

Effects of Different Types of Teacher Written Corrective Feedback on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy

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Abstract

This research is a quasi-experimental study investigating the effect of different types of teacher written corrective feedback (WCF) on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy focusing on two functions of English articles (the first mention and anaphoric reference) and simple past tense (regular and irregular). Ninety-four Iranian learners of English were assigned to three experimental groups of direct feedback group (n=24), indirect feedback group (n=24), direct+indirect feedback group (n=24), and one control group (n=22). The participating groups' homogeneity was checked by their performance on the proficiency test and the pre-test. During six treatment sessions, each of the three groups received its associated feedback. The papers with attached comments were returned to the participants. On two occasions (pre-test and post-test), the participants completed a picture description task. The results of one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in the performance of the three groups. Furthermore, Scheffe post-hoc analysis indicated that the direct group outperformed direct+indirect group, and direct+indirect group outperformed the indirect group.

Keywords: written corrective feedback (WCF), direct feedback, indirect feedback, picture description task

INTRODUCTION

Like many popular and influential trends of teaching, Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is a standard method used by most teachers to provide guidance in revising students writing. In the vein of many other important and influential approaches in writing, in fact, for most writing teachers, it is the most preferred and common form of feedback (Ferris, 1997) and like many other correlated subjects in this area its effectiveness along with different types of WCF have been investigated over the last twenty years, but it is still not possible to make rigid conclusions about which options are the most beneficial to ESL learners. Whilst feedback is an innermost aspect of L2 writing programs across the world, the researchers have not been equivocally positive about its role in L2 development, and teachers often have a sense they are not making use of its full potential (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Most of the studies found that feedback

are helpful and effective in improving student writings. However, there have been controversies on the effectiveness of feedback on student writings (e.g., Fazio 2001; Kepner, 1991; Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2007; Truscott & Hsu, 2008) and conflicting findings in different areas of feedback such as feedback focus and strategy (e.g., Ashwell, 2000; Bitchener, 2008, 2009; Bitchener & Knock, 2009; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986). Reviews on previous researches reveal that disagreement on the findings on the effectiveness of corrective feedback on student writing may be due to design flaws in those studies as highlighted by Bitchener (2008), Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, and Takashima, (2008), and Guénette (2007). Such flaws may include the absence of a control group and too many areas of errors addressed in the studies. Moreover, recent studies (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2007) included a control group, addressed only one error category, and required a new piece of writing as a post-test. However, these studies used direct feedback only and none of these studies used indirect feedback as a treatment. Consequently, these studies did not provide answers to questions of effectiveness of indirect teacher written corrective feedback on student writing. However, this study adds some more sugar to the work by regarding combination of indirect and direct written corrective feedback, besides investigating the effects of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy which covers two areas of errors most frequently made by ESL/EFL learners (i.e., English articles and the simple past tense).

Much research has been conducted on feedback in relation to ESL/EFL student writing improvement. Different studies put different emphasis on different aspects of feedback and from different perspectives toward feedback on student writing. The most obvious focus of previously published studies on feedback and student writing in ESL/EFL context are the effects of feedback focus and feedback strategies. For example, several studies attempted to unveil the effects of written corrective form-focused feedback and content-focused feedback (e.g., Ashwell, 2000; Ferris & Roberts, 2001) or the effects of focused versus unfocused feedback on student writing (e.g., Ellis et al., 2008, Sheen, 2007). Other previous studies investigated the effects of different feedback strategies on student writing such as some studies that compared the effects of direct vs. indirect feedback (e.g., Bitchener, 2008, Chandler, 2003; Robb et al., 1986).

However, little is known from previous studies regarding the effects of a combination of two feedback strategies, indirect and direct written corrective feedback, on student writing. The provision of teacher indirect and direct written corrective feedback can be useful for students as the combination of the two may help them better understand the feedback to correct an error. Teacher direct written corrective feedback followed by indirect written corrective feedback may provide scaffolding of feedback information to guide students to understand the errors they made and how to correct them appropriately. Thus, findings of this study can contribute to the discussion to answer fundamental questions which sparked the debate such as the one initiated by Truscott (1996) and Ferris (1999) on whether or not corrective feedback is effective and helpful for student writing.

