

THE ROLE OF TEACHER FEEDBACK IN IMPROVING TERTIARY LEVEL
EFL LEARNERS' WRITING ABILITY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED

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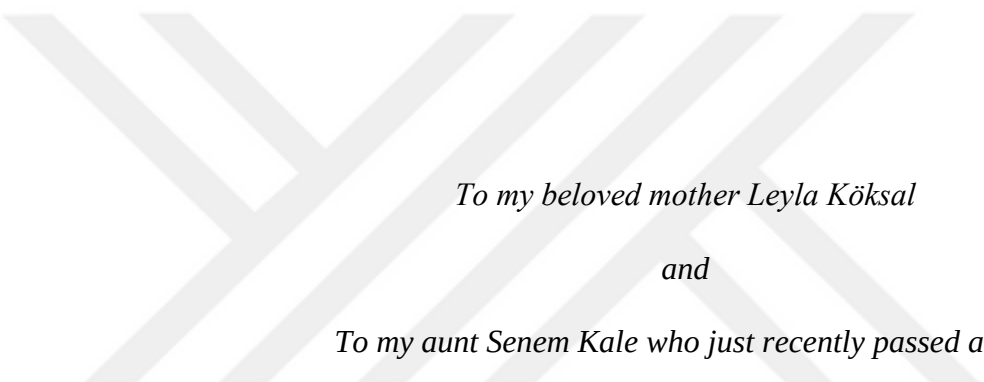
IN

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY

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SEPTEMBER 2022



To my beloved mother Leyla Köksal

and

To my aunt Senem Kale who just recently passed away

The Role of Teacher Feedback in Improving Tertiary Level EFL
Learners' Writing Ability

The Graduate School of Education
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

Selma Köksal

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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Selma Köksal
September 2022

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

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ABSTRACT**THE ROLE OF TEACHER FEEDBACK IN IMPROVING TERTIARY LEVEL
EFL LEARNERS' WRITING ABILITY**

Selma Köksal

MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit

September 2022

The aim of this case study was to explore the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL students' writing ability and investigate the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program of a university in Turkey. For this mixed-methods study, the quantitative data were collected from 62 instructors and 497 students via a survey. To gather qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 instructors and 11 students. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, and content analysis was used for the analysis of the qualitative data which came from open-ended question responses of the survey and one-to-one interviews. The findings of the study indicated some similarities and differences between instructors' and students' perceptions. Both instructors and the students thought demotivation is a significant factor in feedback. Instructors believe they give equal importance to grammar and meaning during their feedback. On the other hand, students reported that they mostly experienced grammar focused feedback although they expect more focus on meaning when they are provided with written feedback.

Keywords: EFL, writing skills, written feedback, teacher feedback, similarities and differences between perceptions.

ÖZET

ÖĞRETMEN GERİBİLDİRİMİNİN YÜKSEK ÖĞRETİMDE YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENENLERİN YAZMA BECERİLERİNİN GELİŞMESİNDEKİ ROLÜ

Selma Köksal

Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Tijen Akşit

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmen geri bildiriminin İngilizce öğrencilerinin yazma becerilerini geliştirmedeki rolüne ilişkin ana paydaşların algılarını araştırmak ve Türkiye’de bir vakıf üniversitenin İngilizce hazırlık programında bu ana paydaşların algıları arasındaki olası benzerlikleri ve/veya farklılıkları keşfetmektir.

Bu karma yöntem çalışması için nicel veriler 62 öğretim görevlisi ve 497 öğrenciye verilen anketlerle toplanmıştır. Nitel veri toplamak için 11 öğretim görevlisi ve 11 öğrenci ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Nicel veriler betimsel ve çıkarımsal istatistiki analiz yöntemleriyle analiz edilmiş, anketteki açık uçlu sorulara verilen yanıtlardan ve görüşmelerden elde edilen nitel verilerin analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları, öğretim elemanlarının ve öğrencilerin algıları arasında bazı benzerlikler ve farklılıklar olduğunu göstermiştir. Hem eğitimciler hem de öğrenciler motivasyon kaybının geri bildirimde önemli bir faktör olduğunu düşünmüşlerdir. Eğitimciler geribildirim sırasında dilbilgisine ve anlama eşit önem verdiklerine inanırlarken, öğrenciler dilbilgisi odaklı geribildirim aldıklarını ancak anlama daha fazla önem verilmesini beklediklerini bildirmişlerdir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi, yazma becerileri, yazılı geribildirim, öğretmen geribildirimi, algılar arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As a vital necessity of living, human beings, must communicate to survive and exist, which is inherently accomplished by a shared language in a global world. Therefore, there is a need for a common language to communicate and interact with other individuals. Thus, the need for such a language is inevitable in people's lives, either personally or professionally. According to The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey Report (2013), even though Spanish and Mandarin have the highest number of native speakers, English is mainly used as the lingua franca of communication among non-native speakers all around the world. Especially in academia, English is beyond a need, and thusly it serves as a means of teaching and/or learning, which requires lots of endeavors and investigation.

In Turkey, in conjunction with the attempts to join the European Union and as a reflection of the demand all around the world, it is obvious that individuals are supposed to give a voice to their opinions, and also they have to make them accessible to others. As Kirkgoz (2007) underpins, the government has increasingly been handling with educating its youth with the awareness that they will be able to acquire new language skills, which might contribute to their academic lives and the society they live in. Turkey, therefore, has been experiencing a period of change and continuous innovation in English language teaching systems to catch up with the European language education system and current global trends in language teaching.

Notably, for tertiary level students, learning English is sine qua non, since it is bound to lead to a qualified and promising professional life. According to the

European Quality of Life Survey (2007), members of the Turkish workforce, who are proficient in English, are more likely to label themselves as ‘well-paid,’ seizing better opportunities for their career development (TEPAV, 2013). In order to be successful, most students are asked to express their ideas in written ways throughout their academic path; in this vein, the significance of writing skill comes to the forefront, especially for university students. Consequently, students need to augment their writing skills. As Poulos and Mahoney (2007) remind us, feedback is a valuable and integral component of teaching/learning, accentuating that particularly university students should be cognizant of the influence of comments on their writing and be taught accordingly. What is more, they are required to internalize the significance of feedback to vigorously promote their academic journey.

Background of the Study

Productive skills are of the utmost importance throughout the foreign language teaching/learning process. Bialystok and Ryan (1985) point out that more complicated analyzed knowledge is required to produce rather than interpret. *Writing* and *speaking* skills appear to be the outcome of learners’ understanding and linguistic competence. These products can be considered tangible proofs of interpreting the input as they are delivered through learners’ own words in a written or spoken way. Unlike what they do in receptive skills -reading and listening, learners have to voice their competence in productive skills, which require a great deal of effort.

It goes without saying that *writing* has become a prerequisite skill, especially for today’s university students in academia, since they take advantage of writing to transmit their opinions through papers in their academic endeavors. According to Xu (2016), students’ written artefacts ought to be analyzed both as a product and as a

process because the writing itself has several sub-processes such as *conceptualizing* the ideas, *formulating* them into words, and then *revising* them for further betterment. As Paltridge et al. (2009) underscore, with these sub-processes in writing, the role of feedback cannot be undervalued -whether it is intended for the written product or the whole writing process. As a result of the critical characteristics of the writing process, there is an ongoing interaction between the writer, the reader, and the text (Xu et al., 2011). Thus, as the first readers of the students' written products in writing classes, teachers should be keenly aware of their role throughout the writing journey paying attention to the quality of the feedback provided rather than its quantity. Kubota (2010) proposes that supporting students with a tremendous amount of feedback is eventually detrimental to both teachers and students. Inevitably, it causes teacher burnout and a mental burden for students. However, writing classes' primary objective is to guide students with appropriate strategies to start, revise, and edit their written work (Matsuda & Silva, 2019). On that note, improving writing skills for academic success is of paramount importance for students. Therefore, improving such skills is closely intertwined with the feedback process, which is the "central aspect of L2 writing" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006a, p. 83), primarily due to students' expectations.

As described by Keh (1990), feedback is "a link in the chain of action and reaction. Besides, in language writing, feedback can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision" (p. 294). Feedback also provides an opportunity for students to recognize the quality of their (written and/or spoken) products. Moreover, the feedback itself is a way of uncovering students' strengths and weaknesses and leads them to detect the points that they need to focus on accurately.

As Leki (1992) utters: "No one is a 'native speaker' of writing." (p. 10).

Writing necessitates multiple drafting, so revision is the focal point here. Thus, the role of feedback is dramatically highlighted to master the writing skill. The importance of feedback which can be provided by a teacher, a peer, or even by the writer themselves, is the beginning of improvement. According to Demirel (2009), the absence of feedback -regardless of its source- would complicate the editing process enormously.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on feedback thus far. The generalizability of this issue is still discussed between two opposing camps. While one group advocates that written error correction can facilitate students' written products and also contribute to their long-term writing skills (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Brown, 2007; Ferris, 2010; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Sheen, 2010); the other asserts just the opposite (Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999; Truscott, 1996; Truscott & Hsu, 2008). Despite the ongoing dispute among the researchers, the potential of feedback cannot be depreciated. Hattie and Timperle (2007) conclude that learners can reach their writing expectations when educators realize the power of feedback which also leads to feed-forward. Above all these opposing views, another issue that has been widely researched is the source of feedback. The current literature has mainly dwelled upon peer-feedback, self-editing, and teacher feedback.

Peer feedback is defined as the "use of learners as sources of information and interactants for each other" (Liu & Hansen, 2002:1), and it was revealed that students benefit from trained peer feedback (Min, 2006). Students' communication with each other throughout the peer feedback process is a reflection of their relationship to a certain extent so that it may be much more helpful and easier than the other sources of feedback. Thus, students can feel much more comfortable during peer feedback

sessions; also, they feel relatively less stressed compared to the feedback session provided by the teachers. Furthermore, it leads to improving their critical thinking skills. These positive perceptions towards peer feedback were reported in many studies (Brammer & Rees, 2007; Carson & Nelson, 1996; Huang, 2004; Peng, 2007; Tsui & Ng, 2000). However, students' training is at the core of this process as revealed in previous studies (Min, 2005; Ren & Hu, 2012; Rahimi, 2013). As a matter of fact, it is a way of indicating how to provide effective feedback, and to that end, the role of the teachers in writing classes cannot be underestimated.

Another source of feedback is self-editing, in which the writer themselves is the feedback provider, Swaffield (2011) underlines that it contributes to learners' authority for learning. Also, it may refer to the requirements of 21st-century skills, which emphasize learner autonomy. This focal point itself seems like a significant challenge for the main stakeholders in education because they may be unaccustomed to this idea and not be ready to encourage an autonomous atmosphere. In this regard, teachers -as the active figures who are responsible for promoting autonomy and due to their roles as facilitator, evaluator and even as an audience for the student writers (Leki, 1990; Reid, 1994)- appear on stage as they have the sufficient power to guide their students' self-sufficiency. Trabelsi (2019) also discovered that when the teacher explained its usage and talked about the preferred types of feedback strategies, the students became pleased with the feedback offered.

As far as teacher feedback -the other most common feedback source- is concerned, it is known that it can be applied by practitioners who already know the effective feedback strategies. This type may be the feedback source that embraces others and can easily approach the student writers. Moreover, teachers are also the providers of quality feedback during this challenging journey. As Nicol (2008)

describes what qualifies a fruitful feedback process and asserts that learners need to realize it, comprehend it and practice it so as to make decisions about their production. This process also implies that there is too much demand on the part of students, which is why teachers must facilitate this practice. On the other hand, teachers stand out as the influencing figures of motivation/demotivation, which shapes the student writers' opinions on their writing learning process. According to surveys, ESL students significantly value written feedback from teachers and constantly score it higher than other forms, such as peer feedback (Hyland, 1998; Zhang, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

Previous research in the relevant literature has documented that written feedback is mostly studied by many researchers to understand the role of feedback on students' writing improvement; however, there is still an ongoing debate among researchers in the field. Furthermore, there is a mismatch between teachers' and students' perceptions regarding teacher feedback and its effects on revision (Ferris, 2003). On the other side of the coin, despite teachers' knowledge and/or experience, it has still been undiscovered whether this most preferred feedback type –teacher feedback- is perceived by the active participants of this improvement process correctly or not. Taking all this into account, the effectiveness of written feedback may require further exploration. In this sense, a detailed study on the perceptions of both teachers and students on feedback might provide an in-depth analysis of the issue as these two pivotal stakeholders are at the center of this productive process.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to explore the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability and investigate

the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program at a university in Turkey.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of both the teachers and the students on teacher feedback in L2 writing classes. In this respect, the study sets out to answer the following research questions:

1. What are EFL instructors' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
2. What are EFL students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
3. What are the similarities and/or differences between the EFL instructors' and students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?

Significance of the Study

Previous studies on teacher feedback have mainly been restricted to the effective ways of feedback, so most of these studies neglected main stakeholders' perceptions related to feedback (Harks et al., 2014). The researchers and/or the practitioners in the field need to understand how the feedback is perceived by both parties in the writing process. As long as the perceptions on feedback are comprehended, an effective and efficient route can be built to improve students' writing abilities. In this regard, this current study can also contribute to implementing effective feedback practice in second language writing through its contributions to both teachers and students who actively participate in the writing process.

Definition of Key Terms

Productive skills: These language skills, which are also named active skills, mean the transmission of information that a language user produces in either spoken or written form (Golkova & Hubackova, 2014).

Feedback: Gagné et al. (1992) described feedback as one of the nine events of instruction: "[feedback] provides the learner with information about performances and sets in motion the process of reinforcement" (p. 189).

Corrective feedback: Russell and Spada (2006) described corrective feedback as "any feedback provided to a learner, from any source that contains evidence of learner error of language form" (p. 134).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study explores the primary stakeholders' perceptions about teacher feedback on improving EFL students' writing ability and delves into the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among their perceptions. In line with this purpose of the study, the literature includes the place of writing as a productive skill, L2 writing, feedback, and the sources of feedback; self-editing, peer-feedback, and teacher feedback on students' writing. Additionally, some studies are to be reviewed to understand the main stakeholder's perceptions of the feedback and its effectiveness on students' writing abilities. Each section will be supported by empirical studies related to the discussed topics.

Writing as a Productive Skill

Throughout the second language learning journey, the productive skills - speaking and writing- play a fundamental role because these two are the required elements of communication in any language. It is indeed beyond doubt that these skills cannot be improved without perseverance and praxis. Productive skills are also significant for teachers so as to get the proof of their students' proficiency level with concrete artefacts and benchmarks -signs of their qualifications in academia. Writing proficiency promotes students to improve their communication, self-expression, and academic success (Graham, 2006). In addition, it helps to enhance students' academic performance and learning outcomes (Liao & Wong, 2010).

However, these two productive skills cannot be equated in terms of instruction: "Speaking and writing are different in both origin and practice; spoken

language is acquired without specific formal instruction, whereas writing must be taught and learnt through deliberate effort ... there are many people who are unable to write. While spoken language comes naturally to human beings, writing does not” (O’Grady et al., 1996, p.59).

The Importance of Writing

According to Mc Arthur et al. (2008) “Writing provides an important means to personal self-expression” (p. 1). By the same token, as a productive skill, *writing* is a valuable component of a language teaching and learning environment. It is an opportunity for the students to indicate an outcome of what they have internalized.

As Leki (1992) emphasizes, “no one is a native speaker of writing” (p. 10). As opposed to *speaking*, which can be achieved instinctively, *writing* requires a systematic way of teaching and learning (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). This productive skill emphasizes the laborious process that leads to production, and throughout this journey, the role of any critical eye on the drafts must be properly appreciated.

According to Matsuda and Silva (2019), writing classes aim to facilitate the writing process by providing favorable revision opportunities. Furthermore, underlining that teaching writing in a foreign language causes several challenges because of the writers’ linguistic, educational and cultural backgrounds, writing is crucial, especially for teachers who guide their students to be aware of the consequences of real-life writing or academic writing (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2010).

Written Feedback

As of the 1970s, the process-oriented approach has gained popularity in a writing environment and from then on providing feedback on the students’ writing has been one of the most discussed topics in the literature on second language

writing. As a result of the rising interest in the process approach to writing, teachers have led students to focus on macro-level communication purposes (Silva, 1990).

As can be seen in the relevant literature, there has been an ongoing debate on written error correction. While some researchers (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Brown, 2007; Ferris, 2010; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Sheen, 2010) claimed that providing written feedback can be helpful for the students' writing abilities, others (Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999; Truscott, 1996; Truscott & Hsu, 2008) expounded that providing feedback is harmful to student writers and is not worth spending time and energy at all. Favoring the first camp, Hyland and Hyland (2006a) defined feedback as "the central aspect of L2 writing" (p.83). Although providing feedback on students' drafts efficiently and effectively is hard, it is still worth trying and putting effort into the students to improve their writing skills. What is more, all learning entails receiving feedback and "activity without feedback is absolutely meaningless for a learner" (Laurillard, 1993, p. 61).

Sources of Feedback

Throughout the related literature there has been a love-hate relationship with the issue of feedback on students' drafts (Ferris, 2003). According to Demirel (2009), if the feedback is not provided -regardless of who is providing it- it will complicate the editing process.

Peer-Feedback

The importance of peer response in L2 feedback is another obviously crucial point. Referring to the social constructionism theoretical framework of Vygotsky, who states that "cognitive development results from social interaction" (Carson & Nelson, 1994, p. 18), it is appropriate to note that students must take part in the learning process actively as a part of interaction in a learning environment. The

possible advantages of peer feedback on the development of L2 writing have become the focus of considerable research and demonstrated how peer criticism might help authors better comprehend writing (Paulus, 1999; Rollinson, 2005; Villamil & Guerrero, 2006; Yu & Hu, 2017). It has been conclusively shown that peer feedback makes it possible for writing instructors to assist their students in getting more feedback on their papers, as well as to support meaningful peer engagement and more exposure to ideas.

