## Effect Of Corrective Feedback Types On Writing Proficiency Of High And Low-Anxiety EFL Learners

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## Abstract

This mixed-methods study examined the impact of different types of written corrective feedback (WCF) on the writing proficiency of high and low anxiety English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. Using the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), 58 intermediate-level female EFL students from a private university participated in the study. Data were collected through pre and post-writing tests and the Survey of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).Results showed that direct corrective feedback (CF) had no significant effect on the writing proficiency of high- and low-anxiety learners. However, the low-anxiety indirect CF group performed better than the direct CF group in the writing posttest. Additionally, low-anxiety learners preferred receiving English comments and error correction, while high-anxiety learners preferred systudents for feedback, whereas low anxiety learners preferred feedback on vocabulary, expression, content, and ideas. The study's pedagogical implications highlight the need for integrating feedback instruction into EFL writing teaching to enhance proficiency and decrease anxiety. Further research is recommended to generalize the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between anxiety and CF in EFL writing classrooms.

**Keywords:** Corrective Feedback, High and Low-Anxiety, EFL Writing, EFL Learner Feedback Preferences

### I. Introduction

Corrective feedback (CF) in language classrooms has been a topic of debate in second language acquisition (SLA) research and language teaching methodology[1]. However, most research supports the usefulness of CF in improving language learners' utterances[2]. Meta-analyses have concluded that CF - whether oral or written - facilitates SLA[6]. Moreover, studies have shown that most language learners prefer to have their writing mistakes corrected in class and find CF helpful[7].

However, some scholars remain skeptical about the efficacy of error treatment. They argue that error treatment may negatively impact students' perceptions and EFL learning since what works for one student in one setting may not work for another in a different setting[8]. Hence, the use of CF types should vary in language classrooms based on learners' cognitive and practical requirements.

Writing is a crucial means of communication in the modern world, whether in a traditional paperand-pencil format or through email [9], [10]. The effectiveness of written corrective feedback (WCF) on writing performance depends on learners' engagement with WCF and their motivational state[11]. WCF also plays a significant role in writing classes[10]. Strategy instruction in L2 writing has also been investigated[11],[12]. The genre-based approach under systemic functional linguistics is useful in improving EFL students' critical thinking capacities in academic writing, supported by text analysis results[2].

The present study is significant as it is the first study to determine whether direct corrective feedback can improve the writing proficiency of high- and low-anxiety Iranian EFL learners. Other studies found that learners' characteristics might determine the effectiveness of selfregulated writing strategies [15]. Teachers have used various methods and feedback types to teach writing in EFL classes [16]. One of the most vital issues in a writing course that teachers encounter is that providing feedback on students' writing papers is probably the most valuable method [17],[18]. A substantial number of studies have researched the correlation between learners' language performance and anxiety[19], the impacts of test anxiety on listening [20]and the impact of nervousness on reading [21]. Furthermore, this study is significant as it utilized the anxiety variable to explore the correlation between high and low anxiety and learners' preferences for WCF in an EFL context.

#### 2. Literature Review

#### 2. I Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is framed by [22]'s affective factors theory, which posits a negative correlation

between anxiety and feedback, particularly corrective feedback (CF). Feedback has the potential to negatively impact learners' emotional states, potentially hindering learning in speaking activities. However, both instructors and learners understand the importance of feedback in learning, and anxiety decreases when learning is not hindered [23]. [22] also suggests that anxiety is debilitate, and CF has the potential to be damaging for students since it may increase their anxiety levels and affective filters. This could impede students' ability to process input and limit their acquisition of EFL.

#### 2.2 Direct Corrective Feedback

The effectiveness of direct feedback in language learning has been the subject of debate among researchers. According to [24] and [25], direct feedback is a helpful method for language particularly learners, those with lower proficiency levels, as it provides explicit correction and reduces confusion. However, some scholars, such as [28] and [29], argue that direct feedback may be less practical as it leaves no room for learners to actively engage in the error correction process. Instead, it requires only passive rewriting, which may not promote longterm learning or individual error perception and revision. [30] suggests that a balance between direct and indirect feedback methods may be necessary to achieve optimal results.