This study will also focus on two grammatical errors frequently made by ESL/EFL students (i.e., English articles, and the simple past tense) which is different from several previous studies that were either too broad by addressing too many areas of error or too specific by focusing only on one error.

This study is aimed at investigating the following research questions:

- RQ1: Does the type of teacher written corrective feedback (direct, indirect, and direct+indirect) have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy?
- RQ2: Which type of feedback leads to more improvement in learners' writing accuracy?
- H₀1: Type of teacher written corrective feedback (direct, indirect, and direct+indirect) has no effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy.
- H₀2: There is no significant difference between the performances of the three groups of teacher written feedback receivers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will present review of the theoretical and empirical works related to this study. The literature reviewed in this section will be divided into three subsections which are as follows:

Error Correction

Despite much research conducted on feedback in relation to student writing and the strong belief that feedback is important and influential on student writing, interpretations of the research findings on the effectiveness of feedback are not decisive. There have been several ongoing debates among writing researchers in the last 15 years on whether or not students benefit from written corrective feedback on their writing (e.g., Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2007; Truscott & Hsu, 2008).

One view (e.g., Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2007; Truscott & Hsu, 2008) holds that correction makes little or no contribution to the development of accuracy in writing, and even harms the learning process. Truscott (1996) argues that teachers correcting students' errors ignore the instructional sequence of grammatical learning that they must pass before acquiring a second language, thus he suggests that grammar correction should be avoided or abandoned in classes. Truscott (2007) reaffirmed that although several studies showed that error feedback can improve writing accuracy, the perceived gains made by students could possibly be attributed to other factors such external exposures. Truscott (2007) also suggested that the fewer errors made by the students may be due to students avoiding correction by writing less or not writing certain constructions. Truscott and Hsu (2008), in support of Truscott's previous claims, noted that the effect of error correction is substantial, and it helps students reduce their errors only in the writings they have received feedback, and accordingly, improvements in text revisions is not a predictor of improvements in new text writing.

There are some other researchers (e.g., Fazio, 2001; Kepner, 1991; Robb et al., 1986) who side with Truscott in downplaying the role of error correction in improving students' writing accuracy. Kepner (1991) studied the effects of feedback on form and content on students' writing accuracy. Findings indicated that the accuracy of the students who had received feedback on form did not enhance more than that of the students who had been corrected on content. Fazio (2001) also reached similar results; no significant difference in accuracy due to feedback conditions (corrections, commentaries, and a combination of the two) was observed for either of the groups (minority- and majority-language students).

As the debate on the effectiveness of feedback on errors in writing continues, a conclusive agreement on the interpretations of the research findings is yet to be reached. In the meantime, several more recent studies have been conducted with evidence in support of written corrective feedback (e.g., Ashwell, 2000; Bitchener, 2008, 2009; Bitchener & Knock, 2009, 2010; Chandler, 2003; Ellis et al., 2008; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Sheen, 2007). In other words, this view attributes more positive effects to error correction in terms of improving students' accuracy in writing. Ferris and Roberts (2001) investigated the effects of three different treatments (giving coded feedback, underlining the errors, giving no error feedback) and found that the two experimental groups significantly outperformed the control group, who received no feedback, on the self-editing task. Ashwell (2000) obtained similar results; groups receiving feedback made more gains in formal accuracy in comparison with the group receiving no feedback. In contrast to Truscott's claim Chandler (2003) pointed out that Truscott (1999) at times drew conclusions without considering statistical evidence in the original studies that are in favor of effectiveness of feedback. Chandler (2003) also suggested that the harmful effect of feedback alleged by Truscott (1996) are aspects of writing fluency which can actually be measured by different approaches (e.g., by the number of words written or the amount of time it takes to complete an assignment). In Chandler's (2003) study, the students who were required to revise each draft improved their accuracy significantly more than the students who were not required to do error correction. In light of the above disputes regarding feedback on student writing, Guénette (2007) reviewed previous studies that became the basis of arguments in the grammar error correction debate among Chandler, Ferris, and Truscott. Guénette (2007) proposed a different perspective on the findings of the research rather than getting involved in the debate. She suggested that different findings which led to conflicting interpretations of former studies can be attributed to several different factors such as research design and methodology flaws and external variables uncontrolled by the researchers. Until these factors are well covered in studies on feedback in relation to student writing, a decisive conclusion will remain undetermined and need further researching.

