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SECONDARY EFL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND SELF-CONFIDENCE WITH AI-MEDIATED WRITING FEEDBACK

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Abstract: This qualitative study investigated secondary EFL students' perceived changes in motivation and self-confidence when Ginger Writer feedback was integrated into classroom writing. The study was conducted in a public junior high school in Jakarta, Indonesia. The classroom implementation involved 25 eighth-grade students, and 10 students consented to participate in semi-structured interviews conducted via WhatsApp call (20–30 minutes). Ginger Writer was integrated over five 80-minute sessions through descriptive, recount, and collaborative writing activities. Interview data were analysed thematically to examine how learners interpreted and used AI-mediated feedback and how these experiences related to motivation and self-confidence. Findings indicate that students perceived Ginger Writer as supportive when feedback was actionable during drafting and revision and when visible progress encouraged continued revising. However, motivational change was conditional: reduced engagement was reported when error volume felt overwhelming or when suggestions were difficult to interpret. Students generally reported increased self-confidence, particularly in willingness to write and submit assignments, yet confidence development appeared uneven and sometimes remained partially tool-dependent. Teacher guidance and peer discussion were perceived as important mediators supporting feedback interpretation and authorship, while connectivity issues and perceived overreliance constrained uptake. The study highlights the value of positioning AI feedback as a scaffold within a mediated feedback system and of teaching feedback literacy to support transfer beyond tool-supported performance.
Keywords: *AI-mediated feedback; Ginger Writer; EFL writing; student perceptions; self-confidence.*

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI)-mediated feedback tools are becoming more prominent in language classrooms, particularly in writing. In writing tasks, students are often expected to write accurately and clearly while completing their work within limited classroom time (Fitriani, 2025; Mekheimer, 2025). In secondary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, writing is often associated with hesitation, anxiety, and uncertainty, particularly when students are concerned about grammatical errors and whether their writing will meet classroom expectations (Achmad et al., 2023; Aydın Yıldız, 2025; Khosravi et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2024). In response to these challenges, AI-mediated writing feedback has been introduced as a potentially useful resource because it can provide immediate suggestions during drafting and revision (Bahari, 2026; Cheng & Zhang, 2024; Mohammed & Khalid, 2025; Nasution & Dewi, 2025). Nonetheless, feedback cannot be understood solely in terms of its availability or technical function. More importantly, it needs to be considered in relation to how students perceive, interpret, and use feedback in the context of classroom writing.

Research on feedback has shown that feedback is most effective when given in a timely, clear, and actionable way, especially when students are able to use it while completing a task (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In second language writing, feedback reception depends not only on the quality of the feedback itself, but also on the conditions under which it is received. These include teacher guidance, learner readiness, and chances for revision (Hyland & Hyland, 2019). Such factors are closely linked to students' motivation and self-efficacy. Classroom motivation is dynamic. It is shaped by how students experience particular tasks and by whether they feel able to continue engaging with

them (Dörnyei, 1998). Confidence also develops gradually through repeated experiences of success and credible self-assessment (Bandura, 1997). From this perspective, AI-mediated feedback in writing is important not only because it may support revision but also because it may shape how students view writing, revision, and their own ability as language learners (Almusharraf et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2026; Huang & Mizumoto, 2024; Meyer et al., 2024; Song & Song, 2023).

Recent research has paid increasing attention to AI-mediated feedback in writing. These studies show that students do not respond to AI feedback in the same way. Their engagement may vary from one learner to another. Yan and Zhang (2024) for example, found that L2 writers differed in their behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement with ChatGPT-generated feedback. This suggests that the usefulness of AI feedback depends not only on the tool itself, but also on how students interpret and respond to the suggestions provided. In a related study, Zhan and Yan (2025) highlighted the role of feedback literacy. They showed that students' engagement with AI-generated feedback is closely related to their ability to evaluate, select, and use suggestions critically rather than accept them automatically.

