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MENCIÓN EN INGLÉS**

**The role of peer correction and teacher feedback in the  
improvement of writing skills in high school students**

Trabajo de integración curricular previo a la obtención del título de:

**LICENCIADA EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN CON  
MENCIÓN EN INGLÉS**

**Autora:** Villagómez Capelo, Daniela Cristina

**Directora:** Solano Jaramillo, Lida Mercedes

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2023

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Loja, 24 de enero de 2023

Magíster

Vanessa del Rocío Toro López

**Directora de la Carrera de Ciencias de la Educación, Mención Inglés**

Loja. -

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Atentamente,

Director: Lida Mercedes Solano Jaramillo Mgtr.

C.I.: 1104417728

Correo electrónico: [msolano@utpl.edu.ec](mailto:msolano@utpl.edu.ec)

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Autor: Daniela Cristina Villagómez Capelo

C.I.: 1718643446

Correo electrónico: [dcvillagomez5@gmail.com](mailto:dcvillagomez5@gmail.com)

### **Dedication**

I dedicate this research work to my parents, who instilled in me the importance of morality, to my children and niece, for whom I hope to set an example. In honor of those who, while not present physically, are always in my heart. Last but not least, I want to thank to that amazing human being who has always been with me from the beginning and with whom I share this achievement.

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### **Abstract**

This study is about the role of peer correction and teacher feedback in the improvement of writing skills in high school students. The main purpose was to determine the differences between teacher and peer feedback and their effectiveness in the correction of semantic, syntactic, and morphological errors in EFL learners' writing skills. It also sought to note the students' perceptions of both types of feedback. The sample consisted of 28 students in the second year of high school, from a private educational institution in Pichincha, Ecuador. During this research, a mixed method was used and the instruments employed to collect the data were a pre-test, three student paragraphs for teacher feedback, three student paragraphs for peer correction, a post-test, a students' survey, a rubric, and a checklist. Concerning the results, it was discovered that both types of feedback are effective in different linguistic aspects; however, teacher feedback is more successful than peer feedback. Additionally, students have positive perspectives toward both types of feedback, but they prefer teacher feedback because they consider it the clearest and most detailed.

**Keywords:** peer correction, teacher feedback, writing skills.

## Resumen

Este estudio trata sobre el papel de la corrección entre compañeros y del docente en la mejora de las habilidades de escritura de estudiantes de bachillerato. El propósito principal fue determinar las diferencias entre ambos tipos de retroalimentación y su efectividad en la corrección de errores semánticos, sintácticos y morfológicos. También investigó las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre ambos tipos de retroalimentación. La muestra constó de 28 estudiantes de segundo de bachillerato de una institución educativa privada en Pichincha, Ecuador. Durante esta investigación se utilizó un método mixto y los instrumentos empleados para recolectar los datos fueron un pretest, tres párrafos para retroalimentación del docente y tres para corrección entre compañeros, un postest, una encuesta, una rúbrica, y una lista de verificación. En cuanto a los resultados, se descubrió que ambos tipos de retroalimentación son efectivos en diferentes aspectos lingüísticos; sin embargo, la retroalimentación del docente es más exitosa que la de los compañeros. Además, los estudiantes tienen perspectivas positivas hacia ambos tipos de retroalimentación, pero prefieren la retroalimentación del docente porque la consideran más clara y detallada.

**Palabras clave:** corrección entre compañeros, retroalimentación del docente, habilidades de escritura.

## Introduction

Currently, in our country as well as in many other parts of the world where English is learned as a foreign language, writing skill is considered the most challenging and it is also the skill where EFL students present the lowest level of proficiency. For this reason, the necessity of finding the best strategies to improve this skill has been identified. Therefore, through the topic: "The role of peer correction and teacher's feedback in the improvement of writing skills in high school students", it has been proposed to analyze the effectiveness of written teacher feedback and peer correction in the improvement of the EFL students' written skills and the reduction of their written errors. In order to achieve this purpose, two research questions have been raised, the first one is: Which are the effects of peer and teacher feedback on the correction of the morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors? And the second question is: Which type of feedback, peer correction or teacher feedback do EFL students prefer for writing?

Other researchers have raised similar objectives, therefore in order to compare and support the findings of this research work some previous studies have been analyzed such as the one conducted by Bonsu (2021), who examine the impact of written comments on EFL high school students writing skills. Concerning the results, it was demonstrated that the learners had positive perceptions towards written feedback since the comments provided by the educator did contribute to the enhancement of their writing performance. It was also determined that the teacher feedback positively impacted the learners' writing skills.

Another study was performed by Razali and Jupri (2014), which sought to examine the effects of written teacher feedback on EFL students' writing skills. More specifically the study focused on finding out which type of feedback (suggestion, criticism, and praise) encourages student revisions. The authors concluded that all types of feedback encourage student revisions. Additionally, they discovered that the type that encouraged more successful revisions was criticism. Finally, they revealed that the learners have a positive attitude towards teacher written feedback.

The following study was conducted by Robles and Torres (2020) and the purpose was to explore EFL teacher perceptions, practices, and difficulties when carrying out written peer correction activities. The findings revealed that the educators have positive attitudes toward the application of WPC, yet they also affirmed they do face a series of challenges when carrying out these activities. Moreover, it was also discovered that the variable of training impacted the difficulties they faced during peer correction.

This study includes three main chapters; the first one is the literature review, which includes relevant scientific information related to the topic of the present investigation. The contents detailed in the literature review were obtained from reliable and current sources such as book chapters, and articles from scientific journals. The next chapter labeled Method contains information about the setting and participants of this study. In addition, this section includes the description of the steps carried out during the present research work from beginning to end. Finally, the third and last chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of the results, it also includes six conclusions and their corresponding recommendations.

## **Chapter One:**

### **Literature Review**

The present chapter includes relevant information about the development of EFL students' writing skills. The contents covered in this section, writing in the EFL contexts, its importance, challenges, and the most common written errors made by EFL learners. In addition, this part also includes the topic of written corrective feedback, its effectiveness as well as teacher feedback and peer correction. Moreover, at the end of this section six previous studies are described in detail. This chapter provides useful information that serves to support or contrast the findings obtained in this study.