Additionally, direct correction appeared to be superior to other types of indirect correction in producing more accurate writing. A number of studies that have found positive effects for error correction have adopted a focused approach to error correction (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010; Eliss et al., 2008;

Sheen, 2007). Bitchener (2008), who examined the effects of corrective feedback on two functions of English articles, i.e., *a* for the first mention and *the* for the anaphoric reference over three writing tasks, reached to the conclusion that corrective feedback was effective in improving students' accuracy in new writings. In their study, Bitchener & Knoch (2009) investigated how different options of corrective feedback affected the students' improvement in their accuracy in the use of two functions of English articles, and found corrective feedback beneficial in students' writing improvement over time and in a new piece of writing. Furthermore, they did not find any significant difference between migrant and international students' improvements in terms of using articles as a result of written corrective feedback. Similar results were obtained in the studies conducted by Bitchener & Knoch (2010) and Sheen (2007).

Indirect Feedback

Indirect feedback is a strategy of providing feedback commonly used by teachers to help students correct their errors by indicating an error without providing the correct form (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Indirect feedback takes place when teachers only provide indications which in some way make students aware that an error exists but they do not provide the students with the correction. In doing so, teachers can provide general clues regarding the location and nature or type of an error by providing an underline, a circle, a code, a mark, or a highlight on the error, and ask the students to correct the error themselves (Lee, 2008; O'Sullivan & Chambers, 2006). Through indirect feedback, students are cognitively challenged to reflect upon the clues given by the teacher, who acts as a 'reflective agent' (Pollard, 1990) providing meaningful and appropriate guidance to students' cognitive structuring skills arising from students' prior experience. Students can then relate these clues to the context where an error exists, determine the area of the error, and correct the error based on their informed knowledge. Indeed, facilitating students with indirect feedback to discover the correct form can be very instructive to students (Lalande, 1982). It increases students' engagement and attention to forms and allow them to problem-solve which many researchers agree to be beneficial for long term learning improvement (Ferris, 2003; Lalande, 1982).

Research on second language acquisition shows that indirect feedback is viewed as more preferable to direct feedback (Chandler, 2003; Ferris & Roberts, 2001) because it engages students in the correction activity and helps them reflect to upon it (Ferris & Roberts, 2001) which may help students foster their long-term acquisition of the target language (O'Sullivan & Chambers, 2006) and make them engaged in "guided learning and problem-solving" (Lalande, 1982) in correcting their errors. In addition, many experts agree that indirect feedback has the most potential for helping students in developing their second language proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005) and has more benefits than direct feedback on students' long-term development (Ferris, 2003), especially for more advanced students (O'Sullivan & Chambers, 2006). When asked about their preference for corrective feedback, students

also admitted that they realize that they may learn more from indirect feedback (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Ferris & Roberts, 2001).

Lalande's (1982) study, which involved 60 German foreign language learners, compared two different treatments of error correction: direct correction in a traditional manner by providing correct forms to be incorporated by students into their written text, and indirect correction in the form of "guided learning strategies" by providing students with systematic marking using an error correction code. Students were asked to interpret these codes, correct their mistakes, and rewrite the entire essay upon corrective feedback. Results of his study showed that students receiving indirect corrective feedback made significantly greater gains as compared to students who received direct corrective feedback from the teacher. Chandler's (2003) study involving 31 ESL university undergraduate students shows that indirect feedback with underlining on students' errors is a preferred alternative to direct correction in a multiple-draft setting as indirect feedback engages the students in the correction process and engages them more cognitively during the process. It is important to note that, in her study where students were required to make corrections, both direct feedback and indirect feedback with underlining of errors resulted in significant increase in accuracy and fluency in subsequent writing over the semester. An additional finding of Chandler's study is that if students did not revise their writing based on teacher feedback about their errors, getting their errors marked was comparable to receiving no feedback as their correctness did not increase. Similarly, the study conducted by Ferris (2006), involving 92 ESL students in the United States receiving several types of direct feedback and indirect feedback, shows that there was a strong relationship between teacher's indirect feedback and successful student revisions on the subsequent drafts of their essays.

