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Contribution of Corrective Feedback to English Language Learners' Writing Skills Development through Workfolio Based Tasks

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between corrective feedback through workfolio based tasks and English Language learners' writing skills development. The study was carried out with 64 B1 level students at a foundation university in the city of Ankara in Turkey. The study took thirteen weeks during which the experimental group received explicit corrective feedback on their written tasks while the control group didn't receive any feedback. Throughout this process, participants took three progress tests. In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were also obtained via interviews with both instructors and participants. While the quantitative data were analyzed in independent samples t-tests through SPSS 20©, the qualitative data were interpreted on. Results from the analyses show that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group. The study also found out that while both females and males improved their writing skills, females in the experimental group outperformed the males in the same group. Furthermore, students stated that getting corrective feedback was beneficial for them as they could learn from their mistakes and be more motivated towards the lesson. As for the instructors, they believed that corrective feedback sessions were useful for their students as they were low proficiency learners. To conclude, the results of the study show that corrective feedback does have a positive impact on improving writing skills and helps to motivate students as well.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Ineffective use of corrective feedback

Being one of the alternative assessment tools, portfolios are favored by many researchers and teachers. However, if they are not planned carefully or assessed accurately, learners will not be able to benefit from them as much as wished. As in the

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case of many teachers, they find portfolios time-consuming and tiring to prepare in order to monitor students' work over a period of time. Even when they follow what their students are doing, they generally don't find it necessary to correct the mistakes on the assignments. Most teachers prefer to use abbreviations such as 'gr' for grammar mistakes or 'v' for vocabulary mistakes. However, when the learner goes over the feedback provided by his teacher at a later time, he finds it difficult to understand what his mistake is and how he is supposed to correct it. He may locate the mistake with the help of the abbreviations, yet as long as he is not able to come up with the correct form, those abbreviations are of no use. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to investigate whether correcting learners' writing assignments explicitly has a positive impact on the development of their written productive skills.

1.2. Theoretical background

How teachers are supposed to correct their learners is a question that has raised much interest in the field of English Language Teaching. Since the article of Truscott "The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes" (1996), the subject matter has gained more popularity among educationalists and researchers (e.g., Ferris, 1999). In his studies, he claimed that no research has proven the efficacy of CF in improving the accuracy of learners' writings. The reason lying behind his theory is that correcting learners' errors contradicts with the nature of second language acquisition (SLA) theories supporting the acquisition of language structures in a certain order. Furthermore, he believes that providing corrective feedback to the learners steals time of the teacher that can otherwise be spent on developing writing abilities of learners. He also states that correction has no place in classes as it is ineffective and harmful. He further questions whether teachers are capable of recognizing errors which, he believes, are difficult even for experts. Even if they can succeed in doing so, it is not certain if they can explain the problematic structure to the learner, and even if teachers again succeed in explaining the problem, the learner may not understand the explanation, may forget it afterwards or may lack necessary motivation to apply the new knowledge in his following writings. He concludes his paper by saying CF leads to stress and demotivates learners.

As opposed to Truscott's claims, Ferris (1999) puts forward the idea that learners can benefit from CF if it is clear and planned carefully. Although she levels with Truscott at some points where she also believes that teachers may not be able to give consistent feedback willingly or students may not be able to understand the feedback being too unmotivated to prioritize it in their language learning process, she believes in the importance of strategy training for learners. As long as the teacher is prepared, practiced and prioritized this subject, students can and will benefit from CF. She agrees that "poorly done error correction will not help student writers and may even mislead them" (p.4). She also adds that Truscott ignored the previous researches that contradict with

his opinions. He only included studies the participants of which are composed of college students unmotivated to revise their work.

For Truscott (2007), CF helps a learner notice the mistakes that s/he has made in a piece of writing and correct them in the following draft(s) of the same writing; however, it does not have any impact on a new writing work implying that CF does not lead to language acquisition. However, Ferris (1999) claimed the opposite and stated that if CF is given consistently in a clear way, it will improve language acquisition. Ellis (2009) also believed that whether it is a communicative approach or a structural one, CF contributes to language learning by fostering learner motivation and ensuring linguistic accuracy. Despite the researchers that proved the efficacy of CF in language acquisition (e.g., Sheen, 2007; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami & Takashima, 2008), SLA researchers such as Krashen (1982) disagrees that CF is effective. She acknowledges that errors are inevitable especially in early stages, and the immediate reaction to errors in this profession is to correct them, yet she believes error correction “has been a serious mistake” (p.74) because correcting errors has an impact on the affective filter of the learners causing them to be defensive and “try to avoid mistakes, difficult constructions and focus less on meaning and more on form” (p.75).

According to Burt (1975), only “global” errors should be corrected and not the “local” ones. The former type refers to the errors that distort the overall sentence having problems in syntax, word order or misplaced connectors. The latter error type, on the other hand, occurs in a morphological level or in grammar structures which affect only single elements. As for Ferris (1999), CF should be given in “treatable errors” which generally occur in a rule-governed way. Furthermore, Ellis (1993) proposed that CF should be provided for structures that learners have problems with. However, Vann, Meyer and Lorenz’s study (1984) found out that teachers value all errors as equals stating “an error is an error”.

Most studies agree on one conclusive point that explicit CF works better when combined with production treatment. Therefore, “when individual factors, such as the learner’s proficiency and language aptitude, were taken into account, the more explicit feedback was of greater benefit to the more able learners” (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006, p.349). When learners are not able to self-correct their mistakes, providing explicit CF has proven to be effective especially in low proficiency level of learners (Ferris, & Roberts, 2001).

As 1950s and 60s were times when errors were to be avoided by the learners, there was no discussion about when is the best time to provide the learner with CF. However, around the time when behaviorism started to be favored, teachers were required to give CF as soon as possible since it was feared that as long as a teacher remains silent about learners’ errors, they will not be aware that they made an error, hence internalizing that corrupted structure (Quinn, 2014). As Kulik and Kulik suggested (1988), although

delayed CF works better in laboratory settings, immediate CF produces better results in actual classroom settings. However, according to some researchers, when the learner is engaged with the second language (L2), he is testing his ability to construct new structures, so he, naturally, makes mistakes which clearly shows his development. Therefore, the teacher should postpone giving CF to a point where he has analyzed this process and come to a decision about how to address it (e.g. Corder, 1967 & Fanselow, 1977). In the meantime, the teacher can also gather all incorrect structures that are common among learners and go over them with all the learners together. Long (1977) also favored delayed correction as it does not interrupt the learner when he is experimenting with the language. Once the learner is disrupted to be corrected, his anxiety level might increase leading him to make even more mistakes.

However, despite all this interest and research, the answer to this question has not been found yet. Although feedback is an important part of language teaching, researchers are not certain whether it has an impact on the development of second language (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

According to “Output Hypothesis” put forward by Swain (1985), pushing learners to produce output helps them acquire a language. However, as gaining autonomy is of utmost importance in second language acquisition, providing input to the learner is also an important strategy to give CF. Although a balance in the amount of usage of recasts and prompts has not been found yet, the former is known to allow teacher to gain control over language forms whereas the latter provides learners with the opportunity to notice their mistakes and self-correct them through different strategies.