Other studies have compared AI-generated feedback with teacher feedback. Their findings suggest that both can support writing development, while also raising questions about how feedback should be prioritised and integrated into revision processes (Muñoz Muñoz et al., 2025). Recent work has also drawn attention to the role of classroom context. Rahimi et al. (2025), for instance, showed that automated written corrective feedback is shaped by broader classroom conditions, including rules, roles, available support, and material resources. Similarly, Rad et al. (2023) found that AI tools can support students' feedback literacy and engagement when learners are encouraged to interpret and negotiate suggestions rather than adopt them passively. Taken together, these studies have improved understanding of AI-mediated feedback in writing. They show that its value depends on learner engagement, feedback literacy, and classroom support. They also suggest that the effects of AI feedback are not simple, uniform, or independent of context.

Despite this growing body of work, important gaps remain. Evidence from Indonesian secondary EFL classrooms is still limited, particularly research that foregrounds students' own accounts of how AI-mediated feedback relates to motivation and self-confidence during routine writing activities (Baskara, 2023; Jiang, 2022; Losi et al., 2024; Rusmiyanto et al., 2023). Existing studies suggest that immediate suggestions can support revision and help students notice errors. At the same time, classroom conditions such as internet access and teacher mediation may influence what students are actually able to do with the feedback in practice (Annisa et al., 2026; Rad et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the literature has not yet explained sufficiently how Indonesian secondary EFL students experience such feedback in relation to motivation, self-confidence, and the classroom conditions that shape its uptake. Three issues are especially underexplored. First, qualitative evidence from Indonesian secondary school settings remains limited. Second, students' own perceptions of motivation and self-confidence in relation to AI-mediated writing feedback have received relatively little attention. Third, the mediating role of classroom conditions, including teacher guidance, peer discussion, and material constraints, has not yet been examined in sufficient depth. These gaps matter because schools may adopt AI-based feedback tools without fully understanding how students interpret, negotiate, and respond to the feedback in everyday classroom practice.

The present study addresses this gap through a qualitative examination of Indonesian secondary EFL students' perceptions of AI-mediated writing feedback, with particular attention to motivation, self-confidence, and the classroom conditions shaping feedback use. Although the broader project from which this study emerged has been reported elsewhere using multiple data sources (Ekizoğlu & Demir, 2025; He, 2024; Sari & Han, 2024; Yang et al., 2024), the present article focuses on a distinct set of more in-depth interviews in order to provide a fuller account of students' experiences. In this way, the study moves beyond broad assumptions that AI-mediated feedback is beneficial in all cases. Instead, it shows that students' responses are conditional, situated, and shaped by mediation. This focus is significant in at least three ways. Theoretically, it extends current discussions of feedback, motivation, and self-efficacy into AI-mediated writing contexts that are socially and materially shaped. Pedagogically, it offers classroom-grounded insight into how teacher support, peer interaction, and feedback clarity

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shape students' engagement with writing feedback. Practically, it provides guidance for teachers and schools seeking to integrate AI-based feedback in ways that are responsive to students' needs and to the realities of classroom practice.

To address these concerns, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How do secondary EFL students describe their writing experiences before and after using Ginger Writer feedback in routine classroom writing? (2) How do students perceive Ginger Writer feedback as shaping their motivation to draft and revise? (3) How do students perceive changes in self-confidence, and what classroom conditions support or constrain these perceptions?

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2007) centred on semi-structured interviews to examine secondary EFL students' perceptions of AI-mediated feedback in classroom writing. A qualitative design was appropriate because the study sought to understand how students interpreted and experienced Ginger Writer feedback during routine writing activities, and how these experiences related to motivation and self-confidence. The study was guided by an interpretive orientation, with particular attention to participant meaning-making and the classroom conditions shaping how feedback was understood and used.

