

PAPER NAME

**laporan; SABARUN-FULL PAPER- TESOL-  
MAKASAR 4-6 JULI 2019.docx**

AUTHOR

**jhon sarip sabarun**

WORD COUNT

**6320 Words**

CHARACTER COUNT

**36217 Characters**

PAGE COUNT

**14 Pages**

FILE SIZE

**66.8KB**

SUBMISSION DATE

**Jul 17, 2023 9:20 PM GMT+7**

REPORT DATE

**Jul 17, 2023 9:21 PM GMT+7**

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## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIRECT, CODED, UN-CODED FEEDBACK IN L2 LEARNERS' WRITING ABILITY

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### Abstract

The research investigated the effect of direct, coded, and un-coded feedback on the setting of writing class. The design was pre-posttest quasi experimental. The learners involved in the study were 82 learners at IAIN Palangka Raya. The data were calculated using ANOVA test. The finding revealed that: (1) Direct Corrective Feedback (DCF) gave effect toward writing ability. The mean difference between DCF and NF was 16.86429\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (2) Indirect Coded Corrective Feedback (ICF) gave an impact toward writing ability. The mean difference between ICF and NF was 12.72895\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (3) Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) gave a facilitative effect toward the learners' writing ability. The mean difference between IUF and NF was 13.60455\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (4) The types of feedback (DCF, ICF, and IUF) gave an influence on writing performance at the  $p < 0.05$ , and the F value (3, 78) = 30.381,  $p = 0.000$ . Tukey HSD test confirmed that the mean scores of the three kinds of feedback differed significantly from no feedback class. However, the different types of feedback did not differ significantly from either group 1, 2 or 3.

**Keywords:** *Direct, Indirect Coded, and Un-coded CF, writing ability.*

### Introduction

The main aim of teaching writing in the L2 class can be divided into two aspects. First, learners express a message, opinion, and idea. Second, the learners emphasize language forms, such as standardized grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, organization, and punctuation (Ur, 1991). In this case, language instructors apply various models of feedback when dealing with both aspects. Feedback has a pivotal role in EFL class. In the teaching process, feedback functions as input. The aim is to increase language development in writing skills. There are two elements of feedback: correction and assessment. In terms of assessment, language instructor conveys the quality of writing product from learners. In terms of correction, the language instructors provide specific information dealing with the learner's performance of the composition. Providing corrective feedback becomes a vital work for L2 writing language instructors in instructional design.

Because of its importance, Hyland (2003) claims that when language instructors give feedback, they should consider some components in learners' writing such as language forms, punctuation,

vocabulary, organization, and content. In the view of Purnawarman (2011), the feedback has a significant role in writing an instructional design. Language instructors give feedback to support learners' writing process. Meanwhile, learners were helped with their works. Teachers have a big part to play in giving students feedback.. Purnawarman (2011) identified four aspects for teachers' role while providing feedback to students. He or she functions as a reader, a grammarian, an assessor, and a teacher of writing language. The language teacher reads the compositions created by the students and provides feedback. He or she might offer the students encouraging criticism. The teacher, who is also a language instructor, may identify certain areas in the composition of the students. The teacher, who is an authority on grammar, may also make comments, ideas, or provide feedback while putting a strong emphasis on grammar rules. The teacher has the duty to evaluate the caliber of the students' work as an assessor. By pointing students in the proper direction when providing comments, language teachers help the class get started. Here, the function of feedback is very crucial. It ensures accuracy for students and stores information (Purnawarman, 2011). According to Ferris (2003), students can gain many benefits from feedback. According to Van Beuningen (2010), feedback has a limited and insignificant impact on the acquisition of L2. He yet insists that it is valuable in the monitoring of L2 production. Although there are many proofs assuming that feedback can facilitate L2 acquisition.

