Shadha Neiroukh

University of Technology and Applied Sciences,

Al Mussanah, Oman

shadha.neiroukh@utas.edu.om

Binu Pathippallil Mathew

University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Al Mussanah

Oman

binu.mathew@utas.edu.om

Mohsen Ghorbanpoor

University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Al Mussanah

Oman

Mohsen.ghorbanpoor@utas.edu.om

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF A COMPREHENSIVE WRITING FEEDBACK GUIDE ON ENHANCING LEARNER AUTONOMY

1   INTRODUCTION

Written corrective feedback, or WCF, is a crucial element in Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA) that helps English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners become proficient writers. The role of WCF is a focus of research, as language educators and researchers look for new and efficient ways to support language learning and development. WCF acts as a linguistic growth scaffold by offering focused feedback on written works, which promotes correctness, fluency, and communicative competence in writing.

This research aims to contribute to an area that would benefit further from understanding personalized feedback with a comprehensive approach. A correction code is limited to addressing linguistic errors in writing by identifying and labelling them, while the Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG) considers linguistic, content-related and organizational aspects. It offers guidance on rhetorical features to enable learners to revise the content and organization of the essay with clarity and coherence. The CWCG provides options for learners to write an effective thesis, topic sentences for body paragraphs, supporting details with reasons, facts or examples, and discourse markers to produce a better second draft.

The CWCG was tailored for revision tasks across several types of writing, including comparison-contrast essays and describing industrial process; the errors are labelled with codes, and then learners use the guidelines to follow the steps to correct their own writing, thus promoting learner autonomy. The CWCG was introduced to intermediate-level EFL students in the General Foundation Programme (GFP) at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Oman. The research aims to test the effectiveness of the CWCG by comparing the exam results of the control and treatment groups, and is intended to address the following research questions to find out learners' and teachers' experiences using the CWCG:

- What is the impact of the CWCG on the overall writing proficiency of EFL learners?
- What are the preferences of EFL learners regarding the types and methods of feedback they receive on writing?
- To what extent does the CWCG foster learner autonomy and self-correction skills?
- What are the perceptions and attitudes of male and female EFL learners (and lecturers) towards using the CWCG?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Developing writing skills is challenging for EFL learners as it requires background knowledge about the topic, the right choice of register, style, rhetorical organization in the target language and constant feedback from instructors (Zachariah, 2007). Writing is a complex skill which demands the command of both grammatical and lexical knowledge (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Numerous studies have explored the impact of corrective feedback on writing in the EFL classroom. Giving corrective feedback on student writing is not a mechanical process of correcting errors, but an essential component of teaching writing. It is a way of interacting with student writers to enhance their communication skills (Binu, 2011).

Constructive feedback is crucial to developing writing proficiency in an EFL setting (Wahyuningsih, 2020). Binu (2020) contends that positive feedback is a great reinforcer that can improve writing performance. Corrective feedback directly impacts EFL learners' writing complexity and accuracy (Bagheri, 2024), while sustained feedback is crucial for improving learners' writing performance (Wicaksono, 2024). Corrective feedback on linguistic errors offers affordances for enhancing accuracy in writing (Cheng & Zhang 2024), and metalinguistic corrective feedback contributes more to writing improvement than error code feedback (Azizi, Behjat & Sorahi, 2014; Shakra, 2013).

Numerous researchers have highlighted the importance of giving explicit feedback to EFL student writers. Sheen (2007), who studied the different effects of various types of corrective feedback, found that feedback targeting a single linguistic item improved learners' accuracy. Karim and Nassaji (2018), who investigated the effects of comprehensive

written corrective feedback, observed that learners who received feedback that included labelling the language errors and providing metalinguistics cues showed significant improvement in revision tasks. According to Ekinci and Ekinci (2000), giving feedback using error correction codes improves learners' writing proficiency. Sheen (2010) argues that explicit corrective feedback with metalinguistic information contributes to learning, as it enables students to know about the rules of grammar and writing conventions. These observations underline the importance of proper guidance for students to revise and improve their written work.

While giving explicit feedback on writing is essential, researchers have also cautioned against the dangers of overcorrection. Overcorrection of errors is sometimes discouraging for learners, and it may negatively affect their fluency and complexity of writing (Kim, 2000). Coyle and Roca (2014), who explored the effects of two different modes of feedback, error correction and model texts, report that learners who received corrective feedback did comparatively better in their revised texts than those who used model texts.

EFL students' preferences regarding teacher feedback on writing vary depending on their learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and proficiency levels. Ferdouse (2012) states that "students prefer coded feedback a lot over non-coded feedback as with the help of the correction codes they get enough opportunity to know about their mistakes and to correct them as well" (p. 79). The acceptance and retention of corrective feedback on writing depend much on learners' affective factors (Storch & Wigglesworth 2010). While some students prefer direct and explicit corrective feedback to pinpoint their errors, others may favour a more indirect approach focusing on positive reinforcement and guiding their self-correction (Eslami, 2014). Similarly, Simard et al. (2015) point out that some EFL students are unhappy with teachers who correct all their errors rather than highlight them, leaving no room for self-correction (see also Ferdouse 2012). According to Chong (2019), most ESL learners prefer electronic written feedback (e-feedback) on their writing tasks. Leki (1991) suggests that the teacher and students should agree on the type of corrective feedback that is most likely to lead to improvements.