Of all language teaching approaches, two seem to be the most common ones: communicative approach and form-focused approach. While the former approach puts great emphasis on fluency and conveying the message without regarding accuracy, the latter one aims to teach the learner correct usages of specific forms by providing him/her adequate practice opportunities (Ellis, 2012; Rahimi & Zhang, 2014). Therefore, researchers have been collecting information about the use of portfolios in language art classes since the end of the 19th century, but they couldn’t find any empirical research on the subject (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991). Instead, they found out that teachers were standing up for the use of portfolios, but they didn’t have enough knowledge about how to integrate them into their classrooms.

Throughout the years of essay-translation, structuralist, integrative and communicative approaches, respectively, Whole Language Approach has given much importance to the use of portfolios in a classroom context (Heaton, 1988). Since it views language learning as a process in which human communication and authenticity are the key terms in a humanistic and constructivist teaching environment, implementing portfolios in a classroom will facilitate learning by doing rather than trying to cover the curriculum (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). One of the most important benefits of portfolio is

that it can be used for both teaching and assessing. Portfolios are generally evaluated either in a holistic manner in which the work is graded upon a general reading (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996) or in a multi-trait manner in which several drafts and improvement of students are evaluated over a period of time thus making the latter grading more preferable (Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000). When they are in harmony with the curriculum, they also have the content validity, thus enabling to achieve instructional goals as well. Using portfolios in education enables deduction about students' knowledge, ability, and attitudes towards the lesson they are learning as they are compilations of students' own works in their areas of interest (Collins, 1992; Goodman, 1991; O'Neil, 1992). As Dellinger (1993) states, portfolios not only increase the quantity and quality of students' works, but they also serve as an enhancement tool for their cognitive development. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) make it clear when they say that unlike single test scores and multiple-choice tests, portfolios provide a multidimensional perspective on student growth over time. Teachers can make more sense of what their students are actually capable of doing through portfolios rather than applying standardized tests to them.

Moreover, portfolios provide wash-back effect to the teachers so that they can detect the defects in their instruction and modify it accordingly. Not only teachers but also program designers and administrators benefit from use of portfolios in assessment because they can monitor if their institutional goals are met. Portfolios also evaluate a wide range of skills when compared to the traditional assessment tools. While students are using their meta-cognitive skills, they are able to learn to take responsibility and control of their own learning process. When they are actively involved in their own learning process, it increases student-teacher interaction as well (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

1.3. Research questions

Throughout this study, it will be revealed whether learners improve their writing skills in the target language when they are explicitly corrected or not. Moreover, the study also seeks to understand the attitudes and beliefs of learners towards portfolio assignments and corrective feedback. It will also provide an insight about the perceptions of teachers towards use of portfolios and correcting student work. Therefore, this study aims to find answers to following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in the diagnosis test?
2. Is there a significant difference between the success of the control group and the experimental group in the first writing progress test?
3. Is there a significant difference between the success of the control group and the experimental group in the second writing progress test?

4. Is there a significant difference between the success of the control group and the experimental group in the third writing progress test?
5. Does the corrective feedback have a positive impact on learners' writing skills development?
6. Do the males and females in the experimental group significantly differ from those in the control group after the implementation in terms of developing writing skills?
7. Do the students in the experimental group find the corrective feedback useful in terms of developing writing skills?
8. How do teachers feel about giving the corrective feedback in their writing classes?

In this study, the word “portfolio” is used interchangeably with the word “workfolio”. The distinction must be stressed out here as the word “portfolio” may be confused with European Language Portfolio which consists of a wide range of activities while what the author tries to investigate in this study is the written work of students that they are supposed to keep in a folder throughout one semester. For this reason, the word “portfolio” refers to “workfolio” throughout this study.

2. Method

2.1. Setting and participants

This study was conducted at the Department of Foreign Languages at a foundation university in Ankara, Turkey. The participants involved in the study were students of preparatory classes. Four classes were chosen according to the diagnosis test Writing Quiz results so that two can form the control group and the other two for the experimental group. All classes have nearly the same average score according to the diagnosis test results. In order to conduct an Independent Samples t-test, both control and experimental groups are composed of 32 students. In each group, 16 of these students are males, and the others are females since another Independent Samples t-test is conducted to see whether there is any difference in the academic success between genders as a result of corrective feedback procedure.

All students, whose age ranks between 18 and 20, are from different departments such as electrical and electronic engineering, industrial design, law, economics, medicine etc., and all four classes are considered to be B1 levels according to CEFR and have the same level of proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Normally, instructors don't have to give corrective feedback to the students as they only have to check if they have done the assignment. Therefore, giving corrective feedback to two different classes, the experimental group, was unusual for this institution. As a result, the other two classes did not suffer from the absence of corrective feedback as the rest of the classes, except the experimental group, are also not getting any.

2.2. Instruments

The instruments of this study comprise a diagnosis test in order to select four equal classes and three progress tests which aim to evaluate students' writing performances and compare their progresses accordingly. In addition, both the students in the experimental group and the instructors involved in this process were interviewed being asked whether they found this whole procedure fruitful.

2.2.1. The diagnosis test

The diagnosis test used in this study was administered by the Standards, Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the third week of the semester. Until the third week of the school, students learn how to write a paragraph with a topic and a concluding sentence and then two different types of paragraphs: "opinion" and "cause" paragraphs, and they are asked to write a "cause" paragraph in the test. After the diagnosis test is implemented, a standardization session is held with all markers by grading a randomly selected paper separately and sharing the results together so that everyone has the same score for that specific paper. Every class' papers are graded by a first and a second marker both of whom are not teaching the class whose papers they are grading, and the markers have to stick to the same rubric for reliability concerns. According to the writing results of this test, two groups with the same or very similar average scores are randomly selected for the study.

2.2.2. Progress tests and workfolio tasks

Workfolio tasks used in this study aim to develop students' writing skills, and progress tests' aim is to monitor these developments. There are three progress tests in total which are given in three or four week periods. After the diagnosis test, both groups are given two writing tasks, and the experimental group receives explicit corrective feedback and re-writes their work with the necessary changes. Some of the students may have to write a third draft because of not changing all the mistakes beforehand. At the end of this process, the first progress test is given to the students in the sixth week. The results of the groups are then compared to see if there is any difference between them.

Then, students are taught how to write an essay for a week and then assigned two essay writing tasks, and the experimental group goes through the same corrective feedback session while control groups' papers are collected only to be noted in the assignment checklist of the instructor, and given back without any feedback. Students now have their second progress test in the tenth week, and the researcher compares the scores of the students.

Lastly, students write two more essays to include in their workfolios, and the experimental group's papers are corrected, and their mistakes are explained to them by their instructor. In the thirteenth week, the last progress test is given to the students to

see if there is any statistically significant difference between the control group and the experimental group.

All these tasks are provided by the Curriculum Development Unit while the progress tests are implemented by the Standards, Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the institution. The six writing tasks and the exam questions for the progress tests are as follows:

Task 1- Choose one of the following topics and write your own effect paragraph.

- Global warming
- Missing a week of your classes
- Quitting a specific bad habit
- Brain-drain
- Increase in population

Task 2- Choose one of the following topics and write your own comparison and contrast paragraph.

- Two TV shows
- Two technological devices
- Studying online and studying on paper
- High school and university
- Two holiday places

Progress Test 1- Choose ONE of the topics below and write a well-developed COMPARISON AND CONTRAST paragraph within 125-150 words.

- Two different sports
- Living with your family and staying at a dormitory
- Working for a large company and running your own business

Task 3- Choose one of the following topics and write your own opinion essay with one body.