The study focuses on three types of feedback, namely, direct, indirect coded, and indirect uncoded feedback. Direct corrective Feedback (DCF) is a model of the feedback a teacher offers with the appropriate language form (such as a word or morpheme), according to Ferris (2002). According to Bitchener et al. (2005), teachers commonly correct grammatical errors by expressing the correct form. The DCF technique is used when language faults are found and the teacher supplies the correct form. Direct feedback can be given by pointing out the incorrect words or phrases and displaying the proper form. DCF can be used in various models by, for example, highlighting the incorrect word, phrase, or morpheme and replacing it with the proper one (Ellis, 2008; & Ferris, 2006). DCF has advantages. It informs students of the appropriate form (Ellis, 2008). Lee (2008) claims DCF is appropriate for beginner learners. In DCF, the teacher locates and corrects errors directly. DCF allows the students to understand the correct form immediately.

The L2 student, for example wrote: He works hard. He works hard, the teacher added. In this instance, the instructor demonstrates the mistake and provides the solution. Direct feedback, according to Ellis (2008), improves student interaction in writing classes. It enhances linguistic control because it prevents the learner from making a mistaken correction. The teacher's accurate forms are delivered with direct feedback. According to Ferris (2003), DCF is a type of feedback provided to L2 students utilizing the right one completed by language instructors. Giving the insertion of missing words, phrases, or morphemes, crossing out the wrong words, phrases, or morphemes, or any combination of these actions. In DCF, the language instructors gave the correct forms of the learners' errors. Elashri (2013) confirmed that DCF helped learners since it provided learners' errors and revises them directly. This type is more suitable for low learners (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005).

On the contrary, indirect feedback (IF) only allowed the lecturer to identify the problems and did not allow them to give the pupils the proper language forms. The indirect feedback indicates that a language error occurred but not directly shows the error (Ferris, 2003). To allow the learner remedy a verbal error that was made but not corrected, indirect feedback is used (Bitchener, 2008). Language teachers give pupils indirect feedback when they point out errors and let them recognize they were made but do not fix them. Language teachers encourage the L2 students to modify it after providing hints regarding the error's placement through the use of an underlining, a circle,

and a code. Generally, various types of giving IF might be: underlining errors and classifying the error types (Bitchener, & Knoch, 2008). In this approach, teachers just point out mistakes without providing the right answer (Lee, 2008). To illustrate faults, language teachers might use lines, circles, or codes. According to Moser and Jasmine's (2010) research, students who received IF outperformed those who received direct feedback. Language teachers often use both the DCF and the IF is occasionally thought to be more beneficial (Purnawarman, 2011).

IF is, then, separated into two: indirect coded feedback (ICF) and indirect un-coded feedback (IUF). According to Ferris (2002), coded feedback is a sort of IF that refers to locating faults (Lee, 2004). Coded feedback uses a code to identify the faults. This approach anticipates that students will become more cognizant of linguistic faults and encourages them to address the issue in L2 writing. Feedback with codes presupposes that students are more likely to report mistakes. The assumption behind the use of coded feedback is that students are familiar with grammar and can quickly correct problems when they see the codes. The coded feedback is less explicit.

The code will function to indicate the error's position and to alert the learners to it, but it will not supply the direct answer. Giving the clue to people who are fixing mistakes is another method to go about it. As a result, the students will be responsible for fixing it themselves. It was described by Brown (2012) as the blending of direct and indirect input. He did, however, stress that codes and hints should be reasonable so as not to confuse the students. As an illustration, the L2 student wrote, "I arrive late to the writing class yesterday." To show that the verb is incorrect and that the learner should rectify it on his or her own, the teachers revised by placing a (V) above the word "arrive". The coded feedback is less explicit.

Indirect Un-coded feedback (IUF), on the contrary, referred to the exact location of mistakes (Ferris, 2002). In this instance, the instructor merely marks the inaccuracy with a circle or underline (Lee, 2004). Without eliciting any responses, teachers in un-coded just mark the error's location. Typically, marking entails emphasizing the inaccuracy (Sheen, 2007). According to Ferris (cited in Sheen, 2007), IUF has more objections than DCF since it forces L2 learners to cope with the proper forms while locating linguistic faults without providing an explanation of the correct form. IUF is the sole way to identify a linguistic mistake without providing the appropriate correction. The ability to analyze the error is demanded of the students.