#### 2.3 Indirect Corrective Feedback

Indirect feedback is a process that pinpoints several errors without labeling these errors[24]. Learners in indirect feedback are challenged cognitively to correct the error considering their background information. This sort of feedback expands learners' engagement and enhances their critical thinking abilities; e.g., [25]. [30] maintained the benefits of this feedback type, who uncovered that learners receiving indirect feedback and utilizing an error code significantly outperformed those who receive direct feedback. Furthermore, instructors give feedback to enable learners to give revised writing assignments and make learners ready to analyze the errors. The feedback process becomes complete when learners correct their errors [31]. The given feedback is also successful when learners, as [30] contends, check grammar books or dictionaries to correct the errors.

## 2.4 Students' Preferences for Error Correction

[23] states that teachers need to know students' perceptions of language learning to encourage more successful learning techniques for learners. [23] assumes that the severe frustration caused by a discrepancy between learners' expectations and the realities they experience in the classroom can hinder language learning.

Several Scholars have explored teachers' and learners' perceptions of error correction and have discovered discrepancies between them [40]. For instance, in his research, [32]uncovered that learners' perceptions of grammar teaching and error correction were more optimistic than their instructors' perceptions; that is, students wanted more error correction. Therefore, when learners' expectations are not met, their motivation can be adversely influenced, and they may doubt the reliability of the given instruction. [32]contends that "such lack of pedagogical face validity could affect learners' motivation" (p. 349). The mismatch between learners' and instructors' expectations can adversely influence EFL learners' perceptions of the language class and can even cause the cessation of EFL learning. Instructors, thus, need to investigate their learners' perceptions and expectations to bridge the gap and boost the impacts of education.

Some studies provide strong support for indirect feedback, while a plethora of literature seems to favor direct feedback. In a study by [33],

the effect of direct and indirect feedback on students' spelling errors was compared. The results revealed that indirect feedback, which led to learners' self-correction, was more effective than direct feedback provided by the teacher without the learners' contribution to the correction process. [34] further asserts that instructors should refrain from over-correcting learners' writing errors to decrease their language anxiety. They confirm a disparity in what learners, on the one hand, and instructors, on the other hand, may consider efficient oral error treatment. Furthermore, instructors should give their learners more explicit and direct error treatment. The findings showed that low-anxiety students benefited from recasts more than highanxiety students and could produce substantial revisions.

[35] explored instructors' and students' preferences for corrective feedback (CF) types in Japanese classrooms by audio recording and stimulated recall interviews with students. The findings showed that recasts were the instructors' most preferred CF type over elicitation and metalinguistic clues because of the time limitation of classes and their awareness of students' cognitive styles. In contrast, the students liked to have a chance to think about their errors to figure out the corrections before receiving the correct form from their instructors.

[36] also researched 110 ESL and 137 EFL (French, German, and Spanish) learners and discovered that both groups had a positive attitude toward written corrective feedback (WCF). The researchers reported that EFL learners preferred to correct language structure, vocabulary, content, and style. However, ESL learners favored feedback content and organization. In alignment with these findings, [37] maintained that EFL learners consider grammatical features as a goal in the language learning process. Sheen clarifies that EFL students prefer developing their L2 information while ESL students build their writing ability. In the investigation carried out by [38], findings demonstrated that the efficiency of WCF relied upon the category of errors and the student's proficiency level. They recommended that specific components like students' attitudes and targets are essential elements; however, learners' perceptions of feedback remained ignored in WCF research.

In earlier research, [39] explored the impacts of CF in correlation with individual differences (i.e., background knowledge of the language, grammatical sensitivity, anxiety, and extrinsic motivation). He found no significant impact for CF; however, communication impacts showed that error treatment benefited only several learners, including the individual difference variables. Learners with great previous success, high language aptitude, and low anxiety levels benefited more from error treatment. [40] explored how students with high and low FL anxiety benefit from recasts and metalinguistic CF. The findings proved that low-anxiety students profited from both metalinguistic feedback and recasts even though the impact of metalinguistic feedback on their progress was more significant. On the other hand, the highanxiety students learned more from recasts than from metalinguistic CF.