Direct Feedback

Another feedback strategy commonly used by teachers is direct feedback. Direct feedback is a strategy of providing feedback to students to help them correct their errors by providing the correct linguistic form (Ferris, 2006) or linguistic structure of the target language. Direct feedback is usually given by teachers, upon noticing a grammatical mistake, by providing the correct answer or the expected response above or near the linguistic or grammatical error (Bitchener et al., 2005). Direct feedback may be done in various ways such as by striking out an incorrect or unnecessary word, phrase, or morpheme; inserting a missing or expected word, phrase, or morpheme; and by providing the correct linguistic form above or near the erroneous form (Ellis, 2008; Ferris, 2006), usually above it or in the margin. Direct feedback has the advantage that it provides explicit information about the correct form (Ellis, 2008). Lee (2008) adds that direct feedback may be appropriate for beginner students, or in a situation when errors are 'untreatable' that are not susceptible to self-correction such as sentence structure and word choice, and when teachers want to direct student attention to error patterns that require student correction.

Several studies employing the use of direct feedback on student errors have been conducted to determine its effect on student writing accuracy with variable results. Robb et al. (1986) conducted a study involving 134 Japanese EFL students using direct feedback and three types of indirect feedback strategies. Results of their study showed no significant differences across different types of feedback but the results suggested that direct feedback was less time-consuming on directing students' attention to surface errors.

On the other hand, Chandler (2003) reported the results of her study involving 31 ESL students on the effects of direct and indirect feedback strategies on students' revisions. She found that direct feedback was best for producing accurate revisions and was preferred by the students as it was the fastest and easiest way for them to make revisions. The most recent study on the effects of direct corrective feedback involving 52 ESL students in New Zealand was conducted by Bitchener and Knoch (2010) where they compared three different types of direct feedback (direct corrective feedback, written, and oral metalinguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback and written metalinguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback only) with a control group. They found that each treatment group outperformed the control group and there was no significant difference in effectiveness among the variations of direct feedback in the treatment groups.

METHOD

Design of the Study

According to Mackey and Gass (2005) the design of this research was a comparison group design, participants were randomly assigned to one of the groups, with treatment (the independent variable) differing between or among groups. It is a subcategory of quasi-experimental design

Participants

148 female and male students who were studying at Alborz Language Institute in Tehran participated in this study. They aged between 15 and 29 and took part in the study voluntarily. They took the Oxford proficiency test to make sure they were qualified as intermediate level of proficiency. After administering the proficiency test, 94 subjects (41 males and 53 females) were chosen. The participants were assigned to one pilot and three experimental groups. Each of the experimental groups was assigned to a treatment condition (feedback). The four groups were labeled as group A (direct feedback), group B (indirect feedback), group C (direct+indirect feedback), and group D (pilot group). The whole research project was conducted over 9 weeks. The classes met 1 hour and 30 minutes, once a week. Some of the students missed some tests and treatments. As such, though, they were kept in their classes, however, their scores were not considered in the data.

Materials

The Oxford Placement Test was used for the purpose of homogenizing the level of the learners. Both pre- and post-test were picture description tasks. They were adapted by the teacher and prior to the actual research they were piloted in order to estimate the allotted time to complete the task or to improve any possible error or misunderstanding. Picture description task included sequential pictures with the key words written next to each picture.

Procedure

Prior to taking any step in doing the present research, participants were required to take a proficiency test. Based on the scores obtained, subjects whose scores ranged from 29 to 47 participated in the study and were assigned into three comparison groups. In order to make sure that there was no statistically significant difference among three groups, a one-way ANOVA was run, which confirmed that there was no significant difference across the three groups.

Two days before the treatment sessions, the three participating groups took the pre-test. One-way ANOVA run on the scores revealed no statistically significant difference among the three groups. In order to help the learners in constructing or retelling stories, following Muranoi (2000) in picture description task, a series of word cues was provided to the learners. The first word cue of both tasks included adverb of time (e.g., once upon a time) "in order to prompt the use of the past tense" (Salaberry & Ortega, 1998). They have reported that "this type of prompting was successful in generating past-tense narrations".