However, there is a common complaint by the students who experience peer-feedback; they claim it can be too broad and unclear to take advantage of it (Ferris, 2003; Leki, 1990b). As Ferris and Hedgcock (2013) reported, peer response is criticized, especially in the second language writing process. According to students, feedback may not be clear and also may be received as hostile, and it may be confusing and even misleading. To this end, it appears that student training is a crucial element in the effectiveness of peer response. Without the proper instruction, students might not be able to end up with helpful criticism or recognize it and apply it to their advantage during revision (Liu & Sadler, 2003; Ren & Hu, 2012).

Self-editing

Another source of feedback -self-editing- might be mostly neglected; however, the writer themselves should have a lot to say on their writing performance as much as the outsiders do. "L2 writing experts agree that pupils need to learn self-editing techniques" (Ferris, 2011, p. 130). This is mostly because self-editing process facilitates learning and equips students with much better reading and revising abilities. It also enables them to realize their strengths and weaknesses that need improvement. In that regard, instructors' use of written feedback might take away students' chances to identify and correct their own errors in a critical way (Sommers,

2013). In addition, reflection is another significant notion in self-editing because, thanks to reflection, students might be able to transfer their skills from writing classes to their future academic endeavors (Beaufort, 2004; Devitt et al., 2004; Downs & Wardle, 2007). For self-editing learner training is also crucial and that requires experts to lead the learners. Inexperienced learners gain autonomy or self-regulation by performing tasks and activities while being guided by more experienced people (Mitchell & Myles, 1998).

Teacher Feedback

Teacher feedback -as the leading type of feedback process- has been studied widely as an indispensable part of writing classes. It is mainly mentioned that teachers need to develop a philosophy considering the students' gains from the feedback process. Teachers are frequently asked to serve as a facilitator and an assessor as well as an audience for writers (Leki, 1990; Reid, 1994). In a recent study Trabelsi (2019) also discovered that the students are content with the feedback given by the teacher as the teacher presented its usage and talked about the kind of feedback technique students want to utilize. It was evidenced by a study by Connor and Asenavage (1994), which revealed that around 5% of corrections were made in reaction to peer feedback, whereas approximately 35% were made in response to teacher feedback. Also, Nelson and Carson (1998) and Tsui and Ng (2000) discovered that students valued instructor feedback more than peer comments.

Computer-Mediated Feedback

Technology has significantly influenced how feedback is delivered in recent years. Today, many teachers provide online feedback to students using the Track Changes feature in word processing applications or via course administration platforms like Moodle. Beach et al. (2014) pointed out class blogs have also been

utilized by instructors to encourage the expression of students' viewpoints through writing, generating a feeling of both authorship and community. In this respect, Chen (2016) found generally successful outcomes with technology in a study of 20 research on computer-mediated peer feedback, allowing students to answer spontaneously, reflect on their thoughts, prepare their responses, and express themselves freely at their own pace. In addition, today, there are a lot of automated writing evaluation (AWE) systems for evaluating writing that includes numerical ratings and written remarks providing feedback to students on a range of areas. However, there is little robust evidence that AWE comments have a beneficial impact on the texts created by students using AWE (Stevenson & Phakiti, 2014).

A Typology of Written Feedback Commentary

In order to investigate the role of WCF Ellis (2009) presents a typology declaring the strategies for giving feedback and the responses of students towards it. For this current study, the conceptual framework that provides a map is a new and comprehensive typology by Pearson (2022), which is also a companion to Ellis' (2009) well-known typology. The typology targeted by researchers and practitioners in writing settings draws on three decades of experimental and interpretive research to yield ten discrete comment characteristics as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Commentary Characteristics of a Typology for Written Feedback

Commentary characteristics	
A Considerations for written commentary	
1 Range of focus:	6 Explicitness:
a general	a explicit WFC
b discourse	b implicit WFC
c form	c revisions not required
a focused	
b mid-focused	
c unfocused	

Table 2 (cont'd)*Commentary Characteristics of a Typology Written Feedback for*

Commentary characteristics	
A Considerations for written commentary	
2 Mode and tone: a advisory b correction c criticism d description e give information f “need to” g praise h question posing i reader reflection	7 Length: a short (e.g., 1–5 words) b average (6–15) c long (16–25) d very long (26+)
3 Syntactic structure: a declarative b imperative c exclamative d interrogative	8 Presence of mitigation strategies: a use of mitigation b no mitigation
4 Text specificity: a text-specific b generic	9 Medium of delivery: a pen and paper b computer-mediated feedback (CMF)
5 Location: a marginal b interlinear c end comment	10 Temporality: a synchronous b asynchronous c anticipatory

Note. Adapted from “A typology of the characteristics of teachers’ written feedback perspective,” by W. S. Pearson, 2022, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6(1), 61-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2021.2024937>

Table 1 presents the part of the typology of options for providing written feedback commentary on L2 student writing and excludes the descriptions of each characteristic and relevant studies. The framework synthesizes the many potential characteristic of teachers’ WFC refined over the last thirty years, often through inductive analysis (Ferris, 1997).

Pearson’s (2022) most updated and comprehensive typology only indicated overall concerns related to written feedback; however, this current study primarily relied on the four main constructs (*discouragement*, *learner readiness*, *grammar focus*, and *meaning focus*) which were mentioned throughout the data collection tools

of the thesis. The data collection instruments of the current study were adapted from Plonsky and Mills (2006), which mainly focused on the students' and the instructors' perceptions of written feedback in the second language writing process and the main constructs of the study incorporated were discouragement, learner readiness, meaning focus, and grammar focus.

Discouragement

Feedback is given with the intent of encouraging students and assure their linguistic correctness (Ellis, 2009), and it is therefore noteworthy to state that emotions play an essential role in students' performances. As Hyland and Hyland (2001) stated two decades ago, praising students for their successful work is vital to promoting their self-esteem. Moreover, according to Ferris (1995), students' reactions to teacher feedback indicate that they usually remember motivational sayings and value them. Therefore, for teachers, it is crucial to take into consideration the potential demotivational effect of the feedback on their students and act accordingly.

Learner Readiness

Student level is another significant construct to take into consideration while providing feedback. Chandler (2003) emphasizes the importance of student level by highlighting the need for students' linguistic proficiency for them to interpret written corrective feedback (WCF) accurately. Students' awareness of the WCF serves as a measure of how much WCF is being processed in their brains, which may be at the level of recognizing or understanding the WCF (Qi & Lapkin, 2001; Sachs & Polio, 2007). At that point, it reminds one the universal truth about individual differences in learning. Han and Hyland (2015) express that the role of students' perceptions and educational experiences and even the environment they are exposed to written

corrective feedback are all related to individual differences. In a recent local study by Atmaca (2016), the relation between students' proficiency level and the necessity of teachers choosing various strategies to deal with students' mistakes were scrutinized. The current proficiency level was found to be a causal factor in providing the ideal way of feedback to the students; otherwise, students cannot even comprehend the feedback itself, and it might not lead to awareness of the mistakes that need to be corrected.

Grammar Focus

Throughout the related literature, focusing on grammar during feedback has been exhaustively discussed. While some researchers state that providing feedback on local difficulties does not assist learners in producing fewer local errors (Kepner, 1991; Sheppard, 1992; Truscott, 1996), there are always opposing views supporting the corrective role of grammar-focused feedback. Providing local comments on students' compositions helps them identify and correct their own local mistakes (Chandler, 2003; Fatham & Whalley, 1990). During feedback, grammar-related mistakes that teachers mostly focus on and students are mainly expected to realize are actually the result of the exam-centered education system. Hillocks (2005) states that the emphasis on form in education has been so dominating due to the pressure on schools and especially teachers during testing periods.

Meaning Focus

During written feedback, grammar, the meaning, and messages of the written texts are crucial for effective communication. The role of meaning in writing was declared long ago by Zamel (1985), and she stated writing is, at its core, a process of discovery, yet methods that place an excessive focus on accuracy ignore students' ideas. Additionally, Sheppard (1992) also emphasized meaning and stated that to

raise students' knowledge of sentence structure, holistic WCF on meaning was more effective than surface-level WCF on the form.

Empirical Studies

As can be seen in the literature, written feedback on language learners written products has been debated for decades, and more recently, in order to investigate the gap of the necessity of taking into consideration the individual student characteristics when they receive, internalize and practice written corrective feedback, Ferris et al. (2013), through a longitudinal multiple case study approach recruiting 10 L2 writers for 16 weeks, found out that students' individual differences affect their gains from the feedback process. It was also noted that even though the students are provided with focused and explicit feedback, they might fail to satisfy students' needs if it is not supplied with follow-up discussion, which brings clarification. To that end, Ferris et al. (2013) suggest that the student texts only cannot provide us with sufficient information about the ways of written corrective feedback, it also requires a sophisticated analysis of the classroom atmosphere and the idiosyncrasy of students and teachers. That study "generated more light than heat" on how L2 writers considered and used written corrective feedback as mentioned in the well-known quotation by Silva (1990, p.18) and highlighted the role of individuals in the whole process.

In a similar vein, Evans et al. (2010) shed another light on the voice of the teachers about L2 writing feedback. Even though the literature on the appropriateness of written feedback is extensive in L2 writing, few studies actually gave a voice to the teachers (Ferris, et al., 2011; Hyland, 2003; Lee, 2004). These studies mainly emphasized that writing teachers' practices must be taken into consideration when written corrective feedback is discussed because teachers'

personal preferences based on their experiences are significant in explaining the function of written corrective feedback in L2 writing. Based on an international survey answered by 1053 participants who were experienced and well-educated second language writing practitioners from 69 countries, Evans et al. (2010) documented that 92% of the participants were in favor of error correction as part of their teaching, and 8% reported that they were not. The latter group asserted their reasons as they believed "content, rhetoric and organization matter most" (Zamel, 1985) on the other hand, the former group said that "language matters too," (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Hyland & Hyland, 2002) and they also suggested "students should be responsible for correcting their own errors" (Ferris, 2011). However, the others claimed that "providing feedback is among the teachers' responsibilities" (Leki, 1990). Predominantly, most teachers explained the rationale behind their choice of written corrective feedback as they believe that the students need it.

In another study conducted by Montgomery and Baker (2007), teachers and students in an intensive ESL program were examined about their perceptions of teacher written feedback. This study itself was also an opportunity for the teachers to discover their own awareness of the feedback they give. To this end, the teachers and the students joined a survey which resulted in a mismatch in the perceived amounts of feedback: students perceived receiving more feedback than teachers perceived giving. Moreover, it was revealed that teachers provided less feedback on meaning related issues and focused on grammatical issues. The findings of that study also indicated that teachers' training influenced positively their perception of providing written feedback.

Echoing the previous studies, Junqueira and Payant (2015) via a case study also investigated teacher feedback beliefs and practices of a pre-service L2 writing

teacher named Kim, who taught an English composition course to ESL students at the university level. Throughout this study -over one academic semester- students' essays were examined. As an outcome of the detailed analysis of Kim's real practices, the study revealed some mismatches; local WCF (83.9%) significantly outnumbered global WCF (16.1%). Other conclusions of the study included the following: Feedback needs to be contextualized, is time-consuming, is a process that requires practice, and can lead to better writing

Busse (2013) carried out a study with first-year university students in the context of German degree courses at two notable universities in which the learners' perceptions of feedback in tertiary level institutions were examined. The results of this study underlined the critical role of feedback for the first-year students as they specifically feel the need for feedback to evaluate their writing performance and the absence of it causes insecurity about their writing abilities and a low level of confidence and motivation just as Ferris (2004) mentioned.

That study pointed out the importance of feedback for students, particularly the ones with low self-efficacy beliefs. The actual feedback was mostly perceived as demotivating among the students because teachers mostly highlight all language mistakes. On the other hand, the absence of feedback affects students' eagerness negatively to put more effort into writing.

In a study conducted in the Turkish context, Vanlı (2012) examined teacher feedback not only from students' but also from instructors' perspectives at a tertiary level institution to investigate the EFL students' expectations and instructors' preferences for teacher feedback. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were utilized. The study revealed that there was a mismatch between them between what the students expect and what the teachers provide In addition,

students' expectations change according to their faculty and gender differences; therefore, the teachers should beware of such differences and act accordingly in the teaching environment. The study also revealed a positive correlation between the students' writing self-efficacy beliefs and their perceptions of the value related to teacher feedback. Both students and teachers were on the same page regarding the significant role of the teacher in writing progress.

In another local study, Atmaca (2016) also examined the perceptions of students and teachers on written corrective feedback. 34 EFL teachers and 34 EFL learners were administered a questionnaire and some open-ended questions, and it was resulted as no significant differences between these two groups. However, there were some differences in their open-ended questions' findings concerning the adoption of written corrective feedback among students or teachers themselves.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Introduction

This chapter outlines the current study's methodology by referring to the setting, participants, research design, data collection and analysis procedures.

This present study aimed to investigate the teachers' and the students' perceptions of teacher feedback in L2 writing classes. To this end, this study tried to answer the following questions:

1. What are EFL instructors' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
2. What are EFL students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
3. What are the similarities and/or differences between the EFL instructors' and students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?

Research Design

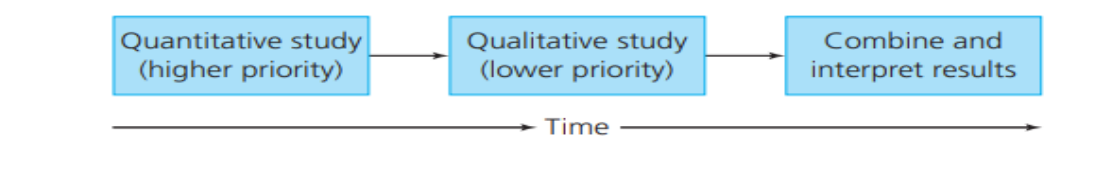
This explanatory study had a mixed-methods research design. The primary data was quantitative, which was collected via questionnaires, whereas the qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions and interviews. Mixed-methods research has been more and more favored in social sciences and may be regarded as a stand-alone research design (Creswell, 2002, 2003; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). In other words, researchers support their findings comprehensively and gain a deeper understanding of quantitative and

qualitative data in such studies (Brewer & Hunter, 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

As the current study focused on the perceptions of the main stakeholders on teacher feedback in second language writing classes and attempted to have a thorough understanding of these participants' perceptions, an explanatory design was selected. This design necessitates administering a quantitative phase first and then a qualitative step to expand upon the results of the previous quantitative study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). That is an explanatory design requires primarily as set of quantitative data, and later qualitative data is collected and processed for further understanding. Then, everything is connected while interpreting, as shown in Figure 1, adapted from Creswell et al. (2006).

Figure 1

Explanatory Design



Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at the English language preparatory school of a foundation university, one of the oldest and most prestigious ones in Ankara, Turkey. The university was specifically chosen for its characteristics representing the target population quite well, thanks to its student profile. The students of the university come from different parts of the country to study in various departments of the university ranging from social sciences to medicine. The English preparatory school is compulsory for students who enroll in undergraduate programs where the medium of instruction, either partially or fully, is English. At the preparatory school, there are

two programs named Program I & Program II, and students are assigned to the appropriate program according to their entry-stage English language proficiency test results. Program I aims to teach general English and to help learners achieve an overall English language proficiency of the CEFR A2 level. On the other hand, Program II also aims to teach general English, as well with the object of helping learners to achieve an overall English language proficiency level of the CEFR B1+. Both programs teach four language skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. However, like most English preparatory schools in Turkey, the curriculum in this institution lacks a separate writing course. Writing content of Program I includes paragraph studies only. As to the writing content of Program II, first, the students study how to write academic paragraphs and then an opinion essay within the scope of the program's ultimate aim.

There are 770 students and 102 English language instructors in this context. All of them were invited to participate in the study on a voluntary basis via QR codes shared in their class folders. Consequently, a total of 497 students and 62 instructors responded to the questionnaires. For the second data collection phase, in total, 11 students from Program I and Program II and 11 instructors with diverse profiles took part in the interview process on a voluntary basis. Table 2 and Table 3 present the demographic information of the student and instructor participants respectively.

Table 2

Demographic Information of the Students

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Female	271	54.5
	Male	219	44.1
	Prefer not to mention	7	1.4
Year in prep. school	First year	441	88.7
	Second year (repeat)	56	11.3

Table 2 (cont'd)*Demographic Information of the Students*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Program	Program I (A2)	330	66.4
	Program II (B1+)	167	33.6
Discipline of Study	Language Studies	25	5
	Engineering	183	36.8
	Medical Sciences	32	6.4
	Social Sciences	256	51.5
Total		497	100.0

As can be seen in Table 2 female and male student participation were almost equivalent while the majority of the students were from Program I. Great majority of the students (88.7%) were in their first year in the English preparatory school. Around half of the students (51.5%) were representing the Social Sciences followed by Engineering students (36.8%).

Table 3*Demographic Information of the Instructors*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Teaching experience	1-3 years	5	8.1
	4-8 years	14	22.6
	9-15 years	8	12.9
	16+ years	35	56.5
Major in BA	American/ English Literature	23	37.1
	English Language Teaching	27	43.5
	Linguistics	6	9.7
	Translation & Interpretation	4	6.5
	Other	2	3.2

Table 3 (cont'd)*Demographic Information of the Instructors*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Highest degree earned	BA	31	50.0
	MA	31	50.0
Gender	Female	52	83.9
	Male	10	16.1
Prior experience in different institutions	Yes	46	74.2
	No	16	25.8
Total		62	100.0

As shown in Table 3, minority of the instructors (8.1%) were novice practitioners while more than half of the instructors (56.5 %) had teaching experience more than 16 years. The number of instructors earned BA and MA degrees were equal to each other. Participants of the study consisted of a wide variety of instructors graduated from different departments or who have been working there for many years or the ones who are relatively newly recruited, or the ones who also have MA degrees and teaching experience at various institutions.

Thanks to this variety among the participants' profiles, the researcher could gain enriched information.

Methods of Data Collection

The data collection process started right after getting the required approvals of the Bilkent University ethics committee and the relevant preparatory school directorate. The quantitative data collection instruments (Appendix A) were adapted from Plonsky and Mills (2006), which mainly focused on the students' and the instructors' perceptions of written feedback in the second language writing process. Also, the primary discussion constructs of the study incorporated discouragement, learner readiness, meaning focus, and grammar focus; therefore, the researcher chose

this data collection tool to analyze the significance of the abovementioned constructs in the study. The numbers of questions and their sections for the questionnaires of each participant group are presented below in Table 4.

