to fix them.

Table 4

The effects of indirect and direct feedback on semantic errors.

SEMANTIC ERRORS	INDIRECT FEEDBACK				DIRECT FEEDBACK			
	First draft		Final work		First draft		Final work	
Lexical	17	26%	10	15%	15	42%	9	25%
Collocations	15	23%	14	22%	12	33%	5	14%
Lexical grammar	9	14%	7	11%	9	25%	5	14%

Note. This is the information obtained from the students' handwritings in both groups.

As it is shown in chart four, the semantic errors were divided in lexical, collocation and lexical grammar in which the participants mentioned that they were confused with the form and meaning of some words. Semantic is seen in a wide sense as "the study of meaning in language" (Hurford et al., 2007, p. 1). Its purpose is to clarify and understand the nature of meaning.

When the written pieces were reviewed, it could be seen that in lexical errors the students confused the assumed synonymy, derivativeness, confusion of binary terms, paraphrase, idiomacity, and similar forms. For instance, the students wrote in their handwriting: *"after that we had to take a decision...."*, this sentence exemplifies derivativeness in EFL learners where *take* substitutes the verb "make" since in Spanish take is also used in the sense of make; the correct form is *"after that we had to make a decision...."*. The key approach of confusion of binary terms lies in those errors which are made when students are confused with lexical elements, generally classified as relational opposites or binary terms (Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani, 2012).

For collocation errors, they are defined as combinations of words which often occur together. According to Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani (2012), collocation errors refer to the usage of one or more collocates whose grammatical form or category is not correct and therefore the consequence of such collocation is wrong. Below an example of students' work: "*It is difficult to get marriage because of high dowry*", the error of students in not using the proper grammatical form of a collocation is denoted through the sentence, in which a well-formed collocation was not obtained. Therefore, the correct way is: "*It is difficult to get married because of high dowry*"

Regarding lexical grammar, about semantic errors, students did not make many mistakes and those who did misunderstand adjectives in place of nouns, nouns in place of adjectives, adjectives in place of adverbs, and adverbs in place of adjectives. Here are some examples taken from the students' work: "*There is no happy in this life*", the error in this sentence clearly demonstrates the students' mistake in substituting adjectives for nouns in this case instead of *happy* is "happiness". In the second example, they wrote: "*My sister-in-law is not very beauty*", through this example it is evidenced that the students are unable to distinguish between the forms of a word (noun, verb, adjective, adverb), the correct sentence is "*My sister-in-law is not very beautiful*".

In the same way, Al-Shormani and Ahmed Al-Sohbani (2012), mention that lexical grammar errors are the incorrect usage of words from a particular grammatical category instead of another grammatical category. This is a vital skill that requires students to distinguish between verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and so on; also including the capability to differentiate how, when, and why a particular grammatical category should be used in its correct position in a sentence.

Considering the effectiveness of direct or indirect feedback, across all of the semantic errors mentioned, the responses from the instruments were remarkable because students better grasp the content when they receive direct rather than indirect feedback. By the same token, the responses of the students in the survey are similar, preferring direct feedback in this type of errors because the indications are more explicit.

Table 5

The effects of indirect and direct feedback on syntactic errors.

SYNTACTIC ERRORS	INDIRECT FEEDBACK				DIRECT FEEDBACK			
	First draft		Final work		First draft		Final work	
Preposition	24	36%	19	29%	26	37%	9	13%
Word order	18	27%	11	17%	19	27%	3	4%
Conjunction	24	36%	19	29%	25	36%	0	0%

Note. This is the information obtained from the students' handwritings in both groups.

As a final point, the syntactic errors were found in the misunderstanding of preposition, word order and conjunction. Syntax is the mechanics of writing and it is mainly a grammatical function, involving correct use of sentence structure. Additionally, it is asserted that "syntax is concerned with the relationship between words in constructions and the way these words are put together to form sentences" (Jackson and Zé Amvela, 2007, p. 11). Likewise, Miller (2002) holds that syntactic errors are the breach of the syntax or grammatical rules of a language.