#### **Writing in the EFL context**

Regarding writing in the EFL context, Talosa and Maguddayao (2018) argue that learning how to write in English has become indispensable all around the world since it allows people to communicate by written words in the most understandable way. Likewise, one of the most important skills in foreign language learning is writing, which involves correctly expressing ideas and thoughts in written form. Writing is important because it helps students overcome new language barriers, whether they are beginners or advanced learners (Farr, 2014).

According to Martínez et al. (2020), in the EFL context, writing skills are considered the most complex among EFL learners, however, they are fundamental to being able to convey a written message successfully. Therefore, these authors affirm that mastering writing brings several benefits for the EFL learner such as the learning of new vocabulary and the development of cognitive abilities.

Moreover, as stated by Jamoom (2021) researchers curriculum designers, and teachers within the EFL context have realized that due to the importance of EFL writing and because it represents a great challenge for EFL learners, it is fundamental to develop different strategies to improve students writing skills.

### **The importance of writing in the EFL students**

Besides, people more often attempt to be productive and prepared, and one of these goals is to learn new languages to speak and write it perfectly, although, most of them do not consider or pay attention to writing, probably due to they think it is not useful for learning or having a conversation (Norbutayeva & Abdurakhmonova, 2022).

In the same way, Ekmekci (2017) asserts that developing writing skills is essential to master a language. Similarly, Bhowmik (2021) affirms that it is important that EFL learners learn how to write because this will provide them with better opportunities in their academic and professional lives. Moreover, Shafiee et al. (2020) assert that enhancing writing skills is beneficial to the students who are able to learn more about the target language structures and grammar rules. Thus, it is key that all students, no matter their English level, focus on their writing skills to be able to express themselves clearly in the target language (Defazio et al., 2010).

Through writing, EFL students can develop their creative inspiration and problem-solving skills. According to Alharbi and Sultan (2017), the development of writing skills is not only an academic ability, but is also an important aspect in any professional field, such as medical reports, financial reports, instructional sheets, user manuals, and all the different kinds of business or economic activities. Thus, writing furnishes us with basic skills which are helpful for many activities.

### **Challenges in the EFL context**

Considering that a native language has difficulties related to learning, acquiring a new language has some challenges, as well as everything about writing, which begins with not being able to write words properly, detecting with this, some causes whereby EFL students cannot advance their writing skills. According to Ahmed (2019), students' challenges in writing include incorrect use of grammar, native-language instruction, restricted vocabulary, punctuation scripts, and word order. Thus, the EFL writing challenge is about how to help students to understand disciplines and discern knowledge that involves structures, purposes, and assignment flairs, among others. But mainly, the real challenge is

for educational institutions to analyze their discipline expectations and the performance of "academic discourse" as part of the curriculum subjects from the first year in all the teaching models in order for the EFL students to have a knowledge construction discipline (Chanock, 2006).

### **The most common and frequent written errors: morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors**

As reported by Khatter (2019), when learning to write both in the first and foreign languages, it is expected and inevitable to make errors. This author adds that written errors can be considered beneficial since they allow the teachers to identify the areas where their students present more difficulty.

In the same way, Nguyen et al. (2021) state that the reason why EFL learners consider writing as the most challenging skill is that when they started to learn it, they made a large number of written errors. Even though these errors are natural and necessary, sometimes they tend to demotivate students, who later feel even neglected to practice this skill. The authors further affirm that the written errors committed by the EFL learners can be grouped according to the areas they belong i.e. morphological, semantic, or syntactic errors.

First of all, it is important to mention that morphology is related to word structure in terms of how they are shaped. Therefore, a morphological error is committed when words and their structures become altered or misused (Jhonson, 2020). Morphological errors include, among other things, inflection, derivation, preposition, and article (Gayo and Widodo, 2018). Thus, a morphological error occurs when words are poorly structured, formed, and in the wrong place at the wrong time, "*There are five womens*" The word "women" is already plural, but someone has added a needless plural suffix. Some morphological errors are caused by phonological errors, which occur when people make and use the wrong sounds because it is written just like it sounds.

Regarding semantic errors, according to Sanders (2016), semantics refers to words and phrases with exact and coherent meanings in order not to confuse the readers, so the function of semantics is to make sense between words and sentences, exploring their

meanings and writing correctly. Thus, a semantic error is a mistaken idea that produces a wrong result. It occurs when the syntax is correct, but the semantics or meaning is not what was expected. It could be due to some language rules are not followed, so for this reason, the performer does not detect semantic errors.

Additionally, Rezai and Davarpanah (2019), elucidate that these errors are produced when learners do not deliver a message correctly, that is, they use incorrect words or expressions which does not allow them to achieve effective written communication. Among the causes of semantic errors, the aforementioned authors mention that literal translation from the students' L1 is the main source of these errors.

Moreover, semantic errors are considered a deviation from the target language's semantic rules. For example, "My refrigerator just drove a car to Chicago." In this case, a reader could think that this is an insane idea, but it is syntactically correct. Also, it is something common in EFL students that they use translators or grammar correctors, which do not detect the sense of sentences or paragraphs, just the grammar, thus, semantic errors are more difficult to detect and correct than syntactic errors. The reader who finds and realizes of the mistakes made, usually detects the semantic error first (Sanders, 2016).

The last type of written error commonly made by EFL learners is the syntactic one. As stated by Atwood (2021), syntax refers to the readers' and writers' following a set of rules to give sense to their sentences or ideas, and over it, create rhetorical or literary belongings. The author affirms that in English syntax, there are around 4 basic rules. The first one says that in order to express a complete idea, the sentence needs a subject and a verb; the next rule declares that in order to write separate ideas, separate sentences are needed; the third rule is that if you join some clauses incorrectly, the sentence becomes a run-out sentence; and finally, usually, for other languages like Spanish and French, the order of the words follows the same structure, subject+verb+object. Hence, it can be concluded that syntax allows us to structure sentences correctly in order for them to be easy to understand by others readers.

