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"The Effects of Corrective Feedback on the Development of ESL/EFL

Learners' Writing Skills"

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Resumen

Esta síntesis investigativa tiene como objeto analizar los efectos de la retroalimentación correctiva en el desarrollo de destrezas de escritura en estudiantes del idioma inglés en segunda lengua o lengua extranjera. Además, reportar tipos, estrategias y percepciones de este tipo de retroalimentación. Para el propósito de este estudio bibliográfico, se seleccionaron veintiséis estudios para su análisis. Estos utilizaron diferentes instrumentos y ocurrieron en diferentes contextos. Los resultados preliminares mostraron que los profesores y los estudiantes percibieron la retroalimentación correctiva como beneficiosa y como una herramienta importante para mejorar las habilidades de escritura. Sin embargo, el efecto de la retroalimentación depende de algunos aspectos relacionados con el proceso de escritura. Esos aspectos son área de mejora de la redacción, tipo de tarea de escritura, tipo de retroalimentación correctiva, enfoque de retroalimentación y los agentes proveedores de retroalimentación. Finalmente, es recomendable un análisis más profundo sobre las percepciones de la retroalimentación correctiva, sobre todo en un contexto propio como es Ecuador.

Palabras claves: Retroalimentación correctiva. Destrezas de escritura. Corrección de errores. Estrategias de retroalimentación.

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Abstract

This research synthesis aimed to discover the effects of corrective feedback on the development of ESL/EFL learners' writing skills. Moreover, to analyze the types, the strategies, and the perceptions of teachers and students towards corrective feedback. For the purpose of this research synthesis, twenty-six studies that used different instruments and occurred in various settings were selected to be analyzed. The preliminary results showed that teachers and students perceived corrective feedback as beneficial and essential for improving writing skills. Nevertheless, the effect of feedback depended on some aspects related to the writing process. Those aspects are the area of writing improvement, type of writing task, type of corrective feedback, feedback focus, and agent provider of feedback. Finally, as a recommendation, it is suggested to analyze perceptions of corrective feedback in a more profound way, also to consider Ecuador as context for further research.

Keywords: Corrective feedback. Writing skills. Error correction. Strategies of feedback.

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Dedication

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CHAPTER I

1. Description of the research

1.1. Background

Oxford dictionary defines feedback as "advice, criticism or information about how good or useful something or somebody's work is." However, the definition needs to be narrow to the field of education. According to Ur. (2006), feedback, in the context of teaching in general, is any kind of information provided to learners about their performance so that they can improve their performance. In other words, feedback in education is information provided by an external agent regarding some aspect(s) of the learner's task performance, intended to modify the learner's cognition, motivation or behavior (Kluger, & DeNisi, 1996). Accordingly, teachers are conscious of their students' performance when they provide feedback, and they expect their students to learn from their mistakes. Giving feedback has been identified as a source of necesary information about the students' strengths and weaknesses to improve on a specific aspect. The role of feedback in language learning is crucial because it can support students' motivation to improve learners' retention of information (Furnborough, & Truman, 2009).

On the other hand, Nasim, Azade, & Mohammad (2015) state that writing is one of the most critical skills in second language teaching, learning, and assessment. Consequently, teachers must enhance their students' writing skills. One beneficial way to provide enhancement is by using feedback properly. Gattegno (as cited in Nunan, 1995) suggests that feedback is a fundamental aspect of the education process since it allows the correction of errors during a

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written assignment. Thus, giving feedback in the ESL/EFL writing process is essential to improve students' writing skills (Brown, 2001).

Additionally, modern concepts of types of feedback have emerged to help teachers provide students with support on skills development. Nunan (1995), Brown (2000), and Ur (2006) agree that, at least, there are two levels of feedback: positive feedback and negative feedback. Furthermore, feedback can be classified into two types: explicit and implicit. Explicit feedback is apparent and evident, which is perceived by students. Conversely, implicit feedback turns into non-evident. Students have to notice it and know how to use it to foster their learning (Ur, 2006).

Moreover, Sheen (2004) has brought to light an inclusive concept: Corrective Feedback (CF). According to this author, "the term "corrective feedback' is used as an umbrella term to cover implicit and explicit negative feedback occurring in both natural conversational and instructional settings." The role of feedback has been a matter of debate in second language acquisition. Some authors, like Schmidt (1990) and Long (1996), claim that negative feedback, which is the teacher's overall attention towards mistakes (brown, 2000), plays a facilitative and crucial role in language acquisition. Furthermore, Long (1996) believes that implicit negative feedback can give students a chance to pay attention to linguistic form from the interaction between the teacher and learners. Thus, linguistic forms may foster the student's acquisition of the language. However, Krashen (1981), Schwartz (1993), and Truscott (1996) differ from Long (1996) and Schmidt's (1990) since they state that just positive feedback is enough for students to

acquire a second language. Moreover, they add that there is no sense in using negative feedback, and it may cause damaging effects on the learners' language acquisition process.

Finally, Hattie & Timperley (2007) investigated the meaning of feedback in the classroom. They proposed a model of feedback that is used to identify the circumstances under which feedback has the most significant impact. The research evidence, which is related to the different types of feedback and their effectiveness in promoting learning, showed aspects of teaching. Consequently, these authors found that feedback can be used to enhance learning and teaching.

1.2. Problem statement

In the language learning process, feedback refers to comments, explanations, and helpful data, which learners receive from teachers to help them improve their skills (Richards, & Schmidt, 2002). However, feedback application in skills such as writing discourages learners from improving their skills (Farnborough & Truman, 2009). Moreover, Farnborough & Truman (2009) pointed out that teachers do not encourage learners to improve their writing skills because teachers ignore the vital role that feedback has to increase motivation and students' cognitive skill development.

Notwithstanding, Correa, Martinez, Molina, Silva & Torres (2013) found out that a lack of teachers' awareness and knowledge on how to provide feedback was notorious. Teachers and learners think that correction is just related to correcting mistakes instead of providing positive or

negative comments that help students develop their writing skills. Nevertheless, Ur (2006) stated that additional comments support writing improvement more than correcting mistakes.

In addition, teachers have neglected the role of feedback in writing since they do not motivate students to develop their writing skills when they provide feedback (Norouzian, & Khomeijani, 2012). While feedback is widely seen as possibly one strategy of the most powerful influences on learning, this potential remains unexplored because teachers neglect the role of feedback and lack of practice (Hyland, 2013). Moreover, Hattie & Timperley (2007) mention that the negation of the role or significance of feedback is because there are differences in which feedback strategy results effectively.