The present study aims to investigate whether there is a statistically significant difference between the effect of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on high- and low-anxiety Iranian EFL learners' writing proficiency. Additionally, the study aims to explore the preferences of high and low anxiety learners regarding different WCF types. The study will utilize a mixed methods research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. In the qualitative phase of the study, the learners' perceptions of feedback types will be elicited using a detailed, structured, and formative survey of corrective feedback preferences. The study participants will be 58 intermediate-level female students aged 18 to 25, randomly sampled from 70 intermediate students attending English conversation classes, and assigned to either the DWCF or IW.

### **3.2 Instruments**

The following five instruments were used to collect data: a) OPT, b) FLCAS, c) a pretest of L2 writing, d) a posttest of L2 writing, and e) a survey of corrective feedback (CF) preferences.

### **Oxford Placement Test**

To check the homogeneity of the participants, OPT was utilized. It is a flexible test of English language proficiency developed by Oxford University Press and Cambridge ESOL that gives teachers a reliable and time-saving tool to learn about students' level of English (Hill & Taylor, 2004). It is easy to administer placement testing and examination screening (Author 3 et al., 2022). The test has two parallel versions and takes approximately 30 minutes to administer.

All the test questions are in multiplechoice format; answers are recorded directly on the answer sheet; the answer sheets can be quickly marked using the overlays provided. The test is considered a global measure of ability in a language or other content areas. To have a homogeneous group of participants, the learners whose low, mid, and high scores were selected to participate in the study. The test has high reliability ( $\alpha$ =.91) based on Cronbach's alpha [41],p. 674). The test has high construct validity [42].

## Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used to check the learners' anxiety levels in the present study. The scale was initially developed by [23]. The scale measures the

anxiety of the EFL learners and includes 33 items. The questionnaire instructions prompted students to respond to each item by rating their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). It indicated a high internal reliability alpha coefficient.93 "The construct validation study also established foreign language anxiety as a phenomenon related to but distinguishable from other specific anxieties" [23], p. 560). In an almost recent study, [43] revised the FLCAS for the Arabian context and found that the scale has high reliability and construct validity. FLCAS was translated into Persian, and then it was piloted among 30 Iranian EFL learners in the same institute where the study was being conducted, and the internal reliability index reported was ( $\alpha$ =.86) based on Cronbach's alpha.

### Writing Pretest

The third instrument used in the pre-treatment level was a pretest of writing labeled as Test of Written English (TWE), which was given to the participants. The writing topic was selected from the topics given in the students' coursebook (Top Notch) specified for the intermediate level. Based on the instructions presented in the coursebook for the students to develop writings for such topics, participants were instructed to use multiple paragraphs and more sophisticated writing structures, such as introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions. Many of the writing topics presented in the book require learners to express their attitudes and perceptions about their life and culture. The writings of the participants were scored by employing the inter-rater method. The raters and the researchers themselves employed the British Council writing scoring rubric for scoring the learners' writings.

### Writing Posttest

Following the treatment, which lasted eight weeks (16 sessions), a posttest of L2 writing like

the pretest was administered. The same inter-rater method used in the pretest scoring phase was employed to score the students' papers.

## Survey of Corrective Feedback Preferences

In the qualitative phase of the study and to find out the preferences of learners concerning the corrective feedback types, the researcher administered a detailed feedback preference survey This survey was conducted at the end of the semester when learners had gained a sufficient understanding of the intervention procedures to present their perceptions on the effectiveness of each feedback type used in the classroom. This helped the researchers determine learners' preferences concerning the corrective feedback types. Because of similar instructional contexts, a form of [34]'s survey was adopted for this study.

