The Effect of Using Non-corrective Feedback on the Eighth Graders' Writing Achievement in English Language and their Attitudes towards Writing in Jordan

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at investigating the effect of using non-corrective feedback on the eighth graders' writing achievement in English language and their attitudes towards writing in Jordan. 28 students participated in the study representing two eighth-grade sections out of three sections at Jordan University Model School during the academic year 2006-2007. The two sections were randomly chosen. One section (n=13) was randomly assigned to represent the experimental group, while the other section (n=15) represented the control group. Two research instruments were developed to collect the data of the study: a writing achievement test and a writing attitudes survey. To analyze the collected data, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and ANCOVA were used. The results of the study showed that the type of feedback used had a statistically significant effect (α=.05) on the writing achievement of the eighth-graders and on their attitudes towards writing in English. The differences between the two groups were in favor of the non corrective group. Based on those results, the researcher recommended teachers incorporate non corrective feedback in their writing classes..

Keywords: Writing, Achievement, Attitudes, Feedback, Eighth Grade, EFL, Jordan.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a means of exchanging ideas, feelings, emotions and experiences between the writer and the reader for communicative proposes via a text. Writing can be a highly -demanding task if students are asked to write about unfamiliar or uninteresting topics, or write under the pressure of time, or if their teachers are too ambitions about students' writing abilities (Bruning and Horn, 2000).

Over the last thirty years, the interest in writing instruction has changed from product to process writing through multiple drafting with feedback between drafts (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). By giving considerable emphasis to revising and responding to writing, process writing has allowed teachers and students more meaningful interaction.

Several classifications of writing assessment scales have been proposed in literature. The most commonly cited categorization is that of holistic and analytic scales.

Holistic scoring refers to the assessment of the overall performance of the writer whereas analytic scoring refers to the assessment of discrete features such as mechanics, content, vocabulary and structure. Holistic scales are often criticized for being impressionistic and open to subjective interpretations rather than offering precise and detailed descriptions of learners' levels. Analytic scales, on the other hand, are generally accepted to result in higher reliability and have higher construct validity for second language writers. Baldwin (2004) and Ramirez (1995) argue that both types of scoring should be incorporated in any writing achievement procedure.

According to Ferris (2007), providing feedback is one of the foreign languages writing teacher's most important tasks. Certain forms of classroom feedback may affect students more positively than others. Ellis (2007) notes that the teacher's feedback on students' writing generally takes the form of indicating that an error has been committed, or providing the correct language form, or providing metalinguistic information about the error, or any combination of these assessment forms. Therefore, non-corrective feedback, with its emphasis on the recursive nature of writing, has emerged as an essential component of the process approach and has gained much

popularity among English language teachers (Morra and Asis, 2009).

Writing tests have been regarded as the major tools for measurement, whose purpose was to compare students with each other, to place students at different developmental levels, and to diagnose students with learning problems. Providing feedback needs to contribute in useful ways to the ongoing process of balancing the writing challenge with the writer's skills and motivations. Therefore, the most useful feedback on writing should involve specific knowledge about how to move toward one's writing goals (Bruning and Horn, 2000).

Marking every error does not encourage students to solve their writing problems nor does it teach them to be their own editors. Over correction only makes students confused, discouraged, overwhelmed and they may think of themselves as incompetent writers. Many students' negative attitudes towards writing stem from their feeling that they aren't capable of writing well by comparing themselves unfavorably to an unrealistic standard of perfection, or assuring themselves they can't begin writing because conditions aren't exactly right (Bruning and Horn, 2000; Chastain, 1990; Paquette, 2008).

Related Literature

Many studies have been conducted on the effect of the type of feedback on learners' writing achievement and attitudes towards writing. Most of the studies that are reviewed here were conducted on L2 students.

Riekan (1992) examined the effect of three types of feedback on the writing achievement of high- school students of beginning French in Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA),Three feedback groups (no corrective feedback, implicit corrective feedback, and explicit corrective feedback) completed a series of compositions and revisions over a six-week period. Measures of frequency, breadth, and accuracy of use were taken from the students' first draft of their final writing. A qualitative method was also used through recording and transcribing introspective interviews made as students completed a revision task. The categorical data produced were analyzed by Chi-square tests. Results showed that students in the explicit feedback group achieved significantly higher accuracy scores than did students in the other two groups.