At last, Brown (2007) states that the correct feedback application can help learners avoid future problems as a fossilization phenomenon. Behaviorists call fossilization the process of assuming an error as correct. Therefore, it is not fixed and keeps being repeated every time. Brown (2001) emphasizes that an appropriate application of feedback can persevere through time on students' minds and help them improve their writing skills. However, teachers' perceptions of beneficial feedback might not coincide, and this discrepancy makes the role of feedback ineffective (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

1.3. Rationale

Patchan, Charney, & Schunn (2009) state that students are missing out on a potential learning opportunity when instructors provide poor feedback because they do not provide the basis for writing enhancement. Ferris (2003) pointed out that receiving feedback of errors

without the correction is more beneficial to learners' improvement than direct corrections. It is because learners need to understand where they committed the errors by themselves. Therefore, feedback applied in different forms can provide learners a way of learning from their mistakes. According to Hyland (1990), feedback on writing should play an essential role in cognitive scaffolding development and make students aware of their writing strengths and weaknesses.

Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) found that the students' accuracy in writing can be improved by the provision of feedback. Thus, feedback helps EFL/ESL teachers reformulate the logic behind their practices and provides the ground for more dynamic learning environments to support learners to improve their learning skills. Abadikhahand Ashoori (2012) pointed out that feedback on writing assessment provides a stimulus for learners to identify the gap or mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language. McClay and Peterson (2010) pointed out that teachers' feedback was directed toward nurturing students' self-confidence as writers and guiding students to improve their writing skills.

Therefore, an exhaustive analysis of the role of Corrective Feedback used on learners' writing skills will be carried out in this research synthesis. Also, this project will report effects, strategies, and teachers' and learners' perceptions of Corrective Feedback. This analysis will contribute to the education field because it will help teachers in the application of feedback on writing.

1.4.Research questions

- What are the effects of corrective feedback on students' writing skills development, as reported by the pertinent literature?

- What strategies of corrective feedback are the most effective to improve writing skills?

- What are the teachers' and students' perceptions of corrective feedback in writing development?

1.5. Objectives.

    1.5.1. General objective

- To analyze the effects of corrective feedback on ESL/EFL students' writing skills.

    1.5.2. Specific objectives

- To identify effective Corrective Feedback strategies reported in the studies.

- To analyze the perceptions students and teachers have of Corrective Feedback on the development of writing skills.

CHAPTER II

2. Theoretical framework.

This section of the research synthesis consists of concepts and theories on the role and types of feedback to develop writing skills. Those concepts are the basis for the research synthesis. It will include the following areas: the definition of writing skill, the definition of feedback, the types of feedback, error vs. mistake, strategies of CF, and agents for providing feedback.

2.1. Definition of writing skill.

Thought.co dictionary defines writing as a system of symbols to transmit an intended meaning. Those symbols and the interpretation of the symbols vary between people and their cultural knowledge. Moreover, a non-literal definition says that writing is a complicated process involving several cognitive and metacognitive activities, such as brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising (Flower & Hayes, 1981). According to Nasim, Azade, & Mohammad (2015), writing is the most challenging area in ESL and EFL because of its complexity. Hyland (2003) described writing complexity as the process based on appropriate and strategic use of language with structural accuracy and communicative potential.

Moreover, Nasim, Azade, & Mohammad (2015) state that writing is one of the most critical skills in second language teaching, learning, and assessment. Although, writing relevance has been ignored. Kellogg (2008) pointed out that writing a text involves not just the language system. It poses significant challenges to our cognitive systems for memory and thinking as well.

Kellogg (2008) mentioned that writing is closely linked to thinking. Indeed, writers can gather virtually everything they have learned and stored it away in long-term memory. It means that the more they write, the more they know.

2.2. Definition of feedback

Oxford dictionary defines feedback as "advice, criticism or information about how good or useful something or somebody's work is." Thus, feedback can be viewed as an essential process for improving students' writing skills since it consists of the loaded information required for the writing process (Hyland, 1990; Hyland & Hyland, 2001). According to Ur. (2006), feedback is the information given to learners about their performance of a learning task to improve their performance. Moreover, feedback has been the concern of many researchers in second/foreign language writing. For instance (Ferris, 2005; Truscott, 2007; Bitchener and Knoch, 2010; Liskinasih, 2016) agree that feedback is necessary because a piece of writing without feedback cannot be improved. It is because feedback on writing contains a heavy informational load, which offers suggestions to facilitate improvement, and provides opportunities for interaction between teacher and student (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Feedback is a crucial issue in the writing process, and it plays a central role since, without the provision of feedback, the aim of writing cannot be fulfilled (Ghanbari, Karampourchangi, & Reza, 2015). Feedback is considered as a great influence on learning as well as achievement, and the most important, students value it, but this impact on learning development can be either positive or negative (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

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2.3. Types of feedback

Researchers have been concerned about the type of feedback and its implementation. For instance, Nunan (1995) established the type of positive feedback. It has been idenfied that positive feedback allows students to realice what they have performed correctly by the way, and to increase motivation. Whereas Brown (2000) mentioned that there is a negative type of feedback if there is positive feedback. Negative feedback is the teacher's overall attention to mistakes. Thus, Nunan (1995), Brown (2000), and Ur (2006) agree that, at least, there are two types of feedback -positive and negative.

On the other hand, Sheen (2004) has brought to light an inclusive concept, which is Corrective Feedback (henceforth CF). According to this author, "the term' corrective feedback is used as an umbrella term to cover implicit and explicit negative (attention to mistakes) feedback occurring in both natural conversational and instructional settings" (p. 264). In other words, corrective feedback refers to giving explicit or implicit correct information about students' errors and letting them notice and internalize that information. Other studies such as Ferris and Helt (2000); Chandler (2003) investigated corrective feedback and where they are more likely than others to help students improving on their writing quality. Moreover, They came up with the distintion of explicit and implicit feedback and the effects on writing quality enhacement (Ferris and Helt, 2000; Chandler, 2003).

Explicit feedback refers to the process of providing the correction clearly, so the learners do not trouble correcting errors (Ellis, 2009). On the other hand, implicit feedback refers to the process in which the error correction is not clearly recognized, so learners may have trouble

correcting errors. However, Ferris and Roberts, 2001 explained explicit and implicit feedback might not be confused with direct and indirect corrective feedback. Actually, direct and indirect are strategies for providing written corrective feedback. In contrast, explicit and implicit feedback can be found in verbal correction.

In addition, error correction has been implemented in educational fields. Error correction is a common type of feedback used in EFL classes. Amara (2015) mentions that error correction is seen as feedback given to learners on their language use. Moreover, when teachers provide feedback, they cannot deny the fact that correcting students' errors is one of the most challenging tasks in language acquisition. Thus, every language teacher should consider some error correction issues: the difference between a mistake and an error, how much correction should be made, at what phases the teacher should correct the error, and how the teacher can correct the learner without de-motivating students.

2.4. Error and mistakes

The confusion between error and mistake influences the provision of feedback on writing. Amara mentioned that teachers should differentiate that an error is something that the learner does not acquire yet or is internalizing. However, a mistake is an accident, learners have acquired and internalized, but they do not realize what they are doing (Amara, 2015). Thus, when teachers provide feedback, they know if the learners committed an error or a mistake.