Once the student writings were produced, the teachers provided direct, indirect or direct+indirect feedback in response to students' errors consistently depending on the experimental conditions. The teacher just indicated the errors associated with the use of English articles and simple past tense (regular and irregular) by underlining them for the indirect group. For direct group, the teacher gave the correct forms of the related errors in the learners' sheets. And for the last group, the teacher gave direct feedback to the students' sheets at the end of first three sessions and indirect feedback at the end of next three sessions. Every session, the teacher corrected the learners' writing and asked them to revise the writing and return back to the teacher.

The post-test was administered to all three groups after treatment sessions. It also included picture description tasks. The pre- and post-test were parallel and the researcher used two versions (A & B) of picture description task during the two testing sessions; so, the participants could not rely on their memory from the previous test to do the task.

RESULTS

This section presents results of the analyzing the data obtained from the study. The means and the standard deviations for pre-test are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Pre-test Scores of the Three Groups

| Group | N | M | SD |
|-----------------------|----|-------|-------|
| Direct Group | 24 | 25.17 | 8.95 |
| Direct+indirect Group | 24 | 25.68 | 10.63 |
| Indirect Group | 24 | 23.86 | 8.07 |
| Total | 72 | 24.90 | 9.18 |

Table 1 shows that the direct group ($M = 25.17$, $SD = 8.95$), direct+indirect group ($M = 25.68$, $SD = 10.63$) and indirect group ($M = 23.86$, $SD = 8.08$) have pretty equal means and the participants could be considered as identical in terms of articles and simple past tense form proficiency.

The normality was checked through One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and Table 2 below shows the result. The sig. value is bigger than .05 which means that the scores were normally distributed.

Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for the Pre-test Scores

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| | N | 72 |
| Normal Parameters ^a | Mean | 24.9029 |
| | Std. Deviation | 9.18426 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Absolute | .107 |
| | Positive | .068 |
| | Negative | -.107 |
| Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z | | .107 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | | .173 |

Table 3 indicates the results of one-way ANOVA among three participating groups in terms of pre-test.

Table 3. One-way ANOVA Results for the Pre-test Scores

| | SS | df | MS | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------|----|--------|-----|------|
| Between Groups | 42.450 | 2 | 21.225 | .24 | .78 |
| Within Groups | 5942.839 | 69 | 86.128 | | |
| Total | 5985.288 | 71 | | | |

Table 3 shows that there was no statistically significant difference between direct, direct+indirect and indirect groups, ($F = .24$, $p < .78$).

Table 4 depicts descriptive statistics for the scores of the three participating groups on the post-test. It can be inferred from the table that the direct group ($M = 78.00$, $SD = 12.37$), direct+indirect group ($M = 53.39$, $SD = 12.93$) and indirect group ($M = 50.37$, $SD = 13.95$) did not have equal means and the participants could not be considered as identical in terms of accuracy.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the Post-test Scores of the Three Groups

| Group | N | M | SD |
|-----------------------|----|-------|-------|
| Direct Group | 21 | 78.00 | 12.37 |
| Direct+indirect Group | 21 | 53.39 | 12.93 |
| Indirect Group | 20 | 50.37 | 13.95 |
| Total | 62 | 60.75 | 17.94 |

Like pre-test, the normality of the scores was checked and the result is shown in table 5 below. Like proficiency test and pre-test, the scores here were normally distributed (Sig= .171).

Table 5. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for the Post-test Scores

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | N | 62 |
| Normal Parameters ^a | Mean | 60.7521 |
| | Std. Deviation | 17.94306 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Absolute | .107 |
| | Positive | .107 |
| | Negative | -.085 |
| Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z | | .107 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | | .171 |

However, to make sure this difference reaches statistical significance, another analysis of variance was run. Table 6 indicates the results of one-way ANOVA for the differences among three participating groups in terms of the post-test.

Table 6. One-way ANOVA Results for the Post-test Scores

| | SS | df | MS | F | Sig. η^2 |
|----------------|-----------|----|----------|-------|---------------|
| Between Groups | 9538.303 | 2 | 4769.151 | 27.83 | .000 .556 |
| Within Groups | 10108.509 | 59 | 171.331 | | |
| Total | 19646.811 | 61 | | | |

Table 6 shows that there was statistically significant difference with a large effect size among groups, ($p < .000$, $\eta^2 = .556$).