Table 4

Number of Questionnaire Items for Each Participant Group

Participant Group	# of Demographic items	# of Likert Scale Items	# Open-ended Items
Instructors	6	24	4
Students	4	24	4

As can be seen in the Table 4, there were six demographic information questions in the instructors' questionnaire while there were four in the students' version. The number of Likert scale and the open-ended questions were the same in both versions of the questionnaire, 24 and four respectively.

The main constructs included in the questionnaire were discouragement, learner readiness, meaning focus, and grammar, as Table 5 illustrates.

Table 5

The Items of Constructs within the Questionnaire

Constructs	Item numbers
Discouragement	# 1 # 2 # 3 # 4 # 5 # 6
Learner readiness	# 7 # 8 # 9 # 10 # 11 # 12
Meaning Focus	# 13 # 14 # 15 # 16 # 17 # 18
Grammar Focus	# 19 # 20 # 21 # 22 # 23 # 24

Before the data collection processes, the original questionnaires were adapted from Plonsky & Mills (2006), in accordance with the present study's needs. The original questionnaires were initially targeted at students in Spanish classes at a mid-size university in the Southwest of the US. Therefore, the items (# 7 # 8 # 11 # 12 # 13 # 17 # 21 # 23) referring to *Spanish* in its original version needed to be replaced by *Turkish* to adapt the tool to the context of the current study (Appendix A). Additionally, for the student questionnaire every single item was translated into Turkish by the researcher herself who had a minor degree in Translation and Interpreting and the translation was also checked by a field expert who was a PhD candidate in Translation and Interpreting. As the target students' level of English was below B1 (CEFR) up until the data collection period on December 22, 2021, Turkish (L1) translation was required to ensure that the student participants comprehended the questionnaire items fully. Therefore, the researcher ensured that each item was clear enough to be understood without any difficulty. In this sense, the items were translated to Turkish -L1 of the students to find out students' and teachers' perspectives on teacher feedback in the second language writing process.

The adapted version of the data collection tool was piloted with three volunteer students. Piloting was quite important at that stage to ensure the clarity of the items as they had been translated to students' mother tongue. It was observed that the questionnaire could be completed within 15 minutes. According to their feedback, a few items including pronoun related confusions were rearranged to ensure clarity.

For the instructor questionnaire, after receiving feedback from two participants, the researcher did not need to change any of the questionnaire items as there was no confusion in terms of clarity. For the subsequent open-ended questions,

the researcher wrote four questions in parallel with the pre-determined constructs of the questionnaire.

For the first phase of data collection, on December 22, 2021, the students' and the instructors' questionnaires (Appendix A) were sent to all participants via QR codes in their class folders. The date was purposefully chosen as one of the most appropriate weeks because, until that time, the students had already experienced the feedback process for every paragraph type (for Program I) and the opinion essay (for Program II). Thus, the participants were able to easily answer the questions as they had been exposed to the process. For the following phase, piloting of the interview questions was carried out with 2 volunteer students and 2 volunteer instructors. The participants signed informed consent forms. Students and instructors were asked five questions throughout the interviews. 11 students and 11 instructors volunteered to provide much more detailed data via one-on-one interviews for the qualitative data collection period. The semi-structured interviews were conducted through either *Zoom* sessions or face-to-face meetings according to the participants' preferences, and all the sessions were audio-recorded with participants' consent.

Student participants answered the questions in Turkish during the interviews as well since most of the students' proficiency levels were lower than B1 during the data collection period.

The 24 quantitative items were followed by 4 open-ended questions and that was also an opportunity for participants to freely share their expectations and experiences related to written feedback in their own words. For the next phase, to reach a comprehensive understanding, semi-structured interviews were applied with students and instructors (Appendix B). Five semi-structured interview questions were designed by the researcher to gain further in-depth information in line with the

boundaries of the existing constructs above. Piloting of the interview questions was carried out with 2 volunteer students and 2 volunteer instructors. The participants signed informed consent forms. Students and instructors were asked five questions throughout the interviews. Students' interviews lasted 3-5 minutes approximately with each participant, while instructors' interviews lasted 5-15 minutes approximately for each participant.

Methods of Data Analysis

After collecting the data through questionnaires and interviews, the data analysis procedure required statistical analysis for quantitative data and content analysis for qualitative data gathered.

Quantitative Data

Both student and teacher questionnaires used in the study had an acceptable range of internal reliability. As can be seen in Table 6, student responses indicated an alpha coefficient of .72 and instructor responses indicated .75, which both indicate high reliability (Taber, 2017).

Table 6

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of the Questionnaires

Student	Instructor
.72	.75

All questionnaire responses were transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) to have descriptive and inferential statistical interpretations. To answer the first question focusing on the instructors' perceptions on teacher feedback, the responses of the instructors were analyzed using descriptive statistics according to the constructs within the questionnaire. Descriptive data were presented in the forms of frequencies and mean averages of the variables.

Moreover, the demographic profile of the participant groups yielded enough data to make a comparison among demographic variables on the questionnaire constructs. Accordingly, a series of independent t-tests were conducted in order to compare instructors' majors, highest degrees and years of experience. Student participants' demographic variety was also sufficient enough to compare students' gender, program and major differences.

In order to answer second research question which was targeted at students' perception related to teacher feedback, the responses of the students were also analyzed using descriptive statistics according to the existing constructs. Descriptive data were presented in the forms of frequencies and mean averages of the variables.

As far as the last research question that aims to explore the similarities and/or differences between the EFL instructors' and students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level, the perceptions of the instructors and the students were compared through independent samples t-tests in terms of the four constructs within the data collection tool, which were; *discouragement*, *learner readiness*, *meaning focus*, and *grammar*.

Qualitative Data

For the next phase, to reach a comprehensive understanding audio-recorded semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim through an audio transcription software called *Trint*. As the so-called software might have overlooked some parts of the data, it also required a further touch from a human perspective. Therefore, the researcher re-read the transcriptions, and for the sake of the accuracy of the data, the transcriptions were sent via e-mail to the participants for member checking to ensure the credibility of the study. The reviewed transcriptions were analyzed meticulously to identify some key terms, leading to the common themes among the responses. In

this regard, deductive content analysis was utilized to arrange the existing themes within the tools (discouragement, learner readiness, grammar focus, meaning focus); additionally, inductive content analysis method was used, and newly emerged themes (timely feedback, correction by student, correction by teacher, correcting all mistakes, correcting major mistakes, familiar topics, etc.) were arranged accordingly.

Totally, 83 minutes of interviews with instructors were transcribed, and the analysis of transcriptions was transferred into 87 lines on an excel spreadsheet. Instructors' open-ended responses were also analyzed in a similar fashion and transferred on an excel spreadsheet, including 334 lines. As for the students, 32 minutes of interviews with students were transcribed and analyzed into 61 lines on an excel spreadsheet. Students' open-ended responses –which had a considerable amount of qualitative data- were also analyzed on an excel spreadsheet creating 2255 lines.

To ensure reliability another qualified and experienced researcher also conducted the same analysis process for 10% of the qualitative data and there was a consensus to a large extent. Additionally, both the coding and analysis stages were meticulously checked and confirmed by the supervisor repeatedly throughout the one month analysis process. With the help of their expertise much more reliable and credible analysis process was ensured.

In order to facilitate the analysis of the data four separate sheets were created through Excel. In the first column the excerpts were taken from the participants' responses. In the following columns parent categories and sub-parent categories and then sub-sub-parent categories (if the data allowed) were generated. Some sample visuals of qualitative data analysis on the excel spreadsheets can be seen in the

following figures. In Figure 2 some parts of students' open-ended responses and their categorization according to the themes are represented.

Figure 2

A Part of Students' Open-Ended Responses' Analysis

776	80.	Too slow, it must be faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
777	108.	As I said, if these feedbacks are shared with us earlier instead of sharing in a hurry just before the class time, we can have enough time to understand them.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
778	110.	they should give a quick response	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
779	181.	feedback takes a long time and every single mistake is not marked	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
780	188.	take a long time	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
781	201.	Should not be kept for a long time	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
782	209.	We need to get feedback faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
783	223.	be faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
784	230.	Feedback should be fast	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
785	239.	Short time and lots of points	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
786	248.	to be faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
787	259.	be faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
788	285.	a little slow and some mistakes are not clear	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
789	296.	It should be quicker and more detailed recommendations should be given.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
790	312.	It should be quick and accessible.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
791	318.	Sometimes there are mistakes made by the test writers in our worksheets, these mistakes sometimes lead the students to the wrong, I think this and similar things need to be improved, and the revising process can be a little faster.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
792	339.	Should be a little faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
793	352.	It should not be long, it should be short and effective.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
794	356.	I don't think there is anything weak or need improvement, just feedback can be faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
795	368.	It would be nice if it finished a little faster.	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb
796	378.	It should be a little faster	expec	expec-ti		expectation-timely fb

Figure 3 also indicates some parts of students' interview responses on an excel spreadsheet which were firstly color-coded according to the participant codes and then categorized to see the most common themes among their comments.

Figure 3

A Part of Students' Interview Responses' Analysis

16	Student	St 3	I think the teacher pay more attention to the way of writing.	expec	expec-gf		expectation-grammar focus
17	Student	St 6	No matter what we want to say, it can't be expressed without grammar.	expec	expec-gf		expectation-grammar focus
18	Student	St 6	I think grammar is more important right now. Because they don't look at what you say in an exam, they look at grammar and words and we get points on it	expec	expec-gf		expectation-grammar focus
19	Student	St 1	Everyone has a level and I think there should be an expectation accordingly.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-imp	expectation-level-important
20	Student	St 3	Teachers should definitely take into account our proficiency level.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-imp	expectation-level-important
21	Student	St 4	I think teachers can interpret the writing much better if s/he knows the level of her students.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-imp	expectation-level-important
22	Student	St 10	I think teachers should take into account all the mistakes we made and explain them according to the background of the students , it can be different for each of us.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-imp	expectation-level-important
23	Student	St 7	Even though it is above my current level , I personally want the teacher to explain it to me.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-unimp	expectation-level-unimportant
24	Student	St 11	student's mistake is , they should be more direct so that the student learns from his mistakes more clearly.	expec	expec-l	expec-l-unimp	expectation-level-unimportant
25	Student	St 1	I think the meaning is more important. But of course, it is necessary to learn the grammar	expec	expec-mf		expectation-meaning focus
26	Student	St 4	I think it should be more important to understand what he/she wants to write and interpret	expec	expec-mf		expectation-meaning focus

In Figure 4, a part of instructors' open-ended responses and their categorization according to the themes are represented.

Figure 4

A Part of Instructors' Open-Ended Responses' Analysis

155	I use error correction codes according to the level of my students and comment on their contents both negatively and positively when needed just to make sure I value their ideas.	exp	exp-l	exp-l-imp	experience-level-important
158	I use error correction codes according to the level of my students and comment on their contents both negatively and positively when needed just to make sure I value their ideas.	exp	exp-l	exp-l-imp	experience-level-important
159	I prefer to correct the mistakes in accordance with the level of the ss , give a personalized and motivational feedback and draw parallels with their grading criteria that is used in the exams	exp	exp-l	exp-l-imp	experience-level-important
160	I try not to discourage the students with the grammatical or word related mistakes that they have made above their ability or knowledge. That's why I don't grade less for their irrelevant mistakes.	exp	exp-l	exp-l-imp	experience-level-important
161	I only comment on the so-called "big" mistakes. That is, what they have so far studied but not yet fully learnt or incorporated into their language production.	exp	exp-l	exp-l-imp	experience-level-important
162	I don't correct each and every mistake in a writing. Some mistakes are related to the points they have not learnt yet. So if the point is easy to understand, I correct it and explain to the student. But if it is not, I just ignore it. Also I use error correction codes to help students think about their mistakes first. Plus, the first thing I give feedback to is always the content. I write it at the beginning of the page to make them clear that meaning is very important for me not only the grammar.	exp	exp-maj		experience-major mistakes
163	Guiding the students without correcting every single mistake , and try to increase their ability to evaluate their own work. Also, to help them gain an understanding of their work, why they write and how they should give their message in their writing.	exp	exp-maj		experience-major mistakes
164	I explain a lot with less marking . Give them advice on how to write better.	exp	exp-maj		experience-major mistakes
165		exp	exp-maj		experience-major mistakes

As it is seen in the Figure 4, instructors' responses were transferred into the first column and then analyzed to find out the key phrases concerning the pre-determined and/or emerged themes, which were also highlighted in the same column.

In Figure 5, a part of instructors' interview responses and their categorization according to the themes are represented.

Figure 5

A Part of Instructors' Interview Analysis

33	Instructor	Inst 8	As writing is a collection of separate skills such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization. I think a teacher should take into consideration all of them when giving feedback	exp	exp-equa		expectation-equal importance
34	Instructor	Inst 10	I think they're both equally important . A teacher should take into consideration, meaning and grammar accuracy. Some teachers just focus on grammar and ignore the content.	exp	exp-equa		expectation-equal importance
35	Instructor	Inst 10	they have to produce the right content with the right organization	exp	exp-equa		expectation-equal importance
36							
37	Instructor	Inst 6	students want it students want their errors should be corrected	exp	exp-co	exp-co-ss	experience-correction-by students
38	Instructor	Inst 8	if I see such problems on my students writings, I explain I give examples and I correct a few of them and then ask my students to correct the rest	exp	exp-co	exp-co-ss	experience-correction-by students
39	Instructor	Inst 8	if I see such problems on my students writings, I explain I give examples and I correct a few of them and then and ask my students to correct the rest	exp	exp-co	exp-co-te	experience-correction-by teachers
40							
41	Instructor	Inst 3	They believe that they don't or they can't write anything in English It's all about their proficiency and their own beliefs that discourage them. Thinking about my feedback, thinking about their own mistakes encourages them	exp	exp-emt	exp-emt-imp	experience-emotions-important
			I start with the positive ones. They should, they should feel relaxed and they should. They should know				

As can be seen from Figure 5, instructors' numbers were noted and color coded first and that column was followed by the excerpts from their interviews; actually there were more than one line for each instructor as the data categorized according to the themes.



CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability and investigate the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program of a university in Turkey. In this regard, the present study addressed the following research questions.

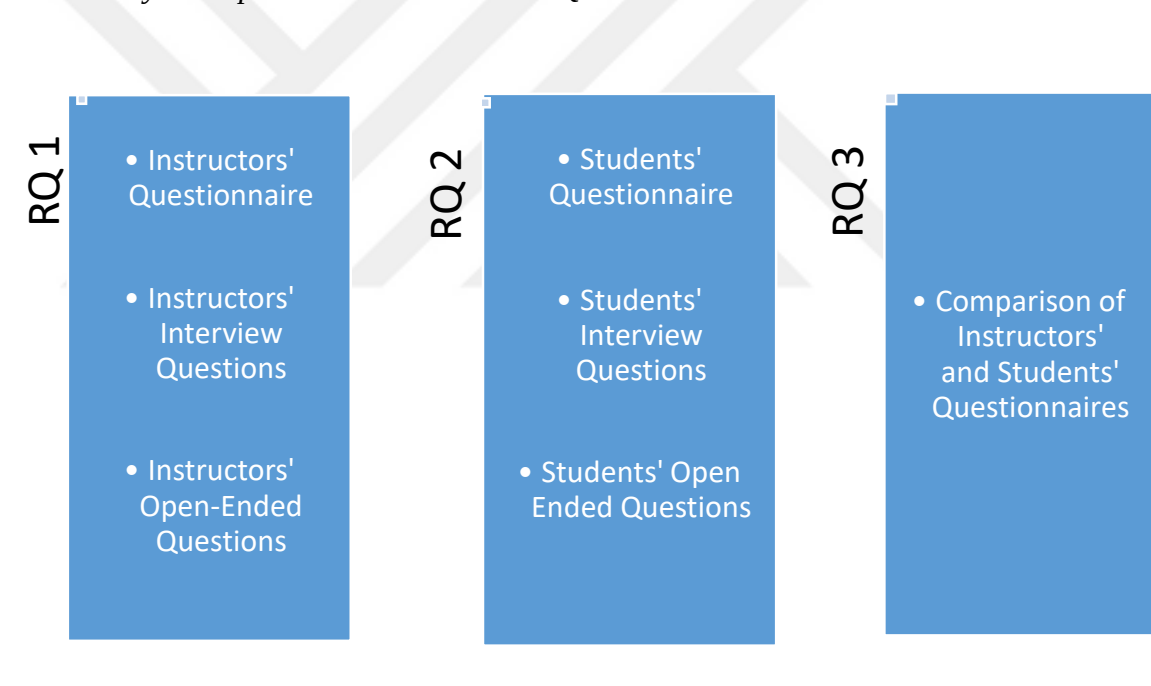
1. What are EFL instructors' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
2. What are EFL students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?
3. What are the similarities and/or differences between the EFL instructors' and students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?

In this chapter, as can be seen in Figure 6, the results are presented in three main sections, and the data analysis steps under each research question are shown clearly. Firstly, the analysis of quantitative data obtained via the online questionnaires is reported. Secondly, the qualitative data gained from multiple sources, including the interviews and open-ended questions in the final part of the surveys are presented. In the last step, data gathered from each participant group are compared. The interview questions were in parallel with the survey questions in terms of the four pre-determined constructs -*discouragement*, *learner readiness*,

grammar focus, and *meaning focus*. Therefore, the questionnaire results are followed by interview responses and then open-ended responses because open-ended questions were answered by a large number of people (62 instructors and 497 students) and yielded much more various personalized responses. In addition, the demographic profile of the participants yielded enough data to make a comparison among demographic variables on the questionnaire constructs. Therefore, independent t-tests findings with respect to demographic data were also presented immediately after related constructs.