2.5. Strategies of providing corrective feedback

The type of feedback has been classified based on the ways or strategies included on the provision of feedback. For instance, Ferris and Roberts (2001) provided that, mostly direct and indirect feedback have been recognized as the main strategies of corrective feedback. Similarly, Ellis (2009) proposed a typology of strategies for providing corrective feedback. However, the typology did not only suggest the two classifications but also other classifications as; metalinguistic corrective feedback and electronic corrective.

First, direct corrective feedback is defined as the provision of the correct linguistic form or structure above or near the linguistic error. "It may include the crossing out of a pointless grammatical element, the insertion of a absent grammatical element, or the provision of the precise form or structure" (Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, 2009). Whereas indirect corrective feedback is mostly provided on written form, in order that, the teacher indicates that students have made an error in their writing, but the teacher does not correct the error. The teacher offers explicit corrections on students' writing by highlighting errors. In this type of feedback, students have to recognize their errors and correct them (Ferris, 2002; Ellis, 2009).

Second, metalinguistic corrective feedback which is a different strategy, provides linguistic hints for the emerged errors (Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, 2009). It can be provided not only in the form of error codes but also as a short-term grammatical explanation. In this kind of strategy, the teacher does not correct the inaccurate forms but rather, through different coding techniques, attracts the learners' attention to the problematic area. Another strategy of corrective

feedback is electronic, which is a way to provide feedback through computer-basis with the objective to lead students to pay attention to written errors. It is mechanical feedback that is provided by computer through a sophisticated software system (hyperlink) which is readily available (Ellis, 2009)

Then, the next type of strategy is focused and unfocused corrective feedback. Focused corrective feedback refers to specific errors that are selected and must be corrected. Some errors gain importance in focused CF and must be highlighted (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami & Takashima, 2008). Thus, focused CF intends to correct errors that follow an established criterion or rubric. However, occasionally errors are not pre-selected to be corrected, and the tutor provides feedback upon everything they consider to be corrected. This type of feedback is known as unfocused CF. Finally, unfocused CF refers to any error that can be fixed in the writing activity.

2.6. Agents-providers of feedback

Two main agents for providing feedback have been identified. These agents are part of the teaching strategy. A common strategy is when the teacher is the main agent provider of feedback. So, teachers' feedback enables students to read and understand their learning process problems and use feedback to improve. According to Hyland (1990), it is an advantage to receive feedback from the teacher. The author says that "Teachers have the advantage of obliging the students to go back and rework their draft" (Hyland, 1990). Thus, teachers' authority role represents an advantage for motivating learners to improve their skills.

Moreover, Leki (1991) mentioned that students expected teachers to correct all errors or mistakes because they felt they needed pressure to improve. Teacher response to students' work is an essential step in the writing process (Hyland, 1990; Ferris, 1999). Therefore, when teachers provide feedback, they inform learners about the progress they are making and guide them to areas that need to be improved (Lewis, 2002). Through the provision of feedback, teachers expected their students focus and concentrate more on what has been being learned. Besides, when teachers provide feedback, they make learners to be aware of their strong points and softness in a learning process. Indeed, they can use their fortes in order to overcome their weaknesses by understanding the feedback received.

On the other hand, nowadays classes are changing from being teacher-centered to student-centered; thus, the teacher's feedback strategy moved to feedback provided by peers. Studies like Sotoudehnama, & Pilehvari, (2014); Hattie & Timperley (2007) can help move toward the goal of autonomous training reviewers and independent writers, who can accurately evaluate their writing as well as their mates' writings, assess different areas of writing to be improved. The authors mentioned above investigated the role of peer feedback. Moreover, participating in peer review activities can be a fascinating adventure for students. It enables them to step out of themselves to see what they have created through others' eyes (Brown, 2001).

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CHAPTER III

Literature review

This section presents the literature that will be analyzed in the present research synthesis. The studies have been classified according to the different characteristics published about feedback and feedback in writing. The classification is as follows: the role of corrective feedback, types of corrective feedback, strategies of corrective feedback, and teachers' and students' perceptions about the role of feedback.

3.1. The Role of Corrective Feedback.

Students' grades have been attributed to the effectiveness of feedback. In this correlation, Haniza, Maulan, & Ismail (2008) conducted a study to analyze the role of teachers' feedback on students' writing. In this study, students had to rewrite based on the feedback they received from their teachers. Moreover, grades were provided on content, organization, and language. Finally, the results showed that minimal feedback given to students was helpful and provided an opportunity to do self-revision, which is one of the most effective lifelong learning processes. The role of feedback is evident because students' grades increased after the re-writing task.

Similarly, Onwuagboke, & Agoha (2018) conducted a quasi-experimental study focusing on feedback effectiveness by comparing students' scores with feedback and students' scores without feedback on their performance. The result indicated the usefulness of feedback in

facilitating students' learning because the group that received feedback performed better than the group that did not receive feedback. It was evident because those grades were higher. Thus, the study demonstrates the role of feedback as a tool that facilitates students' learning. Therefore, students enhanced learning and improved their writing performance.

On the other hand, Furnborough, & Truman (2009) conducted a qualitative study to examine the use of assignment feedback among three groups of beginners' foreign language learners. The study analyzed the relation between feedback and affective factors such as anxiety and doubts. However, the results showed that affective factors did not affect the role of feedback because having anxiety is normal at any learning process. Notwithstanding, feedback was influential in the writing process since all participants demonstrated progress on their skills. Likewise, in an Iranian study conducted by Ghanbari, Karampourchangi & Reza (2015), it was observed that the role of feedback on writing had a positive effect despite having time pressure and peer feedback. Participants who received feedback showed improvement in their writing performance.

3.2. Types of Corrective Feedback

Sheen (2004) highlighted the figure of corrective as the most used type of feedback. Moreover, corrective feedback is used as an umbrella to cover explicit and implicit negative feedback. Brown (2002) mentions that negative feedback is the core part of CF because of its focus on errors. Similarly, Liskinasih (2016) found that CF is commonly applied in language learning. He observed a figure of corrective feedback in the Speaking and Grammar class. Thus, the study demonstrated corrective feedback in two forms; written and verbal.

Under other conditions, Bitchener (2005) conducted a study to investigate whether the type of feedback (direct, explicit written feedback and conferences) improved accuracy in new writing pieces. The study found a significant effect for combining written and conference feedback (oral feedback) on accuracy levels in correcting grammatical errors. Additionally, it was found that the type of feedback depended on what was being learned. Thus, explicit corrective feedback was effective for correcting grammatical errors. Diversely, Correa, Martinez, Molina, Silva, & Torres (2013) demonstrated that explicit feedback focused on content and organization of written messages motivated students to carry out writing activity. The findings show that students felt motivated to re-write a writing task when the teacher provided feedback on content and organization.