Researchers differ in their opinions about the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedback on writing. Ahmadi, Maftoon, and Mehrdad (2012) posit that indirect feedback is more beneficial to ensure accuracy in writing. However, Binu and Nair (2015) argue that personalized feedback and comments are more effective than coded feedback, as teachers can adapt their language, tone, and examples to meet the learner's comprehension level and preferences.

Self-generated feedback plays a significant role in developing writing skills in English, as it enables learners to review and critique their writing independently. The metalinguistic cues in the comprehensive correction guide motivate students to respond to teacher feedback and initiate action in order to independently complete a revised task. Motivation and self-regulation are key factors leading to learner autonomy (Benson,

2007). Metalinguistic corrective feedback contributes more to writing improvement than error code feedback (Azizi, Behjat & Sorahi, 2014; Shakra, 2013). Self-confidence and independence from the teacher are crucial factors in developing learner autonomy in writing (Yeung, 2016). According to Benson and Voller (2014), using correction codes encourages learner autonomy in language learning, while Yugandhar (2014) states that referring to correction codes enables EFL learners to take ownership of their learning and improve their writing skills.

Geçkin (2020), who studied gender differences and student reactions to feedback, claims that female students differ significantly from their male peers in their responses to corrective feedback on writing, with the former liking feedback and a combination of comments and error corrections more than the latter. Peterson (2000) found that while female students considered conformity to writing conventions as their strengths, male students, in contrast, were proud of their creativity. According to Zumbrunn et al. (2023), female students like teacher and peer feedback more than their male peers, while Bijami et al. (2013) state that gender differences play a significant role in writing performance, as males and females differ sharply in their learning attitudes and learning strategies.

3 METHOD

3.1 Participants

The study was conducted in the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC) at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Al Mussanah (UTAS-A). The study targeted intermediate students (B1) in the General Foundation Programme (GFP), which offers preparatory courses in Mathematics, English, and IT before students begin their bachelor studies. It includes four English proficiency levels, from A1 to B2. The classes are for high school graduates aged 18-20, and all GFP students take an entry placement test. The students in this study were placed in L3 either through this placement test or by having passed the level 2 final examinations. There were three treatment groups with a total of 77 students, out of which 57 students agreed to complete the questionnaire. Three questionnaires were removed from the data due to careless responses i.e. they had selected the same alternative across all questions regardless of the reverse-worded questions. The remaining 54 students were composed of 29 and 25 male and female students, respectively. Convenience sampling was used as the treatment could only be applied in the classes of lecturers who had agreed to use the CWCG.

Table 1: Participant Information

Group Assignment		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 Control	1 Male	261	54.5	54.5	54.5
	2 Female	218	45.5	45.5	100.0
	Total	479	100.0	100.0	
2 Treatment	1 Male	29	53.7	53.7	53.7
	2 Female	25	46.3	46.3	100
	Total	54	100	100	

The control group was comprised of 479 students enrolled in the GFP Level 3, excluding those in the two treatment groups, and three teachers (two female, one male) also participated in the study, two of whom are the authors of this paper. All three teachers are highly experienced lecturers and one of them is the GFP level 3 Coordinator.

3.2 The Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG)

The CWCG is a feedback tool designed to enable students to correct organizational errors in their writing. It addresses several writing tasks that are taught in the GFP curriculum, including describing an industrial process, compare/contrast writing, and cause/effect writing. The guide has distinct sections that address each writing task. Organizational errors that are common are identified by the teacher, and each one is given a numerical code (1, 1-2, 1-3, etc.). Each code represents an error. For example, the code '1' indicates a 'hook sentence needs improvement'. Code 1-2 indicates a 'missing hook sentence'. and this continues until organizational errors in the introduction, body paragraph, and conclusions are addressed. The next column of the table is labelled 'How to correct', and this section is crucial as it is the teacher's written instruction on what students need to do to address that error. For example, if a student needs to improve their hook sentence, the instructions are: "Improve your hook sentence by starting with a WOW statement: a sentence that attracts the attention of the readers or arouses curiosity in them. Get the attention of the reader with something interesting about the theme of the question" (see Figure 1 below).