Figure 6

Data Analysis Steps under Each Research Question



Findings of Questionnaires

Instructors' Perceptions of Learner Readiness

Instructors' perceptions regarding the four main constructs in the survey, discouragement, learner readiness, meaning and grammar focus can be seen in Table 7 below:

Table 7*Perceptions of the Instructors Regarding Four Survey Constructs*

Constructs	Instructors (N= 62)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Discouragement	3.11	0.49
Learner Readiness	3.29	0.47
Meaning focus	3.28	0.42
Grammar focus	3.03	0.49

As can be seen in the Table 7, instructors focus on *learner readiness* and pay attention to the current proficiency level of students during feedback more than the other constructs with the highest mean of 3.29 ($SD = 0.47$). The other construct they mostly mentioned is *meaning focus*, with a mean of 3.28 ($SD = 0.42$), indicating that they also focus on *meaning* when they provide feedback, and the least emphasized construct is *grammar focus* with a mean of 3.03 ($SD = 0.49$), which shows that they take into account grammatical points during their feedback but not as much as the abovementioned constructs. Furthermore, the relatively low standard deviations above reveal that there seems an agreement among the instructors.

The detailed reports of the related items under each construct can be seen in Tables 8 and 9 below. The tables are categorized according to these pre-determined four constructs -*discouragement*, *learner readiness*, *grammar focus*, and *meaning focus*- which initially have six items. However, for each construct, there are two separate tables with three parts since they are classified according to the relevant positive and negative statements in the questionnaire to make the interpretations as clear as possible.

Table 8*Distributions of Means for Discouragement (Positive)*

Items	Instructors ($N = 62$)	
	M	SD
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	3.81	1.09
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	3.45	1.21
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	3.69	.951

As can be seen in Table 8, instructors report that they take into consideration the role of *discouragement*. They mostly claim that lots of corrections may create discouragement with the highest mean score of 3.81($SD = 1.09$), and many of them seem not to correct each and every mistake during feedback, with mean scores of 3.69 ($SD = 0.95$) and 3.45 ($SD = 1.21$) respectively.

Table 9 below displays the means of each item related to *discouragement* (worded negatively), which are relatively lower. That is to say; instructors seem to believe that *teachers should think about their students' emotions when they provide feedback* with the highest means of 2.95($SD = 1.29$), 2.48 ($SD = 1.30$), and 2.32 ($SD = 1.15$) respectively.

Table 9*Distributions of Means for Discouragement (Negative)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	2.48	1.30
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	2.32	1.15
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	2.95	1.29

Considering the dimension of discouragement whether instructors had different views as a result of having an ELT or a non-ELT degree was also looked at (Table 10)

Table 10*Instructors' Major Differences: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	ELT	3.78	1.12	-.179	.859
	The others	3.83	1.09		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	ELT	2.33	1.35	-.797	.429
	The others	2.60	1.26		
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	ELT	3.30	1.17	-.886	.379
	The others	3.57	1.24		

Table 10 (cont'd)*Instructors' Major Differences: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	ELT	2.33	1.27	.064	.949
	The others	2.31	1.07		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	ELT	3.67	0.92	-.194	.847
	The others	3.71	0.98		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	ELT	3.11	1.28	.848	.400
	The others	2.83	1.31		

As shown in Table 10, it can be seen that the mean scores of instructors who graduated from the ELT department and the instructors who graduated from other departments are similar for all of the items regarding *discouragement*, and the independent t-test results do not show any significant difference for any of the items. The results suggest that it is difficult to claim that there is any difference in their perceptions because of their majors.

Focusing on the highest degree obtained by the instructors, Table 11 shows the comparison of instructors with BA and MA degrees.

Table 11*Instructors' Highest Degree Differences: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	BA	3.58	1.08	-1.640	.106
	MA	4.03	1.08		

Table 11 (cont'd)*Instructors' Highest Degree Differences: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	BA	2.74	1.36	1.579	.120
	MA	2.23	1.20		
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	BA	3.29	1.21	-1.050	.120
	MA	3.61	1.20		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	BA	2.52	1.26	1.326	.190
	MA	2.13	1.02		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	BA	3.58	0.88	-.934	.354
	MA	3.81	1.01		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	BA	3.29	1.18	2.111	.039
	MA	2.61	1.33		

The mean scores of instructors who had only a BA degree and the ones with an MA degree as well are similar for most of the items regarding *discouragement*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for the majority of the items above. There was only one significant difference between the scores of S6 of BA degree ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.18$) and MA degree ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.33$) conditions; $t = 2.111$, $p = .039$. The results suggest that instructors who have BA degrees seem to believe that feelings should not have a role in teachers' feedback more than the instructors who have MA degrees. Apart from this specific item (S6), it is hard to say that there is a huge difference because of instructors' highest degrees.

Whether instructors' years of experience affect their views regarding discouragement was also explored (Table 12)

Table 12*Instructors' Years of Experience Differences: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	16+ years	3.83	1.07	.179	.859
	The others	3.78	1.15		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	16+ years	2.63	1.33	.996	.323
	The others	2.30	1.26		
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	16+ years	3.34	1.30	-.803	.425
	The others	3.59	1.08		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	16+ years	2.29	1.10	-.284	.778
	The others	2.37	1.24		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	16+ years	3.66	1.02	-.341	.735
	The others	3.74	0.85		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	16+ years	3.00	1.21	.332	.741
	The others	2.89	1.42		

As far as the instructors' experience is concerned, the results indicated that the mean scores of instructors who had more than 16 years of experience and the ones who had less than 16 years of experience are similar for all of the items regarding *discouragement* and the independent t-test results are not significant for

any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of instructors' years of experience.

Instructors' Perceptions of Learner Readiness

Table 13 below shows the means of each item related to *learner readiness* (worded positively).

Table 13

Distributions of Means for Learner Readiness (Positive)

Items	Instructors ($N = 62$)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	3.23	1.17
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	3.13	1.15
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	3.39	1.21

The results revealed that instructors seem to pay attention to their students' level during feedback. With the highest mean of 3.39 ($SD = 1.21$) it seems there is a tendency not to pay attention to students' existing level while providing feedback by most of the instructors.

Table 14 indicates the means of each item related to *learner readiness* (worded negatively).

Table 14*Distributions of Means for Learner Readiness (Negative)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
	M	SD
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	3.69	1.06
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to these structures into their future writing. (S9)	3.05	1.09
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	3.27	1.14

Looking into the existing level of students during feedback, it is seen that instructors state that their *students' level should be a factor when they decide on the mistakes for which they give feedback* with the highest mean of 3.27 (SD= 1.14). On the other hand, the high standard deviations for these items report that data are more spread out among the respondents.

Considering the dimension of *learner readiness* whether instructors had different views as a result of having an ELT or a non-ELT degree was also looked at (Table 15)

Table 15*Instructors' Majors: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	ELT	3.81	0.92	.785	.436
	The others	3.60	1.16		
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	ELT	3.37	1.04	.846	.401
	The others	3.11	1.27		

Table 15 (cont'd)*Instructors' Majors: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	ELT	3.04	1.09	-.071	.943
	The others	3.06	1.11		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	ELT	3.22	1.01	.556	.580
	The others	3.06	1.25		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	ELT	3.11	1.05	-.982	.330
	The others	3.40	1.21		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	ELT	3.67	0.96	1.678	.099
	The others	3.17	1.36		

Findings pertaining to learner readiness revealed that the mean scores of instructors graduated from ELT department and the instructors graduated from the other departments are similar for all of the items regarding *learner readiness* and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above as seen in table 14. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a significant difference in the instructors' perceptions due to majors.

Focusing on the highest degree obtained by the instructors, Table 16 indicates the comparison of instructors with BA and MA degrees.

Table 16*Instructors' Highest Degree: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	BA	3.87	0.71	1.320	.193
	MA	3.52	1.31		

Table 16 (cont'd)*Instructors' Highest Degree: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	BA	3.35	1.08	.860	.393
	MA	3.10	1.27		
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	BA	2.97	0.98	-.578	.566
	MA	3.13	1.20		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	BA	3.06	1.15	-.438	.663
	MA	3.19	1.16		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	BA	3.19	0.98	-.550	.584
	MA	3.35	1.30		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	BA	3.35	1.22	-.207	.837
	MA	3.42	1.23		

As can be seen, the mean scores of instructors who had BA degrees and MA degrees are similar for all of the items regarding *learner readiness*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of instructors' degrees.

Whether instructors' years of experience influence their views regarding learner readiness was also scrutinized (Table 17)

Table 17*Instructors' Years of Experience: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	16+ years	3.71	1.04	.173	.863
	The others	3.67	1.10		
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	16+ years	3.29	1.04	.452	.653
	The others	3.15	1.35		
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	16+ years	2.89	0.99	-1.343	.184
	The others	3.26	1.19		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	16+ years	2.97	1.12	-1.232	.223
	The others	3.33	1.17		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	16+ years	3.51	1.01	1.916	.060
	The others	2.96	1.25		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	16+ years	3.34	1.23	-.323	.748
	The others	3.44	1.21		

Concerning the experience of the instructors Table 17 shows that the mean scores of instructors with more than 16 years of experience are similar for all of the items regarding *learner readiness*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of instructors' years of experience

Instructors' Perceptions of Meaning Focus

Table 18 below shows the means of each item related to *meaning focus* (worded positively).

Table 18*Distributions of Means for Meaning Focus (Positive)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	3.79	0.92
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	3.60	0.91
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	3.95	0.77

The findings uncovered that instructors report that they focus on *meaning* when they give feedback. With the highest mean of 3.95 ($SD = 0.77$), they highlight its importance of it by saying *messages and ideas need to be understood by the audience*.

Table 19 below shows the means of each item related to *meaning focus* (worded negatively).

Table 19*Distributions of Means for Meaning Focus (Negative)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	2.90	1.16

Table 19 (cont'd)*Distributions of Means for Meaning Focus (Negative)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing “correctly” then on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	3.26	0.92
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	2.23	0.94

Distribution for meaning focus above displays that S16 has the highest mean with 3.26 ($SD = 0.92$), which states *the reality of students' emphasis on writing correctly rather than emphasis on meaning*. However, the other two items have relatively lower mean scores of 2.90 ($SD = 1.16$) and 2.23 ($SD = 0.94$), respectively; therefore, instructors do not seem to agree on the importance of accuracy over meaning during their feedback.

Considering the aspect of *meaning focus* whether instructors had different opinions as a result of having an ELT or a non-ELT degree was also looked at (Table 20)

Table 20*Instructors' Majors: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	ELT	4.07	0.87	2.184	.033
	The others	3.57	0.91		

Table 20 (cont'd)*Instructors' Majors: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	ELT	2.59	1.15	-1.875	.066
	The others	3.14	1.14		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	ELT	3.44	1.01	-1.156	.252
	The others	3.71	0.82		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	ELT	3.26	0.90	.009	.993
	The others	3.26	0.95		
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	ELT	3.93	0.55	-.241	.810
	The others	3.97	0.92		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	ELT	2.19	1.00	-.294	.770
	The others	2.26	0.91		

It can be seen that the mean scores of instructors graduated from the ELT department and the instructors graduated from the other departments are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results did not yield any significant difference for any of the items above. In other words, the results suggest that it is difficult to say that there is a difference because of instructors' majors.

Focusing on the highest degree obtained by the instructors, Table 21 illustrates the comparison of instructors with BA and MA degrees.

Table 21*Instructors' Highest Degree: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	BA	3.90	0.87	.960	.341
	MA	3.68	0.97		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	BA	3.10	1.24	1.311	.195
	MA	2.71	1.07		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	BA	3.23	0.84	-3.475	.001
	MA	3.97	0.83		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	BA	3.39	0.88	1.104	.274
	MA	3.13	0.95		
The thing my when writing in English is to be sure that their students should work on most ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	BA	3.84	0.77	-1.147	.256
	MA	4.06	0.77		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	BA	2.58	0.88	3.156	.003
	MA	1.87	0.88		

Scrutinizing the effect of instructors' earned degrees on their preferences of meaning focus feedback, the findings suggested that the mean scores of instructors who had BA degrees and MA degrees are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the

items as shown Table 21. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference due to instructors' degrees.

Whether instructors' years of experience change their opinions regarding meaning focus was also researched (Table 22)

Table 22

Instructors' Years of Experience: Findings for Meaning Focus

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	16+ years	3.83	0.98	.368	.714
	The others	3.74	0.85		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	16+ years	3.06	1.08	1.184	.241
	The others	2.70	1.26		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	16+ years	3.40	0.77	-1.976	.053
	The others	3.85	1.02		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	16+ years	3.43	0.91	1.682	.098
	The others	3.04	0.89		
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	16+ years	3.91	0.81	-.428	.670
	The others	4.00	0.73		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	16+ years	2.26	0.85	.294	.770
	The others	2.19	1.07		

Concerning the experience of the instructors, it is seen that the mean scores of instructors who had more than 16 years of experience and the ones who had less than 16 years of experience are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above as displayed in table 22. That is to say, the results suggest that it is hard to claim that there is a difference because of instructors' experience.

Table 23 below indicates the means of each item related to *grammar focus* (worded positively).

Table 23

Distributions of Means for Grammar Focus (Positive)

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	3.47	1.12
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	2.45	0.97
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	3.45	1.11

Looking into the grammar focus in the feedback process, the instructors also put an emphasis on *grammar* while they provide feedback for their students' writing as seen in table 23. They showed the highest mean ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.12$) in S20 that states *instructors seem to believe that their students expect to be corrected for all of their grammar problems*.

Table 24 indicates the means of each item related to *grammar focus* (worded negatively).

Table 24*Distributions of Means for Grammar focus (Negative)*

Items	Instructors (N= 62)	
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	3.26	1.24
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	2.47	1.03
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	3.11	1.08

As far as instructors' practices with respect to correcting grammar-related mistakes, the findings unearthed that they seem not to believe the importance of correcting a grammatical mistake when they provide feedback as shown in table 24 above. S19 has the highest mean 3.26 ($SD = 1.24$) among the others; that is to say, *they do not think the role of giving feedback for each and every one of their students' mistakes.*

Whether instructors' years of experience influence their opinions regarding learner readiness was also explored (Table 25)

Table 25*Instructors' Years of Experience: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	16+ years	3.43	1.06	1.266	.211
	The others	3.04	1.37		
	The others	3.48	1.18		

Table 25 (cont'd)*Instructors' Years of Experience: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	16+ years	2.40	1.00	-.583	.562
	The others	2.56	1.08		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	16+ years	2.34	0.93	-1.006	.319
	The others	2.59	1.01		
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	16+ years	3.11	1.10	.011	.991
	The others	3.11	1.08		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	16+ years	3.37	1.16	-.644	.522
	The others	3.56	1.05		

In relation to the effect of instructors' experience on their preferences regarding grammar focus when giving feedback, it can be seen that the mean scores of instructors who had more than 16 years of experience and the ones who had less than 16 years of experience are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning focus* and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. In other words, the results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of instructors' years of experience.

Considering the dimension of *grammar focus* whether instructors had different views as a result of having an ELT or a non-ELT degree was also checked (Table 26)

Table 26*Instructors' Majors: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	ELT	3.52	1.08	1.499	.139
	The others	3.06	1.28		
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	ELT	3.48	1.01	.085	.933
	The others	3.46	1.19		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	ELT	2.30	0.95	-1.148	.256
	The others	2.60	1.09		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	ELT	2.22	0.84	-1.659	.102
	The others	2.63	1.03		
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	ELT	2.96	1.01	-.952	.345
	The others	3.23	1.14		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	ELT	3.59	1.01	.876	.385
	The others	3.34	1.18		

Taking instructors' majors into account, the findings uncovered that the mean scores of instructors who graduated from the ELT department and the instructors graduated from the other departments are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items as shown in Table 26 above meaning that it is hard to state that there is a difference due to instructors' majors.

Focusing on the highest degree obtained by the instructors, Table 27 shows the comparison of instructors with BA and MA degrees.

Table 27

Instructors' Highest Degree: Findings for Grammar Focus

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	BA	3.10	1.10	-1.047	.299
	MA	3.42	1.31		
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	BA	3.77	0.95	2.240	.029
	MA	3.16	1.18		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	BA	2.29	0.90	-1.358	.180
	MA	2.65	1.14		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	BA	2.55	0.72	.783	.437
	MA	2.35	1.17		
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	BA	3.06	0.77	-.348	.730
	MA	3.16	1.34		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	BA	3.55	0.92	.683	.497
	MA	3.35	1.27		

In order to see if instructors' earned degrees make any difference on their preference of giving grammar focused feedback, the t-test performed showed the mean scores of instructors who had BA degrees and MA degrees are similar for all of the items regarding *grammar focus* with no significant difference. To that end, it is hard to state that there is a difference because of instructors' degrees.

Findings of Instructors' Interviews

To answer the first research question, which was about the EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL learners' writing ability at the tertiary level, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 volunteer instructors. Based on the data obtained from the interviews the existing/pre-determined themes, which were the primary constructs explored in the questionnaire -*discouragement (D)*, *learner readiness (LR)*, *grammar focus (GF)*, *meaning focus (MF)*- and the newly emerged themes are presented in this section.

Based on the interviewees' responses two main categories emerged throughout the qualitative data analysis: the first one is related to their *experiences* while the other one was related to their *expectations*. Therefore, all of the results have two separate tables for each of the main categories.

Table 28 below shows the distribution of comment on instructors' experiences according to the existing and emerged themes.

Table 28

Distributions of Comments on Instructors' Experiences

Experiences of the Instructors (N= 11)	Number of Comments
Themes under Existing Constructs	
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	10
Giving importance to students' emotions (D)	9
Focusing on meaning (MF)	8
Taking into consideration students' level (LR)	4
Focusing on grammar (GF)	3
Emerged Themes	
Correcting major mistakes	3
Correction by students	2
Giving explanation(negative)	2
Problems with time constraints	2
Providing familiar topics	2
Correction by teacher(positive)	1
Correction by teacher(negative)	1
Focusing on students' strengths	1
Giving examples	1
Giving explanation(positive)	1

Based on the interviewees' responses two main categories emerged throughout the qualitative data analysis: the first one is related to their *experiences* while the other one was related to their *expectations*. Therefore, all of the results below had two separate tables for each of the main categories.

The quantitative data results previously indicated that instructors put an emphasis on learner readiness and they did not seem to prefer grammar focus as much during their feedback. Instead, instructors' interview findings below underlined the role of *equal importance for grammar and meaning*. Also they take into consideration *the importance of students' emotions* throughout their feedback.