The classroom implementation involved 25 eighth-grade students from a public junior high school in Jakarta, Indonesia. From this cohort, 10 students consented to participate in semi-structured interviews. Interview participants were recruited on a voluntary basis to ensure ethical participation and to reduce any perceived pressure associated with classroom assessment. All interviewees had direct experience drafting and revising texts while using Ginger Writer feedback during the intervention. Across the five sessions, students completed descriptive writing, recount writing, and collaborative writing tasks. This enabled interview participants to reflect on the use of AI-mediated feedback across different genres and interactional formats. Given the focused research questions and the relatively homogeneous cohort, the interview dataset provided sufficient information power to identify thematic patterns related to students' perceived motivation and self-confidence.

Data were collected through a semi-structured interview guide focusing on (a) prior writing experiences and perceived challenges; (b) how students engaged with Ginger Writer suggestions, including reading explanations, accepting or rejecting suggestions, and the criteria used for decision-making; (c) perceived emotions and motivation during drafting and revision; (d) perceived changes in self-confidence; and (e) contextual factors, including teacher support, peer discussion, and technical constraints. The interview prompts encouraged students to provide concrete classroom examples, such as occasions when they accepted or rejected suggestions. This helped reduce reliance on general statements and strengthened the evidential basis of the interpretations.

Ginger Writer was integrated into writing instruction over five classroom meetings, each lasting 80 minutes. During these sessions, students engaged in descriptive writing, recount writing, and collaborative writing, while drafting and revising with support from Ginger Writer suggestions. The teacher's role was to (a) demonstrate how to access and use Ginger Writer feedback, (b) clarify classroom expectations for revision, particularly that students were expected to evaluate suggestions rather than accept them automatically, and (c) provide brief support during drafting and revision to help students interpret feedback and retain ownership of their writing.

This study forms part of a broader classroom project examining AI-mediated feedback through Ginger Writer in secondary EFL writing. An earlier publication from the same project reported findings from multiple data sources, including a pre–post survey, brief semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant classroom observations (Annisa et al., 2026). In contrast, the present article reports a distinct qualitative analysis based solely on a separate set of more in-depth student interviews. These interviews were conducted to examine students' perceived changes in motivation and self-confidence, as well as the classroom conditions shaping how AI feedback was interpreted and used in routine writing tasks. Accordingly, the present manuscript differs from the earlier publication in both dataset and analytic focus.

Interviews were conducted after students had sufficient exposure to the tool across the five sessions so that they could reflect on their experiences and perceived changes. With consent, the interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and anonymised. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to allow students to express their experiences accurately. Excerpts

reported in English were translated with attention to meaning equivalence before manuscript preparation. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and was conducted via WhatsApp call.

Participation in the study was voluntary and based on informed consent. Students were informed that interview participation would not affect their grades and that they could decline to answer any question or withdraw at any time without penalty. To protect confidentiality, all participants were assigned pseudonyms and identifying details were removed from the transcripts. Audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely and were accessible only to the research team. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school, and the procedures were implemented in ways that minimised disruption to regular classroom activities.

The interview transcripts were analysed thematically through an iterative and interpretive coding process informed by Braun and Clarke's phased approach. First, all transcripts were read repeatedly to support familiarisation with the dataset and to identify preliminary patterns related to writing experience, motivation, self-confidence, feedback interpretation, and contextual conditions. Second, initial codes were generated line by line to capture meaningful units of data. These codes were treated as provisional and were refined through repeated movement between the coded segments and the full transcripts. Third, related codes were grouped into candidate themes that reflected patterned meanings across participants. These candidate themes were then reviewed against both the coded data and the full dataset to assess their internal coherence and distinctiveness. Finally, the themes were defined and named in ways that reflected their analytic focus and their relevance to the research questions.

The coding and theme-development process was discussed among the researchers during analysis to strengthen interpretive rigour. Given the interpretive nature of the thematic analysis, formal inter-coder reliability was not calculated. Instead, rigour was strengthened through repeated transcript review, discussion of coding decisions, and careful alignment between themes, excerpts, and the study's research questions.

