

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, where English is not used as the primary language of daily communication, writing is often seen as one of the most challenging skills for students to master. As a productive skill, writing requires learners to generate ideas, organize them logically, and express them using accurate language. Despite the importance of writing in academic settings, many students still struggle to produce clear and grammatically correct texts. One of the strategies commonly used by teachers to help students improve their writing is Written Corrective Feedback (WCF). WCF refers to the responses provided by teachers on students' written work to highlight errors and guide students in making improvements (Rod Ellis, 2009, p. 98). Among various types of WCF, direct and indirect feedback are the most frequently used. Direct feedback provides the correct form of an identified error, while indirect feedback only signals the presence of an error without giving the correction.

Although many studies have investigated the effectiveness of WCF in improving grammatical accuracy (Bitchener and Knoch, 2010, p. 214). There is still limited research on how students' perceptions of feedback—especially in relation to their motivational traits—affect their engagement with and use of feedback.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of considering students' emotional responses to feedback. For instance, Mahfoodh (2017, p. 94) found that too much correction could overwhelm students and reduce their motivation to write. Similarly, Zhang and Hyland (2018, p. 226) reported that students preferred direct feedback for more complex errors but liked indirect feedback for smaller mistakes because it helped them build self-editing skills. While these studies highlight the connection between feedback and emotional factors, few have specifically explored how students' motivational traits shape their perceptions of WCF and influence their writing improvement.

With the increasing use of digital tools in educational research, this study used Google Forms to collect data through a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. This method gave students more time to reflect on their experiences and provide thoughtful responses (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 22).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of direct and indirect written corrective feedback and its relation to their motivation in learning English. The results of this study are expected to provide insights that can inform future feedback practices, particularly in digital learning environments.

B. Statement of the Problem

A considerable amount of research had been conducted on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing; however, it remained unclear

how undergraduate (S1) English majors processed and benefited from direct and indirect feedback. Several studies highlighted that direct feedback contributed to improving students' grammatical accuracy (Bitchener and Knoch, 2010, p. 214), while others suggested that indirect feedback enhanced students' self-editing abilities (Van Beuningen, 2011, p. 85-90). Despite these contributions, limited attention had been given to the potential influence of students' motivational traits on their engagement with feedback.

Previous studies on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) mostly emphasized students' emotional responses. Some students reported feeling overwhelmed by an excessive number of corrections (Mahfoodh, 2017, p. 94), whereas others expressed a preference for direct feedback when dealing with certain types of errors (Zhang and Hyland, 2018, p. 226). Nevertheless, the relationship between students' motivation to learn English and their engagement with feedback remained underexplored. This condition indicated the need for further research to examine how students' motivation related to the way they utilized feedback in their writing.

Alongside the increasing use of digital tools in educational settings, employing instruments such as Google Forms with multiple-choice and open-ended questions offered a practical approach to collecting authentic student responses (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 115). This method had not been extensively applied in research involving undergraduate English majors and held potential to provide deeper insights

into students' experiences with Written Corrective Feedback (WCF).

C. Research Questions

Based on the background described above, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions of direct and indirect written corrective feedback?
2. What are the impacts of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on students' writing improvement?
3. What are the effects of feedback on students' motivation in learning English?

D. Objectives of the study

In line with the research questions, the objectives of this study are:

1. To explore students' perceptions of direct and indirect written corrective feedback.
2. To identify the impacts of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on students' writing improvement..
3. To analyze the effects of feedback on students' motivation in learning English.

E. Significance of the Study

This study is important for several reasons:

1. Theoretical Contribution

This study adds to the existing research on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) by providing insights into the connection between students' perceptions, their

motivational traits, and the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback. By including motivational aspects, this study helps enrich the understanding of second language writing, especially in relation to how students respond to feedback.

2. Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study offer useful information for teachers, especially those teaching writing. Teachers can use the findings to develop more effective feedback strategies that match students' preferences and emotional reactions. By adjusting feedback practices based on students' motivation, teachers can help improve students' writing skills and increase their interest in learning.