In the course of interviews, the most frequent themes related to the instructors' experiences were found to be about giving *equal importance to grammar and meaning* among the existing themes and *correcting major mistakes* among the emerged ones as seen in table 28. Unlike what the quantitative results suggested, most of the instructors interviewed seem to put an emphasis on both grammar and meaning when they provide feedback. This is obvious in the following utterance by one of the participants (Inst10) "grammar and accuracy are as important as the content because grammar interferes with content actually, if students cannot produce right grammatical sentence and if they make too many mistakes, then it will interfere with the meaning - the content." Another participant (Inst4) also emphasized the role of balance between grammar and meaning and added that the messages should be conveyed grammatically correctly.

As for the other most frequent theme among the emerged ones, *correcting major mistakes*, was repeated by some of the instructors. One of the participants (Inst4) said "I'm selective because I don't look at each and every mistake one by one especially for beginners."

During the interviews instructors also highlighted their expectations. Table 29 below presents the distribution of comments on instructors' expectations according to the existing and emerged themes.

Table 29

Distributions of Comments on Instructors' Expectations

Expectations of the Instructors (N= 11)	Number of Comments
Themes under Existing Constructs	
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	4
Taking into consideration students' level (LR)	3
Giving importance to students' emotions (D)	2
Focusing on meaning (MF)	1
Emerged Themes	
Correcting major mistakes	3
Giving personal feedback	3
Correction by students	2
Giving detailed feedback	1
Giving explicit feedback	1
Giving timely feedback	1
Providing interesting topics	1
Providing familiar topics	1

The most frequent themes related to instructors' expectations were giving *equal importance to grammar and meaning* and *taking into consideration students' level* among the existing themes and correcting *major mistakes* and giving personal feedback among the emerged themes as shown in Table 29. Some of the instructors seem to believe in the importance of balance between grammar and meaning in their feedback. One of the instructors (Inst8) said, "As writing is a collection of individual skills such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization. I think a teacher should take into consideration all of them when giving feedback." Another one (Inst10) said, "I think they're both equally important. Some teachers just focus on grammar and ignore the content, but a teacher should consider both meaning and grammar

accuracy.” Also, the second theme was about students’ existing proficiency level. One instructor (Inst7) said that “depending on students’ level, what is covered within the units in the classes should be checked.”

As for the most frequent theme among emerging ones, according to some instructors, there should be a focus on selected major mistakes, and it is not necessary to correct every mistake. One of the instructors (Inst2) said, “Teachers shouldn't turn students' paper into a sketchbook, so they shouldn't correct every small mistake, and minor mistakes can be ignored.” Another expectation of the instructors’ was related to personal feedback. One of the instructors (Inst2) commented that “the personal needs of each individual student may be taken into consideration while giving feedback. The same instructor also added that “teacher should demonstrate the students’ mistake to him or her individually.”

Findings of Instructors’ Open-Ended Questions

To answer the first research question, which is what are EFL teachers’ perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL learners’ writing ability at the tertiary level, in addition to the semi-structured interview data instructors’ answers to the open ended questions in the questionnaire were also analyzed. The results will again be presented below in a similar fashion as before, instructor experiences first and their expectations later.

Table 30 below shows their responses regarding their experiences.

Table 30

Distributions of Open-Ended Comments on Instructors’ Experiences

Experiences of the Instructors (N= 67)	Number of Comments
Themes under Existing Constructs	
Giving importance to students’ emotions (D)	23
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	18
Focusing on meaning(MF)	11
Taking into consideration students’ level(positive) (LR)	11
Focusing on grammar (GF)	4
Taking into consideration students’ level(negative) (LR)	3

Table 30 (cont'd)*Distributions of Open-Ended Comments on Instructors' Experiences*

Experiences of the Instructors (N= 67)	Number of Comments
Emergед Themes	
Problems with time constraints	14
Correcting major mistakes	12
Improving students	11
Giving explanation	6
Students' strengths	4
Correction by teacher(positive)	4
Giving explicit feedback	4
Giving detailed feedback	3
Negative	3
Correction by teacher (negative)	3
Correcting all mistakes(negative)	3
Correcting all mistakes(positive)	2
Referring to students' strengths and weaknesses	2
Giving examples	2
Allowing students realize their mistakes	1
No idea	1

In parallel with the interview results, instructors put an emphasis on the role of *equal importance for grammar and meaning* and take into consideration *the importance of students' emotions* throughout feedback in their open-ended responses as well. Thus, we may conclude that there is consistency among their qualitative data results, which come from two different sources.

The most frequent theme related to instructors' experiences was *giving importance to students' emotions*,

One of the instructors (Inst39) said, "I try to get my students to understand and normalize the idea that they will/would make mistakes, and it is perfectly normal! The rest is always rewarding when they trust you and feel secure and comfortable." Another instructor (Inst3) mentioned the importance of building teacher-student dialogue and giving students affective support.

Similarly, another instructor (Inst21) said, "Giving positive feedback motivates the students, even if they have a lot of grammatical errors." Another one (Inst51) stated, "I may overlook some grammar mistakes to not discourage the

student.” In the same vein, another instructor (Inst55) said, “I try not to discourage the students with the grammatical or word-related mistakes that they have made above their ability or knowledge.” Additionally, another instructor (Inst51) said, “My feedback is detailed, but more importantly, encouraging. I try to help the student want to write, not just do so out of necessity.”

The next frequently mentioned already existing theme was giving *equal importance to grammar and meaning* during feedback among the existing themes.

It was emphasized in some comments by the instructors. One of them (Inst57) stated, “I do not only focus on grammar structures, and I also try to feedback on ideas to make it more straightforward and more authentic as possible.” Similarly, another instructor (Inst4) mentioned, “I try to correct the structural mistakes as well as the misunderstandings of the messages, preferably with the corporation of the students.”

As for the emerged themes, *problems with time constraints* and correcting *major mistakes* were among the frequently stated ones.

The problems with time constraints were repeated by some of the instructors. One of the instructors (Inst13) said, “I think we try to apply process writing, but because of the intensive pacing and time constraints, it is not adequate for continuous learner development.” In the same vein, another instructor (Inst41) said, “As we don't have much time for process writing due to our workload, I correct their mistakes and write notes if necessary.” Another instructor (Inst31) said, “Because of lack of time and overloaded work I should do for the class, we cannot pay too much attention to the feedback process.” Another one (Inst53) said that due to limited time in the syllabus, sometimes they cannot find enough time for the second or more

drafts in order to provide more opportunities for improvement. Similarly, another instructor (Inst59) made the following comment:

I think feedback sessions are quite effective and increase the effect of teaching in writing classes as we mostly focus on the theoretical aspects and rules of writing. However, I am still trying to find ways to lower the amount of time it takes. Because of the pacing I have to follow, it's sometimes quite challenging to find enough time to complete the feedback process during class hours.

Instructors' expectations as expressed in their answers to the open ended questions of the questionnaire are shared in Table 31 below:

Table 31

Distributions of Open-Ended Comments on Instructors' Expectations

Expectations of the Instructors (N= 67)	Number of Comments
Themes under Existing Constructs	
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	5
Focusing on meaning (MF)	5
Focusing on grammar (GF)	4
Taking into consideration students' level (LR)	3
Giving importance to students' emotions (D)	1
Emerged Themes	
Correction by student	18
Allowing students realize their mistakes	6
Correction by teacher	6
Giving personal feedback	4
Giving detailed feedback	3
Giving explanation	3
Improving students	2
Correcting major mistakes	2
Giving explicit feedback	2
Referring to students' strengths	2
Referring to students' weaknesses	1

The most frequent themes related to instructors' expectations were giving *equal importance to grammar and meaning* and interestingly *focusing on meaning as repeated in instructors' comments as many as equal importance* as can be seen in Table 31. This supports the previous findings coming from the questionnaires and interviews. The other most frequent theme among the emerged ones showing instructor expectations from students was *correction by students*. Accordingly, one of the instructors (Inst1) said, "Show the mistakes and let them find the correct form." Another one (Inst7) said, "My purpose is to make it clear for the student to be his own corrector the next time they write. To have the vision to see what mistakes they make and learn from my feedback." Similarly, another instructor (Inst24) said, "To make students be aware of their mistakes and correct it themselves first, if they cannot, to correct them by explaining clearly."

Students' Perceptions

The students' responses to the questionnaire liker scale items, interviews and the open ended questions in the questionnaires were analyzed to answer the second research question: *What are EFL students' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability at the tertiary level?* In this regard, firstly the means and standard deviations were analyzed for each of the constructs involved in the questionnaire (Table 32)

Table 32

Students' Perceptions Regarding Four Survey Constructs

Constructs (N= 497)	M	SD
Discouragement	2.77	0.58
Meaning focus	3.53	0.56
Grammar focus	3.13	0.47

Looking at Table 32, it is apparent that *meaning focus* related items have the highest mean ($M = 3.53$) among the others. That is to say, students value the role of *meaning* more than the other constructs while they receive feedback on their writing. The next highest mean score belongs to the items related to the construct of *learner readiness* ($M = 3.46$). The other relatively high mean score belongs to the items pertaining to *grammar focus* ($M = 3.13$), and the lowest among the four constructs belongs to the construct of *discouragement* ($M = 2.77$). That is to say, students do not consider discouragement factor as important as the others. These constructs have similar standard deviations ($SD = 0.58$, $SD = 0.54$, $SD = 0.56$, and $SD = 0.47$, respectively), which indicated that the respondents mostly agree with each other.

The detailed reports of the related items under each construct can be seen in the following tables. The tables are categorized according to the constructs, which have initially 6 items, but you can see 3 items under each construct as they are classified as positive and negative statements so as to be interpreted clearly similar to the pattern followed while presenting the instructor data.

Table 33 presents the results related to the discouragement theme items.

Table 33

Distributions of means: Discouragement (Positive)

Students ($N = 497$)	M	SD
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	2.32	1.38
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	2.65	1.39
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	3.41	1.32

As seen in Table 33, S6 had the highest mean ($M = 3.41$), which states that most students do not focus on the *emotions* during feedback. As for the standard deviations, they are not so different from each other. All of them are more than 1. This may suggest that there might not be full agreement among the students.

Table 34 is again about the discouragement theme but presents the results of the negatively stated items.

Table 34

Distributions of means for Discouragement (Negative)

Students ($N = 497$)	M	SD
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	2.66	1.26
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	2.34	1.24
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	3.25	1.33

As indicated in Table 34, the items for the theme did not yield high means supporting the previous findings. However, standard deviations of items, being higher than 1, may again show a kind of a disagreement among the respondents.

Table 35

Students' Gender: Findings for Discouragement

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	Female	2.69	1.29	.554	.580
	Male	2.63	1.22		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	Female	2.25	1.41	-1.336	.182
	Male	2.42	1.35		

Table 35 (cont'd)*Students' Gender: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	Female	2.28	1.21	-1.277	.202
	Male	2.42	1.28		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	Female	2.55	1.38	-1.747	.081
	Male	2.77	1.41		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	Female	3.22	1.30	-.731	.465
	Male	3.31	1.35		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	Female	3.38	1.34	-.664	.507
	Male	3.46	1.31		

As can be seen in Table 35, the mean scores of female and male students are similar for the items regarding *discouragement*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above, so we cannot claim that there is not a perceptual difference as a result of students' gender.

Table 36 shows that the mean scores of Program 1 and. Program 2 students.

Table 36*Students' Program: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	Program 1	2.59	1.27	-1.889	.059
	Program 2	2.81	1.23		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	Program 1	2.31	1.35	-.291	.771
	Program 2	2.35	1.43		

Table 36 (cont'd)*Students' Program: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	Program 1	2.26	1.21	-1.882	.060
	Program 2	2.49	1.28		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	Program 1	2.63	1.39	-.393	.694
	Program 2	2.68	1.41		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	Program 1	3.18	1.347	-1.645	.101
	Program 2	3.39	1.289		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	Program 1	3.37	1.335	-.986	.324
	Program 2	3.49	1.312		

According to Table 36 Program 1 and Program 2 students' views are similar for all of the items regarding *discouragement*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of students' program differences.

Table 37*Students' Major: Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	Numerical	2.56	1.12	-1.575	.116
	Verbal	2.74	1.35		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	Numerical	2.34	1.32	.200	.842
	Verbal	2.31	1.42		

Table 37 (cont'd)*Students' Major Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	Numerical	2.32	1.17	-.289	.773
	Verbal	2.35	1.29		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	Numerical	2.73	1.37	1.044	.297
	Verbal	2.59	1.42		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	Numerical	3.23	1.27	-.437	.663
	Verbal	3.28	1.36		
Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction. (S6)	Numerical	3.42	1.28	.209	.835
	Verbal	3.40	1.36		

As can be seen in Table 37, the mean scores of students who will study at departments that require numerical and verbal skills are similar for all of the items regarding *discouragement*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of students' major differences in numerical or verbal skills.

In addition to discouragement, the importance of students' levels and students' readiness to get the feedback as a theme was also explored (Table 37).

Table 38*Distributions of Means for Learner Readiness (Positive)*

Students (<i>N</i> = 497)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	3.41	1.29
If advanced grammar structures are corrected, students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	2.80	1.31
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	2.67	1.34

Table 38 shows that students' level is not a concern among their feedback expectations for most of the students. All related items have relatively lower mean scores ($M=3.41$, $M=2.80$, and $M=2.67$, respectively).

Table 39 below confirms the results of Table 37 with high mean scores ($M=4.33$, $M=3.69$, $M=3.90$, respectively) for the *unimportance of students' levels* throughout the feedback process.

Table 39

Distributions of Means for Learner Readiness (Negative)

Students ($N=497$)	M	SD
For students' English to improve, their mistakes should be corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	4.33	0.97
The mistakes students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	3.69	1.32
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	3.90	1.18

Whether gender plays a role in students' perception regarding learner readiness in receiving feedback was also looked into (Table 40).

Table 40

Students' Gender: Findings for Learner Readiness

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	Female	3.29	1.32	-2.232	.026
	Male	3.55	1.23		
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	Female	4.37	0.94	.675	.500
	Male	4.31	0.99		

Table 40 (cont'd)*Students' Gender: Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these their future writing. (S9)	Female	2.77	1.33	-.647	.518
	Male	2.84	1.28		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	Female	3.79	1.33	1.740	.082
	Male	3.58	1.30		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	Female	2.56	1.33	-1.886	.600
	Male	2.79	1.35		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	Female	3.92	1.16	.222	.825
	Male	3.89	1.20		

As it can be seen in the table, the mean scores of female and male students are similar for the items regarding *learner readiness*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for the majority of the items above. There was only one significant difference between the scores of S7 of males ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.23$) and females ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.32$) conditions; $t = -2.23$, $p = .026$. The results suggest that some male students seem to believe the learner readiness in feedback and the role of students' level needs to be the determining factor in feedback more than the female students do. Apart from this specific item, it is hard to say that there is a huge difference because of students' genders.

Possible perception differences due to Program attendance was also explored (Table 41).

Table 41

Students' Program: Findings for Learner Readiness

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	Program 1	3.44	1.29	.750	.454
	Program 2	3.35	1.28		
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	Program 1	4.30	1.00	-1.130	.259
	Program 2	4.40	0.89		
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	Program 1	2.78	1.31	-.380	.704
	Program 2	2.83	1.31		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	Program 1	3.70	1.36	.209	.834
	Program 2	3.67	1.24		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	Program 1	2.70	1.40	.835	.404
	Program 2	2.60	1.20		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	Program 1	3.88	1.22	-.545	.586
	Program 2	3.94	1.10		

As Table 41 shows, the mean scores of Program 1 and Program 2 students are similar for all of the items regarding *learner readiness*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of the students' programs

If student perceptions change according to their majors was also looked into (Table 42).

Table 42

Students' Major: Findings for Learner Readiness

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	Numerical	3,45	1,25	.606	.545
	Verbal	3,38	1,32		
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	Numerical	4,34	0,91	.218	.828
	Verbal	4,33	1,01		
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	Numerical	2,84	1,26	.680	.497
	Verbal	2,76	1,34		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	Numerical	3,73	1,21	.647	.518
	Verbal	3,65	1,40		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	Numerical	2,64	1,27	-.303	.762
	Verbal	2,68	1,38		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	Numerical	3,86	1,15	-.760	.447
	Verbal	3,94	1,19		

As can be seen in Table 42, the mean scores of students whose departments require numerical and verbal skills are similar for all of the items related to *learner*

readiness, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of students' major differences in numerical or verbal.

Students' perceptions regarding meaning focus in written feedback is presented in Table 43 below:

Table 43

Distributions of means for Meaning focus (Positive)

Students (N= 497)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The most important aspect of students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	3.79	1.06
When students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	4.25	0.86
The thing students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	4.09	0.87

Table 43 shows that *meaning focus* is highly important for students. *S15* has the highest mean ($M = 4.25$), which also has a relatively low standard deviation ($SD = 0.86$).

As it is seen in Table 44 below, to some extent, there is a tendency to focus on *grammar* during feedback. *S14* has the highest mean ($M = 3.17$) that states the necessity of feedback on the accuracy unlike the findings above in Table 43 which highlights the importance of meaning over grammar; so these two results are contradictory.

Table 44*Distributions of means for Meaning focus (Negative)*

Students (N= 497)	M	SD
Students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	3.17	1.26
When students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing “correctly” than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	2.95	1.16
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for writing. (S18)	2.94	1.20

If gender plays a role in shaping students’ views regarding meaning focus was explored (Table 45).

Table 45*Students’ Gender: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The most important aspect of my students’ writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	Female	3.72	1.05	-2.053	.041
	Male	3.91	1.06		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	Female	3.14	1.25	-.536	.593
	Male	3.21	1.27		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	Female	4.30	0.83	1.090	.276
	Male	4.21	0.87		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing “correctly” than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	Female	2.99	1.17	1.194	.233
	Male	2.86	1.14		

Table 45 (cont'd)*Students' Gender: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	Female	4.10	0.88	.210	.834
	Male	4.09	0.85		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	Female	2.94	1.19	-.039	.969
	Male	2.95	1.22		

As can be seen in Table 45, the mean scores of female and male students are similar for the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for most of the items above. There was only one significant difference between the scores of S13 with males ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.23$) and females ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.32$) conditions; $t = -2.053$, $p = .041$. The results suggest that some male students seem to believe in the importance of grammar in feedback more than female students do. However, according to the other items, it is hard to claim that there is a difference because of students' genders in general.