However, Wahyuni (2017) revealed that the writing quality was not wildely different between students who got explicit corrective feedback, and those who got implicit. It means that feedback improved writing quality despite the type of it. Nevertheless, Tee (2014) found written directive feedback to be useful and students liked it the most compared to the other categories of feedback. The study' findings clearly indicated that the written feedback was helpful and valuable in their essay revision. The reason was that the feedback was clear, direct, and information loaded. The findings from the written drafts indicated two forms of feedback that were commonly accepted by the students; directive and expressive feedback. Moreover, it is important for the students to receive explicit feedback on writing tasks, because they can improve their linguistic competence.

3.3. Strategies of corrective feedback.

3.3.1. Direct and indirect strategy

The strategies for providing corrective feedback are different from the types of feedback. For instance, Ferris and Roberts (2001) suggested distinguishing between explicitness and directness. Thus, explicitness is related to the type of CF, and directness is related to the strategy of CF. Moreover, Bitchener (2008) found that although direct strategy is slightly notorious, direct and indirect are strategies commonly applied in written corrective feedback. Bitchener (2008) found that direct corrective feedback avoids students' troubles for identifying because the feedback is evident. Similarly, Ellis (2009) investigated strategies for providing corrective feedback. She observed that direct and indirect corrective feedback occurred simultaneously and helped students to overcome their weaknesses.

3.3.2. Metalinguistic, focused and unfocused

Moreover, Ellis (2009) investigated the strategies for providing corrective feedback. She observed different strategies for providing corrective feedback and proposed a typology of strategies for written CF. Thus, the strategies are: direct, indirect, metalinguistic, focused and unfocused. Therefore, the results showed that focused CF let teachers to focus on specific categories of errors. However, unfocused CF ruled upon teachers' beliefs and students' needs. Similarly, Reza, Safivand and Fatamipour (2010) found that the strategy depended on what was being learned. So, direct or indirect, and focused or unfocused CF accomplish the role of feedback on students' writing improvement.

3.3.3. Peer feedback strategy

Teachers have been considered as the main agents and providers of feedback. For instance, Furnborough, & Truman (2009) found that students see teachers as the person who can judge their work because they are trained and they have the knowledge of what to correct. Similarly, Hyland (2013) found that students benefit from teacher's feedback because they see teachers as authority and students should abide by teachers. Nonetheless, nowadays it has been changing and the classes are incorporating different strategies or agents providers of feedback. For instance, Sotoudehnama, & Pilehvari (2015) carried out a study considering the beneficial effects of peer review on EFL learners' writing development. This study compared two groups to determine the advantages of peer review in giving or receiving feedback. The results showed the beneficial aspect of peer feedback on improving local aspects of their writings' structure and vocabulary. He also suggested that the students who commented on the writings of their peers benefited more than the ones who read the comments and modified the texts.

Likewise, in Sotoudehnama's study (2015) presented in the previous section, Ghanbari, Karampourchangi, & Reza (2015) conducted a study to explore the effect of time pressure and peer feedback on EFL students' writing performance. The findings declared that time pressure had no effect. Nevertheless, peer feedback had a significant effect on writing performance and verbal communication. Peer feedback facilitated the process of giving and accepting criticism, and authenticated and empowered peers' positions with peers. Furthermore, Huisman, Saab, Van Driel, & van den Broek, (2018) found the same result of peer feedback. They investigated the writing performances of undergraduate students who either received or provided feedback and

their perceptions about the role of feedback. Results showed that both providing and receiving feedback led to similar improvements in writing performance; they improved local aspects of their writings and verbal communication. The authors concluded that peer's feedback is beneficial because it influences both sides: givers and receivers.

3.4. Students' and Teachers' perceptions.

3.4.1. Students' perceptions

Alvira (2016) Investigated the use of feedback and the perceptions towards it. The author found that the role of feedback has been established as a crucial aspect of the writing process. The results showed that students perceive feedback as a tool that facilitates their learning process. However, corrective feedback had a different effect on writing improvement, and the effect depended on the explicitness of the feedback (Correa, Martinez, Molina, Silva, & Torres, 2013). Thus, students' perceptions might depend on the type of Corrective Feedback.

Similarly, Ellis (2009) found that the students' perceptions depended on the strategies of providing CF. Likewise, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) emphasize the role of the agents involved in the feedback provision. The results of those studies demonstrated that students respond to feedback positively. However, students appreciate some strategies or types more than others. Thus, their perceptions might contribute to a mutual improvement.

Leki (1991) investigated learners' perceptions about the strategy of feedback provided by teachers. The study found that students expected teachers to correct all errors because they felt they needed pressure to improve. Students' perceptions of feedback respond positively, so students believe that the feedback results are beneficial. Similarly, Hyland (2013) found positive

perceptions of students because students believed that they benefit more when receiving feedback from their teachers because they see teachers as the authority. Conversely, Weaver (2006) investigated students' perceptions of teachers' feedback. The study demonstrated that some students perceive that teacher's feedback is too general or vague, lacking guidance, focused only on the negative, or unrelated to the topic or to the assigned task.

3.4.2. Teachers' perceptions

On the other hand, Furnborough, & Truman (2009) conducted a study to analyze teachers' perceptions about the use of feedback. The study demonstrated that teachers believed that their feedback is beneficial because they were trained to do so. Teachers have the knowledge and the facility to provide feedback that their students need. Moreover, teachers concluded that in some way, they obligated their students to improve; they believed it contributed to learners' writing improvement.

Finally, teachers' perceptions resulted positively because teachers consider it necessary for writing improvement. Conversely, a recent study conducted by Lee, Leong, and Song (2016) found that teachers perceive peer feedback as an opportunity because learners can improve their writing by correcting peers' errors. Similarly, Huisman, Saab, Van Driel, & van den Broek (2018) demonstrated a new inclination for the agent provider of feedback. The results showed teachers perceived peer feedback as strategically beneficial.

CHAPTER IV

Methodology

This paper is a research synthesis, which refers to a continuum of techniques and research procedures developed by social scientists to review past literature systematically (Ortega, 2015). Thus, an exhaustive search and some parameters have been established to select the twenty-six studies in order to obtain reliable, relevant, and accurate data for this descriptive bibliographical research synthesis. First, the articles must be empirical to show the relationship between writing and the role of corrective feedback. Second, the empirical articles have to be recent; the publication date has to be since 2000. However, some exceptions will be accepted for those related to theory and theoretical concepts. Third, the studies should be associated with ESL and EFL learning participants. Finally, there will not be any discrepancy between the methodology of the primary studies; that is, those studies can be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed ones.

Regarding databases, the ones used for this research paper were Google Scholar, Academia, Redalyc, ResearchGate, Eric, and the virtual library of the University of Cuenca. Some journals were: journal of language teaching and research, journal of education and social science, and journals of second language writing.

Some of the keywords for the literature review were error correction, feedback, strategies, corrective feedback, implicit and explicit feedback, writing skills.