The effect of indirect coded and uncoded feedback has been investigated. Sampson (2012), for instance, examined the results of both coded and uncoded annotations. He discovered that feedback with codes is more useful. Then, Ahmadi (2014) found that pupils' accurate grammar improved as a result of receiving coded feedback. Additionally, while providing written remedial feedback, Saukah et al. (2017) recommended that teachers use coded-correction feedback. Additionally, research by Bitchener and Knoch (2010) and Van Beuningan, et al. (2012) and other researchers showed that both direct and indirect feedback have an impact on writing correctness. According to Vyatkina's (2010) study, DCF was more practical. The related investigations (Stefanou & Révész, 2015; Mawlawi Diab, 2015; and Han, 2012) were also carried out. Han (2012) discovered that direct feedback can significantly increase learners' use of the simple past tense. Stefanou (2015) discovered that respondents with higher grammatical sensitivity were more likely to improve better achievement in DCF. Mawlawi (2015) revealed that at the delayed post-test, it did not differ significantly among the groups. There have been other studies done (see Sheen, 2007; Daneshvar & Rahimi, 2014; Moazamie & Mansour, 2013). Sheen (2007) discovered that learners' accuracy was increased by written feedback. Other research, including that of Erel and Bulut (2007), supported the superiority of indirect coded feedback over direct feedback. According to other studies, accuracy development may not be facilitated by coded feedback.

Consistent conclusions on the differential influence of written feedback have not been established, as was previously examined. More empirical observations are required to resolve several aspects of linked studies due to the continuous concerns regarding the influence of written feedback researches. Additionally, more investigations are required to assess the effects of coded and uncoded textual feedback. By examining how direct, coded, and uncoded CF affects EFL learners' ability to write, the current study aimed to add to the body of knowledge on feedback. The purpose of the study was to clarify if providing direct, coded, and uncoded feedback has a different impact on improving writing performance in L2 learners. The research questions: Does DCF give influence on the writing ability of learners? Does ICF give influence on the writing ability of learners? Does IUF give influence on the writing ability? Are there any significant differences among direct, coded, and un-coded CF on the writing ability of the learners?

## METHOD

A pretest-posttest quasi-experimental method was used in this study with complete L2 writing classes. A DCF class, ICF class, IUF class, and a control class (NF) were each randomly given to each class. 82 third-semester EFL students from IAIN Palangka Raya took part in the study. First experimental class (n = 21), second (n = 19), third (n = 22), and non-treatment group (n = 20) were the four groups into which the participants were divided. The following table 1 provides an illustration of the study design.

Table 1. The Design of Study

Groups	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experiment A	Test 1	DCF	Test 2
Experiment B	Test 1	ICF	Test 2
Experiment C	Test 1	IUF	Test 2
Control group	Test 1	No Feedback (NF)	Test 2

## Procedures

An odd semester's writing class met once a week for 16 sessions. Each meeting lasted one hundred minutes. Participants in the class were required to write essays of 450–500 words. Writing assessments and all treatments took place in a classroom. All participants took a pretest as the first stage. About 100 minutes passed during the protest. The test's results were used to determine how well students did when they first started writing. The average writing score for each group was essentially the same. The first experimental class received a therapy using DCF, the second one were given a treatment using ICF, and the third one was given a treatment of IUF throughout the learning process. Meanwhile, the control group was not given treatment or no feedback (NF).