Perception differences due to the Program attended was explored (Table 46)

Table 46*Students' Program: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	Program 1	3.73	1.07	-1.991	.047
	Program 2	3.93	1.03		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	Program 1	3.22	1.27	1.123	.262
	Program 2	3.08	1.23		

Table 46 (cont'd)*Students' Program: Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	Program 1	4.19	0.91	-1.936	.053
	Program 2	4.35	0.76		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	Program 1	2.93	1.17	-.414	.679
	Program 2	2.98	1.13		
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	Program 1	4.04	0.88	-1.843	.066
	Program 2	4.19	0.84		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	Program 1	2.90	1.17	-1.058	.290
	Program 2	3.02	1.25		

As can be seen in table 46, the mean scores of Program 1 and Program 2 students are similar for the items regarding *meaning focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for the majority of the items above. The only one item with a mean difference of .20, Program 2 mean of S13 ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.03$) was found to be slightly higher than Program 1 ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.07$). Accordingly, there was a significant difference between the scores of S13 of Program 1 ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.07$) and Program 2 ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.03$) conditions; $t = -1.991$, $p = .047$. The results suggest that some of the Program 2 students seem to believe in the importance of meaning in feedback more than Program 1 students do. However, according to the other items, it is hard to claim that there is an overall difference because of the students' program.

Variation due to student majors was also studied (Table 47).

Table 47*Students' Major Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	Numerical	3.82	0.98	.291	.771
	Verbal	3.79	1.11		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	Numerical	3.21	1.24	.527	.598
	Verbal	3.15	1.27		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across verbal as best they can. (S15)	Numerical	4.21	0.86	-.952	.342
	Verbal	4.28	0.87		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	Numerical	2.92	1.08	-.424	.672
	Verbal	2.96	1.22		
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	Numerical	4.02	0.84	-1.597	.111
	Verbal	4.15	0.88		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	Numerical	2.85	1.15	-1.402	.162
	Verbal	3.01	1.23		

As can be seen in Table 47, the mean scores of students whose departments require numerical and verbal skills are similar for all of the items regarding *meaning*

focus, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state a difference because of students' majors.

As to the grammar focus Table 48 shows students perceptions.

Table 48

Distributions of means for Grammar focus (Positive)

Students (N= 497)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	4.00	1.09
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	3.32	1.08
If students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	3.43	1.02

Table 48 shows that students focus on grammar during feedback. S20 has the highest mean score ($M = 4.00$), which states the agreement on the *expectancy of feedback on all grammatical mistakes*. However, there is not much agreement among the respondents as the items have high standard deviations above 1.

Table 48 also indicates consistency with the item results in Table 47. That is, students expect to see feedback on grammar mostly. However, there is no much agreement among the students according to the high standard deviations ($SD = 1.19$, $SD = 1.07$, and $SD = 1.24$, respectively).

Table 49

Distributions of means: Grammar focus (Negative)

Students (N= 497)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	2.31	1.19

Table 49 (cont'd)*Distributions of means: Grammar focus (Negative)*

Students (N= 497)	M	SD
Students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	2.82	1.07
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	2.94	1.24

The role of gender in affecting students' views are seen in Table 50 below:

Table 50*Students' Gender: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	Female	2.21	1.15	-2.016	.044
	Male	2.43	1.24		
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	Female	4.05	1.08	.756	.450
	Male	3.98	1.09		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	Female	2.75	1.10	-1.590	.113
	Male	2.91	1.05		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	Female	3.35	1.07	.499	.618
	Male	3.30	1.09		

Table 50 (cont'd)*Students' Gender: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Getting the forms and conjugations right	Female	2.86	1.27		
is not the most important thing for the				-1.533	.126
students to write well in English. (S23)	Male	3.04	1.20		
If my students could choose only one area	Female	3.51	1.02		
of their writing to be marked by the				1.794	.073
teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	Male	3.35	1.00		

As can be seen in Table 50, the mean scores of female and male students are similar for the items regarding *grammar focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for most of the items above, only one item (S19) has a slight difference between males ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.24$) and females ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.15$). Accordingly, there was a significant difference between the scores of S19 of males ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.24$) and females ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.15$) conditions; $t = -2.016$, $p = .044$. The results suggest that some of the male students seem to believe in the importance of focus on meaning in feedback more than female students do. However, according to the other items, it is hard to claim that there is a difference because of students' gender.

The role of Program attended on shaping students' views regarding grammar focus can be seen in Table 51.

Table 51*Students' Program: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	Program 1	2.28	1.18		
	Program 2	2.35	1.20	-.551	.582

Table 51 (cont'd)*Students' Program: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	Program 1	3.97	1.13	-.895	.371
	Program 2	4.07	1.00		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	Program 1	2.80	1.08	-.812	.417
	Program 2	2.88	1.06		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	Program 1	3.33	1.09	.184	.854
	Program 2	3.31	1.06		
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	Program 1	2.87	1.26	-1.740	.082
	Program 2	3.07	1.18		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	Program 1	3.43	0.98	.023	.982
	Program 2	3.43	1.10		

As can be seen in Table 51, the views of Program 1 and Program 2 students are similar for all of the items regarding *grammar focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference because of the program students are attending.

The role of students major in shaping students' views regarding grammar focus feedback was also looked into (Table 52).

Table 52*Students' Major: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	Numerical	2.24	1.12	-1.024	.306
	Verbal	2.35	1.24		

Table 52 (cont'd)*Students' Major: Findings for Grammar Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	Numerical	4.05	1.01	.770	.442
	Verbal	3.97	1.15		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	Numerical	2.82	1.01	-.098	.922
	Verbal	2.83	1.12		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	Numerical	3.38	1.03	.927	.354
	Verbal	3.29	1.11		
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English. (S23)	Numerical	2.95	1.18	.166	.868
	Verbal	2.93	1.29		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	Numerical	3.43	1.00	-.058	.954
	Verbal	3.43	1.04		

As can be seen in Table 52, the views of the students who had numerical or verbal majors are similar for all of the items regarding *grammar focus*, and the independent t-test results are not significant for any of the items above. The results suggest that it is hard to state that there is a difference due to their major differences.

Findings of Students' Interviews

11 volunteer students from the preparatory school were interviewed via Semi-structured interviews asking them questions related to their experiences and expectations throughout the written feedback process. Based on the data, the main constructs were seen as *grammar focus*, *meaning focus*, *learner readiness*, and *discouragement*. Apart from the issues explored in the interview questions based on

the already existing themes, some new themes (*time constraints, inconsistency, etc.*) also emerged in their responses. They can be seen in the tables of the following section.

Table 53 presents students' answers when they were asked about their experiences on what the role of meaning/message and grammar/accuracy is when they receive feedback on their writing.

Table 53

Distributions for Interview Comments about Students' Experiences

Themes	Number of Comments (N = 11)
Themes under Existing Constructs	
Focusing on meaning (MF)	4
Focusing on grammar (GF)	3
Giving importance to students' emotions (D)	2
Focusing on meaning(negative) MF)	1
Taking into consideration students' level(positive) (LR)	1
Taking into consideration students' level(negative) (LR)	1
Emerged themes	
Problems with time constraints	1
Inconsistency during feedback	1

Vignettes from the interviews indicated that *meaning focus* is more critical. On the other hand, one comment from a student negatively refers to meaning focus and says, "I don't pay attention to messages in my writing." As for the other construct, grammar focus, excerpts from the interviews emphasized the importance of grammar over meaning. One student (St2) made the following comment:

The important thing for me is the message I want to give; I may have something wrong with grammar or vocabulary, but if that person can understand what I want to write, it's good for me; I don't go into too much detail.

Another student (St6) stated that:

When I want to talk about a topic, I focus on the topic and generally make grammatical or vocabulary mistakes because I only focus on telling about that topic. But our teacher asks us to use grammar correctly, so maybe there is some inconsistency. We are trying to explain the subject; they want us to write the grammar correctly.

As for the other dimension of the interview questions, students were also asked about their perceptions on what the role of meaning/message and grammar/accuracy should be when they received feedback on their writing.

Table 54 summarizes the themes covered.

Table 54

Distributions of Interview Comments on Students' Expectations

Expectations of the Students	Number of Comments (N= 11)
Existing Themes	
Giving importance to students' emotions(positive) (D)	9
Focusing on meaning (MF)	6
Focusing on grammar (GF)	4
Taking into consideration students' level (LR)	4
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	3
Taking into consideration students' level(negative) (LR)	2
Giving importance to students' emotions(negative) (D)	1
Emergед Themes	
Correcting all mistakes	4
Providing familiar topics	4
Providing interesting topics	3
Giving explicit feedback	1
Giving personal feedback	1
Correction by student	1

As can be seen in Table 54, emotions, meaning focus within the existing themes; correcting all mistakes and providing familiar topics within the emerged themes are among the students' mostly mentioned expectations.

Some comments indicated that *emotions* have a great role in feedback. There were explicitly nine comments mentioning that students' emotions should be taken into consideration when teachers provide feedback. One of the students (St8) stated, "When I make a mistake, I get sad, it affects my motivation badly." Another student (St10) said, "I can write well if my teacher supports me, and it will increase my motivation but being mocked demotivates me."

The other frequently stated theme was *meaning focus*, repeated more than grammar focus during student interviews. One student (St1) made the following comment:

I think the meaning is more important. But of course, it is necessary to learn the grammar correctly. When writing something official or something, but that's a little bit later, I think first you should learn the basics of the language and then improve the grammar, that is, it can be improved as you use it.

Another student (St9) added, "Grammar is not a big deal for me; it can be improved; expressing yourself is more important than grammar." Similarly, another one (St11) stated, "The message you convey is more important. It may be better if the teacher focuses on understanding."

As for the emerged themes, *correcting all mistakes* was the most repeated expectation by the students. One student (St2) said, "I think every single mistake should be pointed out, even if it's a minor mistake." Similarly, another one (St8) stated, "I think teachers should point out all the mistakes, so we can find out where we made a mistake." (St6). If the teacher didn't show us all of the mistakes so as not

to offend us, we wouldn't be able to see our own mistakes, and we wouldn't be able to correct them.

The other frequent theme repeated as many as the previous one was related to *familiar topics*. One of the students (St6) said, “If it is a topic I know and have experience or knowledge on, I can write more confidently.” Another student (St9) said, “My motivation decreases when I write about topics I do not know much about.”

Findings of Students' Open-Ended Questions

To answer research question 2, which is what are EFL learners' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL learners' writing ability at the tertiary level, apart from the semi-structured interview data, students' responses to the open ended questions were also analyzed. Table 55 shows the distribution of student comments in their answers to the open ended questions grouped according to the preexisting and newly emerged themes.

Table 55

Distributions of Open-Ended Comments on Students' Experiences

Experiences of the Students	Number of Comments (N= 497)
Existing Themes	
Focusing on grammar (GF)	10
Giving importance to students' emotions (D)	6
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	3
Emerged Themes	
Positive adjectives	562
Correction by teacher	49
Correction by student	28
Giving timely feedback	26
Positive teacher characteristics	24
No experience	10

As can be seen in Table 55, grammar focus and emotions within the existing themes; positive attitudes and correction by teacher within the emerged themes are among the students' mostly mentioned themes related to their feedback experiences.

Some comments indicated that *focusing on grammar* has an important role in their feedback experience. One of the students (St52) said, "As the teachers are interested in the grammar parts of my writing I think it is useful for me." Another student (St358) stated. "Feedback is nice and useful especially in the grammar part."

The examination of the emerged themes yielded lots of positive adjectives uttered by the participating students in relation to their feedback experiences as shown below. (See Table 56)

Table 56

Frequently Used Adjectives to Describe Students' Experiences

Adjectives
a bit slow but effective
accurate
as it should be
clear
comprehensible
effective
efficient
fast and accurate
helpful
ideal
informative
logical
necessary
perfect
pretty well
productive
quick
reasonable
satisfied
successful
sufficient
understandable
useful
well enough

Table 57 below summarizes the students' expectations from the written feedback process as expressed in their answers given to the open ended questions of the survey.

Table 57

Distributions of Open-Ended Comments on Students' Expectations

Expectations of the Students	Number of Comments (N= 497)
Existing Themes	
Focusing on meaning (MF)	31
Focusing on grammar (GF)	16
Giving importance to students' emotions(positive) (D)	16
Giving equal importance to grammar and meaning (GF&MF)	12
Taking into consideration students' level(positive) (LR)	10
Taking into consideration students' level(negative) (LR)	5
Giving importance to students' emotions(negative) (D)	4
Emerged Themes	
Giving timely feedback	85
No idea	84
Improving students	73
Giving explanation	63
Allowing students realize their mistakes	60
No expectation	55
Correcting all mistakes	44
Giving explicit feedback	40
Correction by teacher	26
Giving detailed feedback	26
More	25
Giving personal feedback	18
Not to be penalized	17
Correction by student	14
Correcting major mistakes	9
Giving examples	9
Objectivity during feedback	8
Correcting common mistakes	4
Giving face to face feedback	4
Providing good topics	4

As can be seen in Table 57, most frequently meaning focus and then grammar focus were mentioned within existing themes; timely feedback was also frequently stated among students' expectation, surprisingly nearly the same number of students said they had no idea when they were asked about their expectation.

Some comments indicated that *focusing on meaning* has a great role among students' expectations. One of the students (St306) said "In our writing, I want teachers to evaluate what we want to tell apart from the grammar rules." Another student (St159) stated. "It is very useful, but I think that the vocab choices are taken into account too much, if the meaning is appropriate, I believe I don't need to use the exact word. Similarly, one student (St202) stated:

I think correcting every single mistake is wrong, the important thing is to be able to express our opinion. Actually we cannot learn English perfectly as the schools always put an emphasis on grammar. Even if I learn grammar, most of the time I can't write exactly the idea in my mind.

One of the students (St264) said, "Of course, I would like to see my grammatical mistakes, but it is more important to me to hear about sentence coherence and meaning; it is more effective and better for me." In a similar vein, one student (St309) said "Emphasis should be put on meaning and how well the idea is conveyed, rather than grammar." Another student (St161) stated, "I think more attention should be paid to the coherence and meaning of the article." Similarly, another student (St306) said, "In our writing exams, I want teachers to evaluate what we want to tell apart from the grammar rules."

As for the other most frequently mentioned emerged theme, *giving timely feedback* was repeated by many students as their expectation from the feedback process. One of the students (St191) stated, "It should be given immediately so that

the student will not forget what he/she has written.” Similarly, another student (St167) said, “There should be quicker feedback, and we should write more and more to be aware of our mistakes. Another one (St108) said, “If these feedbacks are shared with us earlier instead of sharing in a hurry just before the class time, we can have enough time to understand them.” Interestingly, as many as the most frequent theme there were lots of comments saying *no idea* in response to their expectations from feedback. Moreover, the students accentuated an array of characteristics of the feedback that they expect utilizing the following adjectives as illustrated in Table 57 below.

Table 58

Frequently Used Adjectives to Describe Students' Expectations

Adjectives
advice
care
careful
conscious
descriptive
detailed
emphasis
emphasized
explanatory
focus on errors
frequent
fun
guiding
informative
initiative
intense
interest
interested
often
practice
proper

Similarities and/or Differences between the EFL Instructors' and Students' Perceptions

To answer the third research question , *which is about the similarities and/or differences between the EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL learners' writing ability at the tertiary level*, based on the quantitative the similarities/differences between the two participating groups' perceptions are presented in Table 59.

Table 59

Scores of Main Stakeholders Questionnaire Constructs

Constructs	Instructors		Students	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Discouragement	3.12	1.16	2.77	1.32
Learner Readiness	3.29	1.14	3.46	1.23
Meaning focus	3.28	0.94	3.53	1.07
Grammar	3.03	1.08	3.13	1.11

When the means of perceptions regarding four constructs are taken into consideration, the descriptive statistics show that students have the highest mean average for *meaning focus* ($M= 3.53$, $SD= 1.07$), which means that they put more emphasis on meaning when they get feedback on their writing. The lowest mean among the student responses is for *discouragement* ($M= 2.77$, $SD= 1.32$). This indicates that they did not lay emphasis on discouragement compared to the other constructs. When it comes to the instructors, the highest mean belongs to the *learner readiness* ($M= 3.29$, $SD= 1.14$), which shows that they attach importance to their students' proficiency levels throughout the feedback process. The lowest mean among the instructors indicates *grammar* ($M= 3.03$, $SD= 1.08$), which means that

they do not put emphasis on grammar as much as the other constructs while they give feedback.

In addition to the descriptive statistics analysis, independent samples t-tests were conducted to see if there was a statistically significant differences between instructors and students in terms of their perceptions on these four constructs: *discouragement, learner readiness, grammar focus, and meaning focus*.

Table 60 presents the independent samples t-test results for *discouragement* related items.

Table 60

Independent Samples t-test Findings for Discouragement

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake. (S1)	Instructors	3.81	1.09	7.582	. <.001
	Students	2.66	1.26		
Teachers should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes. (S2)	Instructors	2.48	1.30	.917	.362
	Students	2.32	1.38		
It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel. (S3)	Instructors	3.45	1.21	6.675	<.001
	Students	2.34	1.24		
Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students. (S4)	Instructors	2.32	1.15	-2,037	.045
	Students	2.65	1.39		
When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students. (S5)	Instructors	3.69	0.95	3.281	.001
	Students	3.25	1.33		

Table 60 (cont'd)*Independent Samples t-test Findings for Discouragement*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Emotions should not play in the teacher's error correction. (S6)	Instructors	2.95	1.29	-2.561	.011
	Students	3.41	1.32		

Independent samples t-test was performed to compare the scores of students and instructors in *discouragement-related* items. As can be seen in Table 60, there was a statistically significant difference between students and instructors' perceptions in the majority of the items under the construct of discouragement, as the *p* values for nearly all of the items are below .05. Instructors' mean of S1 (= 3.81) in *discouragement* related items was found to be much higher than students (*M*= 2.66). In this sense, independent samples t-test results showed that there was a significant difference between the scores of S1 of students (*M*= 2.66, *SD*= 1.26) and instructors (*M* = 3.81, *SD*=1.09) conditions; *t* = 7.58, *p*= .000. The results suggest that instructors take into consideration the affective factors and seem to believe the disadvantage of too many corrections in their feedback more than the students do.