Code	Use	How to correct	Example
1	Hook sentence needs improvement	Improve your hook sentence by starting with a WOW statement. Get the attention of the reader with something interesting about the theme of the question.	*These days, education is the foundation of a successful career.* *The health of our Earth is essential for our survival.*
1-2	Hook sentence missing	Add a hook sentence at the start of the introduction (see 1).	
1-3	Topic of essay not specified	Before your thesis statement, you should have a sentence that zooms in and explains the **issue** in your question. *Remember, do not copy the same sentence from the question – write it in your own words.*	*One issue now is that many students are not completing their college education due to many factors.* *However, global warming has been on the rise and this affects every person.*
1-4	Thesis statement missing/error	Make sure your thesis statement includes the keywords: 'cause' & 'effect'	*There are some causes and effects of this problem.*

Figure 1: Cause and Effect Writing

An example is given to model the correct organizational structure in the final column. When the teacher receives the first draft of writing for marking, they underline organizational errors and add the relevant label (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Student sample

Before returning the marked first draft to the students, the teacher should go through the process of familiarizing them with the new CWCG and demonstrate how they need to use it. This is done by showing samples of marked work with the numerical code. The teacher then shows students how to refer to the feedback in the guide. To ensure full understanding, the teacher will sample a variety of errors labelled with different numerical

codes and ask the class to use their CWCG to make corrections. Once they are finished, each student will receive their own paper and begin the process of correcting their own mistakes and then writing their second draft.

The CWCG reduces the amount of writing on the first draft of the paper, which can be overwhelming if many corrections are needed. It is also personalized to the students, as it is created for the writing task they are learning, and the errors are aligned with the organizational components of the essays that students need to become familiar with. Furthermore, the CWCG ensures the teacher has a chance to leave effective feedback that is shown very clearly in a table format, thus making it easier for students to access the feedback while also eliminating the need to write extensive notes on each first draft.

It should be noted that these numerical codes, which identify the organizational errors, are used alongside other forms of feedback codes that address grammatical issues (e.g., 'sp' for spelling errors, 'v' for verb tense, and so forth). These grammatical codes were used as the standard feedback in all other groups.

3.3   Data Collection

Students in the treatment group were first exposed to the Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG) in a writing feedback class. After teaching each writing task, students were given one writing question per week over a period of four weeks to practice the conventions of those tasks. Samples of corrected first drafts using the codes were then presented in the feedback sessions of the four writing tasks, and the students were instructed to refer to the guide to locate the codes, as needed. Finally, students had to identify and correct the errors using the instructions from the guide. This fairly independent process of revision was done in class time, and the students also wrote a second draft in class.

The data was collected through an online questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and the writing marks in the intermediate final exams (Fall AY23-24). The self-administered online questionnaire was utilized to investigate the attitudes and experiences of intermediate students and teachers with regard to the effectiveness of the new CWCG. The questionnaire consisted of 16 five-point Likert scale rating questions, covering feedback given to linguistic errors such as word choice, verb tense, word order, sentence structure, and subject-verb agreement, as well as essay organizational errors such as paragraphing, thesis and hook sentences in the introductory paragraph, topic sentences, discourse markers, unity and coherence in the body paragraphs, as well as features of a concluding paragraph. There was also a question to assess the respondents' attitudes towards using the correction codes with the CWCG. The last two questions aimed to measure their overall satisfaction with the new corrective feedback guide. The internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by SPSS, and its Cronbach's alpha coefficient based

on standardized items was found to be 0.85 (see Table 2), which indicates a consistent measurement of the underlying construct. The questionnaire administered to teachers had an extra question to explore their ideas on how the new feedback tool could improve student autonomy.

Table 2: Student Questionnaire Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.849	.851	16

Seven students were randomly selected to participate in follow-up semi-structured interviews. Two teachers, who had implemented the new feedback tool in their classrooms, were also interviewed. There were two open-ended questions designed to elicit rich narratives about the most useful aspects of the CWCG and the challenges in using the new tool.

3.4   Data Analysis

Considering the ordinal nature of the data collected through a Likert-scale survey, the small sample size, and violations of normal distribution for two out of the three constructs in question (see Table 3), the non-parametric test of Mann-Whitney U was used to compare the two independent male and female groups in the treatment classes.

Table 3: Normal Distribution Test of the Student Questionnaire

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Linguistic Feedback	.119	57	.042	.963	57	.080
Organizational Feedback	.134	57	.012	.958	57	.047
Overall Satisfaction	.152	57	.002	.952	57	.025

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Shapiro-Wilk results have been considered as there are less than one hundred cases. A non-significant result indicates normality. In this case, the Sig. value is 0.8 for linguistic feedback, which indicates that the data in this category is normally distributed. However, the Sig. values of 0.025 for overall satisfaction and 0.047 for feedback on the organizational elements of the essays indicate that the normality assumption is violated for these two constructs.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test for all three constructs indicate a significant difference between male and female students.

Table 4: Male vs Female Students – Summary of Hypotheses Testing

| Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.[a,b]	Decision
1. The distribution of Linguistic Feedback is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	0.002	Reject the null hypothesis.
2. The distribution of Organizational Feedback is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	0.034	Reject the null hypothesis.
3. The distribution of Overall Satisfaction is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	0.019	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050. b. Asymptotic significance is shown.