Even though they are not environmentally friendly, nuclear power plants should still be preferred because they can produce a lot of energy in a short time. Do you agree or disagree?

Borrowing money from a close friend can/can't harm the friendship in the long run.

In some countries, people are not allowed to smoke in public places and state buildings. Do you think this is a bad rule or a good rule?

Parents should/shouldn't give their children certain chores or tasks to do at home.

Task 4- Choose one of the following topics and write your own opinion essay with three bodies.

Social networking websites like Facebook or Instagram are/aren't the end of privacy instead of the beginning of a new era. Do you agree or disagree?

Modern technology makes/doesn't make life more convenient.

University students should/shouldn't be given the right to choose their roommates.

People who download music and movies illegally are punished in some countries. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?

Progress Test 2- Choose ONE of the topics below and write a well-developed OPINION essay within 250-300 words.

Driving age should/shouldn't be raised to twenty-one.

Some people say that it is important to know more than one foreign language. Do you agree or disagree?

Should recycling be obligatory for schools and businesses?

Task 5- Choose one of the following topics and write your own persuasive essay.

Instead of printed textbooks, students should use the e-books. Do you agree or disagree?

Companies should allow their employees perform religious activities in their building. Do you agree or disagree?

Countries should/shouldn't have more women in their parliaments.

Is the use of surveillance cameras in public places such as parking lots a good idea or violation of privacy?

Task 6- Choose one of the following topics and write your own advantage and disadvantage essay.

Globalization

Studying abroad

Attending a private university

Large companies' and industries' moving to regional areas outside large urban centers

Progress Test 3- Choose ONE of the topics below and write a well-developed ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE ESSAY within 250-300 words.

Having Olympic Games in your own country
 Putting the elderly in care homes or nursing homes
 Increasing tourism activities in your country

Fig. 1. Progress Tests' and Workfolio Tasks' Instructions

2.2.3. Interviews

In addition to above mentioned quantitative research, five random students from the experimental group and two reading & writing instructors teaching in experimental group's classes and providing corrective feedback to them are interviewed about their attitudes towards the issue in hand. Students and teachers' opinions and experiences are taken into consideration while interpreting the results of the study.

2.2.4. Research design

Throughout the study, one diagnosis test, six workfolio tasks and three progress tests are used. Below can be seen the design of the research in a process flow diagram:

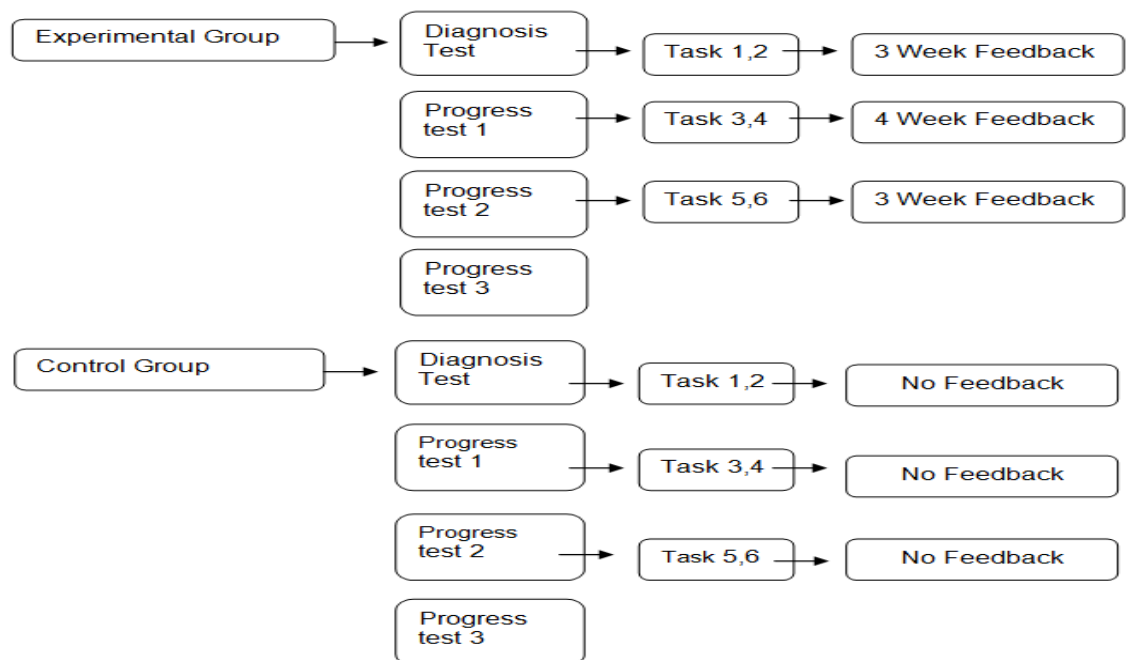


Fig. 2. Research Design

2.3. Procedures

The study, conducted at a foundation university, took thirteen weeks which constitutes the entire second semester of the institution. In the first week of the semester, students went through an orientation process which was about providing them with the syllabus so that they would know what they would be responsible for throughout the semester. They were also informed that their writing tasks would be included in their portfolios, and they would be graded according to these folders. In order to pass one module, they need to get at least 65 points, and portfolio grades constitute 7 points in total. As a consequence, students were highly interested in keeping a portfolio and writing every single task without missing any so that they could get full points.

After they learned the course requirements, they started their third class in the first week with “introduction to writing”. Students learned how to form a topic sentence, what major ideas and minor ideas are, how to support their ideas by adding examples, and how to finish a paragraph with a concluding sentence. They were also taught different methods of writing and had to complete some exercises related to the topic.

In the second week, students learned to write an opinion paragraph with its necessary components. They were also presented with the opinion paragraph rubric if they happened to be asked to write an opinion paragraph in their Writing Quiz so that they would know how their papers would be graded and what was expected from them. After they finished their paragraphs, all papers were collected and read. Then, instructors spared a class hour to provide oral feedback about their papers and how they could have written them better, but their mistakes were not corrected.

In the third week, students were introduced to cause paragraph and taught how to write its topic sentence, give the causes and finish the paragraph by clearly wrapping up. After students completed their cause paragraphs, the instructors collected the papers to read and gave oral feedback without any correction during another class hour. At the end of the third week, students took their Writing Quiz in which a cause paragraph was asked them to write.

Just before the marking, all markers gathered in one room and graded one randomly selected student paper separately and then discussed their grades in each section of the rubric and in total so as to have standardized grading criteria. Then, instructors were paired to read an exam pack, but no one was allowed to read the papers of a class that they were teaching. After being grouped, one instructor became the first marker reading the papers with a red pencil, and the other marker became the second marker reading the same papers again but with a green pencil. Therefore, all papers were read twice, and both markers compared their grades at the end of reading session as they were not allowed to see each other’s rubrics beforehand so as not to get affected by the other person and to remain objective. Finally, markers found their average scores for each

paper and were supposed to re-read the ones that got a difference of 12 or more points between either marker.

As there were 29 intermediate classes at that time, four classes were selected according to their first Writing Quiz results. Before the exam, students didn't receive any corrective feedback. The four classes with the closest diagnosis test, Writing Quiz, scores were selected to form the experimental and the control groups.