The results of the independent samples t-test conducted to compare the scores of students and instructors in *learner readiness related* items can be seen in Table 61 below.

Table 61*Independent Samples t-test Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers. (S7)	Instructors	3.69	1.06	1.938	.056
	Students	3.41	1.29		

Table 61 (cont'd)*Independent Samples t-test Findings for Learner Readiness*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level. (S8)	Instructors	3.23	1.17	-7.092	<.001
	Students	4.33	0.97		
If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing. (S9)	Instructors	3.05	1.09	1.642	.104
	Students	2.80	1.31		
The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class. (S10)	Instructors	3.13	1.15	-3.541	.001
	Students	3.69	1.32		
There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English. (S11)	Instructors	3.27	1.14	3.420	.001
	Students	2.67	1.34		
Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher. (S12)	Instructors	3.39	1.21	-3.129	.002
	Students	3.90	1.18		

As can be seen in Table 61, there was a statistically significant difference in most of the items under the construct of learner readiness as the *p* values for four of the items are below .05. With a mean difference of 1.1, students' mean of S8 (= 4.33) in learner readiness related items were found to be much higher than students (*M*= 3.23). In this sense, independent samples *t*-test results indicated that there was a significant difference between the scores of S8 of students (*M*= 4.33, *SD*= 0.97) and instructors (*M* = 3.23, *SD*=1.17) conditions; *t* = -7.09, *p*= .000. The results suggest

that most of the students prefer their mistakes to be corrected regardless of their level more than the instructors.

Table 61 presents the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to compare the scores of students and instructors in *grammar focus* related items.

Table 62

Independent Samples t-test Findings for Grammar Focus

Items	Group	M	SD	t	p
The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience. (S13)	Instructors	3.79	0.92	-.031	.975
	Students	3.79	1.06		
My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing. (S14)	Instructors	2.90	1.16	-1.602	.110
	Students	3.17	1.26		
When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can. (S15)	Instructors	3.60	0.91	-5.528	<.001
	Students	4.25	0.86		
When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing "correctly" than on making sure that their audience understands what they want to say. (S16)	Instructors	3.26	0.92	2.038	.042
	Students	2.95	1.16		
The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience. (S17)	Instructors	3.95	0.77	-1.308	.194
	Students	4.09	0.87		
Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing. (S18)	Instructors	2.23	0.94	-4.484	<.001
	Students	2.94	1.20		

As can be seen in Table 62, there was a statistically significant difference in half of the items under the construct of grammar focus as the p values for three of the items are below .05. With a mean difference of .71, students' mean of S18 (= 2.94) in

grammar focus related items was found to be higher than instructors ($M= 2.23$). In this regard, independent samples t-test results indicated that there was a significant difference between the scores of S18 of students ($M= 2.94$, $SD= 1.20$) and instructors ($M= 2.23$, $SD= 0.94$) conditions; $t = -4.48$, $p= .000$. The results suggest that some students focus on grammar more than instructors.

As to the last construct *-meaning focus-* another independent samples t-test was run to compare the results of *meaning focus* related items responded by instructors and students as can be seen in Table 63 below.

Table 63

Independent Samples t-test Findings for Meaning Focus

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students' written grammatical mistakes. (S19)	Instructors	3.26	1.21	5.916	<.001
	Students	2.31	1.19		
My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher. (S20)	Instructors	3.47	1.11	-3.627	<.001
	Students	4.00	1.09		
My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing. (S21)	Instructors	2.47	1.03	-2.468	.014
	Students	2.82	1.07		
The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students' grammar. (S22)	Instructors	2.45	0.97	-6.60	<.001
	Students	3.32	1.08		

Table 63 (cont'd)*Independent Samples t-test Findings for Meaning Focus*

Items	Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students' to write well in English. (S23)	Instructors	3.11	1.08	1.072	.284
	Students	2.94	1.24		
If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher, it would be the grammar. (S24)	Instructors	3.45	1.11	.137	.891

As can be seen in the table above, there was a statistically significant difference in most of the items, which means both instructors and students highlight the role of *meaning focus* in feedback.

Summary of the Findings

The perceptions of instructors and students on teachers' written feedback indicated variations between instructors and students and also among the data collection tools.

Table 64 demonstrates the most frequent themes derived from each data collection tool.

Table 64*Summary of the Perceptual Variations among the Participant According to Tools*

Themes	Questionnaire	Open-Ended	Interviews
Pre-determined themes			
Instructors	LR	D	MF&GF
Students	MF	GF	D
Emerged themes			
Instructors	-	Demotivation	Correcting major mistakes
Students	-	Positive perceptions	Correcting all mistakes

Table 64 cont'd)
Summary of the Perceptual Variations among the Participant According to Tools

Note. Abbreviations refer to the following:

MF: Meaning Focus
GF: Grammar Focus
LR: Learner Readiness
D: Discouragement

As can be seen in Table 64, there were differences between the instructors’ and students’ perceptions related to written feedback process. While instructors highly mentioned learner readiness as a significant factor during feedback, students stated that meaning focus was really important for them. Additionally, there was another discrepancy between these two groups; Instructors focus on correcting major mistakes; however, students stated that correcting all mistakes was necessary for them.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability and to investigate the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program of a university in Turkey. This chapter has three sections; first, the main findings of the study are discussed, and they are compared to the relevant literature then the limitations of the study are presented. Lastly, the implications of this study for practice and further studies are covered.

Discussion of the Main Findings

The main findings from the perceptions of instructors and students regarding the role of teacher feedback in improving EFL students' writing ability are presented in line with each research question consecutively by referring to the relevant literature.

Teachers' Perceptions

The findings of the study indicated that instructors usually consider their students' level and act accordingly when they provide feedback. Similarly, Chandler (2003) states that linguistic proficiency is needed for students to interpret written corrective feedback (WCF), particularly indirect WCF. Additionally, the extent to which students are processing WCF, which may be at the level of noticing or comprehending the WCF, is indicated by their awareness of the WCF (Qi & Lapkin, 2001; Sachs & Polio, 2007). As the results showed, according to their perceptions,

the instructors must be aware that teaching and/or learning cannot be monotype in its nature, so it is necessary to apply suitable methods for their students who have a variety of experiences and backgrounds. The results of this study and the instructors' emphasis on learner readiness also remind us of the well-known fact about individual differences in learning, as Han and Hyland (2015) suggest the students' perceptions and learning experiences, as well as the interactional environment of receiving and processing WCF, can be caused by individual differences. Another local study also was in line with similar findings, which underscores that the students' proficiency level is vital because teachers may choose to handle errors differently depending on the students' varying competence levels (Atmaca, 2016).

The participant instructors in this study also reported that they focus on grammar and meaning equally when providing feedback. Specifically, this theme was commonly repeated in their experience and expectation-related responses. In a similar vein, many researchers in the literature seemed to agree that both grammar and content must be considered (e.g., Taylor, 1981) while providing feedback on students' production. Likewise, Ferris (1995) stated that students were curious about hearing comments on both grammar and meaning. In addition, Ferris (1997) came to the conclusion that providing students comments on both form and content at the same time had no adverse effects on their revision. On the contrary, some previous studies evidenced it was helpful (Cohen & Cavalcanti 1990; Ferris 1995)

Another conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that *demotivation* could be considered a significant factor when providing feedback. To this end, instructors reported that they put an emphasis on their students' emotions during feedback, and they were conscious not to create any demotivation by over-correcting student work. Similarly, in their research, Connors and Lunsford (1993) state that

writing is quite personal, and extreme criticism may affect students' motivation and self-confidence in a negative way. Therefore, emotions play an essential role in students' performances. In this present study, instructors also mainly stated that they know the role of motivation and encouragement in feedback. It is believed that praising the student for their good work is necessary to promote their self-esteem – especially for the less able ones. (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). As the results suggest, the findings of the study were in parallel with the previous studies. As a result of the present study, instructors also believe in the significance of being selective while giving feedback, so they repeatedly mentioned giving feedback on significant mistakes. Some previous studies also evidenced that concentrating on a single thing was advised for the long-term achievement of the relevant language item. (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009).

As to the instructor expectations concluded from the findings, *correction by students* was mainly mentioned by the instructors. Actually, as a part of the 21st century and its required skills, learner autonomy is inevitable, and as Hyland (2000) stated, by allowing students to choose their own needs and sources of feedback, teachers can empower students to claim more ownership of their writing, it was also highlighted in the studies conducted by Bitchener and Storch (2016), that teachers should offer assistance that is not merely focused at supporting the learner complete the task at hand, but also encourages the student to embrace an increasingly greater responsibility for the activity. Another recent study was also in line with the previous ones and highlights that instead of providing students with "ideal" forms, we should support them in their attempts to edit their own work if our goal is to develop independent self-editors (Maamuujav, 2019).

Furthermore, it was concluded that some of the instructors complained about their workload, and giving feedback also takes their time. The results suggest that time constraints constitute another critical issue during the feedback process. Similarly, this finding is in line with a previous study conducted by Polio (2012) which states that one of the most time-consuming duties of second language writing teachers is writing error correction. It might be due to the intensive pacing that instructors are obliged to deal with or the number of students, which require much more effort and excessive workload.

Students' Perceptions

The results with respect to students' perceptions indicate that most of the students are satisfied with the existing feedback system in their institution. They reported their positive attitude with many positive comments. In addition, nearly half of the students also reported that they experience mostly grammar-focused feedback. However, they added that they would like to be provided with meaning-focused feedback as well. The current findings are in line with the ones of the previous studies. Three decades ago, the notable researcher Kepner (1991) concluded that message-related comments are more beneficial than error correction/rule reminder feedback in fostering the development of writing ability in the L2. Even today, as this study suggests, students' expectations are mostly related to ideas rather than accuracy as they repeatedly said the critical point is expressing meaning in written communication. These findings showed that there is not a consensus among the students in terms of the existing feedback system. It might be related to a lack of a standardized feedback strategy or in-service training on written feedback within the institution, or the teachers might have provided feedback according to their personal beliefs and educational philosophies. Otherwise, there would not have been such a

variety in students' experiences who have been learning English in the same preparatory school under the same teaching policy.

The findings also showed that contrary to the students who complain about grammar focus on their feedback, there are also the ones who specifically prefer grammar focus. Even they expect their teachers to correct all their mistakes. Similarly, in a previous study, Ashwell (2000) reported that students admitted that they could have relied primarily on the form feedback and that the revising impact of content feedback was only minimal. It might be due to the use of error correction codes in which grammar and related mistakes are underlined mostly. Usually, comments are ignored in which teachers can give further details about the content. In a similar vein, Hillocks (2005) indicates that the emphasis on form in education has been so dominating, and there are a lot of factors. He only focused on three of them: the idea that good writing simply requires a basic understanding of a few elements; the pressure placed on schools and teachers in the period of testing and accountability; and the instructional strategies promoted by state writing standards. For him, these were the main reasons behind grammar focus. It might be the same reason for the students in the present study, as they have been experiencing a similar educational system that also centralizes testing and measurement at its core.

It was also concluded in the current study that *discouragement* is a highly important issue for students when they are provided with feedback. They expect to be given feedback considering their emotions. If they do not feel motivated to write more, they cannot improve their writing skills, so in order not to demotivate them, it is needed to take into consideration their emotions when they read the feedback, even when they encounter their edited paper. These findings echoed the findings of previous studies in the literature. Connors and Lunsford (1993) state in their research

that the writing process is related to the writer personally, so it is of utmost importance not to be offending about the written product; otherwise, it may affect the emotional state of the writer badly. Given this sensitivity issue, it is evident that feedback may have a dramatic effect on student motivation, or it may boost their motivation as Hyland and Hyland (2001) emphasize the relation between praising good performance and encouraging the student, so they expect their teachers to be aware of it. Therefore, it is notable to suggest that emotions play an essential role in students' performances. According to Ferris (1995), students' reactions to teacher feedback indicate that they usually remember motivational sayings and value them.

Even though the students would like their teachers to consider their feelings while giving feedback, they ask for explicit correction of all their mistakes. As a result, they do not seem to face the responsibility of discovering their mistakes and correcting them under their teachers' guidance as expected from a 21st-century learner. It might be because of their notorious experiences with the spoon-feeding education system in the local context, their helicopter parents, or their unwillingness to take responsibility. In a previous study by Lee (2005), contrary to these students' expectations, those students favored complete WCF over selective WCF. It might be totally related to students' individual differences or the reflection of the education system they are in. As evidenced in a recent study, Zhang et al. (2021) found that learners appeared to favor explicit and overt written corrective feedback (WCF) in comparison to three other WCF kinds (underlining, error coding, and metalinguistic explanation). On the other hand, in another study, Simard et al. (2015) stated that when the correct answers were given (for instance, when the teacher edited all the mistakes), some students would feel dissatisfaction with WCF. In fact, as it is observed in this present study, having too many corrections may discourage some of

the students, but as the results suggest, it may also motivate them to see their weaknesses explicitly to avoid repeating them.

Touching upon the timeliness aspect of the feedback process, students also reported that they expect timely feedback from their teachers because sometimes they may even forget what they write about if the feedback is postponed. To that end, it would not be wrong to emphasize that time of feedback has an impact on writing improvement. A previous study by Eckstein et al. (2020) shares similar findings, pinpointing that timely feedback can improve student writing since timely feedback did cause more sophisticated and fluent written products. The timely feedback expectation of the students in the current study seems reasonable as Kurzer (2018) found out students' error rates reduced statistically significantly in the course of the timely dynamic written corrective feedback (DWCF) process. In line with this notion, students in this present study might be right to expect their errors to be reduced with the help of regular and timely feedback.

Some of the student participants of the current study also stated their expectations of writing about *familiar topics* in their tasks, and they believe it will affect their performance in a better way. In line with this result, one of the study's outcomes from an EFL context is that students reported to have performed better when required to write on a topic that was relevant to their own experiences or lives (McDonough, 2018). This is also in parallel with Hyland's perspective on topic familiarity, as he believes students who are familiar with the subject matter personally may be better able to express their opinions and generate essential vocabulary (Hyland, 2003). The results of the study suggest that students would like to feel confident when they express their opinions, so topic choices should be another point that is needed to be considered carefully. It might directly affect students'

eagerness to write in another language. Similarly, another recent study by Yuli, et al. (2020) corroborates the previous findings noting that students' writing ability in cause-and-effect texts and recount texts may be considerably improved by giving them writing assignments with familiar topics connected to previously experienced events.

Similarities and/or differences between teachers' and students' perceptions

The findings uncovered instructors' and students' perceptions bore some similarities and some differences. Both groups believe in the role of *emotions* during feedback. Also, both groups complained about time issues; students stated that they expect to have timely feedback. However, the instructors complained about time constraints due to their workload. Apparently, the expectations of the students and the instructors' experiences directly show a cause-and-effect relation.

When it comes to the differences among the perceptions of these two main stakeholders, it was concluded that instructors placed equal importance on grammar and meaning while giving feedback, but students reported that they mainly experienced grammar-focused feedback, and they added their expectations to be meaning-focused feedback on their written products. As Zamel (1985) long ago stated that writing is, at its core, a process of discovery, yet methods that focus excessively on accuracy ignore the ideas. In an earlier study, Sheppard (1992) also reached consistent findings, emphasizing meaning and declaring that to raise students' knowledge of sentence structure, holistic WCF on meaning was more effective than surface-level WCF on the form.

Thus, a clear mismatch between instructors' and students' perceptions related to feedback focus were found to be echoing the conclusions of previous studies (e.g., Diab, 2005; Hyland, 1998, 2003; Jeon & Kang, 2005; Saito, 1994). Lee (2009) also

found out that teachers are conflicted between their form-focused approach to feedback and their notion that there are other qualities of effective writing besides correctness. It might be due to a potential difference between instructors' opinions and actions, and the extent to which their beliefs translate into practice or vice versa without proper observation cannot be differentiated. Considering all the differences in the perceptions of the instructors and the students, it is vital to melt the expectations of the students and instructors in the same pot so that intended feedback goals might amalgamate with practical needs by making room for the improvement of the writing skills of students.

Implications for Practice

Some practical suggestions can be made in relation to the findings of the present study to improve the writing feedback process of EFL learners, especially in similar contexts. As the study revealed, there was no true consistency in instructors' and students' perspectives related to written feedback experiences and/or expectations. As a result, it is necessary to find a common ground for these two groups and apply the appropriate feedback procedures according to the existing context requirements. Discussion sessions could be organized not only with the instructors but also with the students -both of which take part in this process actively- within the institution on a regular basis and could act in accordance with its dynamic results. Students' awareness is another key point here because as long as the role of feedback is highlighted and students are trained about how to use feedback accordingly to internalize the feedback process, they will be able to take better advantage of the given feedback. Furthermore, it might be accentuated that when the institution guides the teachers with professional assistance and lead them to have a shared understanding of how to provide feedback and reach a standardization

throughout the feedback process. This may also allow students to adjust more easily when their teachers change during their language education in any given program. Also, it has a considerable potential to contribute to the institutional learning itself.

In order to use the time efficiently that instructors mostly complained about, the institution could provide some effective training to the instructors by the field experts and indicate the key issues when responding to a student's paper in the shortest time possible.

Implications for Further Research

Some suggestions can be made for further research in view of the findings and the limitations of the present study. First of all, much more varied data can be gathered from different contexts/settings to gain more generalizable results because the current study only focused on one specific institution. Therefore, the overall perceptions of the students from various higher education institutions -both from state and foundation universities- can be investigated in further studies. Secondly, the participants can be chosen from various departments, not only the preparatory school students but also the ones who have specifically experienced academic writing courses throughout their tertiary education. Furthermore, this study itself applied different data collection tools with participant groups individually; however, further studies may also choose focus groups in their studies to reach a discussion atmosphere, especially to compare their perceptions between and among participating groups, which can yield much richer data.