Pretest and posttest were used to collect data twice throughout the course. The instructor asked the students to write a composition as part of the treatment. The language teacher then received the composition of the students and provided criticism. The participants' compositions were given back by the language teacher the next session, and before handling the composition, the students were instructed to edit their writing in light of the teacher's comments and suggestions. The teacher didn't apply any treatments to the control group. They were urged to examine their own composition and consider how they might be improved. All participants took a posttest during the final session. They must create a composition of between 450 and 500 words. All participants were given a posttest to see the differential influence of direct, coded, and un-coded CF on the learners' writing ability.

## Data Analysis

The hypotheses of null are as follows: (a) DCF does not influence on learners' writing ability; (b) ICF does not influence on learners' writing ability; (c) IUF does not influence on learners' writing ability; and (d) DCF, ICF, and IUF do not give impact on writing ability. One-way ANOVA was used to answer to the questions. It is used to calculate the average score differences between the three different types of feedback. Three independent variables—the DCF, ICF, and IUF—were being looked at in this case, along with one dependent variable, the writing proficiency of the students. Then, the data were analyzed using SPSS program.

## RESULT

As needed by the ANOVA test assumptions, the normality and homogeneity tests were carried out before testing the hypotheses. The Shapiro-Wilk statistic yielded the following sig. values (p-values): DCF (p=0.033); ICCF (p=0.494); IUCF (p=0.010); and NF (p=0.725) for each category. It was determined that the data met the criteria for normalcy because they were higher than 0.050 (see Table 2 for further information). The homogeneity of variance was then examined using Levene's test as the next step. The Levene statistic was determined to be 1.1.39 with probability (p= 0.339 > 0.05). The variation of the four groups was homogenous, as demonstrated by the significant value being higher than 0.050

Table 2. Normality Test

	Types of feedback	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Writings core	DCF	.191	21	.044	.899	21	.033
	ICF	.157	19	.200*	.956	19	.494
	IUF	.166	22	.118	.876	22	.010
	NF	.142	20	.200*	.969	20	.725

### Testing Statistical Hypothesis

Two raters rated the composition of L2 learners in the experiment and control groups to reply to the study objectives. The inter-rater correlation was measured and found to be 0.872, indicating that the composition of L2 pupils was scored similarly by both raters.

### *DCF does not give influence on writing skills.*

The output on Table 3 demonstrated that the mean difference between DCF and NF was 16.86429\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$  in order to respond to the study question no. 1: "Does DCF give influence on the writing ability of learners?" It was said that the alternative hypothesis, which states that DCF had an influence on learners' writing abilities, might be accepted rather than the null hypothesis, which states that DCF had no impact on learners' writing abilities. Consequently, it was claimed that DCF had a positive influence on students' writing skills. Using DCF, the average score for students' writing skill was 77.71. In contrast, the mean score of learners' writing performance without using feedback (NF) was 60.85. It was claimed that the writing performance using DCF achieved higher.

Table 3. Mean Achievement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
DCF	21	77.7143	7.49762	1.63611	74.3014	81.1272	60.00	90.00
ICF	19	73.5789	6.16726	1.41487	70.6064	76.5515	61.00	85.00
IUF	22	74.4545	4.40484	.93911	72.5015	76.4075	70.00	85.00
NF	20	60.8500	5.84245	1.30641	58.1156	63.5844	50.00	71.00
Total	82	71.7683	8.75778	.96714	69.8440	73.6926	50.00	90.00

***The learners' writing performance are unaffected by ICF.***

To address the problem, "Does Indirect Coded Feedback (ICF) have an impact on learners' writing abilities?" The solution was explained by a multiple comparison table. Table 3 indicated that the mean difference between ICF and NF was 12.72895\*, with a significance level of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . It was said that the alternative hypothesis expressing that ICF gave influence effect on the learners' writing ability could be accepted and that the null hypothesis expressing that ICF did not offer impact on the learners' writing ability could be rejected. Indirect Coded Corrective Feedback (ICF) was therefore considered to have a facilitative effect on writing ability. The mean score of learners' writing ability using ICCF was 73.58. On the contrary, the mean score of NF was 60.85. It was claimed that the writing achievement using ICF gained higher.