In this section, the students were really disorganized in their handwriting activity because they confused the use of prepositions, especially, in, on, and at. As put forward by Hafiz et al. (2018), prepositions are short words that usually precede nouns, pronouns, and gerund verbs, expressing a relationship with another word in the sentence. A preposition in students' native language might have several translations depending on the situation, and as a result, they are omitted or used wrongly. As in the examples below, "*We were just on time to catch the plane*", "*.... I bought the bag with \$100*", the students replaced "on" for "in" and "with" for "for"; the correct forms of the sentences are "*We're just in time to catch the train*" and "*.... I bought the bag for \$100*"

Considering the word order errors, students have shown a very great deficiency in this aspect because there is an impact of mother tongue (Spanish) on the written discourse in English for both English high school teachers and learners. In this way, students try to translate most of the words and write in the Spanish context, which means that with errors of word order

they make an incorrect sentence or change its whole meaning. Below are some examples taken from the students' work: "... *that is why my dad bought a car new*", "*We included also the information that the holiday year starts on 1 January*". As it is seen, one of the most common mistakes associated with word order is the tendency to put adjectives or adverbs in the wrong place. This time, the mistakes apply particularly to the words "new" and "also", here are the correct sentences: "... *that is why my dad bought a new car*", "*We also included the information that the holiday year starts on January 1st*".

Concerning the conjunction errors, the students got confused when making sentences because they used two conjunctions, one is enough to join two clauses in English. Similarly, a recent study (Hafiz et al., 2018) highlights that conjunction is a word used to hold other words, phrases, and clauses together. In certain languages, conjunctions are indeclinable words used in a sentence to connect the different parts of speech. Due to the influence of this, the use of conjunctions in English is not correct. This error is demonstrated in the following case: "*Because he was not ready therefore we left without him*", the conjunction "*because*" is enough to join the two clauses. There is no need to use a second conjunction like *therefore* or *so*, here the correction: "Because he was not ready, we left without him"

Similar to the rest of the errors reviewed, in all the instruments applied, students think that when they received direct feedback, they improved their performance because all the information they needed to correct their errors is clearly explained and in a very explicit way. For all these reasons, they felt better receiving direct feedback than indirect.

Students' perceptions and preferences for feedback

As it has been stated in the previous section, feedback is a powerful tool because it provides helpful and valuable information to English high school learners in order to produce a satisfactory piece of writing. Therefore, feedback (direct and indirect) helps learners recognize what they do well and what they must do better or improve. It is also important for educators to get to know their students' progress in order to find the appropriate way to provide feedback and enhance the teaching-learning process. In this regard, Chandler (2003) argues that although direct feedback allows students to immediately internalize the appropriate form

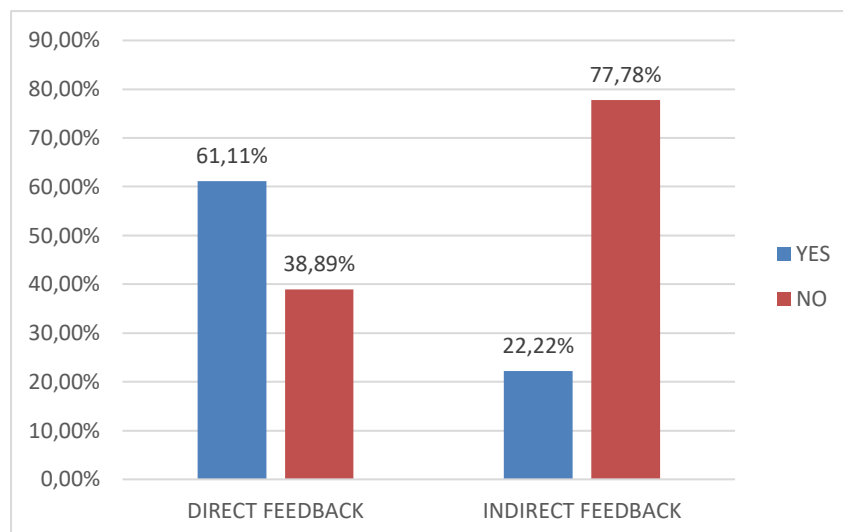
as provided by their instructor, learners whose errors are fixed implicitly do not realize if their own corrections are accurate. This delay in accessing the target form could level out the potential benefits of the additional cognitive effort associated with indirect feedback. That is why, the teacher did not think the same as the students because she really liked to make indirect corrections so that learners understand or realize the error by themselves and rewrite it in the correct way.