3. Practical Relevance

This study also shows how digital platforms, such as Google Forms, can be used to collect meaningful information about students' experiences with feedback. Teachers and schools can apply similar methods to improve how feedback is given, especially in online or blended learning environments.

4. Future Research Directions

This research can be a starting point for further studies on the relationship between feedback, student motivation, and writing performance, especially in online learning settings or when using digital technology in language teaching.

F. Scope and Limitations of the Research

1. Scope of the Research

This study focused on undergraduate students who were studying in English Language Education programs at UIN Palopo. It specifically examined their perceptions of direct and indirect written corrective feedback in relation to their English writing skills. The writing tasks involved in this study included academic writing, such as essays, reports, and research papers. Other English skills, such as speaking, reading, and listening, were not included in this research.

The data for this research is collected using Google Forms with multiple choice and open-ended questions. This way, students can share their honest thoughts and experiences more freely. The study also takes place in a modern digital learning environment because online feedback tools are now commonly used in universities.

2. Limitations of the Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations:

a. Specific Group of Participants

The participants were only undergraduate English majors at UIN Palopo, so the findings may not represent students from other majors or backgrounds.

b. Data Collection Method

Since the data were collected through online questionnaires, students' answers might not be as

detailed as those collected through interviews or focus groups.

c. Short Study Period

The research was conducted in a limited period, which made it difficult to observe the long-term effects of feedback on students' writing development.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Studies

Research on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) contexts has attracted significant attention over the past decades. In EFL settings, learners study English in environments where the language is not commonly used in daily communication, so classroom instruction often becomes the primary source of language input and practice. Within the broader field of SLA, which explores how individuals learn a language other than their first language, feedback is considered an important element that supports language development. In this regard, WCF has been widely examined as a pedagogical strategy that helps learners notice their errors and improve the accuracy of their writing. However, the findings remain varied depending on whether the focus is on students' perceptions, the impacts on writing development, or the effects on motivation. To connect with the present research, this section organizes prior studies according to these three domains.

1. Students' Perceptions of Written Corrective Feedback

Several studies have explored learners' perceptions of teacher feedback. Almohawes (2025, p. 6) found that undergraduate EFL students preferred direct feedback when clarity and immediate correction were required, while motivation was linked to how students valued feedback. Wahyuni and Putri (2024, p. 62) also highlighted

Indonesian EFL learners' appreciation of balanced feedback—accuracy paired with encouragement. Similarly, Alshahrani (2023, p. 49) demonstrated that learners' emotional readiness shaped their perception of feedback effectiveness. Zhang et al. (2021, p. 270) revealed that preferences varied by error type, proficiency, and enjoyment level, with students who experienced higher foreign language enjoyment showing greater receptivity to both direct and indirect feedback

While these studies emphasize preference and perception, they differ from this research, which integrates perception with motivational traits and writing development in the Indonesian undergraduate context.

2. Impacts of Written Corrective Feedback on Writing Development

Another line of inquiry has focused on the role of WCF in enhancing writing skills. Ghoorchaei et al. (2022, p. 8) found that direct feedback led to immediate grammatical improvement, while indirect feedback promoted long-term retention. Karim and Nassaji (2020, p. 65) similarly reported short-term gains in grammatical accuracy from direct WCF. Teng and Zhang (2021, p. 12) emphasized that indirect feedback enhanced metacognitive awareness, while direct feedback promoted accuracy.

Park

and Kim (2022, p. 3) showed that hybrid feedback combining direct and indirect approaches supported both accuracy and autonomy. In the Indonesian context, Cahyono and Astuti (2025, p. 94) found that both feedback types improved accuracy, though indirect feedback fostered greater independence.

These studies primarily measured grammatical outcomes, whereas this research expands the scope by examining students' perceptions of how direct and indirect WCF contribute to their broader writing development.