Additionally, a closer look at the mean ranks (see Graph 1) reveals a central tendency in higher satisfaction ratings for female students compared to their male classmates. This means that females were statistically more satisfied with the feedback they received for their written work (see Graph 2 for bar charts).
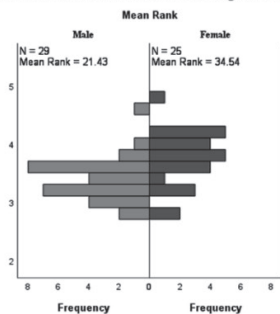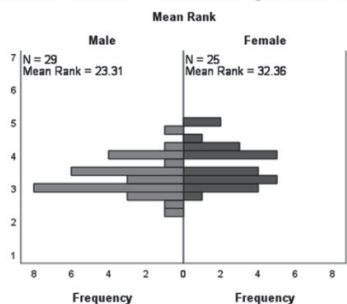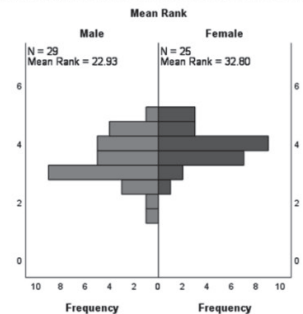

Graph 1: Students' Mean Rank Satisfaction with the CWCG's Three Constructs

Graph 2: Students' Mean Satisfaction with the CWCG's Three Constructs

However, to find out if the difference stems from the predispositions of female students towards the writing guide, their writing style, their learning style, or whether the guide addresses mistakes more commonly made by female students, requires further research which is beyond the scope of this study.

Next, the two participant groups (teachers and all students) were compared to find out their satisfaction with the effectiveness of the CWCG in improving students' second draft writings. A Mann-Whitney U test was avoided due to the large imbalance in sample sizes (54 students vs three teachers). Therefore, the mean satisfaction rating of the two groups was compared and no inferential statistical measures were used (see Table 5).

The average mean ratings of students for feedback on linguistic and organizational features, as well as overall satisfaction, were 3.56, 3.44, and 3.63, respectively. This indicates that the students, on average, tended to agree with the statements in the questionnaire, although the average mean ratings are still under 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree), which could imply they had some reservations or mixed feelings about the guide's effectiveness. In addition, this result could potentially mean that there are areas for improvement or concerns that have not been fully addressed by the new feedback guide.

On the other hand, the figures for teachers were 4.00, 4.54, and 4.50, which suggests that they were much more pleased with the features of the CWCG. A lower standard deviation and variance for teachers also indicate that their satisfaction ratings are more clustered around the mean, indicating that the teachers expressed more consistent opinions about the guide's effectiveness than the students.

Table 5: Students' vs Teachers' Satisfaction with the CWCG

Participant Type		Linguistic Feedback	Structural Feedback	Overall Satisfaction
Student	Mean	3.56	3.44	3.63
	N	54	54	54
	Std. Deviation	.457	.611	.772
	Variance	.208	.374	.596
Teacher	Mean	4.00	4.54	4.50
	N	3	3	3
	Std. Deviation	.346	.072	.500
	Variance	.120	.005	.250
Total	Mean	3.59	3.49	3.68
	N	57	57	57
	Std. Deviation	.460	.645	.782
	Variance	.211	.416	.612

Treatment students and teachers were asked to compare the correction codes – which was the standard feedback tool for the control students – and the CWCG, and state if they believed there was a difference between them. It is worth noting that the treatment groups were familiar with the correction codes and this made it possible to make a fair comparison. The result of the mean rating for teachers (4.33) indicates their firm belief that there is a significant difference between the standard linguistic codes and the new organizational feedback tool, and the low standard deviation value of 0.57 shows relatively consistent ideas among the three lecturers. On the other hand, the mean rating of 3.41 for students, despite leaning slightly towards agreement with the teachers, does not indicate the same level of confidence. The standard deviation value of 1.190 also implies less consistency and more diversity in the students' ideas (see Table 6).

Table 6: Comparing Correction Codes with the CWCG

Question 14 Reversed (I do not see any difference between the new writing guide and the unified correction codes.)			
Participant Type	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Student	3.41	54	1.190
Teacher	4.33	3	.577
Total	3.46	57	1.181

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test (see Tables 7 and 8) suggest that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female students regarding the same question. The mean ranks of 27.02 and 28.06, respectively, also indicate a general agreement between the students (see Graph 3).

Table 7: Male vs Female Students' Views about Q14 – Summary of Hypotheses Testing

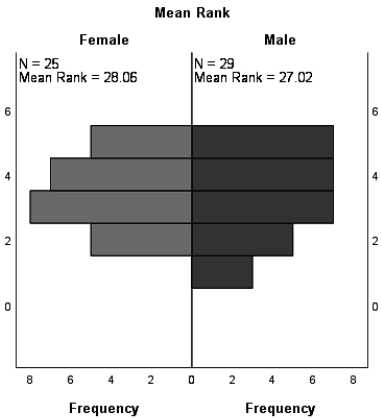| Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.[a,b]	Decision
The distribution of Question 14 Reverse is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.803	Retain the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.   b. Asymptotic significance is shown.