Similarly, Akorbi (2021) clarifies that syntax refers to how we organize words in order to create units such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. According to this author, it is essential to structure coherent ideas when writing in another language. For native speakers, the syntax is learned naturally, but for people who are learning a new language, syntactic errors are the most difficult to identify and fix. Even minor syntactic errors can change the meaning of a sentence or phrase. Thus, among the most common syntactic errors are the inappropriate use of punctuation that can change the meaning immediately; the use of some parts from other sentences to structure new sentences; the application of the wrong modifiers that will change the phrase and confuse the reader (Akorbi, 2021).

### **Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) on EFL learners**

Corrective feedback is information provided to an individual or group about their actions, styles, strategies, or behavior in some specific task, in the case of EFL students, and how it is perceived and affected by others. Hence, corrective feedback is defined as the communication between educators and students through which they are interested in improving their learning. The instructor gives an intervention over the students' statements, which probably contain or present some errors (Guinness et al., 2020).

In the same way, Lee et al. (2021) states that WCF is an effective tool where the EFL instructor corrects the students' written errors and provides useful information and explanations so that the learners are able to improve their English writing accuracy. Additionally, Goldouz and Baleghizadeh (2021) highlight that an essential point that must be considered before carrying out WCF in order for it to be efficient is that it has to be adapted to the EFL learners' necessities, that is, the feedback has to be appropriate for their level, age, learning style, and preferences.

Moreover, WCF can be delivered in two ways: direct feedback which refers to an overt correction of students' written work by the teacher, and indirect feedback which refers to the incitement of students to identify and reflect on their own errors (Slideserve, 2014). Likewise, Chen et al. (2016) also mention that the most commonly used types of feedback

are direct and indirect feedback. Nevertheless, they emphasize that it has been proven that EFL learners prefer direct feedback since this one is easier to understand.

### **The importance of effective feedback**

According to Irwin (2017), in the last 25 years, teacher feedback has been considered one of the best teaching processes considering the time and effort to prepare and evaluate lesson plans, which are based on the rubric and future corrections according to the established topics. This feedback in the writing of EFL students is considered direct and indirect, with words, comments, advice, and suggestions that influence EFL students in order to change and improve their written compositions. Furthermore, students chose to be corrected by their teachers directly due to the teacher's pedagogical abilities to indulge the student's expectations. Most students feel pleased with feedback because it really improves their writing skills.

Effective feedback is essential in the learning process since it provides additional useful information to students about their written errors so that they can understand and correct them. WCF should be provided as soon as possible and there are a variety of ways of providing it, e.g., teacher feedback, peer feedback, and self-evaluation. Talking about peer feedback, it is considered beneficial for students because they will provide feedback to their own classmates. If the teacher trains and shares with students the correct information, in order to achieve effective peer feedback, they will learn from their classmates' errors and improve their own writing skills (Guinness et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, providing written feedback has become a controversial topic due to the poor agreement on how to correct someone that committed an error. Effective feedback is necessary and indispensable, and it is essential that feedback be a positive or at least a neutral experience for students; thus, teachers have the responsibility to provide the appropriate feedback in order to have students finish the class feeling yielding. Consequently, the success of feedback is based on the coherence of teachers and how they deal with students' mistakes. As mentioned by Wahlström (2014), another important aspect of effective feedback is the influence of motivation to receive and use feedback. For EFL

students, motivation is an effective feature, as teachers must take it into consideration to give and use feedback. The students' proficiency level influences their feedback; for example, most students with higher proficiency may express a slightly negative attitude due to many factors considered to be part of their profile, in contrast to other students who are more receptive and show more interest in and positive attitudes toward feedback.

### **Written Peer correction**

According to Ramírez and Guillén (2018), peer correction is a classroom experience where students increase their perception of their own errors by correcting their peers' written errors. In addition, Sultana, (2009) explains that this type of feedback consists of students giving and receiving feedback about their writing from their classmates.

Written peer correction has been an effective way to involve students actively in the teaching-learning process. It has been shown that peer correction presents many ways to improve students' writing. As a result, this correction process has improved the students' autonomy, cooperation, interaction, and development (Ramírez & Guillén, 2018).

Moreover, peer correction results in students being less intimidated by their teacher due to the fact that being corrected by their own friends evokes less anxiety in them. Through peer correction, the class ambiance becomes more friendly and encouraging for students (Sultana, 2009). According to Ramírez and Guillén (2018), this process makes students responsible for their learning and more independent of the teacher.

Peer correction could result in students feeling unwilling because the fact of correcting their classmates' written tasks could provoke distressing friendship feelings. After a student receives peer correction, he/she could feel inferior to their classmates. Some students feel shy about presenting their tasks to other students because they do not want others to know about their errors (Sultana, 2009).

Another disadvantage of this type of feedback, in the words of Perdani (2020) is that students require previous training on how to carry out WPC which may be time-consuming. If learners are not well prepared to perform peer feedback they will not be able to detect all the

written errors and provide suggestions on their classmates' texts and therefore, the strategy will not bring positive results in the improvement of their writing skills.

### **Written Teacher feedback**

Teacher feedback is a pedagogical tool that guides, reflexes, and promotes teacher-student interaction (Carvalho et al., 2014). This feedback has generally positive effects, on which most educational scholars rely; it is critical to learning outcomes and motivates students to meet their learning objectives (Carvalho et al., 2014). Teachers play an important role in feedback, their responses advice and comments can be both planned or spontaneous (Gan et al., 2021).

According to Irwin (2017), students consider the teachers' corrections and advice really important. This author further asserts that there is a significant effect in the reduction of written errors, and the largest number of students prefer teacher feedback because they feel that they are really improving their writing skills. Likewise, Huang (2009) affirms that teacher feedback is a fundamental strategy since it helps learners to reduce their written errors thus enhancing their English writing accuracy. This author adds that when providing written feedback, the teacher allows the pupils to identify their difficulties or weaknesses in writing.

Regarding the disadvantages of teacher feedback, Susanti (2017) claims that sometimes EFL teachers are not well trained to provide it since it is a requirement that their comments and explanation adapt to their students' proficiency level. If learners do not receive comprehensible comments the feedback will be ineffective. Additionally, the author mentioned above also points out another disadvantage which is that carrying out teacher feedback through individualized comments on their students' writing tasks can be a time-consuming activity and add too much to their workload.