3. Effects of Written Corrective Feedback on Motivation

A growing body of research has connected WCF to learner motivation. Rahimi and Zhang (2021, p. 867) reported that motivation mediated learners' engagement with feedback, leading to deeper revisions. Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2023, p. 31) showed that instrumental motivation predicted stronger uptake of direct feedback. Cao et al. (2025, p. 10) demonstrated that writing assessment literacy correlated with higher motivation and reduced anxiety. Lee and Tajeddin (2020, p. 7) emphasized the role of emotional tone, finding that overly negative correction undermined motivation. Mahfoodh (2021, p. 5) also confirmed that supportive feedback boosted confidence, while harsh correction discouraged learners.

Although these studies highlight the motivational role of feedback, few have investigated how direct versus indirect WCF specifically affects motivation in the Indonesian EFL context. This study fills this gap by integrating motivation into the analysis of WCF types.

Overall, previous studies show that WCF affects learners in different ways depending on the type of feedback, the learners' characteristics, and the learning context. However, most of these studies examined perceptions (e.g., Almohawes, 2025; Zhang et al., 2021), writing development (e.g., Karim & Nassaji, 2020; Ghoorchaei et al., 2022), or motivation (e.g., Rahimi & Zhang, 2021; Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2023)

separately. Very few examined how these three aspects are connected, especially in the Indonesian undergraduate context where English learning is influenced by cultural and educational factors.

This study is important because it brings these aspects together. It not only explores how students perceive direct and indirect WCF but also shows how these perceptions relate to their writing development and motivation. By doing so, it offers a more complete picture than studies that focused only on grammar accuracy or attitudes toward feedback.

The findings of this research matter because they highlight WCF as more than just a tool for correcting errors. Instead, WCF is shown to play a role in shaping accuracy, independence, and motivation at the same time. This makes the study valuable both for theory and for classroom practice, while also giving new insights from the Indonesian EFL context that has not been widely studied before.

B. Theoretical Framework

This study used three main theories to support the analysis of students' perceptions of written corrective feedback (WCF) and its connection to their motivation in writing. These theories were chosen to help explain how students might respond to direct and indirect feedback, how their writing development could be influenced, and how their motivation could shape that response in the context of EFL writing.

The first theory used in this study was the Noticing Hypothesis proposed by Schmidt (1990, p. 144). This theory explains that students can only learn new language forms when they consciously notice the difference between what they have written and the correct form. In relation to written corrective feedback, direct feedback gives students the correct form of an error, making it easier for them to notice the mistake. On the other hand, indirect feedback shows that there is a mistake but does not provide the correction, requiring students to think more deeply and find the correct form themselves. This process of noticing is considered important

for helping students improve the accuracy of their writing. The Noticing Hypothesis therefore served as a guide for understanding how students might recognize and respond to errors pointed out in their writing.

The second theory supporting this research is the Output Hypothesis proposed by Swain (1995, p. 126). This theory emphasizes that producing language is not only a means of communication but also a process that pushes learners to reflect on and refine their linguistic output. When students are required to revise their work, they are pushed to produce more accurate forms and restructure their interlanguage. Indirect feedback, in particular, promotes this “pushed output” by encouraging learners to identify and correct errors independently, thereby fostering deeper cognitive engagement and long-term improvement. Direct feedback, while more explicit, also contributes to output by providing immediate models that students can incorporate into their revisions. The Output Hypothesis thus complements the Noticing Hypothesis by explaining how feedback leads to language development through active production and revision.

The third theoretical lens used in this study was Dörnyei’s concept of motivational traits (2001, p. 24). According to this theory, motivation is influenced by personal goals, interest in learning, confidence, and beliefs about one’s own ability. This perspective helped explain how students’ motivation might shape their reactions to feedback. Students who are more motivated may be more likely to use feedback to improve their writing, while students with lower motivation may feel that feedback is difficult or discouraging. Motivation therefore plays an important role in whether students are willing to revise their work and invest effort in improving their writing after receiving feedback.