The survey had twelve questions, eight involving a five-point psychometric response scale. The remaining four questions asked students to choose the most suitable answer on several topics. In the third part of the survey, the students were asked to give their opinion about the kinds and techniques of feedback they had received throughout the semester. This survey was also disseminated during individual writing conferences to understand the students' general opinion of the course, their feedback, and their perception of their English proficiency. The preference questionnaire with 12 items was piloted on 30 students. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for the pilot test was .88. The rest of the items were scrutinized by two PhD.holders in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Hence, the questionnaire's descriptive items could also pass the experts' judgment validity. The completed descriptive perceptions of the learners were transcribed, and the collected data were analyzed employing initial coding, open coding, and axial coding [11].

#### **Materials and Coursebook**

The researchers used questions from the writing conference and a brief breakdown adapted from [34]. The coursebook used in the present study was the intermediate level book of the Top Notch. Units 6-9 of Book 2 of the series were employed in the present study. Top-Notch provides teachers and students with guaranteed lively lessons of personalized, learner-centered interaction exposure to natural English and the development of learning strategies that students can take beyond the classroom.

#### 3.3 Procedure

The present section deals with both quantitative and qualitative procedures taken to conduct the study.

#### **Quantitative Phase**

A total of 58 Iranian female EFL learners at an intermediate level of conversational English courses were selected from a pool of 70 learners with the same level of language proficiency (OPT) for homogeneity. The selected participants were then given the FLCAS to identify students with high and low anxiety.

The students were asked to write two short paragraphs using different academic journals: one using journals numbered 64-122, and the other using journals numbered 123-194.

Next, the selected learners were provided with different forms of corrective feedback types (DWCF and IWCF) in an eight-week intervention. The feedback types were explained to the learners, and they were asked to write a paragraph in each session, which was checked by the teachers who provided the learners with DWCF and IWCF.

In the DWCF cohort, the teacher provided the students with correct linguistic forms and structures to replace linguistic errors. The teacher

identified all existing linguistic errors, both grammatical and non-grammatical, and participants received feedback on all errors.

In the IWCF group, learners received specific error coding, using a code to show where and what type of error it is. Participants received feedback on all errors, including grammatical and non-grammatical errors, which were underlined, and metalinguistic information was provided above and below the errors through codes and in some cases, in the margins.

After eight weeks of instruction (16 sessions), the learners received the writing posttest TWE, which was at the same level as the pretest. The inter-rater method was employed to score the students' papers.

#### **Qualitative Phase**

In the qualitative phase, participants completed [34]'s survey at the end of the semester to express their opinions about the effectiveness of each feedback type used in the classroom. The survey consisted of twelve questions, eight of which consisted of a five-point Likert scale, and four required students to select an answer that matched their opinions about various topics. The third part of the survey required the students to present their perceptions of the feedback types they had received throughout the semester. The completed descriptive reflection logs of the learners were taken into consideration, and the collected data were analyzed by employing initial coding, open coding, and axial coding [11]. This helped the teacher find out the learners' preferred corrective feedback types.

#### 4. Results

The current study aimed at investigating the impact of corrective feedback types on high- and low-anxiety EFL learners' L2 writing development and preferences. Before testing the research questions, the researchers checked

whether the pretest and posttest data were typically distributed. To serve this purpose, the

normality assumption of the data was checked, as shown in Table 1.

			Ν	Skewness	;		Kurtosis		
Group	Anxie	ety	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
		OPT	12	441	.637	-0.69	-1.397	1.232	-1.13
	Low	Pretest	12	1.363	.637	2.14	.973	1.232	0.79
Direct		Posttest	12	.593	.637	0.93	360	1.232	-0.29
	High	OPT	16	1.741	.564	3.09	1.275	1.091	1.17
		Pretest	16	-1.167	.564	-2.07	.539	1.091	0.49
		Posttest	16	-1.170	.564	-2.07	1.343	1.091	1.23
		OPT	18	908	.536	-1.69	463	1.038	-0.45
	Low	Pretest	18	.188	.536	0.35	-1.803	1.038	-1.74
Indirect		Posttest	18	-1.494	.536	-2.79	4.643	1.038	4.47
		OPT	12	.242	.637	0.38	943	1.232	-0.77
	High	Pretest	12	092	.637	-0.14	942	1.232	-0.76
		Posttest	12	813	.637	-1.28	.467	1.232	0.38

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics; Testing Normality Assumption

As shown in Table 1, the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their standard errors were higher than +/- 1.96 for some of the variables. Since some of the variables violated the normality assumption, the present data were analyzed using non-parametric tests.