The students started their fourth week by receiving oral feedback on their Writing Quiz papers. It's of utmost importance in the institution that all students see their exam papers. Then, they were taught a new paragraph type which was effect paragraph. From that time on, students' writings were to be included in their portfolios. When students finished their first task, the papers were collected, and the experimental group's writings were read in detail then their mistakes were explicitly corrected. In the next contact hour, their instructors gave their feedback and explained their mistakes and the corrected forms to them. Next, students were supposed to re-write their writing tasks with the correct forms this time. Instructors checked whether they had changed these mistakes, and required some of them to write a third draft. Afterwards, all these drafts – firsts, seconds, thirds- were filed in their portfolios by the students.

In the fifth week, students learned how to form a comparison/contrast paragraph with its necessary transition words and other components. Once the students grasped the subject, they were given their second task and went through the same corrective feedback session.

In the sixth week, students took their first Midterm and were asked to write a comparison/contrast paragraph. As effect paragraph is very similar to cause paragraph which was tested in the diagnosis test, a comparison/contrast paragraph was considered to be more appropriate for this exam. After that, the exam papers were graded in the same standardized manner on the same day that the exam took place. Instructors graded the papers according to the comparison/contrast paragraph rubric.

In the beginning of the seventh week, students were again given their exam papers to review. After the feedback session, the researcher carried out her study by comparing the results through an independent samples t-test in SPSS 20©. In this week, students were taught about how to write an essay. They were given plenty of exercises requiring them to form an introduction paragraph, a thesis sentence, a body paragraph with its topic sentence, and a concluding paragraph.

Now that students had a sense of writing an essay, their eighth week started with the instruction of how to construct an opinion essay with one body paragraph. As students could feel confused since that was their first time to write an essay, they read some example essays in their booklets and did related activities. After this procedure, they were given their task 3 and asked to write an opinion essay with one body paragraph on

one of the four subjects provided in their booklets. Then, the instructors read the papers and explained the experimental group their corrected papers. Students made the necessary changes in their second drafts and put both papers in their portfolio folders.

Ninth week was not very demanding for students as they were supposed to write an opinion essay for their fourth task but with three body paragraphs this time. While the control group wrote their essays, handed them in and took their papers back with a checked mark on them, the experimental group got explicit written corrective feedback on their papers.

In the tenth week, students took their second Midterm and were supposed to write either type of opinion essay on one of the three topics provided for them. After the standardization session, all papers were graded on the same day according to the opinion essay rubric which is the same for both types.

Students started the eleventh week by receiving oral feedback on their Midterm papers. Then, the researcher gathered her data and put them into an independent samples t-test again. Throughout this week, students learned forming a persuasive essay – their fifth task. The experimental group's drafts were stored in their portfolio folders.

Advantage-disadvantage essay was the last task of the students in their twelfth week. As soon as students understood the design of the essay and completed the exercises in their booklets, they started to write their last essay. Their instructors collected the papers for one last time and corrected the mistakes. After receiving their papers back, all students put the last piece of portfolio task in their folders.

In the last week of the semester, students had their final Midterm in which they were required to write an advantage/disadvantage essay. Once the marking was carried out according to the advantage/disadvantage essay rubric, the researcher put her last data for SPSS analysis.

Throughout this process, as students were made aware of the elements they were being assessed on by being provided with the rubric criteria, explicit corrective feedback was provided for all of the following; grammar, vocabulary, transition, spelling & punctuation, evidence & example, coherence & cohesion, topic sentence & concluding sentence for paragraphs, topic sentence, thesis statement, introduction paragraph & conclusion paragraph for essays.

Although students had to finish their paragraphs/essays in one teaching hour as they had to be able to work in a limited time just like in a real exam, when some of the students couldn't finish theirs because of personal reasons, their papers were also accepted on the condition that they would hand them the following day.

Lastly, now that the exam period was over, voluntary students and teachers were interviewed in the last week and asked about their feelings about the whole procedure. They shared their opinions about what they liked or disliked or whether they have

benefitted from this. Finally, they declared whether they would like to go through the same process again.

2.4. Data Analysis

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained in order to carry it out and come to conclusive results. The data gathered from the progress tests which aim to find out whether explicit corrective feedback can contribute to students' academic success were analyzed through SPSS 20©. An independent samples t-test was run for every progress test in order to see if students' scores differentiate in that particular exam. Moreover, another independent samples t-test was run according to the average scores of all three progress tests to investigate the effects of explicit corrective feedback in the long-term. Finally, as for statistical analysis, the last independent samples t-test was run between the scores of two genders to understand if any sex did better on the exam as a result of explicit corrective feedback. In total, there have been five independent samples t-tests for various purposes. Moreover, students and teachers remarks during the interviews were also taken into consideration while interpreting the results of statistical data.

3. Results and Discussion

The aim of the first research question is to find out whether students in the control and the experimental group differ significantly according to the results of the diagnosis test. Table 1 shows the results of the diagnosis test of all 29 B level classes in order to demonstrate how the control and the experimental groups were selected.

Table 1. Average Grades of 29 B1 Level Classes in the Diagnosis Test

Rank	Class	Average Grades	Rank	Class	Average Grades
1	B7	83.88	16	B25	77.92
2	B13	82.05	17	B22	77.38
3	B27	81.88	18	B5	77.23
4	B12	80.76	19	B19	77.11
5	B10	80.7	20	B20	76.83
6	B29	80.61	21	B21	76.7
7	B9	80.27	22	B24	76.55
8	B14	80.05	23	B16	76.45
9	B8	79.54	24	B26	76.26
10	B4	79.53	25	B18	76.09
11	B2	79.47	26	B3	75.33
12	B11	79.38	27	B1	75.22
13	B6	79.25	28	B17	74.98
14	B15	78.73	29	B23	71.28
15	B28	78.16			

As can be clearly understood from Table 1, the four classes with the closest results from the diagnosis test were B4, B2, B11 and B6 with the means of 79.53, 79.47, 79.38, and 79.25 respectively. Therefore, the closest mean for the control and the experimental group is obtained when B4 and B6 form one group ($M=79.39$), and when B2 and B11 form the second group ($M=79.42$). Additionally, the scores of these students were analyzed through independent samples t-test to understand if there is a significant difference between them.

Table 2. Group Statistics of Diagnosis Test

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Diagnosis Test	EG	32	79.39	9.52	1.68
	CG	32	79.42	8.35	1.48

Table 3. Independent Samples Test of Diagnosis Test

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.	
								Lower		Upper
DT	Equal variances assumed	.000	.991	-.014	62	.989	-.03125	2.23830	-4.50555	4.44305
	Equal variances not assumed			-.014	60.974	.989	-.03125	2.23830	-4.50705	4.44455

As can be seen in Table 2 and Table 3, both the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG) consisted of 32 students. The mean for the EG was 79.39 while the mean for the CG was 79.42. The standard deviation (SD) was found 9.52 for the EG whereas the SD for the CG was 8.35. As can be understood from the table, there was no statistically significant difference between the EG and the CG before the EG began to receive explicit corrective feedback on their papers, $t(62) = -.014$; $p = .989 > .05$. As a result, it can be concluded that the CG and the EG did not differ in the diagnosis test meaning that both groups were at the same level in terms of writing skills in the beginning of the semester.

The second research question aims to find out whether the progress in writing skills of the CG and the EG differ significantly in the first progress test, which is Midterm 1 in this case.

Table 4. Group Statistics of Progress Test 1

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Midterm1	EG	32	83.47	5.84	1.03
	CG	32	80.53	5.41	.96

As shown in Table 4, there are 32 students in each group. While the mean for the EG was 83.47, it was 80.53 for the CG. The SD was found 5.82 for the EG whereas the SD for the CG was 5.41. Since this was the first progress test after the EG received explicit corrective feedback on their papers, there is a 2.94 point difference between the mean

writing grades of the students. The EG already started to make more progress in writing than the CG by getting higher scores.