Together, these three theories formed the foundation of this study. The Noticing Hypothesis explains how students process feedback cognitively, the Output Hypothesis explains how feedback contributes to writing development through language production, and the theory of

motivational traits explains how students' motivation influences their engagement with feedback. By using these frameworks, this study aimed to explore students' experiences and perceptions of direct and indirect written corrective feedback in relation to their motivation to develop their writing skills.

C. Direct vs. Indirect Feedback in English as a Foreign Language Writing Instruction

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction, Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is one of the main strategies used by teachers to help students improve their writing skills, especially grammar and vocabulary. WCF refers to the comments or corrections that teachers give on students' written work to show mistakes and help students revise (Ellis, 2009, p. 98). Two common types of feedback are direct feedback and indirect feedback, each with different ways of correcting mistakes.

1. Direct Feedback

Direct feedback happens when the teacher provides the correct form of a mistake. For example, if a student writes "He go to school," the teacher writes the correction as "He goes to school."

a. Advantages of Direct Feedback

1) Immediate Clarification

Direct feedback makes the correction *clear*, meaning that the learner can see the correct form immediately without guessing. This clarity helps students notice exactly what was wrong and how to fix it (Bitchener and Knoch, 2010, p. 214). For example, when a student writes "*She is a honest girl*," the teacher directly replaces it with "*She is an honest girl*." Similarly, Ellis (2009, p. 99) found that direct corrections of

articles and verb forms improved learners' accuracy more quickly than indirect corrections.

2) Helps Lower-Proficiency Learners

Students who are still learning *basic grammar*—such as subject–verb agreement (*He go* → *He goes*), verb tense (*I am go* → *I am going*), or prepositions (*in Monday* → *on Monday*)—usually prefer direct feedback because they lack the resources to self-correct. Zhang and Hyland (2018, p. 215) reported that low-proficiency learners considered direct correction more useful than indirect methods. A study by Karim, K., & Nassaji (2020, p. 65) found that direct WCF was particularly effective in correcting errors related to verb tenses and prepositions. For instance, when students wrote “*Yesterday, he go to the market,*” the teacher provided the correct form “*Yesterday, he went to the market,*” which helped learners recognize and internalize the correct past tense form. Similarly, when students produced sentences such as “*She arrived to the airport at 8,*” direct feedback replaced the incorrect preposition *to* with *at*, resulting in the correct form “*She arrived at the airport at 8.*” These corrections not only improved students' immediate grammatical accuracy but also reduced the likelihood of repeating the same errors in subsequent writing tasks.

3) Efficiency in Revision

Direct feedback can help students revise their writing quickly because the corrections are already provided (Ferris, 2002, p. 45). Chandler (2003, p. 290) found that learners who received direct corrections completed revisions faster and with fewer mistakes than those receiving only indirect hints. For example, when a teacher changes “*He don't like football*” to

“He doesn’t like football,” students can revise immediately without needing to consult grammar rules.

b. Disadvantages of Direct Feedback

1) Passive Learning

If students depend too much on direct feedback, they might just copy the correction without really understanding the grammar rule (Van Beuningen, 2011, p. 30). For instance, learners might repeatedly write *“She go”* and only replace it with *“She goes”* when corrected, without understanding subject–verb agreement.

2) Demotivation

When students receive too many corrections, they may feel discouraged or lose confidence (Mahfoodh, 2017, p. 94).

2. Indirect Feedback

Indirect feedback shows that there is a mistake but does not provide the correction. Teachers may underline the mistake, use codes like “VT” (verb tense), or write comments such as “Unclear pronoun reference.”

a. Advantages of Indirect Feedback

1) Encourages Thinking

Indirect feedback helps students become more aware of their mistakes and think about how to fix them. According to Schmidt (1990, p. 143), noticing mistakes is important for learning. For example, when a teacher underlines a mistake, the student needs to remember the grammar rule to correct it.

2) Long-Term Retention

Swain (1995, p. 127) explains that students tend to remember grammar better when they correct their own mistakes. A study by Chandler (2003, p. 293) also found that students who worked on indirect feedback remembered grammar longer than those who only received direct feedback.