## Homogenizing Groups on Pretest of Writing

A Mann-Whitney U test was run to compare the DWCF and IWCF groups' means on the pretest to prove that they were homogeneous in terms of their writing ability prior to the main study.

Table 2 Mann-Whitney U Test; Pretest of Writing by Groups

				Median	Mann-	Ζ	Р
		N Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks		Whitney U		
	Group						
	Direct	28 32.36	906.00	48.75	340.00	-1.247	.212
Pretest	Indirect	30 26.83	805.00	45			
	Total	58					

Based on the results shown in Table 2, it can be concluded that there was not any significant difference between the direct (MR = 32.36, Med = 48.75) and indirect (MR = 26.83, Med = 45) groups' mean ranks on pretest of writing (Mann-Whitney U = 340.00, Z = -1.247, p = .212). Thus, it can be claimed that the two groups were homogenous in terms of their writing ability prior to administering the treatments.

This study investigated if there is a statistically significant difference between DWCF and IWCF on high- and low-anxiety Iranian EFL learners' writing development. A Mann-Whitney U test was run to compare them.

Table 3 Mann-Whitney U Test; Posttest of Writing by Anxiety Levels (Direct Feedback Group)

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Median	Mann- Whitney U	Z	Р
	Low	12	17.25	207.00	62.50	63.00	-1.575	.115
Posttest	High	16	12.44	199.00	62.25			
	Total	28						

Based on the results shown in Table 3, it could be concluded that there was not any significant difference between the direct low anxiety (MR = 17.25, Med = 62.50) and direct high anxiety (MR = 12.42, Med = 62.25) groups' mean scores on posttest (Mann-Whitney U = 63, Z = -1.575, p = .115).

The second research question of this study investigated if IWCF has any statistically significant effect on high- and low-anxiety Iranian EFL learners' writing development. A Mann-Whitney U test was run to compare the indirect high and low anxiety groups' mean scores on the posttest.

		N Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Median	Mann-	Ζ	Р
	Group		Sum of Kanks		Whitney U		
	Low	18 18.08	325.50	85.50	61.50	-1.992	.046
Posttest	High	12 11.63	139.50	83.25			
	Total	30					

Table 4 Mann-Whitney U Test; Posttest of Writing by Anxiety Levels (Indirect Feedback Group)

Based on the results shown in Table 4, it can be concluded that the low anxiety group (MR = 18.08, Med = 85.50) had a higher mean score than the high anxiety group (MR = 11.36, Med = 83.25) groups' mean scores on posttest (Mann-Whitney U = 61.50, Z = -1.992, p = .046).

The second research question sought the preferences of high and low anxiety learners

considering different WCF types. Frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of teachers' written feedback, future written feedback, types of errors to be focused on, and types of feedback preferred by the learners.

## Participants' Preferences of Teachers' Written Feedback

 Table 5 Frequencies and Percentages of Preferred Written Feedback

			Anxiety	7	- Total
			Low	High	
	English Comments, Error Correction, and Grade	Ν	7	1	8
		%	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
	English Comments and Error Correction	Ν	7	1	8
	English Comments and Error Correction		87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
	Fradish Comments and Crade	Ν	8	9	17
Types of	English Comments and Grade	%	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
Written	Error Correction and Grade	Ν	0	6	6
Feedback	Error Correction and Grade		0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Only English Commonts	N	7	1	8
	Only English Comments	%	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
	Only Engen Connection	N	1	6	7
	Only Error Correction	%	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
	Only Grade	N	0	4	4

	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Ν	30	28	58
Total	%	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%

Table 5 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of teachers' written feedback. The results showed the following:

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a- Low anxiety students (87.5 %) preferred to receive English comments, error correction, and grades more than the high anxiety group (12.5 %).

b- Low anxiety students (87.5 %) preferred to receive English comments and error correction more than the high anxiety group (12.5 %).

c- High anxiety students (52.9 %) preferred to receive English comments and grades more than the low anxiety group (47.1 %).

d- High anxiety students (100 %) preferred to receive error correction and grades more than the low anxiety group (0 %).