Next, some previous studies have been gathered and they will be described below with the purpose of obtaining relevant information to contrast or support the findings of the present study.

First, the study conducted by Huisman et al. (2018) whose main objective was the direct comparison between providing and receiving peer feedback on the EFL learners' writing performance, also aimed to know the perceptions of the students were connected to the type of peer feedback they received and to their writing skills. This study employed a mixed method, and the sample was 83 EFL learners who either provided or received anonymous WPC in authentic academic writing activities. The research instruments applied were students' essays, language learning platforms, and questionnaires. The findings showed that both actions (providing and receiving feedback) resulted in similar improvement in the learners' writing skills. It was also found that they had a positive perception of both, however, this did not have a relation to the improvement of the student's writing performance.

The second previous study was carried out by Bonsu (2021) with the purpose of examining the impact of written comments on EFL high school students writing skills. The population was 350 high school students. Regarding the research method, it was descriptive in order to analyze the data obtained from the main instrument which was a questionnaire. Concerning the results, it was demonstrated that the learners had positive perceptions towards written feedback since the comments provided by the educator did contribute to the enhancement of their writing performance. It was also determined that the teacher feedback positively impacted the learners' writing skills.

Another research study was performed by Razali and Jupri (2014), which sought to examine the effects of written teacher feedback on EFL students' writing skills. More specifically the study focused on finding out which type of feedback (suggestion, criticism, and praise) encourages student revisions. The sample consisted of 28 college students attending a basic English course. The method employed during this study was a mixed approach, that is both quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed through the instruments which were the students' writing assignments and questionnaires. The authors concluded that all types of feedback encourage student revisions. Additionally, they

discovered that the type that encouraged more successful revisions was criticism. Finally, they revealed that the learners have a positive attitude towards teacher written feedback.

The following study was conducted by Robles and Torres (2020) in the Philippines, and the purpose was to explore EFL teacher perceptions, practices, and difficulties when carrying out written peer correction activities. The participants of the study were 55 EFL teachers from 21 different high schools. The method applied during this research was a mixed approach. In addition, seven variables of the teachers were considered: gender, age, experience, educational level, specialization, number of teaching pedagogical periods, number of training courses as well as their perception, practices, and difficulties when applying peer correction in their lessons. The findings revealed that the educators have positive attitudes toward the application of WPC, yet they also affirmed they do face a series of challenges when carrying out these activities. Finally, it was also discovered that the variable of training impacted the difficulties they faced during peer correction.

Another previous study is the one developed by Ziad and Bouziane (2020) who proposed to explore the impact of teacher feedback and peer correction on the narrative writing skills of EFL learners from different levels. The sample consisted of two English lecturers and six university students in a writing course with different EFL writing proficiency levels. During the research, the learners had to write narrative essays that were corrected by way of a checklist through teacher feedback and peer review. After the intervention, the students showed their perceptions of the different types of written feedback through a think-aloud protocol. Concerning the findings, the authors concluded that the effectiveness of peer review depends on the student level. They also deduced that the more salient the teacher feedback the more effective it is. In addition, from the think-aloud protocol, the authors determined that students with low levels tend to lack trust in their peers' corrections.

Finally, the sixth research was carried out by Yunus (2020) aiming to explore the EFL teacher practices of written corrective feedback as well as the expectations of the students and compare them in order to know if they are aligned. The participants of the study were 64 senior students from three different classes, 37 of them were females and 27 were males.

The research approach used during this research was a mixed, qualitative, and quantitative method. The research instruments employed were questionnaires for students and teachers. The results revealed that educators and students are aware of the benefits of WCF and affirm that it does help to enhance learners' writing skills. Moreover, students prefer direct feedback because they find it the most comprehensible type. The authors finally suggest that the learners' expectations are not aligned with the feedback they actually receive from their teacher.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Method**

#### **Setting and Participants**

The present study was carried out in a private educational institution located in Conocoto parish in Quito, Pichincha, Ecuador. This institution has all education levels from preschool to the third year of high school. Regarding the participants, they were 28 students in the second year of high school whose ages ranged from 15 to 16 years old. The students receive English classes every day for one pedagogical hour, which is 40 minutes approximately.

#### **Procedure**

In order to carry out this study and achieve its main purpose, it was necessary to follow some steps. The first one was to obtain relevant information regarding the topic to build up the literature review. This information can be found in this study and it includes fundamental topics about the development of EFL students' writing skills which serve to support this investigation. All the contents displayed in this part were taken from scientific journal articles and books.

To carry out the intervention, the mixed method that holds both qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. Therefore, the following step was the data collection that consisted on applying teacher and peer feedback to the EFL students. The main instruments used were a pre-test, three student paragraphs for teacher feedback, three student paragraphs for peer correction, a post-test, a students' survey, a rubric, and a checklist. The intervention started with a short introduction to the students about the activities that were going to be held during 8 pedagogical hours of class.

During each intervention, students had to complete a pre-test, which consisted in writing a paragraph using between 120-150 words about different topics. The process started with the pre-test that had the topic "My future plans", students had to write

spontaneously and then they would be corrected based on the rubric by identifying the most common errors in writing; morphology, semantics, and syntax, explained previously.

For the next 6 classes, students had to write more paragraphs using the same number of words, but with different topics; they wrote a paragraph per class, which could be as homework or classwork. The topics for paragraphs that corresponded to the teacher feedback were the following “Healthy lifestyle”, “Weather in my country” and “My favorite movie”, then, the topics for peer correction were “Rules at home and school”, “Email to a friend” and “My last vacation”. Those paragraphs were applied interspersed per day.

Before doing the teacher’s feedback, paragraphs were corrected over 10 points according to the rubric which contained the following aspects: number of words used in context with the paragraph, number of grammar errors in the sentences, word formation, appropriate capitalization, and punctuation, among others. The scores were registered in a spreadsheet including the type of error or mistake made by each student. For peer correction, students just used the computers to correct their classmates and this information was collected on the checklist.