Barry and Nielsen (1997) investigated the writing achievement of approximately 49,000 at grade five,

36,000 at grades eight-nine, and 23,000 at grades 10-12 at Kansas schools (USA). The Six-Trait Analytical Model (Ideas and Content, Organization, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, and Conventions) was used to score each paper. Each trait was rated on a five-point scale (1 = low, 5 = high). In addition to student ratings on each of the six writing traits, other supplemental data were collected from teachers and students via questionnaires. Results showed that choice of topic did not make a significant difference in students' writing performance.

Ashwell (2000) compared the effect of four methods of providing feedback (grammar then content feedback, content then grammar feedback, form and content feedback, and no feedback at all) on the writing development of 50 Japanese ESL students taking their first writing class at . Means, t-test, the Scheffe test, and four one-way ANOVAs were used to analyze the data The results of the study showed that all the three groups who received feedback significantly made more improvement in their writing accuracy than the group with no feedback.

Ferris and Roberts (2001) conducted a study to examine how explicit error feedback can help students to self-edit their own texts. Seventy-two ESL students in California State –USA participated in the study. T-test, percentages of errors corrected, and ANOVA were used to analyze the data of the study. Results indicated that students who received feedback (direct or indirect) or significantly outperformed the no-feedback group on the self-editing task.

Cho (2003) investigated how the tests from the two different approaches in writing assessment (product-oriented and process-oriented) affect the writing achievement of 57 university ESL students in The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Repeated Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVA) was conducted to analyze the data collected via a questionnaire. Results showed that essays produced on the process-oriented workshop test had more elaborated ideas and better organization than their counterparts written on the product-oriented test.

Gau, Hermanson, Logar and Smerek (2003) investigated the effect of a program for improving student abilities and attitudes towards writing through increased writing time and opportunities. The sample of the study consisted of a group of 60 elementary stage students in Chicago, Illinois. Findings showed that when students

were given frequent opportunities to write throughout the content areas, their attitudes towards writing improved and the amount they wrote increased, too.

Al-Ghabri (2005) investigated the effect of direct vs. indirect feedback on students' achievement in writing. Sixty students at Sana'a University participated in the study during academic year (2002-2003). A semi-experimental design was carried out to investigate the role of feedback in language learning. The subject received feedback on nine tasks during the experiment. A pre-test and a post test were given to the experimental group and control group. The data were analyzed, using descriptive statistics. The results showed there was more improvement in the writing achievement of the students who received indirect feedback than those who received direct feedback.

Matsuno (2007) investigated how self- and peer-assessments work in comparison with teacher assessments in ESL Japanese writing classes. Multifaceted Rasch Measurement was used in the present study to investigate how self- and peer-assessments work in comparison with teacher assessments in a university writing class The results indicated that peer-raters were the most lenient raters. However, peer-raters displayed the potential to act as good assessors because most of them were internally consistent when assessing other students' essays. It was concluded that peer-assessment might be utilized as a part of formal assessment.

Rahimi (2008) investigated the impact of feedback on writing accuracy of 56 Iranian English majors over a period of four months. One of the two treatment groups received direct grammar (providing the students with the correct forms of their errors, while the other group received indirect feedback (employing a variety of strategies such as coding, underlining the errors, providing marginal feedback, and giving feedback on the content of the writing). To analyze the data, means, standard deviations and t-tests were used. The results of the study did not show a significant effect of the teachers' feedback.

Paquette (2008) examined second and fourth grade elementary students' attitudes towards writing before and after their participation in a cross-age tutoring writing program in Indiana -USA. The administration and analysis of pretest and posttest writing attitude surveys were performed with treatment and non-treatment groups. Descriptive statistics were compiled and examined and an analysis of covariance test was performed. Results

revealed that participants of the cross-age tutoring writing program enjoyed the cross-age tutoring experience, had positive perceptions of writing, and became better writers because of the tutoring experiences.

Hawthorne (2008) explored students' perceptions about the writing tasks they do in their English classes. The participants were 28 English students from two Auckland high schools in Australia. To collect the data of the study, each student was audio-taped the transcripts generated from the audio-tapes were coded. There was 89% agreement between the two coders in their coding judgments. Results showed that interest in a topic and the perceived relevance of the task were the main factors influencing engagement in their writing.

Morra and Asis (2009) compared the effect of teacher feedback and no feedback on students' (n = 89) error correction. The study was carried out at the School of Languages, National University of Cordoba, Argentina. The data were analyzed using the non-parametric Wilcoxon's Paired Signed Rank Test to analyze the taped or the written data. Results revealed a statistically significant reduction in the number of mistakes in the final drafts due to teacher's feedback. Results also showed that students considered the most beneficial aspect of teacher feedback to have been the focus on micro errors (vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics).