***The students' writing skills are unaffected by IUF.***

To address the third problem, "Does Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) have an impact on learners' writing abilities?" The solution was explained by a multiple comparison table. Table 3's output revealed a mean difference between IUF and NF of 13.60455\* and a significance level of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . It was stated that the alternative hypothesis stating that Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) gave influence on the learners' writing ability could be accepted and that the null hypothesis stating that Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) did not give influence on the learners' writing ability could be rejected. Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF), it was claimed that IUF gave effect toward writing ability. The mean score of learners' writing ability using IUF was 74.45.

***Direct, coded, and uncoded CF had no effect on students' writing abilities.***

The one way ANOVA analysis showed that the value  $F(3,78) = 30.381$ ,  $p=0.000$ , to answer the problem: "Are there any significant differences among direct, coded, and un-coded CF on writing ability of the learners?" (See Table 3 for more information). As a result, the alternative hypothesis, could be accepted. It evidenced a statistically difference at the 0.05 level for various types of CF on the learners' writing ability.

Table 4. A One Way ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3347.676	3	1115.892	30.381	.000
Within Groups	2864.922	78	36.730		
Total	6212.598	81			

Then, to see which one is better among direct, coded, and un-coded CF to give effect on the writing ability, the Tukey test explained the answer, as follows.

Table 5. Mean Difference among the groups

					95% Confidence Interval		
(I) Feedback	(J) Feedback	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Tukey HSD	DCF	ICF	4.13534	1.91890	.145	-.9023	9.1730
		IUF	3.25974	1.84894	.299	-1.5943	8.1137
		NF	16.86429*	1.89355	.000	11.8932	21.8354
	ICF	DCF	-4.13534	1.91890	.145	-9.1730	.9023
		IUF	-.87560	1.89807	.967	-5.8586	4.1074
		NF	12.72895*	1.94155	.000	7.6318	17.8261
	IUF	DCF	-3.25974	1.84894	.299	-8.1137	1.5943
		ICF	.87560	1.89807	.967	-4.1074	5.8586
		NF	13.60455*	1.87244	.000	8.6888	18.5202
NF	DCF	-16.86429*	1.89355	.000	-21.8354	-11.8932	
	ICF	-12.72895*	1.94155	.000	-17.8261	-7.6318	
	IUF	-13.60455*	1.87244	.000	-18.5202	-8.6888	

Table 6. Writing Achievement

		Subset for alpha = 0.05		
Types of Treatment		N	1	2
Tukey HSD	NF	20	60.8500	
	ICF	19		73.5789
	IUF	22		74.4545
	DCF	21		77.7143
	Sig.			1.000

As seen in the output, it showed that the difference mean of DCF and ICF was 4.13534 and the standard deviation was 1.92. The difference was about -0.9023 (lower bound) up to 9.1730 (upper bound) at the 95% Confidence Interval (see Table 4 for detail). The analysis revealed that the significance value of  $p= 0.145 >0.05$ . It was claimed that there was no statistically difference between DCF and ICF. Then, the difference mean of DCF and IUF was 3.25974 and the standard deviation was 1.85. The difference was about -1.5943 (lower bound) up to 8.1137 (upper bound) at the 95% Confidence Interval. The analysis revealed that the significance value of  $p= 0.299 >0.05$ . It was claimed there was no difference between DCF and IUF. Next, the difference means of DCF and NF was 16.86429\* and the standard deviation was 1.89. The difference was about 11.8932 (lower bound) up to 21.8354 (upper bound) at the 95% Confidence Interval. The analysis revealed that the significance value of  $p= 0.000 <0.05$ . It was claimed that there was a statistically significant difference between DCF and NF. It could be said that among direct, coded, and un-



coded CF, there was no significant difference in the writing ability of the learners'. The output of Tukey HSD revealed that on subset 1, there was a statistically significant difference between using no feedback and using feedback with DCF, ICF, and IUF on writing ability. Meanwhile, on the subset 2, there was no difference among DCF, ICF, and IUF on writing ability. All models of feedback gave effect toward the L2 learners' writing ability. However, there was no difference among direct, coded, and un-coded CF to give a facilitative effect on the learners' writing ability. The mean plot below explained an essay way to differ the means score for four groups, as described in the figure.