Trustworthiness was addressed through several complementary strategies. First, credibility was strengthened through repeated engagement with the transcripts, analytic memoing, and iterative checking of interpretations against multiple excerpts rather than isolated quotations. The analytic memo documented emerging insights, developing questions, and decisions made during theme refinement, thereby supporting transparency in the interpretive process. Second, researcher discussion served as a form of peer debriefing during coding and theme development, helping to test the plausibility of interpretations and reduce overly impressionistic readings of the data. Third, transferability was supported through contextual description of the school level, participant cohort, writing tasks, and instructional setting, enabling readers to judge the applicability of the findings to other contexts. Finally, the study used excerpt-supported reporting so that readers could evaluate the connection between the interview data and the interpretations presented.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented as thematic patterns derived from the semi-structured interview data. This section is organised around the three research questions. Each subsection presents recurring meanings in participants' accounts, supported by selected excerpts and followed by interpretation in relation to relevant theory and previous studies. The aim is not only to describe what students reported, but also to explain how these accounts may be understood within current discussions of AI-mediated feedback, motivation, and self-confidence in EFL writing.

RQ1. Writing experiences before and after the use of Ginger Writer

Writing became easier to begin and continue

Across interviews, students described pre-tool writing as emotionally and cognitively demanding. They often mentioned hesitation, concern about grammar, and fear of producing incorrect writing. Several accounts suggest that the main difficulty was not simply limited linguistic knowledge. It was also the anticipation of error, which made starting feel risky. After the Ginger Writer-supported sessions, many students described writing as becoming easier to manage because errors became visible and could be addressed during drafting and revision. This change was not described as immediate mastery. Rather, students explained that the tool helped them continue writing and remain engaged long enough to revise.

This shift was reflected in students' greater willingness to write more. One student linked this change directly to reduced fear: "Now I am more confident, especially in grammar. I used to be

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Volume 14, Issue 2, June 2026

afraid of making mistakes; now I dare to write longer texts." For this student, the visibility of feedback appeared to reduce avoidance and support more sustained engagement in writing.

AI-mediated feedback was not experienced only as correction. Students also seemed to see it as support for starting and continuing the writing task (Kim et al., 2025). This pattern is consistent with feedback theory, which shows that feedback is most effective when it is timely, clear, and actionable during task completion (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). It also aligns with second language writing research suggesting that feedback becomes meaningful when learners can use it while they are still writing, not only after the task is finished (Hyland & Hyland, 2019). In the present study, students' accounts suggest that Ginger Writer helped reduce uncertainty at the beginning of the task. As a result, classroom writing felt more manageable (Widiawati et al., 2023).

Improvement was recognised through visible revision

Students' post-intervention accounts also suggest a change in how they judged writing quality. Rather than relying on guessing or waiting for teacher correction, they described improvement as being able to review and refine their texts during revision. Many students referred to visible signs such as fewer errors, clearer sentences, and neater text. For them, these were indicators that their writing was improving. This pattern is consistent with recent studies on automated and AI-assisted writing feedback. These studies show that revision-related engagement is often supported when learners can interact with feedback during the writing process and observe concrete changes in their texts (Chan et al., 2024; Shen et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024).

This change was reflected in a recurring sequence in students' accounts. They noticed errors, revised them, felt relieved, and then continued writing. One participant expressed this clearly: "I often feel relieved and happy when the number of errors decreases." In this account, improvement was experienced as a visible reduction in uncertainty. It was not described as an abstract sense of progress. A similar emphasis on feedback-supported revision can be seen in recent studies showing that AI-generated or automated feedback contributes to writing improvement when learners engage actively with revision rather than receive corrections passively (Chan et al., 2024; Mekheimer, 2025).

This pattern suggests that visible revision played an important role in shaping students' writing experience. It supports the view that feedback becomes meaningful when it helps learners see what to do next. It also confirms that their effort is producing change. In this sense, Ginger Writer appeared to support not only correction but also the perception that writing could be improved through manageable revision steps. This finding extends earlier work on AI-mediated feedback. It shows that, in routine classroom writing, students may recognize improvement less through formal assessment outcomes and more through immediate visual cues during drafting and revision. This interpretation is also consistent with broader reviews of automated writing feedback, which suggest that its educational value depends not only on performance outcomes, but also on how learners engage with feedback and use it for revision in context (Fleckenstein et al., 2023; Shi & Aryadoust, 2024).