CHAPTER V

Analysis of the data

For the present research synthesis, 26 studies were gathered from different sources. Those studies fulfilled the criteria established in the methodology section. They have been classified according to the following categories: Area by continent, setting, approaches to improving writing skills, area of writing improvement, type of corrective feedback, strategies of CF, agent provider of feedback, writing task. However, only ten studies were gathered for the analysis of one category, which is perceptions toward feedback. Additionally, those studies are classified in this way in order to answer the research questions established in the introduction section.

5.1. Area by continent

Table 1 shows the area by continent where the studies were conducted. This category emerged as the necessity to analyze the topic and the reality of the context. It was classified as follows: Europe, Asia, Middle East, and America.

Table 1 Area by continent

	No of studies	%
Europe	5	19.23
Asia	11	42.30
Middle East	6	23.07
America	4	15.38

It was found that the majority of the studies were conducted in countries such as China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Korea, Singapore, and Thailand. Then, the Middle East countries,Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Jordan, occupy the second place. Conversely, few studies have been conducted in America and Europe. Europe included countries such as the United Kingdom, Liverpool, and the Netherlands. On the other hand, American studies occurred in Colombia, Chile, United States, and Canada. Thus, there is a gap for collecting authentic sources according to our context Ecuador.

5.2.Participants' English level

Table 2 Setting

	No of studies	%
Beginners	0	0%
Intermediate	16	61.53%
Advances	8	30.76 %
No mentioned	2	7.69%

Table two indicates the English level of the participants of the studies gathered for this research synthesis. Although three categories have been established: beginners, intermediate, and advanced in this table, only intermediate and advanced participants were mentioned in the studies. One of the reasons for this may be the one stated by Hyland (2013), who found that feedback on writing works better on complex writing tasks that intermediate and advanced participants can offer. Also, as mentioned by Hyland, the setting is related to the writing assignment and the area of writing improvement.

Finally, the effect of feedback is not directly related to the participant, the effect of feedback depends on some other aspects mentioned below: area of writing improvement, type of feedback, agent provider, strategies, and writing task (Correa, Martinez, Molina, Silva, & Torres 2013; Ellis, 2009).

5.3. Approaches to improving writing skills

Table 3 shows the identified main approaches to improving writing skills by providing feedback. The approaches emerged through the analysis of those 26 empirical studies and were classified as follows. Process-oriented approach, product-oriented approach, and process-product oriented approach.

Table 3 Approaches to improving writing skills

	No. Studies
Process-oriented approach	8/26
Product-oriented approach	6/26
Product-process approach	8/26
None mentioned	4/26

The first approach is process-oriented. This approach is used to emphasize the feedback focus on syntax and grammatical errors in the writing process. This approach demands that the feedback provided on writing should fulfill grammar aspects to create competent writers (Duijnhouwer, Prin, & Stokking, 2012). For instance, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) offer teachers reassuring evidence that high-intermediate students have the required knowledge and

potential to be successful peer reviewers as an integral part of the process-oriented writing classroom (p45). In other words, the process-oriented approach is notorious despite the agent who provided the feedback. The process-oriented approach supports the idea of checking form instead of content. Thus, the process becomes the *focused feedback* in the writing process. 30% of the studies share the notion that form is more important than content while checking students' writing tasks.

On the other hand, six studies based their research on a product-oriented approach. The product-oriented approach focuses on the final product. It means that what should be corrected are ideas regarding cohesion, coherence, organization, and transition (Peterson, & McClay, 2010; Hyland, 2013). In other words, the main focus of this approach is content instead of form. The studies of Lee (2007) and Peterson and McClay (2010) implemented this approach over the overuse of process-oriented approach because they found limitations in the process-oriented approach focus. Then, the product-oriented approaches fulfilled those limitations. Additionally, the product-oriented approach emphasizes the idea of critical and logical writers.

Although the product-oriented approach seemed to be opposite to the process-oriented approach, they share the same objective. Those approaches aim to improve learners' writing skills. Therefore, the product and the process approaches aim to improve writing quality by working independently. However, there are some limitations for each approach that its counterpart can fulfil. The product-oriented approach can fulfill process-oriented approach limitations and vice versa. Thus, a third category emerged from those mentioned previously. The product-process approach, which is the combination of two different points of view and the same

objective, seeks to facilitate the provision of feedback and writing improvement. The product-process approach aims to improve writing quality by working together (Haniza, Maulan, & Ismail, 2008; Patchan, Charney, & Schunn, 2009; Ghanbari, Karampourchangi, & Reza, (2015). In other words, the studies that implemented the product- process approach aimed to improve writing quality and it can be done by providing feedback on content and form. Thus, the effect of feedback on students' writing skills is beneficial.

5.4. Area of writing improvement.

Table 4 shows the area of writing that feedback intended to improve. Those areas emerged from the analysis of 26 studies. The areas of writing improvement were classified as content, form and vocabulary. However, the area of content included the subcategories cohesion and coherence. And the area of form included subcategories as: grammar and syntax.

Table 4 Area of writing improvement

	Area	No. Studies
Content	Cohesion	16/26
	Coherence	16/26
Form	Grammar	14/26
	Syntax	11/26
Other	Vocabulary	5/26

Table 4 shows that content was the predominant area of writing improvement. The content area required the provision of feedback upon global aspects of writing. Global aspects of writing refer to sub areas such as: comprehension, organization, cohesion and coherence (Sotoudehnama & Pilehvari, 2016). Moreover, the content area of writing brings out that product-oriented approach rules upon the provision of feedback. Thus, the content area requires feedback upon global aspects of writing, and gives importance to a final product (Patchan, Charney, & Schunn, 2009; Sotoudehnama & Pilehvari. 2016). However, Hyland (2003) demonstrated cohesion and coherence received attention during the provision of feedback and they represent the *content-area*. Thus, only cohesion and coherence were included and the table. Hyland (2013) stated that feedback should focus on content. It means that feedback should promote critical thinkers instead of expert writers. As mentioned by Hyland feedback provided upon content affected writing fluency. Thus, writers were able to write big writing tasks accurately.

Conversely, some studies focused on form as an area of writing improvement. The area of the form included subcategories such as: grammar and syntax. and those sub-categories are recognized as local areas of writing (Furnborough and Truman, 2009). Moreover, According to Grami (2005) feedback is mandatory to correct the *form-area* of writing and teachers cannot deny that they do it. For instance, when teachers provide feedback, they focus on grammar and syntax which are the local aspects of writing. Notwithstanding, Furnborough and Truman. (2009), Grami (2005), and Duijnhouwer, Prins and Stokking, (2012) conducted studies in which feedback intended to accomplish form-writing improvement. They demonstrated process-

oriented approach rules upon the provision of feedback. This approach emphasizes that feedback should improve the writing process by focusing on grammar error correction. Moreover, the feedback on form affected writers regarding accuracy. Learners were able to write accurately when they received feedback on local aspects of writing (Duijnhouwer, Prins and Stokking, 2012).