Table 5. Independent Samples Test of Progress Test 1

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.	
								Lower	Upper	
MT1	Equal variances assumed	.128	.722	2.087	62	.041	2.93750	1.40722	.12450	5.75050
	Equal variances not assumed			2.087	61.648	.041	2.93750	1.40722	.12418	5.75082

As can be seen in Table 5, we can assume these groups are homogenous, $p = .772 > .05$. Therefore, in the lights of the information in the first line, we can say that there is a statistically significant difference between the EG and the CG after the EG began to receive explicit corrective feedback on their papers, $t(62) = 2.087$; $p = .041 < .05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that the CG and the EG started to differ in their writing skills.

The purpose of the third research question is to find out whether the students in the CG and the EG differ in writing skills according to the second progress test results.

Table 6. Group Statistics of Progress Test 2

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Midterm2	EG	32	85.20	6.47	1.14
	CG	32	76.73	7.51	1.33

As Table 6 demonstrates, the mean for the EG (N=32) was 85.20 while the mean for the CG (N=32) was 76.73. The SD was 6.47 for the EG, whereas the SD was found 7.51 for the CG. The difference between the means of both groups was 8.47 proving that the EG was getting better results on their written work thanks to the explicit corrective feedback provided for them.

Table 7. Independent Samples Test of Progress Test 2

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.	
								Lower	Upper	
MT2	Equal variances assumed	.693	.408	4.833	62	.000	8.46875	1.75228	4.96599	11.97151
	Equal variances not assumed			4.833	60.681	.000	8.46875	1.75228	4.96448	11.97302

We can understand from Table 7 that the variability in both groups is nearly the same ($p = .408 > .05$). There is a significant difference in the scores of the CG and the EG, $t(62) = 4.833$; $p = .000 < .05$. These results suggest that explicit corrective feedback does have an impact on developing students' writing skills. Therefore, when students' mistakes in written works are corrected, they can improve their writing skills better.

The aim of the fourth research question is to find out whether and to what extent students in the CG and the EG differ in terms of progress they made in writing skills.

Table 8. Group Statistics of Progress Test 3

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Midterm3	EG	32	84.64	6.42	1.14
	CG	32	77.13	8.62	1.52

As Table 8 shows, the mean for the EG (N=32) was 84.64 in the third progress test while the mean for the CG (N=32) was 77.13. There was a 7.51 point difference between the results of both groups. While SD for the EG was 6.42, it was found 8.62 for the CG. The experimental group outperformed the control group.

Table 9. Independent Samples Test of Progress Test 3

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.	
								Lower	Upper
MT3	.918	.342	3.955	62	.000	7.51563	1.90040	3.71679	11.31446
								Equal variances not assumed	3.955

Table 9 shows that homogeneity between the CG and the EG was established, $p = .342 > .05$. There was a statistically significant difference between the CG and the EG, $t(62) = 3.955$; $p = .000 < .05$.

Research question 5 seeks to find out whether the students in the CG and the EG differ in terms of their progress in writing skills after the EG received 9-week explicit corrective feedback on their written production. For this purpose, students' mean writing grades of all three progress tests were analyzed through an independent samples t-test.

Table 10. Group Statistics of Averages of Progress Tests

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Averages	EG	32	84.44	4.85	.86
	CG	32	78.13	4.91	.87

As in Table 10, the mean for the EG (N=32) was 84.44 while the mean for the CG (N=32) was 78.13. The SD was 4.85 for the EG, whereas the SD was found 4.91 for the CG. The difference between the means of both groups was 6.31 which shows that the EG performed better in their writing exams when compared to the CG.

Table 11. Independent Samples Test of Averages of Progress Tests

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.		
										Lower	Upper
Equal	variances	.417	.521	5.167	62	.000	6.30729	1.22073	3.86710	8.74749	
	assumed										
Avr.	Equal			5.167	61.991	.000	6.30729	1.22073	3.86709	8.74749	
	variances										
	not										
	assumed										

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the development of writing skills of the CG and the EG. Table 11 shows that both groups were homogenous, $p = .521 > .05$. At the end of the semester, when both groups' all three writing grades were analyzed, the EG differed significantly from the CG in terms of the progress they made in developing their writing skills, $t(62) = 5.167$; $p = .000 < .05$

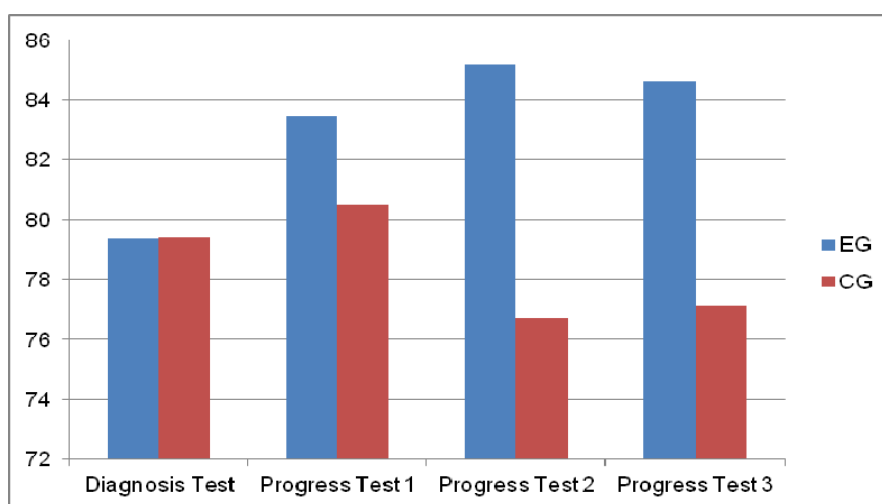


Fig. 3. Column Chart of the EG and the CG Over Time

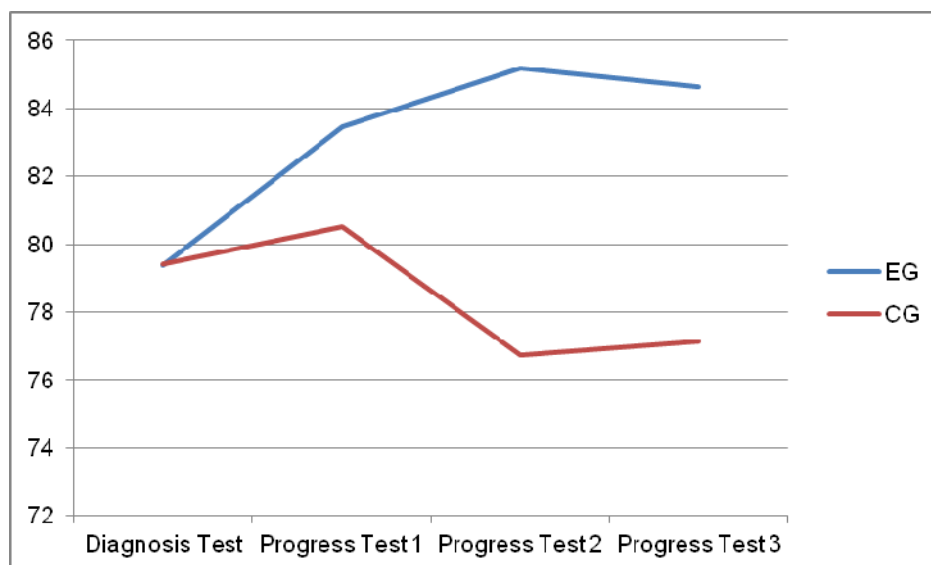


Fig. 4. Line Chart of the EG and the CG Over Time

Figure 3 and 4 clearly show the difference between the progress the EG and the CG made. While the EG made progress throughout the whole explicit corrective feedback sessions, the CG showed some progress only in the first progress test after which they started to get lower scores from the other two progress tests.