3) Promotes Independence

Indirect feedback encourages students to revise their writing without always depending on the teacher (Ferris, 2002, p. 45). In a study by Park and Kim (2022, p. 3), students who received indirect hints reported feeling more responsible for their writing and more confident in revising independently. For example, a code such as “*WW*” (*wrong word*) may push a student to replace “*discuss about*” with “*discuss.*”

b. Disadvantages of Indirect Feedback

1) Difficult for Beginners

Students who are not yet familiar with grammar rules might find it hard to understand the codes or symbols used (Zhang and Hyland, 2018, p. 214). For example, a code like “*ART*” (article: *a, an, the*) could confuse students who are not familiar with grammar terms.

2) Takes More Time

Using indirect feedback usually means that students need more time to revise because they have to figure out the corrections by themselves (Van Beuningen, 2011, p. 30).

3. Hybrid Approaches: Combining Direct and Indirect Feedback

In some cases, teachers apply a combination of direct and indirect feedback depending on the context, the type of error, or the learners’ needs. Ferris (2002, p. 45) suggests that direct feedback may be more appropriate for complex or unfamiliar errors, while indirect feedback may be used for mistakes that students are expected to recognize and correct independently. Zhang and Hyland (2018, p. 214) emphasize that adjusting feedback types based on the

learner and the task may provide a more flexible approach. For example:

- a. Direct Feedback: Correcting a misplaced modifier (“Running quickly, the finish line was crossed” → “Running quickly, he crossed the finish line”).
- b. Indirect Feedback: Pointing out vague vocabulary (“good” → “effective” or “beneficial”).

Although several studies have examined direct and indirect written corrective feedback, most have focused on grammatical accuracy and error correction. However, research about students’ perceptions of these feedback types, particularly regarding their motivation in learning English writing, remains limited—especially in the Indonesian EFL context. This study seeks to fill that gap by investigating students’ views and experiences with written feedback in relation to their motivation.

D. Google Forms in Educational Research for Corrective Feedback in EFL Contexts

In learning English as a foreign language (EFL), Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is very important. It helps students fix mistakes in their writing and slowly improve their grammar and vocabulary (Rod Ellis, 2009, p. 98). But, how useful WCF is depends on how students understand, process, and use the feedback (Van Beuningen, 2011, p. 5-7).

A big challenge in research is getting honest opinions from students about feedback. Traditional interviews often have problems like needing a lot of time, only getting a few participants, and students feeling shy. Because of this, many researchers now use online tools like Google Forms. Google Forms lets researchers collect answers from many students easily and without needing to meet face-to-face

(Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 158). Also, students feel more relaxed answering online, so they can think more carefully and answer more honestly (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 22)

1. Google Forms for Qualitative Data Collection

Google Forms is a cloud-based tool that allows researchers to design surveys and collect responses online. In WCF research, Google Forms can be used to pose multiple choice and open-ended questions that explore students' experiences with direct and indirect feedback (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 22).

2. Advantages of Google Forms in Corrective Feedback Research

The key benefits of using Google Forms in qualitative research on WCF include:

a. Wider Accessibility and Participation

Google Forms allows students to participate at any time and from any location, overcoming the scheduling and geographical limitations of face-to-face interviews (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 158). This also facilitates larger sample sizes, ensuring more diverse perspectives.

b. Minimization of Interviewer Bias

In direct interviews, people's answers can be influenced by their wish to be seen positively by others, where students may feel pressured to provide answers they believe the interviewer wants to hear. With Google Forms, students can express their opinions more freely without feeling intimidated (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 22).

c. More Time to Think

Corrective feedback needs students to think carefully, and they might need some time to reflect on what they experienced before they can explain their thoughts clearly. Using online surveys gives them enough time to think deeply about how they understand and apply the feedback, which can help them give longer and more thoughtful answers (Fyfe et al., 2013, p. 183).

d. Efficiency in Data Processing

Google Forms automatically puts the answers into a spreadsheet, making it easier to analyze the data multiple choice and open-ended answers can be grouped and studied to find common patterns in how students feel about written corrective feedback (WCF) (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 158).