After finishing with the teacher and peer feedback activities, a post-test, with a similar topic as the pre-test, was applied in order to analyze the student's performance after the feedback and correction exposed during the previous classes. Additionally, a survey was applied to students with the purpose of knowing their perception of the written project, in which, students were invited to select if they agree, feel neutral, or disagree with the 12 parameters about the use of teacher and peer correction feedback.

The next step was the tabulation of the results, the data were organized into three tables and these results were described and analyzed. Table 1 analyzes the pre and post-tests results to obtain the average and variance between both of them. Table 2 shows the analysis of the semantics, syntax, and morphological error results of teacher feedback and peer correction respectively based on the score register and the checklist. Table 3 shows the percentages of the students' responses based on the applied survey. Finally, with the

information collected and the results obtained, conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

## Chapter Three

### Analysis and Discussion

This chapter contains the analysis of the results obtained from the application of the instruments. This analysis seeks to find answers to the research questions proposed at the beginning of this study. Therefore, during this section, the effects of teacher and peer correction are discussed. Finally, through the data taken from the survey applied at the end of the intervention, the students' perceptions are analyzed.

***Which are the effects of peer and teacher feedback on the correction of the morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors?***

**Table 1.**

*Pre and post-test results.*

Pre-test	Post-test	Variance
6.82	8.21	0.97

Note: Average scores Results of the pre and post-test average score and variance.

Table 1 shows the results of the pre and post-tests. In the initial activity "pre-test" the average score was 6.82 and for the final activity "post-test" the average score significantly increased to 8.21; hence, the variance obtained was 0.97. According to Bhandari (2020) variance is the variability and spread of a data set, and the greater the distance between them, the larger the variance will be as well.

In this table, the variance shows the improvement between the first sample "pre-test" and the last "post-test", noticing that the feedback given during the interventions helped students in their paragraph constructions.

Based on the pre-test results, only 14.28% of students received a grade of less than 5 out of 10, indicating an intermediate English level. Some students presented problems organizing ideas, vocabulary, and grammar rules. On the other hand, a small part of them could not accomplish the task, the principal difficulty for them was little knowledge on

paragraph structure, the number of words, their concentration, vocabulary, and grammar skills.

In order to analyze the errors, considering semantics, morphology, and syntax, each of the paragraphs was taken into account. The results showed that the average number of these errors was 3 points for semantics, 2 for morphology, and 2 for syntax. Clearly, for the pre-test the most common error students commit was related to the semantic aspect. Regarding the post-test part, the errors were 1 for semantic, 1 for morphological, and 1 for syntactic.

By way of illustration, a great number of semantic errors were found during both teacher and peer correction such as the following collocation error: "It's important to **give a good impression**" here the student incorrectly used the verb "give" instead of the verb "make" since the correct collocation in English is "to make a good impression". Therefore, the correct written sentence should be "It's important to **make a good impression**".

Regarding the syntactic category, the students also made considerable errors of this type, for instance, a student wrote the following sentence "I went to a **park beautiful** with my family", in this case, the students made word order errors since the adjective "beautiful" was placed after the noun "park" which is incorrect in English. The correct way of writing the sentence is: "I went to a **beautiful park** with my family".

Lastly, some morphological errors were detected, for example, a student wrote "Last year I **change** to this high school" here an omission error can be observed in the verb "change" since the student is talking about the past therefore the verb should be in the past tense however the learner omitted the morpheme "-d". The correct sentence should be: "Last year I **changed** to this high school"

According to the data collected from the pre and post-tests, there is a significant improvement in the scores since students started this study with an average of 6.82 and finished it with 8.21, showing a significant improvement. This implies that applying teacher and peer feedback was a good correction strategy. This result was obtained due to the constant teacher's attention to feedback and monitoring of students during the activity.

Finally, students' participation in the writing of pre and post-tests was good, the class environment was respectable, students worked by following the teacher's instructions, they paid attention, made questions, and asked for help all the time.

**Table 2.**

*Teacher and Peer feedback results*

	Teacher's feedback		Peer's feedback	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Semantic</b>	65	44,83%	35	47,29%
<b>Syntactic</b>	44	30,34%	19	25,68%
<b>Morphological</b>	36	24,83%	20	27,03%

Note: The frequencies and percentages of the semantic, syntactic, and morphological errors identified when carrying out teacher and peer correction.

Table 2 shows the results of teacher and peer feedback. The percentages refer to the number of errors found in each type (semantics, syntactic and morphological). As it can be observed, in the semantic category, teacher feedback found 44.83% of errors with a frequency of 65, and peer feedback 47.29% of errors with a frequency of 35. Comparing the results of each category, they show that the teacher's feedback counted more than twice the number of errors as the peer feedback. The most common semantic errors were divided into two categories that are collocation errors and lexical choice errors.

During teacher feedback, some collocation errors were identified. First, the teacher found the following error: "I had to **do a great effort**" here the student wrote "do" instead of "make" since the correct English collocation is "make an effort". Therefore, the correct written sentence should be "I had to **make a great effort**". Similarly, when carrying out peer correction a student detected the following collocation error: "They didn't **put attention** to our teacher" in this case, the student incorrectly wrote "put attention" instead of "pay attention".

In the same way, during teacher feedback some lexical choice errors were identified such as "I'd like to **follow** a doctorate..." here the learner chose the wrong word "follow", thus, the correct sentence is: "I'd like to **study** a doctorate..." In addition, when performing

peer correction a student detected a lexical choice error in this sentence. “First, I **presented** myself...” here the student incorrectly used the word “presented” which is incorrect since in the context the student meant “introduced”. Therefore, the correct way of composing the sentence is: “First, I **introduced** myself...”.

As it can be evidenced the semantic errors made by the participants are mainly due to literal or direct translation from their first language or mother tongue which is Spanish. These errors are also due to a lack of vocabulary and collocation knowledge. In every language, there are some phrases that always go together and if they are altered the sentences make no sense that is why students must be aware of these phrases called collocations.

Moreover, learners are unaware of the existence of false friends which are words that seem to be similar in two languages but some of them have very different meanings. This is another reason why some learners make semantic errors. In line with these findings, Rezai and Davarpanah (2019) express that when learning to write in another language students tend to make a great number of semantic errors since they lack vocabulary and use words or expressions incorrectly. Likewise, these authors declare that the main source of these errors is the literal translation from students’ first language.