The results of the progress tests are in the same direction as the views of Ferris and Roberts (2001). When the level of the student is low, they are not able to self-correct themselves; therefore, giving explicit CF is an effective method. Although Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) believes that explicit CF is more beneficial for the higher level students, the participants of this study are B1 levels and seem to have benefitted from the explicit CF sessions as seen in their writing exam results. As Swain (1985) states, what helps students to acquire a language is to push them to produce the language. Likewise, since portfolios are used as an assessment tool in the institution as suggested by Brown and Hudson (1998), students are pushed to write all six tasks in the institution if they want to get full points from portfolio assessment.

As Ellis (2012) and Rahimi & Zhang (2014) states, providing students adequate practice opportunities helps them learn the correct usages of specific forms in a language. Although Ferris (1999) stated that consistent corrective feedback given in a clear way improves students' language acquisition, this study found out that explicit written corrective feedback helps students develop their writing skills. As opposed to Truscott (2007) who states that corrective feedback is useful for the learners as they can realize their mistakes; however, it does not stop them from making those same mistakes in a new piece of writing, this study found out that the students in the EG outperformed those in the CG in all three progress tests meaning that CF does lead to language acquisition,

and it is of great help for students in not only making them notice their existing mistakes but also refraining from making the same mistakes in their new written works.

Similar to what Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) found out in their study, this study has conclusive data that when students' written works are graded in a multi-trait manner which requires them to write several drafts, they demonstrate improvement. Therefore, holistic grading supported by Grabe and Kaplan (1996) is not preferred.

In contrast to the views that Burt (1975) holds which favor correcting only global errors and not the local ones, the instructors in the EG gave explicit corrective feedback to both global and local errors. As results of the study suggest, correcting both these error types helps students improve their writing skills. Just as Vann, Meyer and Lorenz stated (1984), an error is an error.

Quinn (2014) states that if a teacher remains silent at the scene of a student error, the student may internalize that error. Drop in the scores of the control group indicates that when the teacher does not provide corrective feedback, students may internalize their mistakes. However, the author believes that students should be given the chance to experiment with the language naturally making mistakes which will eventually lead to their development. Otherwise, if the teacher disrupts the students while they are working on a written work, they may get anxious causing them to make even more mistakes. That's why, in this study, students were provided with delayed CF as suggested by Corder (1967), Fanselow (1977) and Long (1977).

Sixth research question aims to investigate whether males and females in the EG made more progress compared to those in the CG.

Table 12. Group Statistics of Males

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Males	EG	16	82.7188	4.52635	1.13159
	CG	16	78.0208	5.28586	1.32146

Table 13. Independent Samples Test of Males

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.	
								Lower	Upper	
M	Equal variances assumed	.288	.596	2.700	30	.011	4.69792	1.73976	1.14486	8.25098
	Equal variances not assumed			2.700	29.306	.011	4.69792	1.73976	1.14133	8.25451

Table 12 states that in both the EG and the CG, there were 16 male students. The mean for the EG was 82.7188 while the mean for the CG was 78.0208. The SD was found 4.52635 for the EG and 5.28586 for the CG. As can be clearly seen, at the end of one

school semester with explicit corrective feedback, males in the EG performed better than the males in the CG with a mean difference of 4.698. Table 13 shows that both groups had equal variances, $p = .596 > .05$. Males in the EG differed significantly from the males in the CG, $t(30) = 2.700$; $p = .011 < .05$.

Table 14. Group Statistics of Females

	Groups	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Females	EG	16	87.54	3.95	.99
	CG	16	77.68	8.06	2.02

Table 15. Independent Samples Test of Females

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Interval of the Dif.		
								Lower	Upper	
F	Equal variances assumed	6.791	.014	4.396	30	.000	9.86458	2.24407	5.28157	14.44760
	Equal variances not assumed			4.396	21.811	.000	9.86458	2.24407	5.20832	14.52085

As in Table 14, the mean for the females in the EG (N=16) was 87.54 while the mean for the females in the CG (N=16) was 77.68. The SD was 3.95 for the EG, whereas the SD was found 8.06 for the CG. The difference between the means of both groups was 9,86 which shows that the females in the EG performed better in their writing exams when compared to the females in the CG. Table 15 shows that females in the CG and the EG were not homogenous, $p = .014 < .05$. However, even when equal variances are assumed or not, there is a statistically significant difference, $t(21.811) = 4.396$; $p = .000 < .05$.

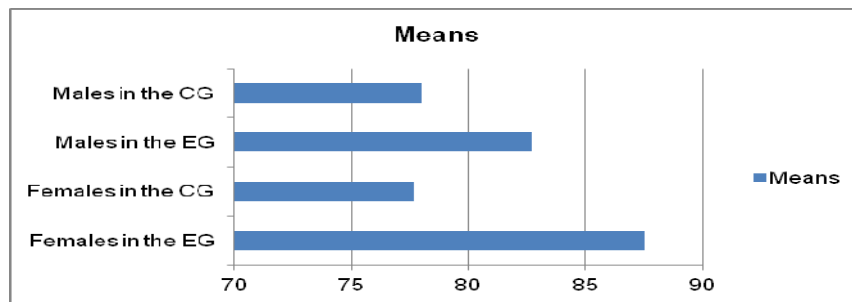


Fig. 5. Bar Chart for the Progress of Males and Females

As Figure 5 and Table 13 and 15 illustrate, females in the EG developed their writing skills the most while males in the EG were the second in improving their written production, indicating that females in the EG scored higher than the males in the EG. However, as for the CG, males outperformed the females in terms of the progress they made in their written work.

The aim of the seventh research question is to understand the beliefs and attitudes of the students in the EG with regards to CF. Five students were willing to answer the researcher's question and share their experiences regarding the topic. After students were asked their names and departments, the researcher asked them how they felt about the CF procedure, whether they liked it or not and requested them to state their reasons.