In Jordan, there have been only few studies on assessing students' writing. For example, Abed (1990) compared the effect of providing no-feedback, informative feedback (pointing to the writing error without correcting it), corrective feedback (correcting every single error with no explanation), and explanatory feedback (correcting and explaining) on the writing achievement of 56 community college students in Amman-Jordan. A pre-test and post- test was used to achieve the purpose of the study. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study showed that both the explanatory method and the corrective method were more effective than the informative and the no-feedback methods of assessment.

Al-Toubat (1996) conducted a study to investigate the effect of corrective feedback on the writing proficiency of the twelfth academic graders in Irbed District. The sample of the study consisted of 154 students in both the scientific and literary streams in Al-Zarnooji comprehensive Secondary School for Boys during the academic year 1995/1996. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), a t-test, means and standard

deviations were used to analyze the data. The results showed that proving students with corrective feedback significantly improved students' writing proficiency.

Al-Omari (2004) explored the aspects that EFL university instructors in Jordan focus on when they assess their students' writing. The sample of the study consisted of all EFL instructors of writing at ten universities in Jordan. Data were collected via a questionnaire and interviews with some instructors. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the results of the study. The results of the study revealed that the majority of the instructors focused on grammatical accuracy and on writing mechanics (handwriting, spelling, and punctuation more than on organization, content and cohesion. Only few instructors were found to provide students with written feedback.

Hadree (2006) carried out a study to investigate the impact of using the "read-to-write" technique of error correction on the writing performance of Jordanian secondary students. The sample of the study consisted of (60) female Grade (11) students enrolled in Al-Hussein School for Girls during the academic year (2005-2006). Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to analyze the data of the study, in addition to t-test. The findings showed that the mere correction of mechanical errors was ineffective compared with using the "read-to-write" technique.

Mohaidat (2008) conducted a study to investigate the effect of an instructional program based on authentic assessment on the achievement of EFL secondary stage students in Jordan in reading and writing skills: The sample of the study consisted of 70 eleventh grade students selected from Sa'ad Bin Abi-Waqas Secondary School in Irbid First Directorate of Education during the academic year 2006-2007. Means, standard deviations, and t-test were used to analyze the data of the study. The findings of the study showed that the program significantly improved the reading and writing achievement of the experimental group.

Al-Ahmad (2009) conducted a study to explore students' reactions to two types of the instructor's feedback (indirect coded written feedback and oral feedback). The sample of the study consisted of thirty-six (36) freshman EFL students at Yarmouk University during the academic year 2007-2008. A questionnaire was used to achieve the purpose of the study. Frequencies, percentages and Friedman's Nonparametric Test were used to analyze the collected data The results

of the study showed that students reread more of their instructor's feedback on the first drafts than on the final ones, they became more self-dependent in responding to their instructor's comments, and they found written feedback useful in improving their writing performance.

It can be realized that there has been no consensus among researchers on the effectiveness of one writing assessment procedure over another. For example, (Cho, 2003; Ferris, 1997; Hawthorne, 2008; Gau et al., 2003; Matsuno, 2007; Mohaidat, 2008; Paquette, 2008) concluded that teachers should not explicitly and extensively correct students errors, while (Abed, 1990; Al-Omari, 2004; Al-Toubat, 1996; Morra and Asis, 2009; Riekan, 1992) revealed significant effect of explicit teachers' error correction on students' writing development.

As far as the studies conducted in Jordan, (Abed, 1990; Al-Ahmad, 2009; Al-Omari, 2004; Al-Toubat, 1996; Hadree, 2006) most of them have dealt with assessing the writing skills of secondary stage students or university students. Moreover, there has been no single study in Jordan which investigated the effect of non-corrective feedback on students' attitudes towards writing in English. Therefore, it is hoped that the present study will shed light on the effect of the type of feedback provided by English language teachers on eighth graders' writing achievement in English language and on their attitudes towards writing.

Statement of the Problem

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Jordan requires all schools to follow centralized English as a foreign language EFL curriculum for each grade level. For example all English language teachers in Jordan are required to use a variety of assessment strategies and give students feedback on their learning at regular intervals and provide them with opportunities for student-to-student assessment and student self assessment (MOE, 2003: 59). Students are also required to revise written work for clarity, correctness and coherence with assistance of peers and teachers. Students are also expected to show respect for the ideas of others, support them, and help them assess their own work (MOE, 2006 50-52).