Concerning the syntactic category, teacher feedback got 30.34% of errors with a frequency of 44 times, and for peer feedback, 25.68% of errors were found and a frequency of 19 times. Comparing the results of each category, it showed that the teacher feedback counted more than twice the number of errors as the peer feedback. The errors found in this category was classified into word order and preposition errors.

For instance, during teacher feedback the following word order error was detected “I also was very happy...” here the student wrongly placed the word “also” before the verb “was” which is not correct since adverbs go after the verb to be hence the correct sentence should be: “I was **also** happy...”. Similarly, during peer correction, a student found a word order error in the following statement: “I had a **dog white**...” here the students noticed that the classmate incorrectly placed the adjective after the noun which is not the correct order

since in English the adjective goes before the noun. Therefore, the correct written sentence should be: “I had a **white dog**...”

The teacher also found preposition errors during teacher feedback such as the following: “I went to the beach **on** August”, in this example the student wrote the preposition “on” instead of the preposition “in” which is the one used with months. Hence, the correct sentence should be written as follows: “I went to the **beach in** August”. Likewise, another preposition error found during peer correction was the following: “I was **in** the bank” in this case, the student used the preposition “in” instead of the preposition “at” which is used to refer to places. Therefore the correct sentence should be: “I was **at** the bank”.

After analyzing syntactic errors, it can be deduced that these errors can be caused due to L1 interference, that is, they are mostly interlingual errors. However, they are also due to a lack of knowledge of the target language rules, since as it could be evidenced in the examples, the students were unsure which prepositions (in, on, at) they needed to use with months and locations. Therefore, it can be affirmed that these errors are also intralingual errors since they are due to a lack or misunderstanding of the target language rules. In agreement with these results, Akorbi (2021) claims that syntax is an essential aspect when learning to write in another language and it is common for EFL learners to present errors related to this aspect, especially in the first stages of the language learning process.

Finally, in the morphological category, teacher feedback obtained 24.83% of errors with a frequency of 36 times, and regarding peer feedback, it was found that 27.03% of errors and a frequency of 20 times. Comparing the results in the morphological aspect, it shows that the teacher feedback counted more than twice the number of errors as the peer correction. These errors were further divided into omission and misformation errors.

For example, during teacher feedback the following omission error was found: “My father **like** to go to play soccer” here the student omitted the inflectional “-s” that must be added to the verbs in the third person singular in the present tense. Thus, the right way of writing the sentence should be: “My father **likes** to go to play soccer”. On the other hand, during peer correction, the students were not able to find any omission errors.

Additionally, during teacher feedback the instructor also found some misinformation errors, for example, “I went to buy some **thigns...**” in this case the student made a misinformation error in the word “things” which is incorrectly written and the correct form is “things” therefore the sentence should be: “I went to buy some **things...**”. Similarly, during peer correction a student identified the following misinformation error in a classmate’s paragraph: “The place was **beutiful...**” here, the student incorrectly wrote “beutiful” instead of “beautiful”. Hence, the corrected sentence is: “The place was **beautiful...**”

To sum up, after analyzing the results from the teacher and peer feedback, a significant difference was identified, considering the objective of the activities, which is, to identify errors and give feedback in order for students to improve their writing skills. Teacher feedback showed a critical and objective correction based on teacher knowledge and experience, the feedback was provided together with correct class management, fostering respect and confidence. Furthermore, students paid attention and made questions solving their doubts just at the right moment.

On the contrary, the peer correction process could improve the students' autonomy, cooperation, interaction, and development (Ramírez & Guillén, 2018). In fact, peer feedback obtained fine results, but the correction process was done at a low level because some students corrected their classmates' errors according to their knowledge, while other students just counted the number of words, the paragraph structure, and ideas. The issue with peer feedback was that most students just reviewed their classmates' written paragraphs thinking about their friendship, and the other's feelings. For those reasons, in most peer feedback paragraphs, the identification of errors did not occur.

***Which type of feedback: Peer correction and teacher feedback do EFL students prefer for writing?***

**Table 3.**

*Students perception about teacher and peer feedback*

Nº	Questions	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
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<b>1</b>	I consider it is important to receive peer feedback in written assignments	88.46%	11.54%	0 %
<b>2</b>	I consider it is important to receive teacher's feedback in written assignments.	76.92%	23.08%	0 %
<b>3</b>	The feedback delivered by my peer helps me to improve my writing skills.	73.08%	26.92%	0 %
<b>4</b>	The feedback delivered by my teacher helps me to improve my writing skills.	80.77%	19.23%	0 %
<b>5</b>	My peer provides me with feedback through comments, questions or additional information.	57.69%	38.46 %	3.85%
<b>6</b>	The teacher provides feedback through comments, questions or additional information.	65.38%	34.62%	0%
<b>7</b>	The feedback delivered by my classmate is clear and easy to understand.	38.46%	46.15%	15.38%
<b>8</b>	The feedback delivered by the teacher is clear and easy to understand.	88.46%	11.54 %	0%
<b>9</b>	I feel comfortable to receive feedback from my peer	76.92%	23.08%	0%
<b>10</b>	I feel comfortable to receive feedback from my teacher.	73.08%	26.92%	0%
<b>11</b>	The feedback provided by my classmate has helped me to improve in...			
	Grammar use(Verb agreement, sentence construction, Capitalization and Punctuation)	61.54%	34.62%	3.85%
	Word formation (Spelling)	42.31%	53.85%	3.85%
	Vocabulary misuse	61.54%	34.62%	3.85%
<b>12</b>	The feedback provided by the teacher has helped me to improve in.....			
	Grammar use(Verb agreement, sentence construction, Capitalization and Punctuation)	76.92%	19.23%	3.85%
	Word formation (Spelling)	73.08%	19.23%	7.69%
	Vocabulary misuse	80.77%	15.38%	3.85%

Note: This table shows the results of the survey applied to the participants in order to know their perceptions of both teacher and peer feedback.

Table 3 shows the results obtained from the survey applied to students about their perception of both teacher and peer feedback. According to their perceptions, it was found that teacher feedback helped them to improve more than their peer feedback.