On the other hand, some studies highlighted content and form as areas of writing improvement by considering content and form as areas of writing that have to be improved separately. Those studies aimed to improve writing by providing feedback on content and form. Bitchener (2005) mentioned it is possible to promote organized content writers with an excellent writing knowledge level while providing feedback on both areas. For example, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) conducted a study where feedback provision created fluent and accurate writers. It means that they were taught about the global and local aspects of writing. (p.38) Thus, they could improve those aspects. Chandler (2003) focused on content and form as areas of writing that must be improved by providing feedback and concluded that writing can be improved in both areas. Thus, feedback on content and form affected students/writers regarding fluency and accuracy. Writers were able to write their writing tasks in an organized, and accurate way. Similarly, the provision of feedback upon the *content-form area* is ruled by an approach, which is product-process approach.

Additionally, studies like Ghanbari, Karampourchangi and Reza (2015), and Wahtyni (2017) demonstrated that vocabulary is one area of writing that can be improved by feedback provision. However, this area of writing improvement does not depend on an approach. Thus, few studies focused on vocabulary as an area of writing improvement. Vocabulary has not been

considered an essential element in writing improvement because correcting errors seemed to overshadow vocabulary importance (Ashraf, Fareed, & Bilal 2016). Therefore, feedback on vocabulary affected writers regarding fluency and accuracy because learners were able to retain information that they corrected.

5.5. Type and form of corrective feedback

Table 5 shows the type of corrective feedback implemented in the studies. The analysis indicates that corrective feedback, which consists of providing corrections implicitly or explicitly, is the most notorious type of feedback. It means that it was repetitive among the studies. However, the research consisted of analyzing implicit and explicit as types of corrective feedback. Besides the factor, table 5 shows two forms of providing corrective feedback: written and oral. Those two forms of providing feedback are related to the explicitness of corrective feedback. Actually, verbal corrective feedback and written corrective feedback happen in two ways; explicit and implicit.

Table 5 Type and form of CF

	Explicit	Implicit
Written	21/26	12/26
Oral	7/26	NA

First, the main type of feedback is corrective feedback. Corrective feedback resulted to be common among twenty of twenty- six studies. Corrective feedback is a term used to cover negative feedback. Brown (2000) mentioned that negative feedback is related to mistakes and

errors, while positive feedback is related to positive comments too. The purpose of providing corrective feedback is either to show learners the error they made and wait for the correction or to show learners the corrections of their errors. Hyland (2013) mentioned that the effect of corrective feedback depends on how explicit or implicit the teacher wants to be. Thus, two types of feedback emerged from this affirmation: explicit-corrective feedback and implicit-corrective feedback. Sheen, (2004) highlighted the term of corrective feedback as an umbrella to cover explicit or implicit negative feedback.

Explicit feedback refers to the process of providing the correcting order clearly, so the learners do not trouble correcting errors (Ellis, 2009). Explicit feedback intends to show where the errors are, and the learners have no problems identifying and correcting them (Ellis, 2009). explicit corrective feedback facilitates the agent provider of feedback since orders are clear and can be understood easily. There is no concern about order confusion. Nevertheless, Explicit corrective feedback affected learners' internalization. It took more time to improve writing skills without learners' effort to understand the error during writing correction. Thus, learners are prone to repeat errors among their learning process until they internalize the writing patterns (Bitchener, 2005).

However, the internalization process can be different by providing implicit corrective feedback. Implicit feedback is a type of feedback in which the teacher indicates that an error has been made on learner' writing task, but the teacher avoids out providing the right form of the error (Lee, 2007; Pei. 2013). Implicit corrective feedback benefits learners since learners get involved actively in the learning process. The effort they do helps to internalize corrections. Thus, learners benefit more from their writings when they have to make an effort to understand

what they have been learning. They are able to recognize patterns and use it on different writing tasks. Notwithstanding, implicit corrective feedback requires carefulness. The agent who provides implicit corrective feedback must take care about the intended meaning because teachers' role is to guide and avoid learners' confusion. Implicit corrective feedback requires effort on both sides; providers and receivers.

On the other hand, explicit and implicit were evident in two forms: written and verbal. Consequently, corrective feedback can be classified as written-corrective and oral-corrective feedback. Written corrective feedback was moderately notorious. This type of feedback occurred among the 20 studies in this analysis. The results showed that written feedback is the most used in writing tasks. Written corrective feedback is mandatory for writing correction because the only way to correct writing is through writing (Pei, 2013). Pei (2013) mentioned that teachers cannot deny that written feedback is what they know to correct students' writings. Written feedback benefits students who are afraid to interact with their teachers (Ghanbari, Karampourchangi, & Reza, 2015). Written corrective feedback affects learners' understanding of corrections, sometimes learners need some clarification of the feedback they received (Alvira, 2016).

However, written feedback can help to improve areas of writing as local and global aspects. It means that written feedback can be used to highlight writing's aspects and learners can take a look when they need. It depends on the explicitness of the feedback. Written corrective feedback most of the time is explicit because of the complexity of providing implicit corrective feedback without misguiding learners. Explicit written corrective feedback is simple and does

not require carefulness. Conversely, Implicit written corrective feedback must be provided carefully, so learners can achieve feedback goals.

On the other hand, oral corrective was not commonly used, nevertheless oral corrective feedback was beneficial because it provides information that cannot be understood in written corrective feedback. Alvira, (2016) mentioned that during oral corrective feedback learners can ask for clarification. Furnborough and Truman (2009) found that oral feedback provides learners a clear view of what they should improve through the teachers' clarification. Oral feedback benefits learners since they are able to negotiate with their tutor. Learners have the opportunity to ask for clarification or a better explanation (Peterson, & McClay, 2010; Alvira, 2016). Moreover, during verbal corrective feedback, teachers tend to use implicit feedback because they have the opportunity to guide students in the way they want. Thus, implicit oral corrective feedback over poses explicit oral corrective feedback.

Finally, oral corrective feedback sometimes works as a complement of written corrective feedback. Thus, written feedback shows what should be corrected and oral feedback gives a better explanation of the corrections that should be done. The provision of written and verbal corrective feedback requires a planned process depending on its explicitness. Also, the provision of written and oral corrective feedback depends on the writing task itself.

5.6. Strategies of corrective feedback.

This table shows the common strategies to provide corrective feedback. Those strategies are direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic CF, and focused and unfocused CF. Moreover, the

typology of those strategies was proposed by Ellis (2009) and responded to the form of written corrective feedback.