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e- Low anxiety students (87.5 %) preferred to receive English comments only more than the high anxiety group (12.5 %).

f- High anxiety students (85.7 %) preferred to receive error correction only more than the low anxiety group (14.3 %).

g- High anxiety students (100 %) preferred to receive grades only more than the low anxiety group (0 %).

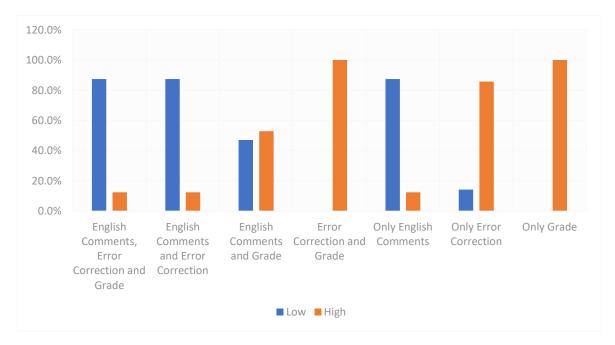


Figure.1. Percentages of preferred feedback

## Participants' Preferences of Teachers' Future Written Feedback

			Anxiety		— Total
			Low High		- Total
	Error Correction	Ν	0	10	10
	End Correction		0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Types of	Scores and Grades	Ν	13	1	14
Written	Scores and Grades		92.9%	7.1%	100.0%
Feedback	English Comments	Ν	13	3	16
In Future		%	81.2%	18.8%	100.0%
	Current Mathed is Adaquate	Ν	4	14	18
	Current Method is Adequate		22.2%	77.8%	100.0%
Total		Ν	30	28	58
10101		%	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%

Table 6 Frequencies and Percentages of Future Preferred Written Feedback

Table 6 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of teachers' future written feedback (Q10). The results showed the following:

a- High anxiety students (100 %) preferred to receive error correction in the future more than the low anxiety group (0 %).

b- Low anxiety students (92.9 %) preferred to receive scores and grades in the future more than the high anxiety group (7.1 %).

c- Low anxiety students (81.2 %) preferred to receive English comments in the future more than the high anxiety group (18.8 %).

d- High anxiety students (77.8 %) preferred to continue with the present method of teachers' feedback more than the low anxiety group (22.2 %).



Figure.2. Percentages of preferred feedback in future

## Participants' Preferences of Types of Errors to be focused on

		Anxiety		Total	
			Low	10ta1	
	Q 1	N	0	10	10
	Structural	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Veeebulers/Eveneesione	N	15	7	22
Errors to be	Vocabulary/Expressions	%	68.2%	31.8%	100.0%
Focused on	Crommetical	N	0	10	10
	Grammatical	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Content/Ideas	N	15	1	16
	Content/Ideas	%	93.8%	6.3%	100.0%
T- (-1		N	30	28	58
Total		%	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%

Table 7 Frequencies and Percentages of Types of Errors to be Focused on

Table 7 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of types of errors to be focused on (Q11). The results showed the following:

a- High anxiety students (100 %) preferred structural errors to be focused on more than the low anxiety group (0 %).

b- Low anxiety students (68.2 %) preferred vocabulary and expression

errors to be focused on more than the high anxiety group (31.8 %).

c- High anxiety students (100 %) preferred grammatical errors to be focused on more than the low anxiety group (0%).

d- Low anxiety students (93.8 %) preferred errors related to content and ideas to be focused on more than the high anxiety group (6.2 %).