RQ2. Students' motivation during drafting and revision

Motivation increased when feedback supported visible progress

Students often described their motivation as increasing when the tool made progress visible and immediate. Across interviews, a recurring pattern was that fewer flagged errors and clearer sentences were experienced as encouraging. These visible changes were not only noticed cognitively, but also felt emotionally rewarding. For several students, such progress motivated them to continue revising.

One student expressed this connection clearly: "I often feel relieved and happy when the number of errors decreases… I become more motivated because my writing feels neater. I also revise more diligently." Another participant described a similar experience in a short interview exchange:

> I: "When you write using Ginger Writer, what feelings do you experience most often?"
> S: "Happy… it becomes easier to write. I feel more relieved and more motivated."
> I: "When does that feeling of relief usually appear?"
> S: "After I revise the sentences… when I can see the improvements."
> I: "Does it make your writing faster or slower?"
> S: "Faster."

When taken together, these accounts suggest that motivation was not perceived as a fixed trait.

Rather, it was shaped by students' experiences of visible progress during the writing process. Students seemed more willing to continue revising when they could clearly see improvement and when the feedback showed them what to do next.

This interpretation is consistent with (Dörnyei, 1998) view that classroom motivation is shaped by learners' experiences with particular tasks rather than by abstract disposition alone. It also aligns with feedback theory, which suggests that feedback is most useful when it helps learners reduce uncertainty and engage meaningfully during ongoing performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Recent studies on AI-mediated feedback point in a similar direction. They show that learner engagement tends to increase when feedback is understandable and actionable (Yan & Zhang, 2024; Zhan & Yan, 2025). In the present study, visible progress appeared to function as a motivational cue that sustained revision effort.

Motivation weakened when feedback felt excessive or unclear

At the same time, students' accounts show that motivational change was not always positive. Some participants explained that the same visibility of feedback that supported revision could also become discouraging when too many issues were flagged or when suggestions were difficult to understand (Bouwer & Dirkx, 2023; Chan et al., 2024). In such cases, progress no longer felt manageable, and feedback began to feel burdensome.

One student expressed this tension simply: "But sometimes I get frustrated when there are too many mistakes." Another student distinguished between feedback that felt trustworthy and feedback that was harder to interpret:

> I: "Which feature do you trust the most?"
> S: "I think the most trustworthy feature is grammar correction."
> I: "Which Ginger Writer feature do you doubt?"
> S: "I doubt the long sentence suggestions; sometimes I do not understand what they mean."

These accounts suggest that motivation depended not only on the availability of feedback, but also on how understandable it was and how much effort it required. When feedback was clear and manageable, it supported continued revision. When it was excessive or unclear, it created confusion and interrupted the writing process (Cruz Cordero et al., 2023).

This finding helps explain why motivation in AI-mediated writing contexts may be conditional rather than consistently positive. It supports recent work on learner engagement and feedback literacy, especially the view that students need to evaluate and use feedback critically rather than accept it automatically (Rad et al., 2023; Yan & Zhang, 2024; Zhan & Yan, 2025). It also suggests that the effectiveness of AI-mediated feedback depends partly on whether teachers help students prioritise, interpret, and respond to suggestions in manageable ways (Escalante et al., 2023; Fleckenstein et al., 2023). In this sense, the motivational value of AI feedback is shaped not only by the tool itself, but also by pedagogical support.