3. Limitations of Google Forms in Corrective Feedback Research

Despite its advantages, Google Forms has certain limitations when used in WCF research:

a. Lack of Depth in Responses

In interviews, if a student's answer is unclear or confusing, researchers can immediately ask follow-up questions to get more detailed information. However, when using Google Forms, this is not possible because researchers only receive written answers and cannot directly ask for clarification. As a result, if a student's response is vague or incomplete, the researcher has to accept it as it is without the chance to explore the answer further (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 22). To solve this, the researcher will add small guiding questions after each main question, such as "*Can you explain more?*" or "*Why do you think that?*". These prompts will help students give longer and more detailed answers.

b. Some Answers are too Short

Since Google Forms only collects written responses, some students might give brief or not very detailed answers. This can lead to data that lacks depth because researchers can not ask follow-up questions or clarify any unclear responses. According to Brace (2018, p. 142), online surveys have limitations in gathering in-depth responses since participants can not elaborate or clarify their answers the way they could in face-to-face interviews. To improve this, the researcher will add a note asking students to write more (for example, *“Please explain in at least 2–3 sentences”*). The researcher will also give an example of a good answer that can help. In the beginning of the form, it will be useful to explain why longer answers are important for the research.

c. Technology Problems

Not all students have reliable internet access or digital literacy skills to navigate online surveys, potentially limiting participation from certain groups (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 158). To reduce this problem, the researcher will choose students who already have internet and are used to using digital tools. A short question at the start of the survey can help check this, such as:

“Do you have regular internet access and can you complete this form by yourself?” This makes sure that students who take part can complete the form without problems.

4. Case Studies: Google Forms in Corrective Feedback Research

Several studies have explored the use of online platforms in researching Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction. Some of these studies have used Google-based tools to collect data from students.

For example, Liu and Lan (2016, p. 195) investigated how web-based platforms, including Google Forms, can be integrated into EFL classrooms to encourage collaboration and feedback. Their findings suggest that using such platforms can increase student engagement and participation in learning activities.

Using Google Forms to collect data in corrective feedback research offers several advantages. It is accessible, minimizes potential interviewer bias, encourages students to reflect on their responses, and simplifies data management for researchers.

However, despite these advantages, there is still limited research that specifically explores students' perceptions of written corrective feedback and its relationship to motivation using Google Forms, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. This study aims to contribute to that gap by utilizing Google Forms to explore how Indonesian EFL students perceive written feedback in relation to their motivation in learning English writing.

E. Motivation in Learning English

Motivation plays a central role in second language learning, influencing how much effort students are willing to invest in improving their skills. Dörnyei (2001, p. 24) defines motivation as the combination of desire, effort, and attitudes toward learning a language. According to Dörnyei (2001), students' motivation is shaped by both internal factors, such as personal goals and confidence, and external factors, such as feedback from teachers and classroom experiences.

One of the important aspects of motivation, as Dörnyei (2001, p. 24) explains, is how students perceive the difficulty of learning tasks. If a task seems too difficult, students may lose interest or confidence in their ability to succeed. On the other hand, when students believe that a task is achievable, they are more likely to stay engaged and motivated. Therefore,

teachers play an important role in managing students' motivation by designing learning activities and providing feedback that is both challenging and achievable.

Motivation is also dynamic, meaning that it can change over time based on students' experiences in the classroom. Dörnyei (2001, p. 27) emphasizes that feedback from teachers can either support or weaken students' motivation, depending on how it is given and how students interpret it. Feedback that encourages students and helps them see progress may increase motivation, while feedback that feels unclear or overly critical could lower students' confidence.

While previous research has discussed how feedback may influence students' learning behaviors, further investigation is needed to understand how students perceive this feedback in relation to their motivation, particularly in the context of EFL writing. This study uses Dörnyei's motivation theory as a foundation for exploring how students' motivation interacts with their experiences of written corrective feedback.