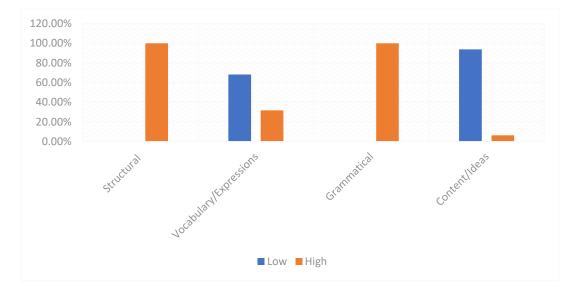


Figure 3. Percentages of types of errors to be focused on

### **Participants' Preferences of Types of Feedback**

Table 8 Frequencies and Percentages of Types of Feedback

			Anxiety		Tetal
			Low	High	—— Total
Types of	Direct	Ν	12	16	28
Written	Direct	%	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
Feedback	<b>T</b> 11	Ν	18	12	30
	Indirect	%	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
T1		Ν	30	28	58
Total		%	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%

Table 8 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of types of feedback (Q12). The results showed the following:

a- High anxiety students (57.1 %) preferred to receive direct feedback more than the low anxiety group (42.9 %).

b- Low anxiety students (60 %) preferred indirect feedback more than the high anxiety group (40 %).

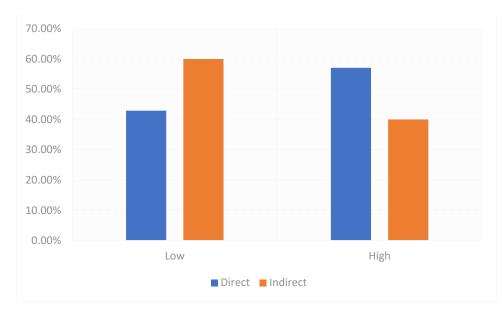


Figure 4. Percentages of preferred types of feedback

### **Students' Preferences**

Table 9	Responses to Questions from	the Writing Conference
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<b>1.</b> Do you feel confident writing in	Very	Confident	Not Confident
English?	Confident4.7%	23.9%	72.4%
2. How much time did you give to this	Significant	Appropriate 9.2%	Inadequate Effort
assignment?	33.5%8.6%	34.3%	57.1%
<b>3.</b> How well do you comprehend the	Mostly Understan	ndSomewhat	Inadequately
feedback on the assignment?	18%	Understand	Understand
4.		38.1%	43.9%
_5.			

Writing Conference Questions

<b>6.</b> How well do you comprehend the teacher's comments on the assignment?	Mostly Underst	andSomewhat Understand	Inadequately Understand
			41%
7. Can you correct your mistakes using the feedback from your teacher?	Yes 37%	Maybe 59.1%	No 3.9%

The researchers of the present study indicated that students' understanding of the provided written feedback was measured by the individual feedback students gave. The teachers conducted entirely English conferences to answer the participants' questions. the teachers clarified how to correct the errors they had made. The teachers generally focused on the recurring errors in the text. The participants were also given time to ask the teachers questions about their assignments.

The participants' responses indicated that 72.4% indicated that they did not feel confident about their writing skills, which the teachers did not expect. This finding aligns with research indicating that sometimes EFL students assess their writing skills at a lower level than their teachers' assessments [34],[46], [25].In the same vein, 57.1% of the students did not feel they did their best to excel at revising their written assignments.

Likewise, the participant's responses to questions three and four examining their understanding of the teachers' feedback and comments, were similar to their responses to questions one and two. Sixteen students (43.9%) asserted that they comprehended only 50% or less of the teacher's feedback, whereas fifteen students (40%) indicated that they understood 50% or less of the teacher's comments. However, by the end of the treatment, 97% of students confirmed that they comprehended the feedback at least 50% of the time. Three students answered that they could not correct their mistakes by employing the feedback given by the teachers, which is possibly due to a lack of understanding of the codes the teachers used.

#### 4.2 Discussion

The present study's findings are consistent with those of [34], which suggest that there is an interaction between a teacher's feedback practices and a group of students' preferences and expectations. Specifically, students in this study preferred that their teachers provide direct lexical and grammatical error corrections and attend to all of their mistakes. However, these findings do not completely align with those of [9], which showed that written corrective feedback positively affects learners' writing performance when engagement and motivation are boosted.