"A complete essay without mistakes is very informative for us because of that, corrected mistakes by teacher compels me to do that in right way. In my opinion, if you are writing your essay by yourself, it's a favor for your writing because you learn from your mistakes."(st.1)

"I think receiving feedbacks are an important factor for a good essay writing. After my teacher gives feedback to me, I usually take a note about my mistakes. When I study my writing quiz, I often review these notes. If I were a teacher, I would have given more homework than I would give more feedback. In my opinion, teacher's giving feedback is really a beneficial way because writing skill is necessary for our work lives."(st.2)

"Corrective feedback is one of the beneficial methods for my writing skill. It improved my writing skill. My teacher showed me my mistakes and I don't do same mistakes anymore."(st.3)

"In my opinion, giving corrective feedback is a helpful way to learn rules. It is important to say children this sentence is wrong and you can make it true this way. When I take feedback, I try not to make the same mistakes in my essays. I learn a lot of grammatical rules with the help of corrective feedback."(st.4)

"Normally I don't understand my mistakes, but I believe corrective feedback helps to me to understand my mistakes. When I look at my essay, I don't see any wrong. When teacher explains, I understand better and don't do the same things again." (st.5)

As can be seen in the remarks of the students, all of them agreed that they benefitted from CF to a great extent. The reason lying behind this is also similar for all students. They believed that when the teacher provided them with CF, they could easily notice their mistakes. Krashen (1982) believed that CF is not very effective since errors are inevitable and teachers' to-go response to errors is to correct them immediately. She furthers this claim by stating that correcting those errors is a serious mistake as this procedure has a negative impact on the students' affective filter and leads to defensive students who will try to avoid constructing difficult structures in order not to make mistakes and will concentrate more on forms rather than meaning. However, as can be clearly understood from students' reflections, all students found CF effective, and none of them stated that they had problems with motivation, anxiety or self-esteem. These students did not affirm the existence of any kind of psychological or emotional constrains that they had experienced. On the contrary, as Ellis (2009) put it stating that CF facilitates language learning by enhancing students' motivation and assuring linguistic accuracy, all students were highly motivated towards CF procedure as they were quite

aware of the fact that CF was helping them to improve their writing skills. One of them even supported giving much more homework and CF correspondingly as they saw in their writing exams that they were getting higher grades and learning from their mistakes. Especially when they tried new structures that had not been taught in their main course classes beforehand, but they learned the correct forms through writing, they felt more enthusiastic and motivated about the process because they started to see writing lessons as an opportunity to improve not only their structural writing skills but also their grammar.

The purpose of the research question eight is to investigate the attitudes of the instructors teaching in the EG classes. Both instructors agreed to reflect upon their experiences throughout this process.

“As an instructor giving corrective feedback for many years, I personally believe that we shouldn’t provide corrective feedback to high level students. Students should be able to understand the mistakes on their own with the help of the teacher and correct them themselves. However, as the level of my current class is not high, I have the obligation to correct their mistakes. Despite this, there are still some students not being able to understand the mistakes they’ve made.”(ins.1)

As the first instructor states, she has supported providing CF in her entire career. She holds the same opinion as Ferris and Roberts (2001) believing that low level students are not able to recognize their own mistakes and self-correct themselves; therefore, giving explicit CF is a beneficial teaching tool. However, she also stated that even with the CF procedure, some of her students were still not able to understand their mistakes. It can be concluded that Truscott (2007) may have been right saying that CF does not lead to language acquisition.

As for the second instructor, she said that:

“I always give explicit corrective feedback to my students because they need guidance while learning a new language. I think it is important to correct all their mistakes and explain them why because pre-intermediate level students cannot come up with better and grammatically correct sentences after I give implicit feedback. However, higher level students write better essays with only a few mistakes. In that case, I correct grammar/vocabulary mistakes and talk to the students face to face in order to give ideas to improve the content. As my students are not motivated, implicit feedback, which turns into a challenging task, discourages them more. They do not attempt to correct their mistakes after implicit feedback believing they are not capable of writing better. However, when I give explicit corrective feedback, students understand why a sentence cannot be written in the way they do and this is encouraging.”

The second instructor also believed that students with low proficiency levels should be provided with explicit CF. However, with higher level of students, she holds the opposite opinion as Burt (1975) proposing that the local errors which only affect the single elements in a sentence must be corrected. She does not agree with Vann, Meyer and Lorenz (1984) in their idea that an error is an error as high level students can self-correct themselves on other components of writing. Moreover, she also favors explicit CF as it is motivating students especially the ones in our institution as they generally do not feel like putting more effort in their works and prefer the teacher to spoon-feed them. As a

consequence, she also disagrees with the opinions of Krashen (1982) in terms of affective filter.

4. Conclusions

In order to carry out this study, two groups needed to be formed. According to the writing grades of the diagnostic test that was employed in the third week of the semester after all students had been taught two paragraph types, two groups with the closest means were selected as the control group and the experimental group. Moreover, these groups' means were analyzed through an independent samples t-test to see whether these groups had differed significantly before the study took place. Once the results showed that there wasn't any statistically significant difference between these two groups, one of them was chosen as the control group and the other one for the experimental group. The mean score for the experimental group was found 79.39 (N= 32; SD= 9.52) while the mean score for the control group was 79.42 (N= 32; SD= 8.35), which showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group before the experimental group started to receive explicit corrective feedback on their papers, $t(62) = -.014$; $p = .989 > .05$. It is clear that both groups were at the same level in terms of writing skills in the beginning of the semester.

In the sixth week, students had their first progress test in order to find out whether the experimental group started to perform better in writing than the control group because the experimental group had already been receiving explicit written corrective feedback on their two writing portfolio tasks for three weeks. The results showed that the mean scores of the experimental group (N= 32; M= 83.47; SD= 5.82) was higher than those of the control group (N= 32; M= 80.53; SD= 5.41). As this was the first progress test after the experimental group went through a two-week explicit corrective feedback process, there was a 2.94 point difference between the mean writing grades of the students. The experimental group was making more progress in writing than the control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group after the experimental group began to receive explicit written corrective feedback for every mistake on their papers, $t(62) = 2.087$; $p = .041 < .05$.

After their exam, the experimental group continued to receive explicit corrective feedback on two more writing portfolio tasks for four weeks. Then, they had their second progress test in the tenth week. The results showed that the experimental group got better writing scores (N= 32; M= 85.20; SD= 6.47) than the control group (N= 32; M= 76.73; SD= 7.51). The difference between the means of both groups was 8.47 which showed that the experimental group was benefitting from the explicit corrective feedback provided for them. According to the results of the independent samples t-test, the scores of the control and the experimental group differed significantly, $t(62) = 4.833$; $p = .000 < .05$. These results suggested that explicit corrective feedback did have an impact on

developing students' writing skills. Therefore, when students' mistakes in written works were corrected, they could understand their mistakes, learn from them and get better writing results accordingly.

The experimental group continued to receive explicit corrective feedback on their last two portfolio tasks for another three-week period. At the end of the thirteenth week, they had their third progress test in which the experimental group ($N= 32$; $M= 84.64$; $SD= 6.42$) again performed better than the control group ($N= 32$; $M= 77.13$; $SD= 8.62$). The results of another t-test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group, $t(62)= 3.955$; $p= .000 < .05$.

When the mean scores of three progress tests were analyzed, it was found that the experimental group ($N= 32$; $M= 84.44$; $SD= 4.85$) improved their writing skills more than the control group ($N= 32$; $M= 78.13$; $SD= 4.91$). The 6.31 difference between the means of both groups and the t-test results showed that at the end of the semester, when both groups' all three writing grades were analyzed, the experimental group differed significantly from the control group in terms of the progress they made in developing their writing skills, $t(62)= 5.167$; $p= .000 < .05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that explicit corrective feedback had a positive impact on students' academic success in terms of writing skills.

Although this study reached at conclusive data that explicit corrective feedback helped students improve their writing skills, it also investigated whether the females and the males in the experimental group differed significantly from the ones in the control group at the end of this corrective feedback procedure. In order to find out, another independent samples t-test was conducted. Males in the experimental group ($N= 16$; $M= 82.7188$; $SD= 4.52635$) performed better than the males in the control group ($N= 16$; $M= 78.0208$; $SD= 5.28586$). As can be clearly seen, at the end of one school semester with explicit corrective feedback, the mean scores of all three progress tests of males in the experimental group were 4,698 points higher than those in the control group. Therefore, the results showed that males in the experimental group differed significantly from the males in the control group, $t(30)= 2.700$; $p= .011 < .05$.