To pinpoint exactly where the differences existed, Scheffe post-hoc ANOVA was run on the post-test. As the Table 7 shows, participants assigned to the direct group outperformed the other groups, $p < .05$.

Table 7. Scheffe Post-hoc ANOVA Results among Three Groups for the Post-test

| Group (1) | Group (2) | Mean Differences | Std. Error | Sig. |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------|--------|
| Direct vs. | Indirect | 24.60 | 4.03 | .000** |
| Direct vs. | Direct+indirect | 27.62 | 4.08 | .022* |
| Indirect vs. | Direct+indirect | 3.01 | 4.08 | .431 |

DISCUSSION

Two research questions were posed in the current study that will be discussed here. With regard to the research question 1 which asked whether the type of teacher feedback have any effect on Iranian EFL students' writing accuracy, and comparing the results obtained from the pre-test and post-test, it is revealed that treatment has the effects on students' writing accuracy, and these effects are positive. Therefore, the null hypothesis 1 was rejected. And research question 2 asked which type of feedback leads to more improvement in learners' writing accuracy. According to the results obtained from the post-hoc analysis, it can be mentioned that students who received direct feedback of the teacher outperformed the students who received direct+indirect feedback of the teacher in the post-test. Not to mention that, the students who received direct+indirect feedback outperformed the students who received indirect feedback.

From these results, it can be inferred that providing any type of teacher feedback was effective in improving students' writing accuracy. These findings are consistent with the findings of previous studies by Bitchener and Knock (2010), Chandler (2003), Ferris and Hedgcock (2005), Ferris and Roberts (2001), and Lalande (1982).

By a short glance at the comparison between the indirect feedback and direct feedback groups performance, it is revealed that the direct group had a higher accuracy than the indirect group. This is understandable as the direct group received not only indications of errors but also the correct forms from the teacher to replace those errors while the indirect group who only received indications of errors with no provision of the correct forms. As suggested by Chandler (2003), providing direct feedback is best for producing accurate revisions and is easier for students to make revisions.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the effects of three types of teacher corrective feedback on improving learners' writing accuracy focusing on two functions of English articles (first mention and anaphoric reference) and simple past tense (regular and irregular). The results demonstrated that all the students assigned in the three groups improved their writing accuracy in the use of target forms; however, there was significant difference among the performances of the three groups. The results indicated that direct group outperformed the other two groups, and also it was shown that direct+indirect group performed better than indirect group.

On the whole, the findings of this study support the idea that giving direct feedback to students' writings by teacher that takes a significant part in improving one's writing is more beneficial than indirect one in raising L2 writers' accuracy.

A number of limitations of the study need to be acknowledged. The sample size would be more desirable if it was bigger. Intending to examine participants' error correction, in the current study, the criteria for measuring the students' writing accuracy were limited to accuracy in the use of only two structures, and another measurement for assessing the participants' overall grammatical accuracy was not prepared. The

treatment sessions were adequate for mastering the two target structures. However, in the case of more treatment sessions, working with extra grammatical forms would be possible.

The findings of the current study shed light on the role of teacher written corrective feedback in improving EFL learners' writing accuracy. The results of this study can be used to inform ESL/EFL teachers and researchers interested in applying or investigating teacher various types of written corrective feedback as used in this study. The finding that participants in the treatment groups in this study gained in grammatical accuracy, may encourage teachers and researchers in the ESL/EFL field to provide corrective feedback with confidence that students can benefit from feedback. Additionally, teachers should feel confident that providing direct feedback is more effective and helps learners to improve better in accurate use of target forms than indirect feedback.

A number of interesting questions remain to be answered surrounding the role of teacher corrective feedback in helping the EFL or ESL learners improve their writings. Further research could be undertaken to investigate the effects of teacher corrective feedback on learners' accuracy in the use of other grammatical structures as well as local aspects of writing such as vocabulary or mechanics. Examining the effects of teacher corrective feedback on learners' writing quality with different L2 proficiency levels is an issue which merits further investigation. Also, comparing the effectiveness of different types of teacher corrective feedback on raising L2 learners' autonomy or enhancing their motivation are areas that are worthy of further research. Moreover, the effects of different types of teacher corrective feedback on learners' writings can be studied both in the form of focused and unfocused feedback.

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