However, being an EFL university professor and a supervisor of student- teachers for more than 10 years, the researcher realized that private schools do not really abide by these methods of teaching and assessment. In

fact, most private schools have their own English textbooks and methods of teaching. For example, students are still asked to write individually on a given topic under the pressure of time. Many teachers in these schools argue that basic stage EFL students cannot improve as writers unless they are explicitly corrected by the teacher. Even some parents insist on getting all the mistakes of their children corrected by the teacher himself with the grade on the top of each written piece.

Therefore, the present study was intended to find out whether using non-corrective feedback in the writing classes has the same effect of corrective feedback regarding students' writing achievement and attitudes towards writing

Purpose and Questions

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of using non-corrective feedback on the eighth graders' writing achievement in English language and their attitudes towards writing in Jordan. To achieve the purpose of this study, the following two questions were addressed:

1. Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha=.05$) in the writing achievement mean scores of the eight grade EFL students that can be attributed to the type of feedback?

2. Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha=.05$) in the writing attitudes mean scores of the eight grade EFL students that can be attributed to the type of feedback?

Importance of the Study

The results of the present study may give insights into assessment activities which turn students on or off writing, so that teachers can improve students' engagement with the writing act. While the findings of the present study cannot be generalized to all Jordanian EFL students, the insights and results can empower teachers in other schools to revisit their assessment practices. Curricula developers may also gain more insights into the relevance of writing prompts, methods of teaching writing, and writing assessment suggested for basic stage students. Researchers may be tempted by the results of this study to investigate other aspects of writing in different EFL contexts.

Operational Definitions of terms: The following terms are operationally defined to serve the purpose of this study:

- Writing achievement: Students' ability to write about their ideas, feelings, or knowledge of something. A special writing scale was used in this study to measure students' writing ability according to the following aspects: clarity of expression, organization, grammar, mechanics, and length. Each aspect was assigned five points. Therefore, the total writing score of a student was out of 25.

- Attitudes towards writing: The attitudes, feelings, preferences, or motivation of Jordanian EFL students to write in English as measured by a thirty- item survey. Students scores on each item ranged from (5= strongly agree) to (1= strongly disagree) as shown in appendix A.

- Corrective feedback: the teacher's corrections of students' spelling, punctuation, indentation or grammar of their written work. The teacher may also rephrase sentences, move, delete or add other sentences. A score is assigned according to these corrections

- Non corrective feedback: comments, questions or suggestions a writer got back on his written work. Such feedback was not meant to give scores, but mainly to help students to develop their own writing. Examples on this type of feedback are mentioned in the treatment section.

METHODOLOGY

Population and sample of the study

Jordan University Model School (JUMS) was selected to conduct this study during the first semester 2006-7. There were three eighth -grade sections in the school, which were taught English by the same teacher. Two out of those three sections were randomly selected. Section one had 13 students while the other section had 15 students. Section one was assigned randomly to the non-corrective feedback group (n=13), while section two represented the corrective feedback group (n =15).

Instrumentation

The two research instruments used to collect the data of the study were a writing achievement test and a writing attitudes survey.

- The writing achievement test: Both groups of students were asked to write about the same prompt ***"How I feel about my writing in English"*** as a pre-test during the second week of September, 2006-7. Twelve

weeks later, both groups were also asked to write on another prompt *"How I feel about my school'* as a post test. A writing scale was developed by the researcher based on some related literature (Baldwin, 2004; Ramirez, 1995; Mickan, 2003; Todd, Thienpermpool, and Keyuravong, 2004; Weigle, 2002). The scale was validated by seven EFL experts before it was used to grade students' writing.

According to this scale, a student total writer score should be (25) distributed as follows:

1. Clarity of expression: Ability to express one's self sensibly, relevance of information included, and message. (5 points)
2. Organization: Development of ideas, cohesion, coherence, and organic unity. (5 points)
3. Grammar: Subject –verb concordance, verb tense and voice, word formation, and sentence type (5 points)
4. Mechanics: Capital letters, spelling, punctuation, and indentation (5 points)
5. .Length: Number of relevant ideas, number of sentences per paragraph, and number of words per sentence (5 points).

Two EFL teachers who have the same teaching experience and qualification independently scored a sample of students' written pieces to ensure their agreement on the scorer of each written piece. By using Spearman's rho, it was found that inter-rater reliability between the two raters was 0.94 (p < 0.01).