Table 6 Strategies of CF

	Type	No study
	Direct	14
	Indirect	9
Strategy of CF	Metalinguistic	3
	Focused	14
	Unfocused	12
	Electronic	1

Table 6 indicates that direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback were commonly identified among the analysis. Direct corrective feedback was used to provide the appropriate linguistic form or structure close to the linguistic commited fault. For instance, Wahtyni (2017) described direct corrective feedback as pointing out unnecessary elements, and the insertion of a missing elements, or the provision of the right form or structure. Moreover, Ferris (2005) highlighted that the effect of direct corrective feedback depends on some conditions. The first one is when the learners are beginners in language proficiency. The second is when the teacher wishes to focus on a particular error. However, direct corrective feedback prone students to repeat errors because of its simplicity. Direct feedback facilitates teachers to provide it and facilitates learners to understand it. Notwithstanding, learners require challenging conditions to overcome their writing weaknesses.

On the other hand, indirect corrective provides the challenging condition. In indirect corrective feedback, the teacher indicates students have made an error in their writing, but the tutor does not highlight the correction of the committed error. Ferris and Roberts (2001) indicated that Indirect corrective feedback most of the time can be presented by providing idications like codes. For instance, coding in the bottom page the number of errors, aplaying hints in order that showing where the error has happened, what type of error it is, or underlining or crossing out the errors. Ferris and Roberts (2001) found that indirect corrective feedback demanded students to make an effort. Thus, the learners were able to internalize the information and correct the errors.

The second strategy for providing corrective feedback was metalinguistic. Metalinguistic is a type of corrective feedback which provides linguistic codes for the commited error. It can be in the form of error codes or a brief grammatical explanation (Ellis, 2008). Bitchener (2005) found that through metalinguistic corrective feedback students performed better because they used the examples as a brief grammatical explanation. Moreover, the analysis revealed that metalinguistic corrective feedback was applied as a complement of direct corrective feedback.

Finally, the strategy of providing focused and unfocused corrective feedback acquired attention. Focused corrective feedback demands providing feedback on an average number of forms that have been selected previously, for example, on the sabject-verb agreement or the use of definite or indefinite articles (Ellis, 2008). The author holds that because the range of the errors is too vast in unfocused CF, learners find it more difficult to process the errors. The provision of focused corrective feedback facilitated the attention of specific students' language features in writing compositions.

Unlike focused corrective feedback, unfocused corrective feedback is provided upon all errors that have been made by students, not only on specific ones (Ellis, 2008). Unfocused corrective feedback does not restrict teachers to provide feedback on students' writing features they consider necessary. Thus, teachers provide feedback upon unpredictable emerging errors. However, unfocused corrective feedback is demanding because focusing on any kind of error consumes time, and that may result in frustration for learners. Additionally, the strategy used to provide corrective feedback depends on the writing features. Thus, the effectiveness of those strategies is related to the condition in which the feedback is provided.

5.7. Type of writing task.

The effect of feedback on writing depends on the type of writing task. Table 4 shows the common types of writing for the 26 studies gathered in the analysis. The types of writing tasks are: essays, paragraphs, and others. Table 4 shows the type of writing task. In terms of complexity, they were classified as: simple and complex. Simple writing tasks included sentences and paragraphs while complex writing tasks included essays and bibliographies.

Table 7 Type of writing task

	No. Studies
Essays	11/26
Paragraphs	6/26
Others	6/26
None mentioned	3/26

Table 7 shows that essays have a higher effect on writing development because the agent in charge of providing feedback could focus on more aspects (Wahtyni, 2017). Thus, the analysis' results showed that the type of writing task is related to the area of writing improvement. In other words, in order to cover aspects of content and form in a more significant way, the writing task should be a complex one. For instance, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) found that they can examine local and global aspects of complex writing tasks. However, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016); Wahtyni (2017) found that if the purpose of the feedback is on grammar and syntax, simple writing tasks are enough to examine and provide feedback in this aspect.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to examine aspects of cohesion and coherence in simple writing tasks. but it can be done in an efficient way in complex writing tasks. Moreover, the analysis' results showed that the type of writing task leads to different areas of writing improvement. It means that biographies, essays, paragraphs or sentences, intend to examine knowledge, fluency, and structure. Those writing tasks focus on those aspects, but those writing tasks lead to a deeper focus than others. Additionally, the type of writing task during feedback provision is not as important as the focus of the feedback, which depends on the type of feedback.

5.8. Agent providers of feedback.

The impact of feedback depends on the agent who provides the feedback. Table 8 shows the common agents during the feedback provision. Those agents are teachers, peers and others. Others included agents like a computer.

Table 8 Agent providers of feedback

	No of studies	%
Teachers	19	73 %
Peers	5	19 %
Others	2	10 %

Table 8 shows the agent who provides feedback. The majority of the studies in the analysis evidenced that teachers are the main agent during feedback provision to improve writing skills. The reasons why those studies implemented teachers as the main agent of feedback provision can vary. The first reason is that teachers have the opportunity to apply some kind of pressure on their activities (Furnborough, & Truman, 2009; Leki, 1991). As mentioned by Hyland (2013) students benefit from teacher's feedback because they see teachers as authority. The teachers' role on feedback provision seemed to be crucial on writing improvement. Teachers are the main agent provider of feedback because learners expect that. Similarly, Leki (1991) found that students expected teachers to correct all errors because they felt they needed pressure that only teachers can do in order to improve. Hyland (1990) mentioned that teachers have the advantage of obligating students to go back and rework their tasks.

Second, teachers are the main agents who provide feedback because of the capacity to focus on local and global aspects. It means that teachers are trained to give feedback, and they can focus on aspects such as content or form (Ashraf, Fareed & Bilal, 2016). The feedback provided by the teacher emphasizes the crucial points that learners have to improve.

Furthermore, the feedback provided by the teacher has to motivate learners. Thus, teachers' feedback affected learners' constancy because they worked when the teachers asked them to do it (Ashraf, Fareed & Bilal, 2016).

However, teachers' feedback affected learners' dependency too; they expected teacher's feedback all the time. Dealing with this statement, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari, (2014) stated that nowadays, classes are changing from teacher-centered to student-centered. Thus, the strategy of feedback provided by the teacher moved to feedback provided by peers. Although peers cannot provide feedback on certain aspects in a deep way, they can increase motivation. If peers are trained to give feedback on the different areas of writing, the effect of feedback can be greater. Finally, peers' feedback affected learners' autonomy; they were able to work by themselves and to help others. Peers' feedback affected learners' confidence and motivation (Weaver, 2006).

Nevertheless, teachers' feedback and peers' do not contradict each other, and they can work in harmony for different purposes. For instance, some studies implemented the two agents' providers of feedback. Adventitiously, the feedback provided by those agents affected learners' motivation. They were able to accept criticism, internalize the information, and transfer or use that information to correct peers' works.

5.9.Perceptions toward corrective feedback.

In this category, ten studies were selected to be analyzed. Then, it presents teachers' and students' perceptions. Moreover, the table indicates positive and negative perceptions, respectively.