Table 8: Male vs Female Students' Views about Q14 – Mann-Whitney U Test

Total N	54
Mann-Whitney U	376.500
Wilcoxon W	701.500
Test Statistic	376.500
Standard Error	56.006
Standardized Test Statistic	.250
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.803

*Graph 3: Male vs Female Students' Views about Q14 – Mean Ranks*

The last question on the teachers' survey sought to determine whether they believed that the guide contributes to student autonomy, and the average mean score of 4.67 (see Table 9) indicates strong support for this idea.

Table 9: Teachers' Views on Increased Student Autonomy (Question 17)

| Valid	3
Missing	0
Mean	4.67
Std. Deviation	.577

The thematic analysis of the student interviews suggests that most students found the accessibility of the new guide very helpful. They believed the new guide was comprehensive, and helped them identify any errors as well as attempt self-correction by looking at examples. Overall, more than half of the interviewed students stated that using this feedback tool has improved their writing proficiency.

Students' Comments about Useful Aspects of the CWCG
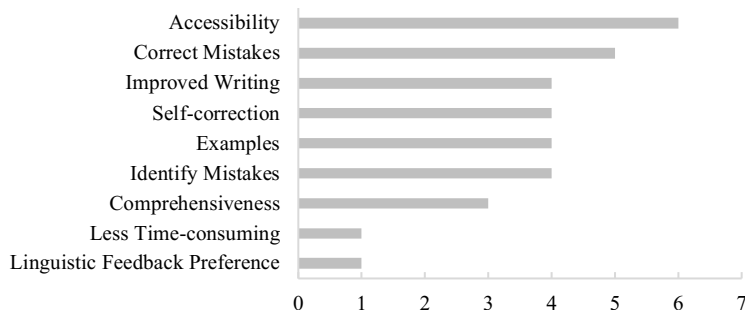
Graph 4: Students' Comments in Interviews about Useful Aspects of the CWCG

In terms of challenges, over 70% of the interviewees could not think of any noticeable difficulties in using the new guide. However, one student reported the initial difficulty, lack of user-friendliness and amount of exposure, and memorizing the codes as some of the challenges he had faced.

Student Comments about CWCG in Interviews - Challenges Faced
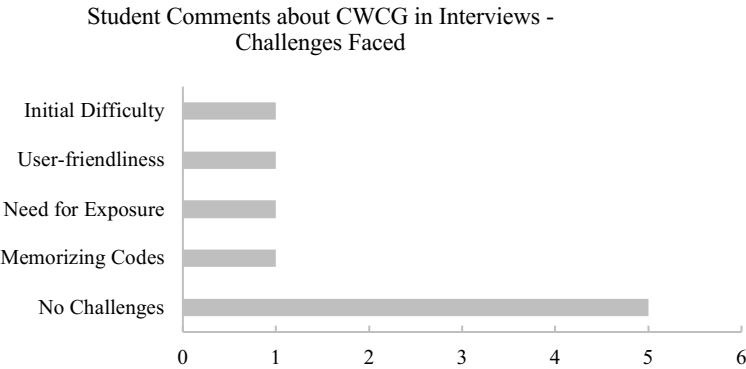
Graph 5: Student Comments in Interviews about Challenges Faced When Using the CWCG

Based on the two interviewed teachers' observations, locating the right information caused some initial difficulty, although this issue was solved after enough exposure to the tool. On a more positive note, they listed the reduced workload despite offering individual and quality feedback, identifying common mistakes for remedial purposes, and the simple and self-reliant nature of the guide as the most useful aspects of the CWCG.

Table 10: Student Writing Marks – Tests of Normality

	Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Writing Task 1 (out of 20)	Control	.085	479	.000	.986	479	.000
	Treatment	.089	77	.200[*]	.982	77	.353
Writing Task 2 (out of 20)	Control	.087	479	.000	.965	479	.000
	Treatment	.119	77	.009	.962	77	.020
Writing Total (out of 25)	Control	.057	479	.001	.991	479	.005
	Treatment	.141	77	.001	.967	77	.046

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.   a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

In addition to the qualitative analysis, the control group's writing marks in the final exam (479 cases) were compared to those of the treatment groups (77 cases). They were all level 3 (B1) students taking the same final exams. Due to violations of the normal distribution (see Table 10 above), Mann-Whitney U, a non-parametric test, was used to compare the two independent control and treatment groups. Table 11, below, summarizes the findings.
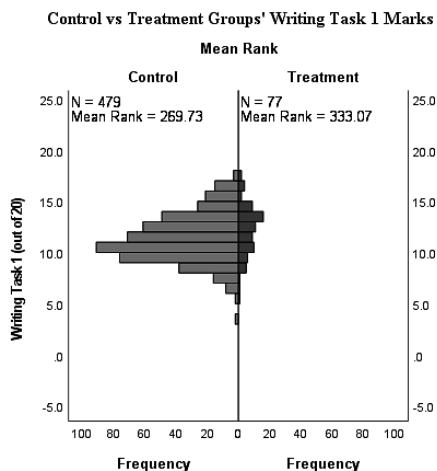
Table 11: Control vs Treatment Groups' Writing Marks – Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Test	Sig.[a,b]	Decision
Task 1- Mann-Whitney U Test	0.001	Reject the null hypothesis.
Task 2- Mann-Whitney U Test	0.565	Retain the null hypothesis.
Total Writing Mark- Mann-Whitney U Test	0.128	Retain the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.   b. Asymptotic significance is shown.

A closer look at the Sig. values of the three comparisons suggests that there is only a significant difference in the marks for Writing Task 1. This is further supported by looking at the mean rank (see Graph 6) of the students in the control groups (269.73) versus that of the students in the treatment groups (333.07). The difference in the mean ranks could imply that there is a positive correlation between using the CWCG to provide corrective feedback in completing a second draft of task 1 questions and improvement in the relevant final exam marks.

It is also worth noting that although the Sig. values of Task 2 (0.56) and Writing Total Mark (0.12) are nonsignificant, the higher mean rank of both (see Graph 7) indicates an improvement in the writing marks of the students in the treatment groups in both categories.

Graph 6: Mean Ranks of Control vs Treatment Groups' Writing Task 1 Marks
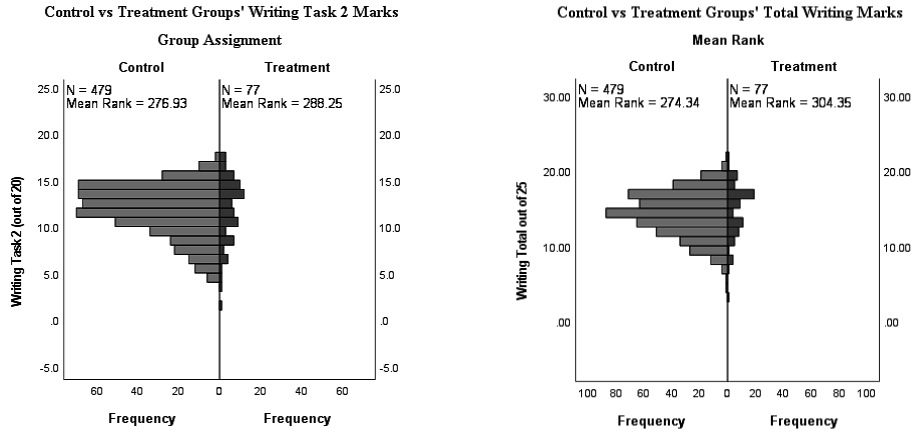
Graph 7: Mean Ranks of Control vs Treatment Groups' Writing Task 2 and Total Marks

Finally, the Pearson Chi-square test and Fisher's Exact test were used to observe if there was any significant difference in the Pass/Fail results between the control and treatment groups. The total writing mark in the GFP programme for intermediate students is out of 25, and 50% achievement signifies a pass mark. The Pearson Chi-square test result (0.83), as well as Fisher's Exact test result (0.89), indicate no association between using the CWCG and students' pass rates.

Table 12: Pass/Fail Crosstabulation

			Pass	**Fail**	**Total**
Group Assignment	Control	Count	349	130	479
		Expected Count	349.8	129.2	479.0
	Treatment	Count	57	20	77
		Expected Count	56.2	20.8	77.0
Total		Count	406	150	556
		Expected Count	406.0	150.0	556.0

Table 13: Correlation between CWCG and Pass/Fail Rates

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.046[a]	1	.831		
Continuity Correction[b]	.006	1	.940		
Likelihood Ratio	.046	1	.830		
Fisher's Exact Test				.891	.476
Linear-by-Linear Association	.046	1	.831		
N of Valid Cases	556				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 20.77.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

4   DISCUSSION

This research set out to explore the impact of the Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG) on the overall writing proficiency of EFL learners. It also examined student preferences with regard to the type of corrective feedback they received and their perception as to whether the CWCG encouraged learner autonomy and self-correction skills. The findings reveal that the students who used the CWCG demonstrated notable improvements in their technical writing and essay writing.

Regarding student preferences on the type of feedback, there was no significant indication that they preferred the CWCG. Despite this, the survey affirmed that teachers who used the guide observed a significantly higher degree of learner autonomy. This finding was corroborated by student interviews, which indicated increased self-correction skills.

However, the findings should be treated tentatively, bearing in mind that the design of this study is subject to limitations. Without a pre-test to measure the proficiency of the students in both groups it would be misleading to attribute the writing improvements solely to the CWCG. Additionally, the observed increase in learner autonomy was only reported by three teachers, and thus this result should be interpreted with caution.

Nevertheless, this study can be interpreted as the first step in widening the scope of written feedback and branching out to encompass organizational feedback in correction codes. Stakeholders may benefit from using the CWCG in writing courses and thus seeing an improvement in writing skills. Researchers may also consider using the guide on wider populations and using it with students over a longer period in order to test the long-term effects on writing.

In future research, the limitations of this study should be considered and could be addressed by pre-testing students and increasing the sample size to yield more representative results.

Another suggestion for future research is exploring the relationship between the guide and AI. Stakeholders may consider using the guide as a basis for creating innovative AI solutions to provide linguistic and organizational feedback to meet the needs of different students. Developing this AI solution can also bridge the gap between writing and assessment, which can bring educational institutions closer to the possibility of providing instant feedback and generating more accurate grades in writing assessments.

5   CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study compared two writing feedback tools and found that the Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG) enhanced student writing proficiency compared to the traditional correction code. The CWCG's holistic approach, which addresses both linguistic and organizational aspects, resulted in notable improvements in exam scores for students who engaged with it. While students did not express a strong preference between the two feedback tools, teachers observed that the CWCG fostered greater learner autonomy and encouraged independent learning practices. These findings underscore the CWCG's potential as a valuable resource for educators and students, not only improving writing skills but also promoting a more autonomous learning environment.

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POVZETEK

RAZISKOVANJE VPLIVA ORODJA ZA POVRATNE INFORMACIJE O PISANJU NA KREPITEV AVTONOMIJE UČENCEV

V raziskavi smo primerjali dve orodji za podajanje korektivnih povratnih informacij o pisnih izdelkih študentov: tradicionalne korekcijske kode in *Celoviti vodnik za korekcijo pisanja* (*Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide* oz. *CWCG*), ki so ga oblikovali raziskovalci. Proučevali smo tudi izkušnje študentov in učiteljev z uporabo teh orodij. Medtem ko s pomočjo korekcijskih kod dajemo predvsem splošnojezikovne povratne informacije, CWCG ponuja celostnejši pristop, ki omogoča podajanje povratnih informacij o jezikovnih in organizacijskih vidikih različnih pisnih izdelkov. Vodnik omogoča klasifikacijo napak in ponuja nasvete za njihovo odpravljanje. Osrednji cilj naše raziskave je bil ugotoviti, ali CWCG pozitivno vpliva na izboljšanje študentove pisne zmožnosti. Uporabili smo mešan metodološki pristop. Ta je vključeval količinske podatke, pridobljene iz rezultatov zaključnih pisnih izpitov ter anket študentov in učiteljev, in kakovostne podatke, pridobljene s polstrukturiranimi intervjuji. Naši izsledki kažejo na opazno izboljšanje izpitnih rezultatov pri študentih, ki so uporabljali CWCG, tako pri nalogah tehničnega pisanja kot pisanja eseja. Čeprav iz odzivov študentov nismo zaznali pomembnih razlik v odnosu do kateregakoli od obeh orodij, učitelji poročajo o večji avtonomiji študentov pri uporabi CWCG. CWCG torej spodbuja oblikovanje samostojnejšega učnega okolja, čeudi študenti ne izražajo večje naklonjenosti temu orodju. Naše ugotovitve potrjujejo koristi uporabe CWCG, saj to orodje izboljšuje učenčevo pisno zmožnost, obenem pa pripomore k njegovi večji avtonomiji, zato je dragocen pripomoček za učitelje in učence.

Ključne besede: pisna korektivna povratna informacija, povratna informacija o jezikovnih in organizacijskih vidikih pisanja, učenčeva avtonomija, učiteljeva povratna informacija za učenčevo samoizboljšanje, vključevanje povratne informacije, pisanje v drugem jeziku

ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF A COMPREHENSIVE WRITING FEEDBACK GUIDE ON ENHANCING LEARNER AUTONOMY

This study compared two tools for providing corrective feedback on student writing: the traditional correction codes and a Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG) designed by the researchers. The research also explored the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding their experiences with using these feedback tools. While the correction codes primarily focus on general linguistic feedback, the CWCG offers a more holistic approach by providing feedback on both linguistic and organizational aspects of several writing tasks. It labels the type of error and provides

instruction on how to correct these identified errors, making it more comprehensive in nature. The primary aim of this study was to determine whether the CWCG positively impacts learner writing proficiency. A mixed-method approach was employed to achieve this, integrating quantitative data from final exam writing results and surveys from both students and teachers, alongside qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews with the participants. The findings revealed a notable improvement in the exam results of students who utilized the CWCG for both technical writing and essay writing tasks. Although the student responses indicated no significant difference in their attitudes toward either tool, the teachers reported an increase in learner autonomy when students engaged with the CWCG. This suggests that while students may not express a strong preference, the CWCG fosters a more independent learning environment. Ultimately, the findings highlight the potential benefits of implementing the CWCG, as it not only improves student writing proficiency but also encourages greater learner autonomy, making it a valuable resource for educators and students alike.

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaires

Questionnaire 1: Students' Feedback on the Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide

The following survey intends to compare two corrective feedback tools for use with students' writing. The tools are the correction codes and the new Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG). Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your feedback and insights are greatly appreciated.

My Consent: I acknowledge that I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this survey. I understand that my responses will be used for research purposes, and I hereby grant permission for the collection and use of my data. I am aware that my personal information will be kept confidential and used only for the stated research objectives. By typing my name below, I confirm my willingness to participate.

_____

Demographics

I. Please choose your level: Level 3   Level 4

II. Please type your section number (for example, 12): _____

III. Please select your gender.   Male   Female

A	Please rate your agreement with the following statements using the Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
	My **choice of words** (for example, correct collocations) has improved.					
	I am more aware of the use of appropriate **verb tenses** (e.g. past tense, simple present tense, etc.) for **each writing task** (e.g. process essay, incident report, etc.)					
	After using the new writing correction guide, I see **little improvement** in my understanding of **sentence structure** (e.g. subject + verb + object).					
	My understanding of **word order** (e.g. adjective + noun) has improved.					
	My understanding of how a verb should **agree in number with** a singular or plural **subject** has improved. (For example, _They play football_, but _He plays football_.)					

Despite using the new writing correction guide, I am still **unsure** when it is the right time to **start a new paragraph**.					
My understanding and usage of a **thesis statement** in an essay have improved.					
I am still **unsure** what a **hook sentence** is and where it should be used.					
My understanding of the function and use of **topic sentences** has improved.					
I know how to **finish an essay** well in the **concluding** paragraph.					
The new guide has been helpful in improving my use of **discourse markers** (linking words or phrases that connect ideas such as *Also*, *However*, etc).					
The new writing guide has **little** positive effect in helping me **stay on topic.**					
I am still **unsure** how to **develop my ideas** with examples, reasons, personal experiences, etc.					
I **do not see** any difference between the new writing guide and the unified correction codes.					
Overall, I am **satisfied (happy)** with the new writing correction guide.					
Overall, the new writing correction guide has helped me **become more aware** of my writing mistakes.					

Questionnaire 2: Teachers' Feedback on Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide
The following survey intends to compare two corrective feedback tools for use with students' writing. The tools are the correction codes and the new Comprehensive Writing Correction Guide (CWCG). Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your feedback and insights are greatly appreciated.

My Consent: I acknowledge that I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this survey. I understand that my responses will be used for research purposes, and I hereby grant permission for the collection and use of my data. I am aware that my personal information will be kept confidential and used only for the stated research objectives. By typing my name below, I confirm my willingness to participate.

_____

Demographics
I. Please choose the level you teach: Level 3   Level 4

II. Please type the section number you teach (for example, 12):_____

III. Please select your gender.   Male   Female

A	Please rate your agreement with the following statements using the Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
	Students' **choice of words** (for example, correct collocations) has improved.					
	Students are more aware of the use of appropriate **verb tenses** (e.g. past tense, simple present tense, etc.) for **each writing task** (e.g. process essay, incident report, etc.)					
	After using the new writing correction guide, I see **little improvement** in my students' understanding of **sentence structure** (e.g. subject + verb + object).					
	Students' understanding of **word order** (e.g. adjective + noun) has improved.					
	Students' understanding of how a verb should **agree in number with** a singular or plural **subject** has improved. (For example, *They play football*, but *He plays football*.)					
	Despite using the new writing correction guide, students are still **unsure** when it is the right time to **start a new paragraph**.					
	Students' understanding and usage of a **thesis statement** in an essay have improved.					
	Students are still **unsure** what a **hook sentence** is and where it should be used.					
	Students' understanding of the function and use of **topic sentences** has improved.					
	Students know how to **finish an essay** well in the **concluding** paragraph.					
	The new guide has been helpful in improving students' use of **discourse markers** (linking words or phrases that connect ideas such as *Also*, *However*, etc).					
	The new writing guide has **little** positive effect in helping students **stay on topic.**					
	Students are still **unsure** how to **develop their ideas** with examples, reasons, personal experiences, etc.					
	I **do not see** any difference between the new writing guide and the unified correction codes.					
	I am satisfied with the **quality of feedback** provided by the new writing correction guide.					
	Overall, the new writing correction guide has helped students **become more aware** of their writing mistakes.					
	The new writing correction guide has increased **learner autonomy.**					

B. Considering your experience with the two writing correction tools, please answer the questions below.
1. Does the new writing correction guide reduce your marking time?
2. In your opinion, what specific areas of the guide are most effective, and why?
3. What suggestions do you have for further improvements to the guide or its implementation in the GFP?

Appendix B. Interview Questions

Interview Questions for In-Person Interviews (for selected lecturers):
1. Can you describe any noticeable changes in student writing quality since the implementation of the new writing correction guide?
2. Have you observed any challenges or difficulties students face when using the guide? If so, please provide examples.
3. How has the guide affected your teaching methods or workload in terms of time and quality of the provided feedback?
4. Does the use of the new writing guide help the common mistakes stand out?
5. In your opinion, does the new guide have any effect on the ease of giving feedback (for the teacher) and receiving feedback (for the learner)?

Interview Questions for In-Person Interviews (for selected students):
1. What specific aspects of the new writing correction guide do you find most helpful, and why?
2. Did you face any challenges in using the new correction guide? If yes, please specify.