A writing attitudes survey: To explore the attitudes of eight- grade EFL students towards writing in English, a thirty - item survey was developed by the researcher based on related literature (Atwell, 1987; Burning and Horn, 2000; Gau et al.; Smerek, 2003; Klassen, 2002; Ramirez, 1995). A five -point Likert-scale was used, with choices ranging from strongly agree (scored as 5) to strongly disagree (scored as 1). Then, the survey was translated into Arabic so that eight grade students could understand the meaning of each item as it was intended. The experts validated the survey before it was administered to the subjects of the study. A test-retest method was used to establish reliability of the survey. By using Pearson correlation, it was found that the reliability coefficient was (0.86) According to statisticians, the survey used to achieve the purpose of this study is, therefore, reliable (See appendix A).

Design of the study

The research design was a quasi-experimental design.

There was one independent variable with two levels (corrective feedback and non-corrective feedback) and two dependent variables (students' writing achievement and students' attitudes towards writing).

Procedures of the study

The researcher reviewed related literature on teaching and assessing writing (Atwell, 1987; Bruning and Horn, 2000; Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Gau et al., 2003; Ramirez, 1995) Then, the most commonly used guiding principles for using non-corrective feedback in the EFL writing classes were summarized. Those guiding principles were discussed with the eight-grade teacher. The researcher and the teacher also reviewed samples of students' written pieces which have non-corrective comments, suggestions and questions on them to help her provide her students with similar feedback on their writing. The main focus was that the teacher should not correct students' written mistakes, but help students fix those mistakes on their own. If she was having trouble reading students' writing, she had to indicate so. The teacher was asked to concentrate on the macro aspects of writing (content and organization) on the first draft, and on both macro and micro (vocabulary, grammar, mechanics) components on the second draft. Written feedback had to be provided to each student, and students had to get their papers back at the beginning of the next writing session. Each week, during the treatment, the researcher visited or called the teacher to make sure that she was providing the proper feedback to each group (corrective and non-corrective). Examples of the comments, suggestions and questions the teacher used in the non-corrective class looked like these:

- *Please, tell me more about this.*
- *Where does your piece begin/ end?*
- *Can this sentence be moved somewhere else?*
- *I am not sure if I have understood what you mean here.*
- *If I were you, I would double check tense in this paragraph.*
- *Do you really mean to punctuate this word the way it is?*
- *See if you can rephrase this sentence.*
- *Are all sentences in this paragraph in their proper order?* (See appendix B)

The non-corrective feedback students were encouraged to choose the topics collaboratively on their own unless they asked the teacher to suggest some. They

were also encouraged to exchange their written pieces. Answers to students' questions regarding the non-corrective feedback were discussed before students exchanged written pieces. Students were led to select their own partners, but were encouraged to change partners as they proceeded in the semester. They were instructed that they had a responsibility to write back to their partners so that they would not let down each other. They were allowed to consult each other while providing feedback, because the purpose of peer feedback was to help rather than to compete with one another. They were also asked to praise what others write well while pointing out what can be improved, avoiding negative feedback whenever possible. Each writing session took about thirty minutes. There was no obligation that at the end of each writing session students had to finish a written piece.

As for the corrective feedback group, all students' errors were explicitly corrected by the teacher and students were asked to avoid those errors when they had to write next time. Teacher's corrections included spelling, punctuation, rephrasing, replacing sentences, or changing the meaning of the whole paragraph. Generally, a score was assigned to each written piece based on the teacher's corrections.

Students in both groups wrote for 30-40 minutes once a week during the first semester (mid of September- end of December), making a total of 12 writing times. The writing achievement posttest and the survey were administered to both groups after implementation.

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were used to analyze the data of the study. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to test for significant differences between the mean scores of students of both groups with regard to their writing achievement and attitudes towards writing.

Table 1. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the differences in the writing achievement mean scores of students

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
PRE	263.93	1	263.93	36.53	0.000
GROUP	34.33	1	34.33	4.75	**0.039***
Error	180.65	25	7.23		
Total	474.68	27			

*Sig α = .05

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Results related to the first question: *Are there any statistically significant differences (α=.05) in the writing achievement mean scores of the eight grade EFL students that can be attributed to the type of feedback?*

Analysis of covariance was used to measure the differences between the two groups (the experimental group and the control group) regarding their writing achievement. The results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 shows that there were significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group at (α = .05) regarding their writing achievement. By measuring the adjusted mean scores and standard errors (Table 2), it was found that the experimental group had significantly higher mean scores (mean = 16, SD = 0.65) than those of the control group (mean=13.7, SD = 0.81).