RQ3. Students' self-confidence and the conditions shaping feedback use

Students reported greater willingness to write and submit their work

Most participants reported increased confidence, although the change was usually described as gradual and limited rather than dramatic. Students associated this increased confidence with a greater willingness to write more, continue revising, and submit assignments with less fear (Nurjati et al., 2025; Setiawan & Alkhowarizmi, 2025). At the same time, several accounts suggested that confidence was sometimes dependent on continued access to the tool. One interview excerpt illustrates this pattern clearly:

> I: "Compared to before using Ginger Writer, how is your confidence now?"
> S: "Now I feel more confident."
> I: "What do you feel now?"
> S: "Now I dare to submit my assignment without being too afraid."
> I: "Do you think you became more capable because you learned, or because of the app?"
> S: "I think both. I understand basic grammar a bit better. But without the app, it is still difficult. With Ginger Writer, the final result is indeed better."

This account is analytically important because it shows both sides of confidence development. On the one hand, supported revision appeared to increase students' willingness to write and submit their work. On the other hand, confidence that was fully independent of the tool had not yet been firmly established.

This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1997) view of self-efficacy as something that develops through repeated mastery experiences.

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In the present study, AI-mediated feedback seems to have supported confidence by helping students complete tasks more successfully and with less fear. However, the interviews also suggest that these gains were still partly scaffold-dependent. This is important because it indicates that AI-mediated feedback may strengthen confidence (Nguyen, 2025) during supported performance without necessarily producing stable self-efficacy once the support is removed. In this respect, the findings extend recent work comparing AI and teacher feedback by suggesting that performance support and confidence development are related, but not identical processes (Muñoz Muñoz et al., 2025).

Teacher guidance and peer discussion supported feedback use

Students' accounts also highlighted the importance of social support, especially when AI suggestions were perceived as unusual, overly complex, or difficult to evaluate. Peer discussion was often described as a way of comparing options and making decisions during revision.

> I: "Do you ever discuss Ginger Writer with your friends?"
> S: "I often discuss it with friends when a suggestion seems strange. Usually, we compare different versions."

These accounts suggest that students did not use AI feedback in isolation. Instead, they often relied on teacher guidance and peer interaction to interpret feedback and decide whether it should be adopted, modified, or ignored (Zeevy-Solovey, 2024). This indicates that the usefulness of AI-mediated feedback depended not only on its technical output, but also on the interpretive support available in the classroom.

This finding supports socio-cultural and interactional perspectives on feedback in L2 writing, which emphasise that feedback uptake is shaped by teacher explanation, learner interaction, and contextual expectations (Hyland & Hyland, 2019). It also aligns with recent research suggesting that AI-mediated feedback is used more productively when learners are supported in interpreting and negotiating suggestions rather than accepting them mechanically (Rad et al., 2023). In the present study, teacher support and peer discussion appear to have played an important role in preserving student agency and preventing feedback from becoming a purely technical or passive experience (Tran, 2025).

Connectivity problems and perceived overreliance constrained feedback use

Students also identified material and pedagogical constraints that shaped how they used AI-mediated feedback in practice. Internet instability was repeatedly mentioned as a barrier that disrupted writing and revision. "I use my phone; the internet is sometimes slow."

In addition to technical constraints, some students also identified overdependence as a risk. One participant linked this concern directly to a suggestion for classroom practice:

> I: "What is your biggest difficulty when using Ginger Writer?"
> S: "The main obstacle is the internet, and sometimes I become too dependent, Miss. My suggestion is that teachers should still assign practice without the app as well."

These accounts suggest that students were aware not only of the practical limitations of the tool, but also of the risk that too much dependence on it might weaken transfer beyond the immediate task. This is important because it shows that the use of AI feedback in classroom writing is shaped both by access to the technology and by students' awareness of its limitations.

This finding is consistent with Rahimi et al.'s (2025) activity-theory perspective, which suggests that the effectiveness of automated feedback depends on the broader classroom system, including available support and material resources. The present findings point in the same direction. Connectivity problems can interrupt revision, while overreliance may reduce opportunities for students to strengthen independent writing strategies. Taken together, these constraints suggest that AI-mediated feedback should be understood as part of a broader classroom system rather than as a stand-alone solution.