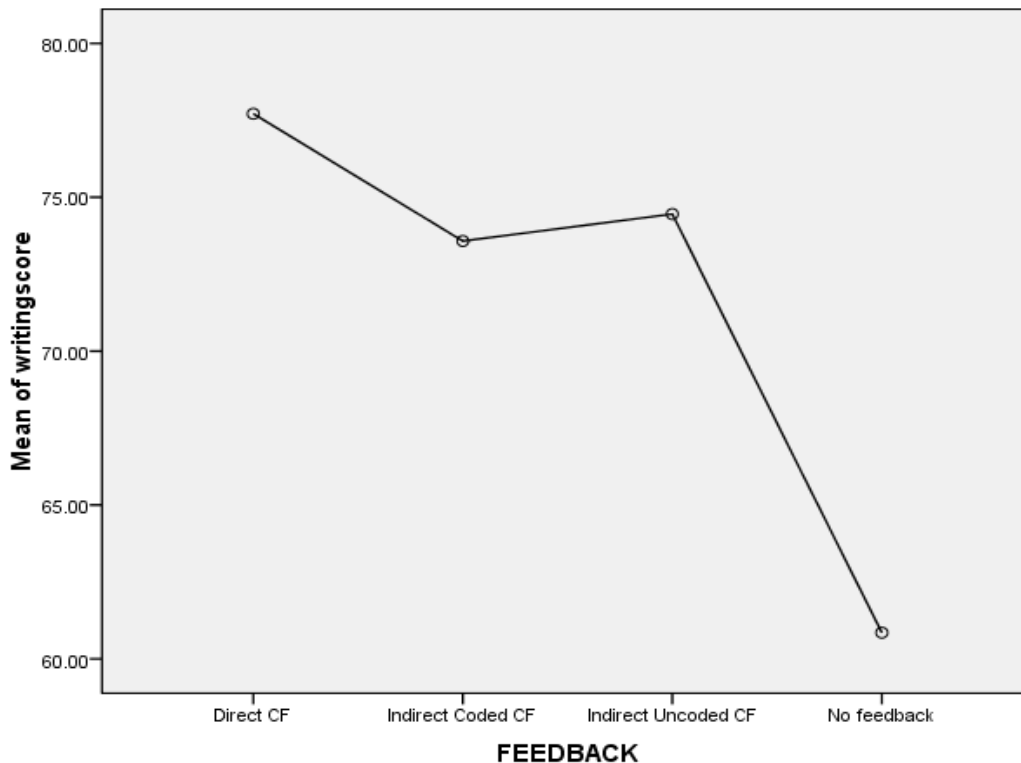


Figure 1. The Means Score of writing

Referring to the output, it was said that that the average score for DCF (M= 77.71), the average score for ICF (M= 73.58), the average score for IUF (M= 74.45) significantly differed from NF (M=60.85).

## Conclusion

The analysis was to measure the influence of direct, coded and un-coded CF in improving EFL writing ability. The output confirmed that: (1) Direct Corrective Feedback (DCF) gave effect on writing ability. The writing performance using Direct Corrective Feedback (DCF) (Mean 77.71) achieved higher than no feedback (Mean 60.85). The mean difference between DCF and NF was 16.86429\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (2) Indirect Coded Corrective Feedback (ICF) gave effect on writing ability. The writing performance using Indirect Coded Corrective Feedback (ICF) (Mean 73.58) outperformed better than no feedback (Mean 60.85). The mean difference between ICF and NF was 12.72895\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (3) Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) gave a facilitative effect toward the learners' writing ability. The writing performance using Indirect Un-coded Feedback (IUF) (Mean 74.45) achieved better