Considering that the data were mainly based on self-reported measures, another researcher could also take advantage of having direct observation of feedback sessions and even analyze students' written products and the teacher feedback that they received to generate more robust findings.

Limitations of the Study

The results of the present study need to be interpreted cautiously due to various limitations. Firstly, this current study was conducted at a single university, and its generalizability is limited. Secondly, the sample size was another limitation, especially because of the Covid-19 pandemic; data collection processes were primarily completed online through QR-coded questionnaires and online interviews on various meeting platforms. Thus, the interviewees could not use their natural body language, which was also crucial for proper observation. Moreover, the pandemic also affected participants and even the researcher both physically and psychologically, so it would be definitely better eliminating undesired conditions and adverse effects of such a disastrous period for everyone.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaires

Instructor Questionnaire

Questions in PART I focus on your demographic information and PART II and III explore your perceptions on written feedback.

Part I

Please choose the best option for the items below.

1. Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Prefer not to mention
2. Department you graduated from:
 - ☐ English Language Teaching
 - ☐ American/ English Literature and Language
 - ☐ Linguistics
 - ☐ Translation and Interpretation
 - ☐ Other
3. Highest degree earned:
 - ☐ BA
 - ☐ MA
 - ☐ PHD
4. Have you experienced teaching at different educational institutions?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
5. Years of teaching at tertiary level:
 - ☐ 1-3 years
 - ☐ 4-8 years
 - ☐ 9-15 years
 - ☐ 16+ years
6. Levels usually taught (You can choose more than one option):
 - ☐ Program 1
 - ☐ Program 2
 - ☐ Departmental Courses
 - ☐ Academic Writing Courses

Part II

For each statement below, rate how much you personally agree or disagree with these statements. Please don't select more than one option.

1= strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = strongly agree

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>1. The discouragement that may result in students from lots of corrections is a valid reason for a teacher to not mark every mistake.</u>					
<u>2. The teacher should not consider their students' feelings when correcting mistakes.</u>					
<u>3. It makes sense for a teacher not to correct all of the mistakes on account of the negative feelings that the students might feel.</u>					
<u>4. Teachers should not take into account the negative emotional impact that marking errors might have on their students.</u>					
<u>5. When the teacher corrects mistakes, some thought should be given to how the number of corrections might be perceived by his/her students.</u>					
<u>6. Emotions should not play into the teacher's error correction.</u>					
<u>7. My students' level of knowledge and ability in English should determine which mistakes are marked on their papers.</u>					
<u>8. For my students' English to improve, they need their mistakes corrected, regardless of their difficulty or level.</u>					
<u>9. If I correct advanced grammar structures my students probably won't be able to incorporate these structures into their future writing.</u>					
<u>10. The mistakes my students make should be marked even if they have to do with structures and issues that they haven't seen yet in class.</u>					
<u>11. There are certain types of mistakes that should not be marked because of my students' level of proficiency in English.</u>					
<u>12. Students, regardless of their level, should have their mistakes marked by the teacher.</u>					
<u>13. The most important aspect of my students' writing in English is the message that they are or are not able to convey to their audience.</u>					

<u>14. My students prefer to see comments on their paper that have to do with their accuracy, not necessarily the content of their writing.</u>					
<u>15. When my students write they place the most importance on getting their meaning across as best they can.</u>					
<u>16. When my students write in English, they place more emphasis on writing “correctly” than on making sure that their audience understands what I want to say.</u>					
<u>17. The thing my students should work on most when writing in English is to be sure that their ideas and message can be understood by their audience.</u>					
<u>18. Clarity of ideas is less important than clarity of forms (for example, conjugations) for their writing.</u>					
<u>19. It is not helpful for a teacher to correct all of his/her students’ written grammatical mistakes.</u>					
<u>20. My students prefer that all their grammatical mistakes be marked by the teacher.</u>					
<u>21. My students do not expect the teacher to provide them with more comments and corrections on their English grammar than on any other aspect of their writing.</u>					
<u>22. The area of writing that the teacher should mark most is the students’ grammar.</u>					
<u>23. Getting the forms and conjugations right is not the most important thing for the students to write well in English.</u>					
<u>24. If my students could choose only one area of their writing to be marked by the teacher it would be the grammar.</u>					

Part III

For each question below, explain your written feedback process according to your experiences and please reflect on your own perspective.

Open-ended questions:

1. What do you think about your feedback process in writing classes?

2. What are your purposes throughout your feedback process? Please explain.

3. What are the strengths of your feedback process according to your experiences? Why?

4. What are the weaknesses of your feedback process according to your experiences? Why?

Öğrenci Anketi

1. Bölüm

Lütfen her soru için uygun cevabı seçin.

1. Cinsiyetiniz nedir?

- ☐ Kadın
☐ Erkek
☐ Belirtmek istemiyorum.

2. Hangi seviyede okuyorsunuz?

- ☐ Program 1
☐ Program 2

3. Bölümünüz nedir?

4. İngilizce Hazırlık Programındaki kaçınıcı yılınız?

- ☐ 1. Yılım
☐ 2. Yılım

2. Bölüm

Aşağıdaki her bir ifade için, bu ifadelere kişisel olarak ne kadar

katıldığınızı veya katılmadığınızı değerlendirin. Lütfen yanıtınızı en iyi

varsıtan seçeneği işaretleyin.

1= kesinlikle katılmıyorum, 2 = kısmen katılmıyorum, 3 = fikrim yok, 4 = kısmen katılıyorum, 5 = kesinlikle katılıyorum

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>1. Öğrencilerin cesaretlerinin kırılması öğretmenin çok sayıda düzeltme yapmasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir ve bu durum her hatanın <u>işaretlenmemesi için geçerli bir nedendir.</u></u>					
<u>2. Öğretmen, hataları düzeltirken öğrencilerinin duygularını dikkate <u>almamalıdır.</u></u>					

<u>3. Öğrencilerin hissedebilecekleri olumsuz duygular nedeniyle öğretmenin tüm hataları düzeltilmemesi mantıklıdır.</u>					
<u>4. Öğretmenler, hataları işaretlemenin öğrenciler üzerindeki olumsuz duygusal etkisini hesaba katmamalıdır.</u>					
<u>5. Öğretmen hataları düzelttiğinde, düzeltmelerin sayısının öğrenciler tarafından nasıl algılanabileceği üzerine biraz düşünmelidir.</u>					
<u>6. Duygular, öğretmenin hata düzeltmesinde rol oynamamalıdır.</u>					
<u>7. İngilizce bilgi düzeyim ve yeteneğim, kağıtlarımda hangi hataların işaretleneceğini belirlemelidir.</u>					
<u>8. İngilizcemin gelişmesi için, hatalarımın zorluk derecesi veya seviyesi ne olursa olsun düzeltilmesi gerekiyor.</u>					
<u>9. İleri düzey dil bilgisi hatalarım düzeltilirse, bu yapıları gelecekteki yazılarıma aktarmam mümkün olmayabilir.</u>					
<u>10. Yaptığım hatalar, henüz sınıfta görmediğimiz yapılar ve konularla ilgili olsa bile işaretlenmelidir.</u>					
<u>11. İngilizce yeterlilik seviyeme uygun olmayan bir takım hataların işaretlenmemesi gerekir.</u>					
<u>12. Öğrencilerin hataları -seviyeleri ne olursa olsun- öğretmenleri tarafından işaretlenmelidir</u>					
<u>13. İngilizce yazmamın en önemli tarafı, okuyucularıma mesajımı iletip iletemediğimdir.</u>					
<u>14. Yazımın içeriğiyle değil, doğru yazılışıyla ilgili yorumları görmeyi tercih ederim.</u>					
<u>15. Yazarken, en çok önem verdiğim şey karşı tarafa elimden geldiğince anlamı aktarmaktır.</u>					
<u>16. İngilizce yazdığımda, okuyucularımın söylemek istediklerimi anladığından emin olmaktan daha çok “doğru” yazmaya önem veririm.</u>					
<u>17. İngilizce yazarken en çok üzerinde çalışmam gereken şey, fikirlerimin ve mesajımın okuyucular tarafından anlaşılabilirliğinden emin olmaktır.</u>					
<u>18. Fikirlerin netliği, dil bilgisi yapılarının (örneğin; fiil çekimleri) netliğinden daha az önemlidir.</u>					
<u>19. Bir öğretmenin tüm yazılı dilbilgisi hatalarımı düzeltmesi yararlı değildir.</u>					
<u>20. Tüm dilbilgisi hatalarımın öğretmen tarafından işaretlenmesini tercih ederim.</u>					
<u>21. Öğretmenin İngilizce dilbilgim hakkında, yazımın diğer herhangi bir yönüne göre daha fazla yorum ve düzeltme yapmasını beklemiyorum.</u>					

<u>22. Öğretmenin en çok işaretlemesi gereken yazı alanım dilbilgisidir.</u>					
<u>23. İngilizcede iyi yazabilmem için formları ve çekimleri doğru yapmak benim için en önemli şey değildir.</u>					
<u>24. Öğretmen tarafından işaretlenecek yazım hatalarımın bir alanine seçebilseydim, bu dilbilgisi olurdu.</u>					



3. Bölüm**Açık uçlu sorular:**

1. Yazma derslerindeki geri bildirim sürecine dair ne düşünüyorsunuz?

2. Geri bildirim sürecinden beklentileriniz nelerdir? Açıklayınız.

3. Deneyimlerinize göre geri bildirim sürecinin güçlü yönleri nelerdir? Açıklayınız?

4. Deneyimlerinize göre geri bildirim sürecinin zayıf ve geliştirilmesi gereken yönleri nelerdir? Açıklayınız?

ÖNEMLİ NOT:

Daha fazla bilgi vermek ve mülakat yapmak için gönüllü olmak isterseniz iletişim bilgilerinizi benimle paylaşabilirsiniz.

e-posta:

Cep Telefonu: +90 (5)

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Instructors:

1. What discourages and/or encourages your students in their writing classes?
2. What do you think teachers need to take into consideration when they give feedback on their students' writing?
3. What do you think about the importance of meaning/message in your students' writing? Why?
4. What do you think about the importance of grammar/accuracy in your students' writing? Why?
5. What should be the role of meaning/message and grammar/accuracy when teachers give feedback on their students' writing?

Öğrenci Mülakat Soruları

1. İngilizce yazarken sizi neler motive eder ya da motivasyonunuzu kırar?
2. Sizce öğretmenler, öğrencilerinin yazılarına geri bildirim verirken genel olarak neleri göz önünde bulundurmalıdır?(Öğrencilerin seviyesi, bilgi birikimi vs.)
3. Sizce öğrencinin yazdıklarında anlamın/mesajın önemi nedir?
4. Sizce öğrencinin yazdıklarında dil bilgisinin ve doğru yazmanın önemi nedir?
5. Sizce öğretmenler, öğrencilerinin yazılarına geri bildirim verirken anlamın/mesajın ve dilbilgisinin/doğru yazmanın rolleri ne olmalıdır?

APPENDIX C

Consent Forms

Consent Form for Instructors' Questionnaire

Dear Colleague,

This questionnaire* was prepared for my thesis within the scope of İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, MA in TEFL Program, with the purpose of exploring the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL learners' writing ability and investigate the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program of a university in Turkey under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit. Answering the questionnaire will approximately take 10 minutes. In terms of this questionnaire;

- Your identification will never be disclosed.
- Your data will only be accessed by the researcher, will be kept on a password protected computer and will only be used for this thesis and possible related conference presentations, and journal publication purposes.
- Your answers will not be shared with your school and will not affect your working rights.
- You can leave the questionnaire any time you want.
- The results of the study will be shared with you if you request them. In this case, you can reach me via the e- mail address stated below.
- Please tick the box below if you meet the criteria and agree to participate.
Criteria:
- I am over 18 years old.
- I have read and understood the information about this study above.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study without any consequences at any time.
- I understand who would have access to identifying information provided and what will happen to the data at the end of the study.
- I understand that this study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through Bilkent University Ethics Committee.
- ☐ I meet the criteria and agree to participate.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you would like to volunteer for a short interview to provide me with further information, please share your e- mail address and phone number below.

e-mail: _____ mobile: +90 (5) _____

Thank you for your contribution.

Selma Köksal

Bilkent University/ MA in TEFL

*adapted from Plonsky & Mills (2006)

Consent Form for Instructors'

Semi-Structured Interviews

Dear Colleague,

This study is designed to explore the main stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of teacher feedback on improving EFL learners' writing ability and investigate the potential commonalities and/or discrepancies among these main stakeholders' perceptions in an English language preparatory program of a university in Turkey. To that end, your careful completion of the questionnaires will contribute greatly to obtaining real data, which is crucial for more accurate findings. Upon the completion of questionnaires, there will be a semi-structured interview on voluntary basis, which will take place at a convenient time and place for you, and it will be video- recorded if you give consent. I guarantee that all information and data from the questionnaires and the answers from the follow-up focus group interviews will be stored safely in password protected files and will not be shared with others in any way in which the participants' names or individual responses could be identified. Additionally, in all presented and published data resulting from the research, your responses will be aggregated with responses from other participants to assure protection of your identity. Please be informed that to participate in this study you need to be 18 years or older and your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time for any reason without any explanation and/or without any penalty. You may choose not to answer any question for any reason.

Thank you very much in advance for your invaluable time and cooperation and if you have any questions about this research project, or would like more information, please contact me at the e-mail address below:

Selma Köksal

MA TEFL
Bilkent University, ANKARA

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Öğrenci Anketi için Onam Formu

Sevgili Öğrenci,

Bu anket*, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent Üniversitesi, TEFL Yüksek Lisans Programı kapsamında, Yrd. Doç. Dr. Tijen Akşit'in süpervizörlüğünde öğretmen geribildiriminin İngilizce öğrenenlerin yazma becerilerini geliştirmedeki rolüne ilişkin Türkiye'de bir vakıf üniversitesindeki İngilizce Hazırlık Okulundaki ana paydaşların algılarını araştırmak, olası ortak noktaları ve/veya uyuşmazlıkları ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla tezim için hazırlanmıştır. Anketi cevaplamak yaklaşık 10 dakikanızı alacaktır. Bu anket açısından;

- Kimliğiniz asla ifşa edilmeyecektir.
- Verilerinize yalnızca araştırmacı tarafından erişilecek, şifre korumalı bir bilgisayarda tutulacak ve yalnızca bu tez ve olası ilgili konferans sunumları ve dergi yayımları amacıyla kullanılacaktır.
- Cevaplarınız okulunuzla paylaşılmayacak ve eğitim-öğretim haklarınızı etkilemeyecektir.
- Anketi istediğiniz zaman bırakabilirsiniz.
- Çalışmanın sonuçları talep etmeniz halinde sizinle paylaşılacaktır. Bu durumda bana aşağıda belirtilen e-posta adresinden ulaşabilirsiniz.

Kriterleri karşılıyorsanız ve katılmayı kabul ediyorsanız lütfen aşağıdaki kutuyu işaretleyin.

Kriterler:

- 18 yaşının üzerindeyim.
- Bu çalışma ile ilgili yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve anladım.
- Herhangi bir zamanda herhangi bir gerekçe olmaksızın çalışmadan çekilebileceğimi anladım.
- Sağlanan tanımlayıcı bilgilere kimlerin erişebileceğini ve çalışmanın sonunda verilere ne olacağını anladım.
- Bu çalışmanın Bilkent Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu tarafından incelendiğini ve etik izin aldığını anladım.

☐ Kriterleri karşılıyorum ve katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Kıymetli vaktiniz ve iş birliğiniz için şimdiden çok teşekkür ediyorum. Bu araştırma projesi hakkında sorularınız olursa ya da daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz aşağıdaki iletişim bilgilerinden bana ulaşabilirsiniz:

Selma Köksal

Bilkent Üniversitesi/ MA TEFL

*Plonsky & Mills (2006)'dan uyarlanmıştır.

Öğrenci Mülakatı için Onam Formu

Sevgili Öğrenci,

Bu çalışma İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent Üniversitesi, TEFL Yüksek Lisans Programı kapsamında, Yrd. Doç. Dr. Tijen Akşit'in süpervizörlüğünde öğretmen geribildiriminin İngilizce öğrenenlerin yazma becerilerini geliştirmedeki rolüne ilişkin Türkiyede bir vakif üniversitesindeki İngilizce Hazırlık Okulundaki ana paydaşların algılarını araştırmak, olası ortak noktaları ve/veya uyuşmazlıkları ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla tasarlanmıştır.

Bu amaçla, anketleri dikkatli bir şekilde doldurmanız, daha doğru bulgular için çok önemli olan gerçek verilerin elde edilmesine büyük katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anketlerin tamamlanmasının ardından, sizin için uygun bir yer ve zamanda gerçekleştirilecek olan gönüllülük esasına dayalı bir görüşme yapılacak ve onay vermeniz halinde video kaydına alınacaktır. Anketlerdeki tüm bilgi ve verilerin ve takip görüşmelerinden elde edilen cevapların güvenli bir şekilde şifre korumalı dosyalarda saklanacağını ve katılımcıların isimlerinin veya bireysel yanıtlarının tanımlanabileceği hiçbir şekilde başkalarıyla paylaşılmayacağını garanti ederim. Ayrıca, araştırma sonucunda sunulan ve yayınlanan tüm verilerde, yanıtlarınız, kimliğinizin korunmasını sağlamak için diğer katılımcıların yanıtlarıyla birleştirilecektir. Lütfen bu çalışmaya katılmak için 18 yaşında veya daha büyük olmanız gerektiğini ve katılımınızın tamamen gönüllü olduğunu unutmayın. Bu çalışmadan istediğiniz zaman herhangi bir nedenle herhangi bir açıklama yapmadan ve/veya herhangi bir ceza ödmeden çekilebilirsiniz. Herhangi bir nedenle herhangi bir soruya cevap vermemeyi seçebilirsiniz.

Kıymetli vaktiniz ve iş birliğiniz için şimdiden çok teşekkür ediyorum. Bu araştırma projesi hakkında sorularınız olursa ya da daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz aşağıdaki iletişim bilgilerinden bana ulaşabilirsiniz:

Selma Köksal

Bilkent Üniversitesi/ MA TEFL