Furthermore, it was observed during the classes that students were very interested in learning how to correct their drafts because each correction was based on giving indirect feedback and in a general way, so that the students could understand their shortcomings. For instance, students wrote *"We gone to the beach and we have a lot of fun making figures with the sand"*; when this type of errors occurred, the teacher explained again the topic that the students were failing and gave some examples to make the content more understandable. In this case, the teacher reminded them the use of verbs in the past tense saying *"we must take into account the regular and irregular verbs in the past: eat-ate, travel-traveled, go-went, have-had, invite-invited, etc."*

However, some students did not understand the explanation of the teacher and they continued making the same mistakes. In the survey, it was also stated that students do prefer to receive individual feedback. They argue that they feel special when the feedback is addressed individually, either in written or oral form, since the comments are especially directed at their mistakes and so they can better understand what they should correct.

Figure 1

Do you prefer direct or indirect feedback after your writing activities?



Note. This is the information obtained from the students' survey.

Students' preferences in terms of the type of feedback are shown in *graph one*. Concerning direct feedback, the answers reflect that 61.11% of students do prefer direct feedback after their writing activities and 38.89% who do not. An opposing view was revealed about indirect feedback, 77.78% of the students say that they are not in favor of indirect feedback after their writing activities while 22.22% of pupils claimed that it was adequate.

Then, it can be stated that the vast majority of students prefer direct feedback when they receive correction of their writing activities. They expound that when they made mistakes or got confused with the subject matter, their teacher provided them explicit information about the correct linguistic form.

Otherwise, the teacher argues that she provided direct feedback so that all mistakes of the students' assignments were corrected. However, she explained that she did prefer to provide indirect feedback because it helped students to recognize the mistakes by themselves (using only clues), and it made them more responsible with their learning performance.

In order to support the teacher's response, Nematzadeh and Siahpoosh (2017) state that indirect feedback is based on cognitively challenging students in order to make them reflect upon the clues given by the teacher, who acts as a reflective agent who provides practical and relevant guidance to the cognitive abilities of students that have emerged from

their previous experience. Students can then relate these clues to the context where an error exists, determine the area of the error, and correct it on the basis of their informed knowledge. Furthermore, the commitment and attention of the students improve and allow them to solve problems perceived as beneficial for the improvement of their long-term learning.

As it has been noted, the teacher explained that she usually paid close attention to the way she gave feedback in order to avoid students' frustration and thus not interfere with their linguistic development. In relation to this, Harmer (2007) claims that when students get a written work covered in red ink, underlined, and crossed-out, most of them find it daunting to correct it. Over-correction can have a demotivating effect on students; that is why a balance must be struck between being accurate and truthful, on the one hand, and treating students with sensitivity and sympathy, on the other hand. Thus, the appropriate type of feedback is one way to avoid over-correction as a demotivating factor, and to improve the target skills.

Conclusions

Direct feedback has been the most efficient feedback used in order to correct and improve student's errors and their writings, due to the fact that it indicated the specific errors and the exact form to correct them. For this reason, direct feedback provided valuable information that helps English high school students to make important decisions on their final written works.

Correspondingly, English high school learners preferred direct feedback because the teacher corrected their drafts giving a clear explanation and precise comments of their exact errors. Both teachers and English high school students stated their great acceptance towards direct feedback since it constituted an important improvement during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, direct feedback produced better results and improved students' final written assignments substantially.

Considering a more-in-depth analysis, omission is one of the most common morphological errors that English high school learners committed in their written compositions since learners deviated from accepted norms of standard written English and violated the target language rules. In other words, learners lacked morphological knowledge that is assumed to appear in their sentences but learners delete it. Direct feedback helped students to identify and correct this morphological error appropriately in order to avoid making it again.

Lexical is one of the most common semantic errors found in the learners' written works since English high school learners violated the rules of meaning of a natural language. In fact, English high school students committed semantic errors since they were writing a valid grammar structure with invalid logic. For this reason, direct feedback promoted students to prevent these semantic errors in their final works.

In terms of syntactic errors, the major errors were related to prepositions and conjunctions because English high school learners used incorrect grammar in their written compositions that did not follow the rules of the language. Based on the results, it was found that direct correction enabled students to make fewer syntactic errors with greater accuracy

in a new piece of writing than the improvement students had in terms of morphological and semantic errors.