than no feedback (Mean 60.85). The mean difference between IUF and NF was 13.60455\* and the significance value was  $0.000 < 0.05$ . (4) All models of feedback (DCF, ICF, and IUF) gave effect on writing ability comparing with no feedback. At the  $p < 0.05$ , there was a significant difference for the types of CF on the learners' writing performance  $F(3,78) = 30.381, p = 0.000$ . However, there was no difference among direct, coded, and un-coded CF to give effect on writing ability. The output of Tukey HSD revealed that on the subset 1, there was a statistically significance difference between using no feedback NF ( $M=60.85, SD=5.84$ ) and using feedback with DCF ( $M=77.71, SD = 7.49$ ), ICF ( $M=73.58, SD = 6.17$ ), and IUF ( $M= 74.45, SD = 4.40$ ) on writing ability. Meanwhile, on the subset 2, there was no significant difference among DCF, ICF, and IUF on writing ability. This meant that the different types of feedback did not differ significantly from either group 1, 2 or 3.

## DISCUSSION

The study attempted to give a scientific contribution to the knowledge body on the effectiveness of corrective feedback by measuring the influence of DCF, ICF, and IUF on learners' writing ability. The findings revealed that direct, coded, and un-coded CF differed significantly to give a facilitative effect on the learners' writing ability. DCF gave L2 students with explicit guidance on the way to revise the mistakes (Ellis, 2009). This explicit direction was highly needed since learners could not correct most errors by themselves. Therefore, they needed to be corrected by the writing teachers. Thus, writing teachers were encouraged to provide immediately corrections to the learners. On the contrary, it was advisable to apply indirect feedback both ICF and IUF if the errors were treatable and learners could correct the errors by themselves. Indirect feedback provided more reflection and direct learning, which fostered long-term memory (Ferris, 2002). Besides, establishing forums on problems of writing can be a source of feedback (Saadat, M., Mehrpour, S. and Khajavi, Y, 2016).

This result was consistent with Guénette (2007), Ferris and Roberts (2001), Van Beningan et al. (2012) and Bitchener and Knoch (2010). The results also agreed with research from Amirani, Ghanbari, and Shamsoddini (2013), Jamalinesari, Rahimi, Gowhary, and Azizifar (2015) and Farjadnasab and Khodashenas (2017). According to Farjadnasab and Khodashenas (2017), receiving direct feedback helps students write more accurately. This result agreed with (Karim, 2013), as well. The results also suggested that feedback might increase grammar precision. Additionally, Sheen & CF (2010) found that DF had a stronger impact on learners' grammatical accuracy than oral recast. Similar to Sheen (2010), Storch & Wigglesworth (2010) discovered that outside influences had an impact on the written corrective feedback that was provided. Similar comparisons were made previously by Chandler (2003, p. 292), who discovered that, while underlining errors was beneficial for students who were able to self-correct, correction of errors was ultimately the most effective method. He added that students must revise their writing for written English to be used correctly. Comparable to receiving no input at all is receiving feedback but not revising the text. The results were also consistent with Chandler (2003; 2012; Bitchener & Ferris). Contrarily, this outcome did not agree with Truscott's. In conclusion, it was discovered that various forms of feedback significantly influenced how well learners used their language abilities when writing. Additionally, it was crucial for both the instructors and the students.

The findings improved the body of knowledge by making suggestions on how various sorts of feedback might serve various functions. These discoveries have aided numerous current investigations for additional research. For instance, what study confounding factors were included? More factors contributing learning, such as various genders, self-efficacy, motivation, and

preferences, needed to be included in the subsequent study. The subject of how feedback affects writing was extremely difficult because it encompassed numerous factors that might have an impact on the outcome. The most recent inquiry was an attempt to clarify a crucial feedback issue. Referring to the findings, it was suggested that other researchers perform further investigations on feedback in order to help lecturers give more useful feedback.

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