Regarding the first and second statements which were about *how important they consider to receive peer and teacher feedback*; 88.46% were in favor of peer feedback and 11.54% of the students were neutral. While teacher feedback obtained 76.92% of students' agreement and 23.08% neutral. Those results are probably due to receiving peer correction from their classmates and vice versa, which allowed students to feel more confident and autonomous, promoting them the responsibility of managing their knowledge in order to be prepared at the moment that it is required. In addition, students are also aware of how positive teacher feedback is for them.

The students' answers are in line with Lee et al. (2021), who claimed that written corrective feedback was an essential strategy since it allows students to detect and correct their written errors greatly improving their English writing performance. Similarly, Irwin (2017) also indicates that the written feedback provided by the EFL teacher is considered the most important type among EFL students. Moreover, the author affirms that learners tend to prefer this type of feedback.

Concerning statements three and four, most students agree that feedback delivered by the teacher helps them to improve their writing skills with 80.77% agreeing and 19.23% neutral. On the other hand, regarding peer feedback the agree answers represented 73.08% and 26.92% were neutral responses. Analyzing these outcomes, it can be inferred that students firmly believe that the comments provided by the teacher helped them to improve their writing skills. Similarly, most of them also consider that peer correction allows them to develop their English writing. In agreement with these findings, Yunus (2020) points out that a great number of teachers and learners recognize or are aware of the advantages of written feedback and they assure that receiving WCF does support the improvement of EFL learners' writing performance.

With regards to statements five and six which asked if the feedback was provided through comments, questions, or additional information, it was found that in peer feedback, 57.69% of students agreed, 38.46% were neutral, and 3.85% disagreed. With respect to teacher feedback, 65.38% of students agreed and 34.62% were neutral. These results

demonstrate that the students perceived that they received more explanations or additional information about their written errors when receiving teacher feedback. These results agree with Tsuroyya (2020) who emphasizes that previous training or modeling is needed for students to be able to add comments and useful information and explanation in their students' written works. Otherwise, if the learners have no experience or practice they will certainly provide a few vague and confusing comments.

Continuing with statements seven and eight which asked if the feedback was clear and easy to understand. In these statements, the results considerably differ since, in relation to peer feedback, 38.46% of students agree, 46.15% of them had a neutral opinion, and 15.38% of them disagree. On the contrary, for teacher feedback, 88.46% of the participants agree, 11.54% were neutral, and no one disagreed.

These findings probably turned out this way because the feedback provided by their classmates was harder to understand than the teacher's comments which must be more accurate since the instructor has more knowledge and experience and knows how to adapt these corrections and explanations to their students' levels. In this regard, Huang (2009) points out that the instructors provide clear and comprehensible feedback that allows their learners to easily recognize where their written errors and weak areas are in order to correct them.

Moving on to the ninth and tenth statements, which refer to the comfort while receiving feedback. For peer feedback, 76.92% of students agreed and 23.08% had a neutral opinion; meanwhile, in relation to teacher feedback 73.08% of them agreed and 26.92% gave neutral answers. These results express that students felt safe and confident receiving both types of feedback and they are aware of how these activities will help them to improve their English writing accuracy.

These results differ from Sultana (2009) who stated that some EFL students usually feel shy when presenting their written tasks to other students because they do not want others to know about their errors. However, in this study, the results were the opposite since most of the learners affirmed feeling comfortable with both types of feedback which may be

because in the classroom there is an atmosphere of trust and respect among students and with their teacher.

The last two statements ask about which areas they improved after receiving feedback. Concerning peer feedback, 61.54% of the students agree with improving grammar use, 42.31% of them agree with word formation, and 61.54% agree with vocabulary misuse. From these data, it can be inferred that half of the students affirm having improved in all linguistic areas after receiving peer correction. In line with this result, Ramírez and Guillén (2018) point out that written peer feedback has been an effective way to involve students actively in the language learning process, improving in this way their writing skills.

On the other hand, regarding teacher feedback 76.92% of the EFL learners agree having improved in grammar use, another 73.08% agree with word formation improvement and 80.77% agree with vocabulary misuse. In this aspect, the percentages increase a little more due to the teacher's experience and knowledge. The results were not 100%, a justification could be, the reduced time in which the project was executed, and because the students interacted for the first time with UTPL practitioners.

Derived from the survey results, it can be deduced that the participants express positive perceptions toward both types of written feedback; however, in specific aspects the students prefer teacher feedback. According to the participants' responses they consider both types of feedback important, and effective, and they also feel comfortable receiving both of them. Nonetheless, they affirm that teacher feedback is clearer and the instructor provides more comments and additional information.

## Conclusions

The pre and post-tests average scores demonstrated that written corrective feedback generates a positive impact on the enhancement of EFL students' writing skills. In other words, the students did reduce their morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors after receiving teacher and peer feedback combined.

Teacher feedback was the most effective type of written feedback since as evidenced by the statistical data the instructor found a greater number of morphological, semantic, and syntactic errors in the students' paragraphs. This is due to the experience and preparation that teachers possess which allows them to provide better quality feedback.

It was also concluded that peer feedback was less effective since students were not able to detect all the written errors that their classmates' made. In addition, the feedback delivered by the students lacked comments or explanations since the majority of them did not know how to correctly carry out peer feedback.

The errors most frequently made by the EFL students were the semantic ones followed by the syntactic errors. Both types of written errors are mainly caused by interlingual as well as intralingual factors such as direct translation from L1 and lack of knowledge of the target language rules. On the contrary, the least frequently found were morphological errors.

TEFL students prefer teacher feedback because it helped them significantly improve their writing accuracy helping them to reduce their errors related to grammar use, word formation, and vocabulary misuse. In addition, the participants consider that the suggestions delivered by their educator are the most complete and comprehensible, and they are familiar with and comfortable receiving this type of feedback.

EFL learners consider that peer feedback is also important and helps them improve their English writing. Nevertheless, they prefer teacher feedback, furthermore, they state that the feedback provided by their peers is not clear and totally comprehensible.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that EFL teachers combine different types of written feedback such as peer feedback, teacher feedback, self-correction, or direct, indirect, focused, and unfocused feedback when working on the improvement of their students' English writing ability. Applying different types of WCF will support the development of the different aspects of writing.