Recommendations

Teachers should emphasize on using direct feedback to correct writing errors to English high school students. Direct feedback should be developed between teacher and students focusing on the errors; therefore, teachers must organize the time to provide direct feedback to each student and prepare their comments to be clear with the suggestions since this feedback reduces errors caused by miscommunication. For this reason, educators should avoid using indirect feedback since it only indicates errors but not the way to improve them.

Teachers should increase the amount of writing drafts and final works for English high school learners in the classroom as often as possible. These assignments must be focused on one major aspect of writing which is syntactic errors so that English high school learners can practice more the grammar and thus commit fewer syntactic errors each time in writing. Moreover, teachers should use direct feedback to check and correct all assignments such as homework, pair works, group works, and extra works related to writing.

It is highly recommended that private language institutes plan lectures, workshops and courses for teachers about the importance of providing feedback since this can help to improve the teaching-learning process of English.

It would be essential that teachers provide clear explanations and examples focusing on morphological errors especially on omission in order to explain the correct way to use morphology and elaborate good paragraphs; in this way, learners have the opportunity to commit fewer errors in their final works. Moreover, teachers should share short videos about how to avoid morphological errors.

Teachers should organize a specific schedule for each student in order to provide direct feedback focus on semantic errors especially on lexical ones; in this way, learners have a clear idea about their semantic errors. In addition, teachers should ask EFL learners to elaborate at least three paragraphs per week in order to practice their writing skills.

It is advisable that teachers assign extra time in each English class to focus only on correcting the syntactic errors such as prepositions and conjunctions. In this way, English high school students know about the importance of syntactic errors in order to avoid them during

their writing tasks since writing is also a skill that students must master completely. In one way or another, these extra hours can also help to encourage students to think in their target language rather than mother tongue when writing.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Handwriting activities.



UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL
TITULACION INGLES

WRITTEN WORK #1

Objective:

- To collect relevant information about how feedback improves students' writing.

Instruction:

- Write a paragraph about the topic: "My last vacation" (Draft).

Strategies:

- This paragraph must contain the three main important parts (topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence).
- Include information such as: location, food, types of activities to do, reasons why you like this place, and the main characteristics of this last experience.

"My last vacations"

Appendix 2: Format of the teacher's surveys.



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
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ÁREA SOCIOHUMANÍSTICA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

Teacher's survey

The purpose of this survey is to obtain specific information on how teachers' classes are managed by providing direct or indirect feedback.

Gender: Male (____) Female (____)
 Age: _____
 English level of your students: _____
 Educational institution: _____

Answer the following questions, please.

Nº	Questions	Ye s	No
1	Do you think that giving feedback in EFL classrooms is important?		
2	Do you give general feedback at the end of the class?		
3	Do you provide immediate feedback as soon as students make mistakes?		
4	Do you provide appropriate comments and encourage students to do their best?		
5	Do you reformulate a statement when students make mistakes?		
6	Do you provide metalinguistic cue feedback through comments, questions or by giving additional information?		
7	Do you let students correct their mistakes by themselves?		
8	Do you provide students with more feedback when they do a writing activity?		
9	Do you use direct feedback to correct writing?		
10	Do you use indirect feedback to correct writing?		
11	In writing activities do you give general feedback to the entire group of students?		
12	In writing activities do you provide individual feedback for each student?		
13	Do you allow students to correct their mistakes on their own?		
14	Do you prefer to give direct feedback in writing activities?		
15	In your opinion do the students improve their writing skill because of direct feedback?		
16	Do you prefer indirect feedback to correct writing activities?		
17	In your opinion do students improve their writing skill because of indirect feedback?		

18	Direct feedback avoid students' morphological errors?		
19	Direct feedback avoid students' semantic errors?		
20	Direct feedback avoid students' syntactic errors?		
21	Indirect feedback avoid students' morphological errors?		
22	Indirect feedback avoid students' semantic errors?		
23	Indirect feedback avoid students' syntactic errors?		

Types of feedback		D i r e c t	I n d i r e c t
24.	What type of feedback do you use most commonly in English classes?		
25.	What type of feedback do you think is appropriate to use in English classes?		