Table 2. Adjusted mean scores and standard errors of students' writing achievement

GROUP	Mean	SD
Experimental	16.0	0.65
Control	13.7	0.81

The results shown in Table 2 are consistent with results of other studies such as those of (Al-Ahmad, 2009; Cho, 2003; Ferris, 1997; Gau et al., 2003; Hadree, 2006; Matsuno ,2007; Mohaidat, 2008), but they are inconsistent with the results of (Abed, 1990; Al-Omari, 2004; Al-Toubat, 1996, Morra and Asis, 2009; Riekan, 1992).

The results of the present study may indicate that the teacher's formative comments helped the experimental group to revisit, organize, and develop their written pieces independently. It seems that by giving students the chance to choose their own topics, the teacher helped students to have a sense of achievement as responsible

writers. This resulted in better voice, richer vocabulary, and greater independence to write on the things that they knew well. Students seemed to have interest and value in what they wrote about and in the feedback they got from the teacher because he was not a corrector of their errors, but a guide and brainstorming fellow in the writing workshop. It is rather inaccurate to assume that language development automatically takes place when students mistakes are explicitly corrected by the teacher, simply because this reflects what the teacher can do and not what the student can do (Hedgcock and Lefkowitz, 1994; Townsend and Fu, 1997). By shifting students' attention from the mere focus on mechanics of writing (e.g.

punctuation and spelling) to negotiation of meaning and exchange of ideas, probably the teacher had sent implicit messages about what good writing should be. As a result, students' writings made more sense, though some errors were still here and there. Of course, this does not mean that teachers should not correct students' errors under any circumstance; it simply means that when errors impede mutual understanding between the reader and the writer, leading questions and suggestions for improving the written piece may suffice (Bruning and Horn, 2000; Gilbert, 1990; Keh, 1990; Paquette, 2008; Townsend and Fu, 1997).

Table 3: Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the differences in the attitudes towards writing mean scores of students

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
PRE	.47	1	0.47	4.06	.055
GROUP	.81	1	0.81	6.95	*.014
Error	2.91	25	0.16		
Total	4.35	27			

Results related to the second question: *Are there any statistically significant differences (α=.05) in the writing attitudes mean scores of the eight grade EFL students that can be attributed to the type of feedback?*

Analysis of covariance was used to measure the differences between the two groups (the experimental group and the control group) regarding their attitudes towards writing.

Table 4: adjusted mean scores and standard errors of students' attitudes towards writing in English

GROUP	M	SD
Experimental	3.63	.08
Control	3.27	.10

The results of this question are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that there were significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group at (α = .05) regarding their attitudes towards writing. By measuring the adjusted mean scores and standard errors (Table4), it was found that the experimental group had significantly higher mean scores (mean = 3.63, SD = 0.08) than those of the control group (mean = 3.27, SD = 0.10).

These results in Table 4 indicate that using non corrective feedback had a significant effect on learners' written work regardless of source feed back (the teacher or the peer). These findings are consistent with those of

(Hawthorne, 2008; Gau, et al., 2003; Klassen, 2002; Paquette, 2008), but they contradict those of (Ferris & Roberts 2001; Truscott, 1996).

The significantly more positive attitudes towards writing among the non-corrective feedback group were most likely due to the praising comments of students' good points in their written pieces without directly pointing out to their errors. The teacher responded respectfully to each writer regardless of the level of the accuracy of his written piece. This seemed to have fostered confidence among the non corrective feedback group as able writers (Abu-Hilal, 2000; Bruning & Horn, 2000). Another reason for having this result could be due to the exchange of written ideas, comments and suggestions among the non corrective feedback group. Contrary to the climate of competition and individualism among the corrective feedback group, the non-corrective feedback group was encouraged to work collaboratively. Students in the corrective group seemed to have suffered from anxiety during the writing session, feeling that they were taking a test more than communicating. Much of what makes poor writers disappointed is constantly to be reminded that they are lagging behind their peers (Chastain, 1990; Townsend and Fu 1997).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following

recommendations are made:

1- English language teachers incorporate non corrective feedback in their writing classes by providing students with opportunities for to exchange constructive comments and develop as reflective writers.

2- It would be interesting to explore the EFL teachers'

attitudes towards the type of feedback they prefer compared to the type of feedback their students prefer and why.

3- Other researchers may explore the relationship between the type of the writing errors made by students and the type of feedback provided by the teacher.

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