As for females, the mean for the females in the experimental group ($N=16$; $SD= 3.95$) was 87.54 while the mean for the females in the control group ($N=16$; $SD= 8.06$) was 77.68. The difference between the means of both groups was 9.86 which showed that just like males, the females in the experimental group performed better in their writing exams compared to the females in the control group. Although the female groups were found not to be homogenous ($p= .014 < .05$) even when equal variances were not assumed, there was a statistically significant difference, $t(21.811)= 4.396$; $p= .000 < .05$.

Apart from the quantitative data, qualitative data were also obtained through interviews with students and instructors. All students believed that they benefitted from corrective feedback sessions. They also stated that they learned from their mistakes and

tried not to do the same mistakes again. Thanks to corrective feedback, they even learned different grammatical structures through writing portfolio tasks. As for the instructors, both had nearly the same viewpoints towards this procedure believing that explicit corrective feedback was most effective when it was provided to lower level students. One of them also stated that corrective feedback may not have led to language acquisition as she encountered the same mistakes in her students' writings in their new pieces of works. The other one was a strong advocate of explicit corrective feedback as she believed that providing implicit feedback discouraged her students, but when they received it explicitly, they were more motivated to participate in writing tasks. You may present the main conclusions of the study in a brief Conclusions section. This section should not simply repeat the main findings and discussions but should attempt to draw conclusions that can be based on the findings of the study and under the light of the current knowledge. Preferably, the section may provide the readers with future directions for research and practical implications.

4.1. Recommendations for further studies

Since keeping portfolios generally comprises of different tasks, and in this study, only students' writing tasks were taken into consideration, the grade that the students got for their portfolios could not be compared to the progress tests through SPSS analyses. Although the study at hand dealt with only one aspect of portfolios, further studies may carry out the same procedures in different aspects or even multiple of them. Then, they can investigate the relationship between portfolio grades and academic success of students.

Moreover, as this study was conducted with only 64 students in total, it is not very likely to make generalizations about the results. Therefore, further studies may work with a greater number of participants so that they can reach at more generalizable conclusions.

Another recommendation is to conduct the same or a similar study with a different level of students. Because this study was carried out with B1 level of students, it is not possible to assume that other levels of students will bear the same results. If this study can be done, then the contribution of explicit corrective feedback to students' academic success will be proven correct for other levels as well.

Additionally, another research on the same subject can be carried out in a longer or shorter time period. As completion of the data collection in this study took thirteen weeks, it is not certain whether this amount of time was enough, longer or shorter for some groups. That is why the same study may be carried out with two pairs of experimental and control groups. While one experimental and control group might go through this process in a short period of time, the other experimental and control group

may have the same process in a longer time period. Therefore, whether time limitation has an effect on the results can be clearly understood.

Furthermore, the focus of the experimental group in this study was on explicit corrective feedback with lower level of students. However, another study may be conducted with higher level of students who will receive implicit corrective feedback so that it can be made clear whether implicit corrective feedback and students' academic success has the same relation with explicit corrective feedback and students' academic success.

Finally, in order to find out whether males and females demonstrated a significant difference, both the experimental and the control group consisted of the same number of males and females in this study. In further studies, gender differences may be touched upon more by forming each group with only males or females.

4.2. Pedagogical implications

The results of the study propose some principles regarding corrective feedback that might be beneficial for teachers. To begin with, students should be made aware of the importance of receiving corrective feedback; therefore, teachers should inform their students about the whole procedure and set the goals together with their students. Then, teachers should embrace the idea of corrective feedback no matter how much time it may take. That is why they should not refrain from correcting students' mistakes in a consistent manner. Moreover, teachers should determine which errors they want to correct, how they want to correct them and when they are planning to make the correction in the beginning of the school term and inform their students about these so that they can be a part of this process. Furthermore, the feedback of the teacher should be so clear that when students revise their work at a later time, they must be able to make sense of the correction on their own. Last but not least, teachers should monitor their students during this process in order to observe their development.

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Appendix A. Interview with the students

My name is Dilara Ataman, and apart from teaching at TOBB, I am also a student at Hacettepe University in the department of English Language Teaching. For my thesis, I would like to interview you and record your voice for transcribing your answer later on. As you know, your teacher has been giving you corrective feedback on your writing portfolio tasks. Could you please tell me whether you benefitted from the corrective feedback process and state your reasons when you feel ready?

Student 1:

A complete essay without mistakes is very informative for us because of that, corrected mistakes by teacher compels me to do that in right way. In my opinion, if you are writing your essay by yourself, it's a favor for your writing because you learn from your mistakes.

Student 2:

I think receiving feedbacks are an important factor for a good essay writing. After my teacher gives feedback to me, I usually take a note about my mistakes. When I study my writing quiz, I often review these notes. If I were a teacher, I would have given more homework than I would give more feedback. In my opinion, teacher's giving feedback is really a beneficial way because writing skill is necessary for our work lives.

Student 3:

Corrective feedback is one of the beneficial methods for my writing skill. It improved my writing skill. My teacher showed me my mistakes and I don't do same mistakes anymore.

Student 4:

In my opinion, giving corrective feedback is a helpful way to learn rules. It is important to say children this sentence is wrong and you can make it true this way. When I take feedback, I try not to make the same mistakes in my essays. I learn a lot of grammatical rules with the help of corrective feedback.

Student 5:

Normally I don't understand my mistakes, but I believe corrective feedback helps to me to understand my mistakes. When I look at my essay, I don't see any wrong. When teacher explains, I understand better and don't do the same things again.

I would like to thank you for your valuable opinions on the subject and sharing them with me. If you would like to know the results, I would be more than happy to inform you. Here are my contact details:

Email: dataman@etu.edu.tr
Extension: 4152

Appendix B. Interview with the instructors

My name is Dilara Ataman, and apart from teaching at TOBB, I am also a student at Hacettepe University in the department of English Language Teaching. For my thesis, I would like to interview you and record your voice for transcribing your answer later on. As you know, you have been providing corrective feedback to your students in your writing class. Could you please tell me whether you found the corrective feedback process helpful for your students and state your reasons?

Instructor 1:

As an instructor giving corrective feedback for many years, I personally believe that we shouldn't provide corrective feedback to high level students. Students should be able to understand the mistakes on their own with the help of the teacher and correct them themselves. However, as the level of my current class is not high, I have the obligation to correct their mistakes. Despite this, there are still some students not being able to understand the mistakes they've made.

Instructor 2:

I always give explicit corrective feedback to my students because they need guidance while learning a new language. I think it is important to correct all their mistakes and explain them why because pre-intermediate level students cannot come up with better and grammatically correct sentences after I give implicit feedback. However, higher level students write better essays with only a few mistakes. In that case, I correct grammar/vocabulary mistakes and talk to the students face to face in order to give ideas to improve the content. As my students are not motivated, implicit feedback, which turns into a challenging task, discourages them more. They do not attempt to correct their mistakes after implicit feedback believing they are not capable of writing better. However, when I give explicit corrective feedback, students understand why a sentence cannot be written in the way they do and this is encouraging.

I would like to thank you for your valuable opinions on the subject and sharing them with me. If you would like to know the results, I would be more than happy to inform you.

Email: dataman@etu.edu.tr
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