Table 9 Perceptions toward feedback

	Perceptions	No of studies
Teachers	Positive	8
	Negative	0
Students	Positive	10
	Negative	5

Note 9 = 10

As it can be seen, teachers' perceptions toward feedback are positive. First, Tang and Harrison (2011), Hyland (2013), and Lee, Leong, and Song (2016) found that teachers consider feedback as an essential element in the process of language acquisition since it is a tool to guide students to think about writing errors and learn from them (Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016).

Second, it was found that teachers provide feedback based on their beliefs about the needs and capabilities of their students (Lee, Leong & Song 2016). In other words, the feedback that teachers provide is based on what they consider learners need to become competent writers. Then, teachers' beliefs are basically about giving feedback on local and global aspects of writing. Moreover, Tang and Harrison (2011) found that teachers provide feedback in three ways: grade, grades plus explanation, and detailed feedback of all errors. In fact, feedback upon error benefits

more than providing grades. However, another finding states that teachers rarely establish feedback as a complement for grades explaining the reason for that grade.

Third, some teachers are inclined to view their feedback as beneficial; thus, Furnborough, & Truman, (2009) stated that teachers are seen as the perfect feedback provider because they are trained to do so. However, Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2014) pointed out that feedback provision has been changing. Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2014) mentioned that peers are capable of providing feedback, too. Finally, the results showed that teachers perceive that feedback is acceptable from any agent provider; thus, the agent provider of feedback could be the teacher or peers, but they should be trained beforehand.

Additionally, teachers consider that feedback is beneficial if it is provided orally. When teachers provide oral feedback, they have the facility to explain some aspects that are misunderstood. However, most of the time, teachers provide written feedback because of the condition. Pei (2013) states that the perfect way to correct writing is through writing. Finally, there was not a big deal with the type of feedback, so teachers considered that any kind of feedback turns into a benefit because there is always something to improve.

On the other hand, the findings also revealed that some students responded positively to feedback. They perceived feedback as a necessary complement to writing practice (Rotsaert, Panadero, & Schellens, 2017). This complement shows students the areas and aspects they should focus on during the writing process; in other words, feedback shows their weaknesses. As mentioned by Furnborough and Truman (2009); and Hyland (2013), teachers can motivate learners. Conversely, some students considered that peers' feedback helped to improve their

writing skills since peers' feedback provided more than error focus, and it also offered praises too.

Notwithstanding, the perception of beneficial feedback is based on aspects such as cognitive styles or the student's level. Thus, some students respond negatively to feedback; they perceive that feedback does not always fulfill their needs; sometimes, they feel that it is insufficient to improve learning (Weaver, 2006). Additionally, students consider that some comments are too general or vague, lack guidance, focus on the negative, or are unrelated to the writing task. Therefore, when students receive feedback and a grade, they perceive feedback as an explanation of the grade instead of information that helps them to improve their learning.

Finally, any kind of feedback was accepted by students. However, there was a little inclination for direct strategy and explicit type of feedback, because that make feedback simple and straightforward. In the same way, students considered that written feedback was more relevant than oral feedback, because they avoided face-to-face interaction, but there was no trouble receiving verbal feedback. Thus, Mulliner and Tucker (2015) found that students and teachers perceived oral and written feedback to complement each other.

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CHAPTER VI

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

According to Hyland (2013), the writing process is based on the appropriate and strategic use of language with structural accuracy and communicative potential. Many cognitive processes participate in writing, making this skill essential in language teaching, learning, and assessment (Nasim, Azade, & Mohammad 2015). Then the necessity of the use of feedback as a strategy to improve writing. Feedback is any kind of information given to learners about their performance of a learning task, usually to improve their performance (Ur, 2006). Hyland states its importance by saying that feedback in writing motivates students to develop their writing skills.

Consequently, the results of twenty-six empirical studies were analyzed to identify the effects of corrective feedback on ESL/EFL students' writing skills. These studies were divided into six main categories: approaches to improving writing skill, type of corrective feedback,

strategies of Corrective feedback, agent provider of feedback, writing tasks, and teachers' and students' perceptions.

First, regarding the effects of corrective feedback, the type, and the strategies play an important role in writing development. It has been mentioned that any kind of feedback can influence writing improvement; however, to provide feedback accurately and make it useful for students, it has to identifystudents' weaknesses to modify learners' cognitive processes (Rotsaert, Panadero, & Schellens, 2017). Therefore, two types of corrective feedback were identified as effective in improving writing skills; explicit and implicit. Those two types of CF were provided in two forms; written and oral.

Second, four strategies of corrective feedback resulted in being effective on writing development. However, the application of one strategy over others depends on writing conditions and the purpose of the feedback. Ellis (2009) proposed a typology of strategies of corrective feedback and included: direct, indirect, focused, and unfocused. Notwithstanding, the analysis demonstrated that direct strategies of corrective feedback were commonly used.

Additionally, three main approaches resulted to be closely related to the types of feedback. The approeches included written and verbal feedback though there was an inclination for direct strategies of corrective feedback. These approaches are the product-oriented approach, the process-oriented approach, and the process-product approach. The product-oriented approach, whose focus is content, affected organization, transition, and connection. The process-oriented approach, whose focus is the form, influenced grammar and syntax. Therefore, those approaches working together, process-product approach, made feedback meaningful because

learners focused on local and global aspects of writing (Haniza, Maulan, & Ismail, 2008; Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari 2016).

Third, the agent provider of feedback played an important role in writing development. Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) found that teachers have been seen as the perfect agent because they are trained to provide feedback on local and global aspects. Those aspects cannot be identified easily by others. However, nowadays, classes are moving from being teacher-centered to student-centered. Then feedback is also given by peers and not only teachers. However, the feedback that peers provide focuses on praises rather than aspects of writing (Furnborough, & Truman, 2009). Sotoudehnama and Pilehvari (2016) found that peers can fulfill feedback parameters if they are trained before providing it.

Finally, teachers' and students' perceptions coincided with the idea of feedback as a vital core part to improve writing skills. They perceive that feedback fulfills their writing needs, although it does not always happen, sometimes they feel that it is insufficient to improve learning (Weaver, 2006). It was found that feedback is provided based on the beliefs of the agent; those beliefs are about the needs and capabilities of their students (Lee, Leong & Song 2016).

On the other hand, some other aspects did not coincide between learners and teachers. Teachers perceived that CF strategies and the types of CF are effective. However, students perceived that some (direct- explicit) are more effective than others. Additionally, students

expected teachers' feedback most of the time. However, they were open to receiving feedback from anyone who was trained in providing feedback.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the results of the studies, two recommendations have been established. First, taking into account students' perceptions, teachers should be concerned about all CF strategies so that students do not consider feedback vague or too general. Also, teachers should make students understand that feedback is not about explaining a grade but pointing out relevant writing aspects where students should improve. In other words, feedback should identify students' weaknesses.

Finally, the analysis showed that most studies belonged to Asia and the Middle East, and a few empirical studies were conducted in America. Therefore, a final recommendation is to conduct primary studies in Ecuador about the effects of CF on the development of writing skills and the perceptions of students and teachers towards it.

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