The ministry of education together with the educational authorities should focus on offering preparation and training to teachers on how to provide effective written feedback. Teachers should receive courses, seminars or workshops focused on giving feedback and the different types of giving it.

EFL instructors should provide guidance and preparation to their students before carrying out the peer correction activity. It is essential that EFL learners receive training and practice as, in this way, they will be able to improve in giving feedback and develop autonomy in language learning.

English educators should develop the semantic awareness of their students through tasks related to vocabulary learning of collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs. In the same way, the teachers should use other activities such as classifying words, recognizing words from their definitions, and comprehending and using descriptive words, among others.

The teacher must continuously apply written teacher feedback when focusing on the students' writing skills since this is a widely used strategy and it is quite effective. The students will learn a lot from the corrections to their errors including comments or suggestions about their mistakes and the areas where they have more difficulty.

It is suggested that when carrying out peer feedback, the teacher considers aspects such as students' preparation and previous knowledge. In the same way, it is recommended that for peer feedback to be clearer, learners focus on particular topics of written English or specific linguistic aspects, for example, that students focus on finding spelling errors, misapplication of a certain rule, errors of capitalization or punctuation, among others.

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**Appendix B: Post- Test**

**1) Write a 120-150 words narrative paragraph about your experience in taking remote classes during the Covid-19 pandemic.**

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### Appendix C: Rubric

PARAMETERS	EXCELLENT (10 – 7.6)	GOOD (7.5 - 5.1)	FAIR (5 – 2.6)	POOR (2.5 - 0)
<b>SEMANTIC CRITERIA</b> 6	All words (more than 75%) were used correctly in the context of the paragraph. Uses grade appropriate language throughout.  Each sentence supported the other and there were smooth transitions between thoughts.	Most of the words (75%) were used correctly in the context of the paragraph. Some use of grade appropriate language.  All sentences were complete, but very few were underdeveloped.	Some words (50%) were used correctly in the context of the paragraph. Consistently uses language at a level one grade lower.  There were several areas (50%) that were hard to understand.	A few words (less than 25%) were used correctly in the context of the paragraph. Consistently uses language at a level two grades lower.  Sentences (more than 75%) are not complete, and they have no or little development.
<b>SYNTACTIC CRITERIA</b> 8	All words, phrases, and sentences were complete (more than 75%). There were no grammar errors in the sentences.  All the sentences follow an appropriate order respecting subject + verb + complement, depending on the type of construction. (Declarative, interrogative, imperative...)	Most of words, phrases, and sentences were complete (75%). There were a few grammar errors (less than 25%) in the sentences.  Most of the sentences follow an appropriate order respecting subject + verb + complement; depending on the type of construction. (Declarative, interrogative, imperative...)	Some of the words, phrases, and sentences were complete (50%). There were still several sentences (50%) that were underdeveloped.  Some sentences follow an appropriate order respecting subject + verb + complement; depending on the type of construction. (Declarative, interrogative, imperative...)	A few words, phrases, and sentences were complete (less than 25%). There were too many errors (more than 75%) in grammar, usage, or sentence structure, which made it hard to read.  A few sentences follow an appropriate order respecting subject + verb + complement; depending on the type of construction. (Declarative, interrogative, imperative...)
<b>MORPHOLOGICAL CRITERIA</b> 3	Student correctly identified all the affixes that could be used with the root words. The use of word borrowing is correct and word formation is accurate.	Student correctly identified 7 out of 10 affixes that could be used with the root words. The use of word borrowing is partially correct and word formation is accurate.	Student correctly identified 5 out of 10 affixes that could be used with the root words. The use of word borrowing is partially correct and word formation is inappropriate.	Student correctly identified less than 5 out of 10 affixes that could be used with the root words. The use of word borrowing is not correct and word formation is inappropriate.
<b>MECHANICS</b> 5	Capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes are used appropriately.  No errors were made	Capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes are used somewhat appropriately.	Capitalization, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes were not used very appropriately.	Capitalization, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes were not used appropriately (or were not found in

	in spelling and part of speech.	Few errors were made in spelling.	These errors make it more difficult to understand the message or meaning of the writing. Frequent errors made in spelling.	writing). These errors make it hard to understand the meaning/message of the writing due to these errors. Numerous errors made in spelling.
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### Appendix D: Student's checklist

Criteria	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
The feedback provided by peers is useful and clear.					
The feedback provided by peers is closely related to the teacher's model.					
Feedback delivered by peers considers the criteria in the checklist.					
Feedback provided by peers follows different strategies such as the use of marginal notes, colors, codes, among others.					
The feedback provided by peers allows students to know their strengths and weaknesses.					
Peer feedback focuses on all the semantic errors in the task.					
Peer feedback focuses on all the syntactic errors in the task.					
Peer feedback focuses on all the morphological errors in the task.					
Further aspects apart from the semantic, syntactic, and morphological criteria were considered and corrected.					
Peer feedback delivered reflects high responsibility and commitment.					

### Appendix E: Students' Survey

Nº	Questions	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	I consider it is important to receive peer feedback in written assignments			
2	I consider it is important to receive teacher's feedback in written assignments.			
3	The feedback delivered by my peer helps me to improve my writing skills.			
4	The feedback delivered by my teacher helps me to improve my writing skills.			
5	My peer provides me with feedback through comments, questions or additional information.			
6	The teacher provides feedback through comments, questions or additional information.			
7	The feedback delivered by my classmate is clear and easy to understand.			
8	The feedback delivered by the teacher is clear and easy to understand.			
9	I feel comfortable to receive feedback from my peer			
10	I feel comfortable to receive feedback from my teacher.			
11	The feedback provided by my classmate has helped me to improve in...			
	Grammar use (Verb agreement, sentence construction, Capitalization and Punctuation)			
	Word formation (Spelling)			
	Vocabulary misuse			
12	The feedback provided by the teacher has helped me to improve in.....			
	Grammar use (Verb agreement, sentence construction, Capitalization and Punctuation)			

	Word formation (Spelling)			
	Vocabulary misuse			