Pedagogical implications

The findings suggest that the integration of AI-mediated feedback in secondary EFL writing requires thoughtful pedagogical design. It should not be treated as a matter of tool adoption alone. First, teachers need to teach feedback literacy explicitly. Students need support in learning how to judge AI suggestions in terms of meaning, relevance, clarity, and appropriateness. Short classroom routines may also help students explain why they accept, revise, or reject particular suggestions (Rad et al., 2023; Yan & Zhang,

2024; Zhan & Yan, 2025). Second, revision needs to be organised into manageable stages. For example, students may be guided to focus first on grammar, then on clarity, and later on organisation. This may help keep feedback actionable within limited classroom time (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Third, teachers need to design for transfer and reduced dependence. This can be done by including occasional writing tasks without the tool and by using reflective prompts that encourage students to internalise revision strategies beyond supported tasks (Bandura, 1997). Finally, implementation constraints should be treated as part of pedagogy. Teachers may need alternative routines for connectivity problems, such as drafting offline, checking later, or using peer-based support. At the same time, the supportive roles of teachers and peers need to be made clear during the feedback process.

Theoretical contribution

This study offers a cautious theoretical contribution. It shows that AI-mediated feedback may function as a mediated resource in secondary EFL writing rather than as an independent corrective tool. By foregrounding students' interview accounts, the study adds to feedback research by showing how perceived changes in motivation and self-confidence are shaped by several interacting factors. These include the actionability and interpretability of feedback, students' developing feedback literacy, and classroom mediation. Conceptually, the findings suggest that feedback theory, self-efficacy development, and classroom mediation should be considered together when examining how AI-mediated feedback works in actual teaching contexts.

Limitations and future research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study relied only on interview data. These data capture perceptions and meaning-making, but they do not directly show how feedback was taken up during drafting and revision. Future studies could therefore combine interviews with classroom artefacts, revision histories, or screen recordings in order to examine feedback use more directly. Second, the intervention was relatively brief. It involved only five 80-minute sessions. This may have been enough to capture early changes, but not longer-term transfer or more stable confidence development. Longitudinal research is needed to examine whether these perceived gains remain when AI support is reduced or removed. Third, the study focused on one cohort of Grade 8 students in a single public junior high school in Jakarta. This limits transferability to other contexts. Future research could compare different school settings and different levels of material access in order to better understand how classroom conditions shape students' engagement with AI-mediated feedback. Finally, future work could examine whether different writing genres and interactional formats, such as descriptive, recount, and collaborative writing, shape students' responses to AI-mediated feedback in different ways.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how Grade 8 students perceived AI-mediated feedback through Ginger Writer in a public junior high school in Jakarta. In relation to the first research question, the findings indicate that students found it easier to begin and continue writing when errors became visible and could be revised during drafting. They also recognised improvement through immediate revision rather than through delayed correction or uncertainty. In relation to the second research question, the findings show that motivation was conditional rather than consistently positive. It tended to increase when feedback supported visible progress and manageable revision, but weakened when suggestions felt excessive, unclear, or cognitively demanding. In relation to the third research question, students reported greater willingness to write and submit their work, although this confidence remained uneven and at times partly dependent on continued tool support. Teacher guidance, peer discussion, and material conditions, particularly connectivity, were important in shaping how feedback was interpreted and used.

Taken together, these findings suggest that Ginger Writer is best understood as a scaffold within a mediated feedback system rather than as a stand-alone corrective solution. Its pedagogical value depends not only on the feedback it generates, but also on the interpretive, social, and material conditions through which that feedback is taken up in classroom writing. The study therefore highlights the importance of teaching feedback literacy, supporting selective uptake, and designing for transfer beyond tool-supported performance. Future research can build on these findings by combining interview data with drafts, revision traces, or other process-based evidence, by extending the duration of the investigation, and

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by comparing more diverse school contexts and writing-task types.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
The interview data are not publicly available due to ethical and confidentiality considerations. They may be available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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