The results of data analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the effect of Direct Written Corrective Feedback (DWCF) on high and low-anxiety learners' writing development. Conversely, the study found that Indirect Written Corrective Feedback (IWCF) had a more positive impact on the L2 writing of learners than DWCF, especially when low anxiety learners received it. This finding is in line with [23], who found that low anxiety leads to greater concentration in the L2 classroom. Similarly, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) yielded the same finding in their study of foreign

language classroom anxiety. Furthermore, [19] found that language anxiety affects L2 writing success, and this inference was also supported by [23]'s study on language anxiety, L2 writing, and speaking achievement.

The present study also found that anxiety can predict performance in the foreign language classroom, as demonstrated in previous studies [48, 20, 43, 49]. In this study, low anxiety learners benefited more from indirect feedback than high anxiety learners, possibly due to the high concentration of low anxiety learners on the feedback they received. While students prioritize one feedback over another, indirect feedback is helpful to improve L2 proficiency and metalinguistic awareness [24].

The findings of the present study also highlight the importance of selecting appropriate feedback specific assignments, types for student proficiency levels, and classroom goals. Deciding whether to provide direct or indirect feedback in error correction remains critical [24]. This finding is in line with [52], who found that learners with low anxiety were more likely to get involved in the teacher's indirect feedback than the direct one. Conversely, learners perceived direct feedback as tedious and time-consuming. Unlike DWCF, IWCF involves learners in the process of learning and requires minimal processing on the part of language learners.

The third finding of the study demonstrated that teachers' written feedback had more impact on low anxiety students who preferred to receive English comments and error correction than on high anxiety learners who preferred to receive fewer comments and grades. Additionally, high anxiety students preferred focusing on structural and grammatical errors, while low anxiety learners preferred vocabulary and expression errors and errors related to content and ideas. This finding is consistent with [39], who studied the effects of foreign language anxiety on EFL learners' perceptions of oral corrective feedback. According to [39], low anxiety learners were more open to indirect corrective feedback, while high anxiety learners were not at ease with indirect corrective feedback and preferred direct feedback presented by the teacher. It can be stated that high anxiety learners care more about grammatical structure than vocabulary items and expressions, as ungrammatical structures production would lead to inhibition; thus, they try to prevent these errors from recurring.

Finally, the study's results show some conflicting findings. For example, only 20 percent of the students expressed their confidence and ease with writing skills in the conference-writing stage. However, approximately 75 percent of them preferred one, two, or more feedback types, indicating their awareness of the nature of feedback provision. There may be several reasons for this range of findings. While language learners' proficiency improved vastly after the intervention, it is unlikely to happen.

### Conclusion

The present study attempted to investigate the effects of corrective feedback types on high- and low-anxiety EFL learners' L2 writing development and their preferences through a mixed-method study. The data analysis results revealed no significant difference between the effect of direct WCF on high and low-anxiety learners' writing development. The indirect written feedback group with low anxiety outperformed the direct written feedback group on writing posttest.

The study has some limitations. It included a relatively small student sample. Furthermore, it was restricted to one gender. Further research is needed to repeat the present study using a larger student sample of female and male students with different proficiency levels, investigating individual factors affecting students' speaking engagement in the corrective feedback they receive{149}. It is also critical that researchers utilize the think-aloud protocols to understand students' processing strategies rather than depend on their perceptions of these strategies.

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### Appendixes Appendix A: Writing Pretest

## Write the way you think you can best express yourself.

People attend college or university for many different reasons (new experiences, career preparation, and increased knowledge). Why do you think people attend college or university? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

#### **Appendix B: Writing Posttest**

## Write the way you think you can best express yourself.

A company has announced that it wishes to build a large factory near your community. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this new influence on your community. Do you support or oppose the factory? Explain your position.

## Appendix C: British Council Writing Scoring Rubric

Guidelines for Raters.

Reproduced from Alderson, C., & Tankó, G. (2010). Into Europe: The writing handbook. London: British Council, P. 129.

Adapted from: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files /aptis\_scale\_revision\_layout.pdf

## Appendix D: Student Preferences of Teacher Feedback Survey

Adapted from: Irwin, B. (2017). Written corrective feedback: Student preferences and teacher feedback practices. IAFOR Journal, 3(2), 35-58. 2/