Thanks for your collaboration!

Appendix 3: Format of the students' surveys.



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
ÁREA SOCIOHUMANÍSTICA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

Students' survey

The purpose of this survey is to obtain specific information on how students receive feedback in English classes and to notice what is the most useful feedback direct or indirect.

Gender: Male (____) Female (____)
 Age: _____
 English level: _____
 Educational institution: _____

Answer the following questions, please.

Nº	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you think it is important to provide feedback in the class?		
2	Does the teacher provide appropriate feedback and encourage students to improve?		
3	Do you think it is appropriate to receive feedback at the end of the class and thus not be interrupted while developing your English language skills?		
4	When you make mistakes, is it important to receive feedback immediately?		
5	Does the teacher emphasize feedback more in writing?		
6	Does the teacher provide feedback through comments, questions or information?		
7	Are you comfortable receiving individual feedback from your teacher?		
8	In your writing work are you comfortable receiving general feedback to the entire group of students from your teacher?		
9	In writing activities does the teacher provide individual feedback for each student?		
10	Does the teacher allow students to correct their mistakes on their own?		
11	Do you prefer direct feedback after your writing activities?		
12	In your opinion do you improve your writing skill because of direct feedback?		
13	Do you prefer indirect feedback?		
14	In your opinion do you improve your writing skill because of indirect feedback?		
15	Direct feedback avoid your errors using adjectives, verbs, adverbs and prepositions in a sentence?		

16	Direct feedback avoid your errors with collocations and lexical grammar in a sentence?		
17	Direct feedback avoid your errors using the correct subject and complement in a sentence?		
18	Indirect feedback avoid your errors using adjectives, verbs, adverbs and prepositions in a sentence?		
19	Indirect feedback avoid your errors with collocations and lexical grammar in a sentence?		
20	Indirect feedback avoid your errors using adjectives, verbs, adverbs and prepositions in a sentence?		

	Direct	Indirect
Types of feedback		
21. What kind of feedback does the teacher use to correct student mistakes?		
22. What kind of feedback would you like the teacher to use in case of causing writing mistakes?		

;Thank you for your collaboration!

Appendix 4: Observation sheet.



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
ÁREA SOCIOHUMANÍSTICA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS
Observation sheet # _____

Institution: _____ **Date:** _____

Teacher: _____ **Class:** _____

Observer: Ximena Alejandra Saca Remache.

Nº	Questions	Answer		Notes
		Yes	No	
1	Teacher provides immediate feedback as soon as students make a mistake.			
2	Teacher and students consider that giving feedback in EFL classrooms is important.			
3	Teacher gives general feedback at the end of the class.			
4	Teacher asks more for writing activities.			
5	Teacher provides appropriate comments and encourage students to do their writing activities.			
6	Teacher lets students correct their mistakes by themselves.			
7	Teacher provides individual feedback for each student.			
8	Teacher asks students to work on peer-feedback after do their activity.			
9	Teacher uses appropriate words when correcting students.			
10	Teacher provides elicitation feedback to students by repeating words or short phrases			
11	Teacher reformulates a statement when students make mistakes.			
12	Teacher corrects students by non-verbal feedback?			
13	Teacher provides feedback through underline, circle or cross directions on their papers.			
14	Teacher provides metalinguistic cue feedback through comments, questions or by giving additional information?			
15	Teacher provides students with more feedback when they do a writing activity.			
16	Teacher provides students with more feedback when they do commit morphological errors.			
17	Teacher provides students with more feedback when they commit semantic errors.			

18	Teacher provides students with more feedback when they commit syntactic errors.			
19	Students feel motivated when teacher corrects their writing mistakes.			
20	Students feel disappointed when teacher corrects their writing mistakes.			
21	Students react positively because they read or listen carefully to teacher's feedback.			
22	Students feel comfortable when they receive peer-feedback.			
23	Students prefer to receive feedback at the end of the lesson and not be interrupted.			
24	Students prefer to receive immediate feedback as soon as they make a mistake.			

Types of feedback	D i r e c t	I n d i r e c t
25. What type of feedback teacher uses most commonly in English classes.		
26. What type of feedback students prefer the teacher uses to correct a mistake.		

Elaboration: Ximena Alejandra Saca Remache.

Observations:
