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472 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 P-ISSN 2355-2794
E-ISSN 2461-0275 Written Corrective Feedback across Different Levels of EFL Students'
Academic Writing Proficiency: Outcomes and Implications Suhartawan Budianto¹ Teguh
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INDONESIA Abstract This current research aimed at finding out the impact of different
feedback modes, that is indirect corrective feedback and direct corrective feedback, on
the writing proficiency of EFL students at the university level.

Direct and indirect corrective feedbacks were provided by covering global and local
aspects of writing together. This study reported on a 14-week study with 63 students
majoring in the English Education Department of an outstanding university in Surabaya,
Indonesia. The pre-test was given to 35 students that belonged to a high proficiency
level group, whereas 28 students belonged to the low proficiency level.

The proficiency level was used to examine whether the corrective feedback was effective
for certain levels of learners' proficiency. An experimental design was run to examine
whether there was a noteworthy different impact of direct corrective feedback (DCF) and
indirect corrective feedback (ICF) on descriptive essays produced by EFL students.

Two groups of participants, DCF group and ICF group, wrote eight topics in which each was treated using different feedback. The results revealed that the DCF is more powerful than ICF and contributes significantly to * Corresponding author, email : sulistyoteguh@unikama.ac.id Citation in APA style: Budianto, S., Sulistyo, T., Widiastuti, O., Heriyawati, D. F., & Marhaban, S. (2020).

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Marhaban, Written corrective feedback across different levels of EFL students' academic writing proficiency: Outcomes and implications | 473 improve students' EFL writing, regardless of the students' level of proficiency (high or low). The outcomes of DCF and ICF in the EFL writing process that do not depend on proficiency level indicates that the use of DCF and ICF is not influenced by proficiency level. In other words, direct corrective feedback is advantageous for both low and high proficiency learners in EFL writing process.

Keywords: Written corrective feedback, direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, proficiency levels. 1. INTRODUCTION A number of researchers have investigated studies on written corrective feedback. The studies have proven experimentally that learners truly require corrective feedback to improve the quality of writing.

Therefore, it will not be wise to allow learners to produce errors in ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) writing products without any strategies to help them. Learners commonly make errors, but allowing them to make errors is a strange action for a teacher. Without feedback, learners will not gain language improvement.

Khanlarzadeh and Nemati (2016) revealed that unfocused written corrective feedback (henceforth, WCF) during the process of revision does not improve EFL students' accuracy in writing when there is no available feedback. The previous findings provide conflicting results and raise different points of view on WCF, which emerges as a demanding and pertinent issue to discuss in ESL writing.

Necessarily, there have been many investigations showing limited impacts of WCF on students' learning. The investigations also deal with the impacts of types of feedback

(teacher feedback, peer feedback, self-assessment, or computer-mediated feedback) on students' learning (Shao, 2015). Carless et al.

(2010) found that one problem may be a lack of incentives to engage in such practices, particularly if there is a risk that asks challenging questions of students. These uncomfortable directions might have negative impacts on student evaluations of teaching. Surprisingly, Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) found that regardless of the types of feedback provision, the results will be the same.

Thus, it seems that questions dealing with feedback in writing proficiency is of importance to be investigated further. Therefore, issues about written corrective feedback remain challenging to investigate, especially in writing. Few gaps still need to be explored further to reveal the conclusive motion.

It is important to realize that to improve EFL students' writing proficiency is the main goal of corrective feedback. In providing WCF, the long-period changes are best estimated by learning experience and enjoyment (Wu et al., 2011). Learning experience requires an effort to assist learners in improving their accuracy of L2 writing that has to be conducted by a teacher.

Corrective feedback is one of the alternative techniques among others to make the learning outcome better. What to remember is that corrective feedback addresses ESL/EFL learners to improve L2 writing quality since corrective feedback not only shows learners' errors but also expects the learners to apply the appropriate language features.

Basically, the dispute between two contradictory ideas either "to correct or not to correct" should focus on the ideas related to what needs to be corrected and how to correct" (Guénette, 2007) for two issues. Firstly, it is a must to correct the errors. Secondly, it is a must to treat 474 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 the errors wisely, so the corrective feedback focuses on local and global aspects of writing. The phenomena about WCF are of researchers' interests, especially in ESL/EFL writing settings.

The phenomena have not been revealed preciously since they commonly focus on the benefits of WCF, especially dealing with errors made by the students in their texts. However, which WCF fits best to students' needs in feedback provision when the students are heterogeneous in terms of their level of proficiency in writing is still important to reveal.

Thus, this study investigates the teachers' written corrective feedback toward EFL writing

across different students' levels of proficiency as formulated in the following questions:

1. Do the students taught with Direct Corrective Feedback (DCF) produce better EFL writing proficiency than those taught with Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF)? 2.

Do the effects of Direct Corrective Feedback (DCF) and Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) on EFL writing depend on the level of proficiency? Based on the second research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated: • Ha: The effect of direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback in EFL writing depends on the level of proficiency. • Ho: The effect of direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback in EFL writing does not depend on the level of proficiency.

The present investigation is going to fill the discrepancies on the previous studies which should have conclusively discussed the effects of DCF and ICF in which the participants of the study have different proficiency levels consisting of high and low levels. This present study hopefully reveals how WCF and students' levels of proficiency contribute to practical use and theoretical development to EFL academic writing both for teachers and students. 2. LITERATURE REVIEW In ESL and EFL writing, corrective feedback is certainly plausible and necessary.

Lewis (2002) proposes that feedback is a tool for teachers to explain their learner's language, besides serving information for teachers about individual and collective class progress and, indirectly, is a form of evaluation on their own teaching. If those errors are not shown and corrected appropriately, EFL writers do not know or are not aware that they have made inappropriate use of language in their writing.

WCF functions to refine and to correct a learners' errors since an error is not a trivial matter in EFL writing. Written corrective feedback is expected to improve the quality of EFL writing where teachers indicate the errors and help correct the errors properly. Lewis (2002) proposes that giving feedback means telling students about the progress they are making as well as guiding them to areas for improvement.

Corrective feedback (henceforth, CF) for written production, known as written corrective feedback can be classified into several types such as direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic, reformulation, etc. Furthermore, Lewis (2002) explains based on students' writing that feedback can be divided into three types: (1) teacher feedback (marking, conferencing, collective feedback, comment orally one by one, feedback sheet, summarize feedback on the board, and checklist), (2) peer feedback (exchange paper, role-play, pair work in a moving circle, pass papers round, feedback questions, S. Budianto, T. Sulisty, O. Widiastuti, D. F. Heriyawati & S.

Marhaban, **Written corrective feedback across different levels of EFL students' academic writing proficiency: Outcomes and implications** | 475 multiple feedback, read/listen/respond, compare writing, summarize and photocopy advice, the sentence on board), and (3) self-correction (student checklist). With a similar point, Ellis (2009) argues that corrective feedback can be classified as follows: (1) direct corrective feedback where the teacher gives the correct form to the students, (2) indirect corrective feedback where the teacher shows that an error happens but does **not give the correct form**, (3) metalinguistic corrective feedback where the teacher gives some kinds of a metalinguistic clue as to nature, (4) the unfocused and focused corrective feedback where the teacher tries to correct all (or most) of the students' errors or selects one or two specific types of errors to correct, (5) electronic feedback where the teacher shows an error and gives **a hyperlink to a concordance file that** gives examples of correct usage, (6) reformulation where **this consists of a native speaker's reworking of the students' entire text to make the language seem as native-like as possible while keeping the content of the original intact.**

In the teaching-learning processes of English, both for ESL and EFL learners' feedback provision is a common activity. Petchprasert (2012) claims that feedback is a crucial element of language teaching-learning processes that affect students' learning and accomplishment. In addition, feedback does not only help the teachers but also their students to find objective and instructional tools **in the teaching-learning process.**

ELT (English Language Teaching) teachers have a strong willingness to always find new and effective approaches and methods to upgrade their learning and performance. To enhance this, corrective feedback functions to collect students' responses. When a teacher is performing meaningful and impactful learning, feedback **plays a significant role** to the students.

It is needed to realize that abandoning to give error correction is not a wise solution, but finding the way **to correct the errors** is the most relevant and logical issue in ESL/EFL writing. It is commonly true that **the most crucial statement is that there is no ideal method in executing** WCF. Guénette (2007) **states no corrective feedback** recipe, and he also argues that the success of conducting corrective feedback relies on classroom situations, kinds of error learners produce, levels of proficiency, kind of writing, and accumulation of other unknown variables.

Corrective feedback would be more valuable if improvement covers not only language fluency but also accuracy. Guénette (2007) explains that there are two objectives in providing corrective feedback: (1) to gain language accuracy and (2) to gain language fluency. Accuracy relates to the **local aspects of writing** while fluency deals with global

aspects of writing.

Moreover, linguistic accuracy is achieved when the learners in L2 writing receive dynamic corrective feedback (Evans et al., 2011). Interestingly, they suggest that traditional process writing instruction makes learners decrease their linguistics accuracy. To grasp the fluency in writing, teacher's corrective feedback can be awarded in the form of individualized comments for learners as suggested by Ene and Kosobucki (2016). 3.

METHODS A quasi-experimental study with the factorial design was conducted in the present study to examine the impacts of DCF and ICF on EFL students' writing products across different levels of proficiency, namely high and low as the moderator 476 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 variables. The moderator variables were the levels of proficiency which were determined by conducting a pre-entry behaviour test.

This study employed fourth-semester students majoring in English Education Department in an outstanding university in Surabaya, Indonesia in which there were 32 students (18 high and 14 low achievers) treated using DCF and 31 students (17 high and 14 low achievers) treated using ICF. This study conducted a pre-test to select sample involved in the study to identify the entry behaviour as the basis grouping and a similar level among the groups.

The participants consisted of five classes (class A to E). There were 27 students from A class, 22 students from B class, 18 students from C class, 17 students from D class, and 41 students from E class. Therefore, the population was 125 students.

Based on the results of the test from 125 students, 45 participants were categorized as the high proficiency students, 42 students the medium proficiency students, and 38 students belonged to low proficiency students. From those three levels of proficiency above, this study involved two of them (high and low), and it can be seen in Figure 1. Figure 1.

Grouping of written corrective feedback. To identify the entry behaviour as the basis grouping and a similar level among the groups as well as the results of the post-test, two raters scored the students' essays based on a writing scoring rubric in order to avoid bias and keep the reliability of the test.

In addition, to ensure the validity of the test, the present study employed to construct and expert validity. To investigate the interaction between DCF and ICF in EFL writing

depends on the level of proficiency by using a two-way ANOVA. S. Budianto, T. Sulistyono, O. Widiastuti, D. F. Heriyawati & S.

Marhaban, Written corrective feedback across different levels of EFL students' academic writing proficiency: Outcomes and implications | 477 This study was conducted in 14 weeks in which each week consisted of 120 minutes. Each group wrote essays by using eight selected topics for #n type of corrective feedback. Class A (DCF_H and DCF_L) wrote #n topic in the first section, and class B (ICF_H and ICF_L) wrote #n topic (with the same topic as Class A) in the second section.

The students submitted to the researchers after finishing writing. In the following week, the researchers returned the students' writing with corrective feedback. Class A got DCF while class B got ICF. The students revised their writing based on the feedback given and submitted again to the researchers after finishing writing. In the same period, each group received the same #n topic of writing.

To assist participants in recognizing the corrective feedback given, the researchers utilized the different colours of pen ink; blue for content and organization, and red for vocabulary, language, and mechanics. The use of these colours had been informed to the participants in the initial meeting (before they were asked to write).

DCF group was given the feedback on content and organization by underlining incorrect patterns and providing comments with the correct patterns, while the ICF group was given only by underlining incorrect pattern providing comment without showing the pattern. Moreover, the DCF group was given the feedback on language use, vocabulary, and mechanics by underlining incorrect patterns and providing with the correct patterns while the ICF group was given only by underlining incorrect patterns without showing the correct one. 4.

RESULTS The research findings were used in answering the research questions: (1) whether students treated using DCF had better proficiency in writing process compared to those taught using ICF, and (2) whether the effects of direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback on EFL writing depended on the students' proficiency levels. 4.1

The Effect of DCF and ICF on the Students' Writing Proficiency The results of the computation on the post-test by applying DCF indicated the maximum and the minimum scores made by the high proficiency students are 92.50 and 80.00, while the maximum and the minimum scores made by low proficiency students are 86.50 and 58.00 (see Table 1).

On the other hand, the results of the computation by using ICF showed the maximum and the minimum scores made by the high proficiency students are 95.00 and 70.00, while the maximum and the minimum scores made by low proficiency students are 75.50 and 53.00 (see Table 2). Table 1. Descriptive statistic: DCF on the post-test. Group N Mean SE Mean StDev Min. Q1 Median Q3 Max.

High 18 84,25 0,929 3,942 80,00 81,75 82,75 86,50 92,50 Low 14 71,96 1,93 7,22 58,00 69,38 72,50 75,38 86,50 Table 2. Descriptive statistic: ICF on the post-test. Group N Mean SE Mean StDev Min. Q1 Median Q3 Max. High 17 78,59 2,20 9,07 70,00 71,50 73,00 88,50 95,00 Low 14 66,07 1,81 6,77 53,00 60,50 66,25 71,50 75,50 478 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 The test of normality showed the p-value of DCF is 0.07 which is greater than 0.05 while the p-value of ICF is also 0.02 which is not greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be inferred that the data on DCF were normally distributed but the data on ICF was not (see Table 3). Table 3.

Test of normality on the post-test. Score Method N KS P-Value Distribution Total DCF 32 0,148 0,075 Not Normal ICF 31 0,175 0,024 Not Normal To compare the effect of DCF and ICF, the Mann Whitney test was run on the Post-Test. The results of the computation showed the p-value is 0.0086 is less than 0.05; it indicates that there is a significant difference between DCF and ICF where the median score of DCF (80.50) is higher than ICF (72.00).

This shows that the students treated using DCF produce better descriptive essays than those taught using ICF. Table 4. Mann Whitney Test on the post-test. Method N Median DCF 32 80,50 ICF 31 72,00 W = 1215,5 P-Value = 0,0086 From the results of computation from the post-test, it can be seen that a significant effect was found when direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback were given on EFL writing.

In addition, students with direct corrective feedback outperformed those with indirect corrective feedback. 4.2 The Interaction between Students' Proficiency Levels and WCF Provision In the Post-test, the results of the computation of Test of Between-Subject Effect of the post-test indicated that interaction effect of DCF and ICF in EFL writing depends on the level of proficiency was not significant, F (1,59)=.004, p=.948 because the p-value was 0.94 (> 0.05) (see Table 5).

The hypothesis of which mentioned that "the effect of direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback in EFL writing depends on the level of proficiency" could not be accepted. Table 5. Test of Between-Subjects Effects on the Post-Test Source Type III Sum of Squares df Mean Square F Sig. Partial Eta Squared Corrected Model 2946.954a 3

982.318 20.294 .000 .508 Intercept 351914.403 1 351914.403 7270.186 .000 .992 X
 519.014 1 519.014 10.722 .002 .154 Y 2391.440 1 2391.440 49.405 .000 .456 x * y .208 1
 .208 .004 .948 .000 Error 2855.903 59 48.405 Total 369235.000 63 Corrected Total
 5802.857 62 Table 5 shows that the effect of DCF and ICF in EFL writing does not
 depend on the level of proficiency.

In other words, the use of direct and indirect corrective S. Budianto, T. Sulisty, O.
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 feedback is not influenced by the level of proficiency.

It indicates that no matter what the students' level of proficiency in writing is, WCF
 should be given either in the mode DCF or ICF; however, DCF is proven to be more
 beneficial than ICF. 5. DISCUSSION Based on the results of computation, this study
 concluded that the effect of DCF and ICF on students' writing proficiency was significant.

The result is in line with the first research hypothesis saying the learners taught with DCF
 perform higher quality writing products than those treated using ICF in EFL writing. Yet,
 it was found that the interaction effect of DCF and ICF in EFL students' writing
 proficiency is not dependent upon the students' proficiency level.

Thus, the use of DCF and ICF was not determined by the level of proficiency. In other
 words, the impact of direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback in EFL
 writing product does not correspond to the students' writing proficiency levels.

The results of this current research, somehow, are contradictory with the findings of
 several previous studies revealing that the treatment of corrective feedback does not
 significantly upgrade the writing proficiency of EFL and ESL students (Bruton, 2007,
 2009; Truscott, 2001; Truscott & Hsu, 2008), but the results of this study are in harmony
 with some other researches (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Bitchener et al.,

2005; Bitchener, 2008) which concluded that the implementation of corrective feedback
 significantly assists students to increase their writing skills. The results of this study
 showed convincingly that DCF is more powerful compared to ICF in classes of EFL
 writing, and it is in agreement with some previous researches claiming that DCF
 outperforms ICF (van Beuningen, et al., 2012; Mirzaii & Aliabadi, 2013; Farid & Samad,
 2012; Tootkaboni & Khatib, 2014).

Similar findings are also found by the previous researchers that DCF is also more
 superior to ICF in the ESL writing process (Chandler, 2003; Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener et

al, 2005). Briefly, DCF is not only effective in EFL writing but also ESL writing. In ESL and EFL writing, the most crucial difference between the findings of the current research and those of the previous ones is **in the use of** writing aspects which are assessed.

Some studies measured writing partially since they only focused on language use or grammar, but this study measured five aspects which are divided into global topics (content and organization) and local topics (vocabulary, language use, and mechanics). Farid and Samad (2012), for instance, applied language use focusing on verb errors.

The other linguistic targeted such as preposition, articles, simple past tense was used (Bitchener et al., 2005; Tootkaboni & Khatib, 2014; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). Therefore, the results of those studies imply that DCF is good for grammatical accuracy. Bitchener et al. (2005) reported DCF combined with written and conference improve learners' accuracy on simple past and English articles.

DCF combined with other feedback affects positively **in using English articles** in ESL writing (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010). Additionally, many learners prefer DCF from their teacher than ICF in ESL writing due to the fact that it is considered the easiest and fastest way for both students and teachers in written feedback provision (Chandler, 2003).

480 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 In contrast, ICF tends to be more powerful than DCF in EFL writing (Eslami, 2014; Jamalinesari et al., 2015) for low level (Eslami, 2014) as well as the intermediate level (Alhumidi & Uba, 2016; Jamalinesari et al., 2015), so they claim ICF is **more effective than DCF** in EFL writing.

In addition, Kao (2013) asserts that both metalinguistic explanations and direct correction provide more advantageous impacts on students' accuracy in the long-term learning process. Accordingly, direct correction seems appropriate for learners' acquisition in writing texts, especially plain errors. However, this research found that DCF is reasonable for both plain errors, such as language use and global issues covering content and organization.

Some students, probably, believe that DCF is not very demanding because they are confident that they are able to revise their written productions without being shown the correct version. The other reason why DCF outperforms ICF is because ICF is less teachable where it is suggested correction should be on linguistic features that are more treatable but less teachable. DCF may be appropriate for a simple grammatical problem but not for other issues.

It is supported by Karbalaee and Karimian's (2014), and Lee's (2008) studies which argue that students probably fail to understand the teacher feedback because of some reasons, so it makes sense that DCF performs better than ICF. Students can recognize what they have to revise when DCF is provided since the teacher shows the errors and the correct forms. Ferris et al.

(2013) mention that several students prefer DCF than ICF because they may forget what they have learned. Moreover, this study believes the quality of EFL writing does not rely on only one aspect of writing but also others. The results of the study are somewhat in agreement with Montgomery and Baker (2007) in which the local and global issues have to be treated equally in writing since some writers are strong in producing global issues but they are weak in local issues or vice-versa.

In giving feedback dealing with organization and content, only showing the errors without providing the correct form does not help learners much. It is necessary to test using every aspect of writing separately (analytic scores). The results of this research show that DCF and ICF differ significantly in holistic ratings on Immediate Tasks 1 and 2.

The scores of the DCF group are higher than the ICF group on both two immediate tasks. Interestingly, this study has shown a significant effect occurs on content and language use from Immediate Task 1. Meanwhile, the effect on organization, language use, and mechanics exists in Immediate Task 2.

Consequently, this study indicates that DCF is also beneficial for writing global aspects such as organization and content. The aspect of vocabulary is not significantly different when DCF and ICF are used in EFL writing. Then, DCF is beneficial for errors in grammar while ICF is good for errors dealing with non- grammatical aspects and DCF also affects students' long-term impact on grammatical accuracy purposes and global issues dealing with content and organization in writing (van Beuningen et al. 2012).

Contrarily, some previous researches revealed that ICF improved better compared to DCF (Jamalinesari et al., 2015; Eslami, 2014). In addition, Liu (2008) reports that direct feedback did nothing to improve learners' errors in a different paper although it decreased learner' errors in the immediate draft while indirect feedback was helpful for morphological than semantic errors.

However, Liu (2008) revealed that learners like underlining and description, which is contrary to the findings of this present research claiming that DCF is more powerful than ICF. Frear and Chiu (2015) report ICF turns to be a clue for students to motivate

themselves to produce new pieces S. Budianto, T. Sulisty, O. Widiastuti, D. F. Heriyawati & S.

Marhaban, Written corrective feedback across different levels of EFL students' academic writing proficiency: Outcomes and implications | 481 of writing with better accuracy. Further research is needed to investigate why ICF is more beneficial than DCF since the previous studies commonly proved that errors on grammar can be solved effectively by making use of DCF (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; van Beuningen et al., 2012).

Based on the discussion above, both DCF and ICF are indispensable for students in EFL writing process. In contrast, written corrective feedback is also advantageous in the ESL writing process (Chandler, 2003; Ferris et al, 2013; Bitchener et al., 2005; Bitchener, 2008). Additionally, the results of the study between EFL writing and ESL writing should be considered carefully.

This study shows students with DCF outperformed students with ICF in the EFL context. The same result also shows that learners receiving written corrective feedback exceeded the control group (Bitchener et al., 2005; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2009, 2010). Truly, those studies above reveal the fact that the treatment group outperform the control group.

Therefore, this study sharpens those studies that written corrective feedback tends to be significant in both ESL and EFL writing settings, particularly DCF. Meanwhile, the second question of this research was to examine the interaction impact of direct corrective feedback vs indirect corrective feedback based on the level of proficiency on students' EFL writing proficiency.

It was proved that DCF and ICF in EFL writing do not correlate with students' level of proficiency indicating that whatever the level of proficiency is, students may get the advantages when DCF is given by the teachers. The findings are in harmony with those of the study done by van Beuningen et al. (2012) revealing that there is no statistically significant correlation between teacher feedback provision and education level of the students.

Shoaei and Kafipour (2016) found that level of proficiency had no interaction with the students' responses regarding the corrective feedback. The kinds of corrective feedback used in ESL and EFL writing by the previous studies are effective only for certain proficiency levels. On the contrary, some studies proved that there is a significant interaction between WCF and level of proficiency. Bitchener et al.,

(2005) and Chandler (2003), for example, discovered that DCF might be equally beneficial, particularly with low achievers with specific categories of errors. Besides, WCF is important for young learners (van Gelderen et al., 2011) and intermediate level learners (Eslami, 2014; Hosseiny, 2014). Several previous studies claim that the effectiveness of the corrective feedback depends on the students' writing proficiency level and cognitive developmental readiness (Guénette, 2007) as well as the characteristics of educational background, behaviours, confidence, and motivation (Ferris et al., 2013).

Lee (2008) revealed that low and high achievers need their teacher feedback. Nevertheless, high achievers show more interest in error feedback than low achievers. All in all, this study found that WCF is beneficial for any proficiency level, yet there is another claim stating that WCF is advantageous for a certain proficiency level.

Like earlier studies, the results of this study indicate that the provision of both direct and indirect corrective feedback is effective in the EFL writing process when the participants have the same L1 background. It is in harmony with the previous findings (van Gelderen et al., 2011; Hosseiny, 2014; Jamalinesari, et al., 2015). The studies applied participants with the same L1 backgrounds, for examples; Iranian EFL students (Soori et al.,

2011), female intermediate students in an EFL context (Jamalinesari et al., 2015), pre-intermediate students in an Iranian's institute 482 | Studies in English Language and Education, 7(2), 472-485, 2020 (Hosseiny, 2014), EFL students belonging to low-intermediate level in Iran (Eslami, 2014), and 107 Dutch students in bilingual education (van Gelderen et al., 2011).

Based on the previous researches above, it can be inferred that the use of DCF and ICF is worthwhile for the participants with the same L1 background. Involving the participants with the same L1 background could result in a similar finding but the level and proficiency of the participants should be carefully considered. In sum, the most prominent finding of this study is that DCF contributes significantly to the low and high proficiency levels of learners.

The findings of this study propose the body of knowledge for the EFL writing teachers and students. Teachers should give DCF in providing feedback toward the students' essays. In addition, DCF is more recommended than ICF in correcting students' errors in EFL writing. By applying DCF, writing teachers enable students to produce better essays.

Moreover, this study shows that DCF is not only appropriate for low proficiency students but also for high proficiency students in EFL writing where most writing teachers face

the students with different levels of proficiency in a class. Consequently, it is suggested that writing teachers may use DCF for students with a low and high level of proficiency.

In providing DCF, it is suggested for writing teachers to cover the four aspects of writing: content, organization, language use, and mechanics. Since the quality of writing does not rely on one aspect but also the others. 6. CONCLUSION DCF is helpful for learners to improve their EFL writing proficiency in dealing with writing aspects both locally and globally.

Corrective feedback criticism which argues that it does not contribute to the accuracy and fluency in EFL writing is not true since DCF leads a significant effect on language use, vocabulary, mechanics, content, and organization. The outcomes of DCF and ICF in the EFL writing process that do not depend on proficiency level indicates that the use of DCF and ICF is not influenced by proficiency level. In other words, direct corrective feedback is advantageous for both low and high proficiency learners in EFL writing process.

Therefore, the superiority of DCF can be utilized to assist EFL learners to reach better results in the elements of content, organization, language use, and mechanics. Consequently, DCF multifunction is prominent for EFL teachers in providing corrective feedback for learners with different levels of writing proficiency. In other words, WCF contributes significantly to students' EFL writing proficiency regardless of the students' proficiency (high or low), and DCF is more powerful than ICF for students with low and high proficiency.

It implies that teachers should provide more opportunities for the students to be treated using DCF no matter the proficiency levels in writing they belong to. This current study may have some limitations, such as the small number of the participants, so more thorough research should be conducted by employing more participants and different moderator variables, such as different kinds of learners' styles. S. Budianto, T. Sulistyo, O. Widiastuti, D. F. Heriyawati & S.

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