The Role of Corrective Feedback Via Offline and Online Applications on Iranian EFL Learners' Grammatical Accuracy

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Abstract
The present study aimed to compare the grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners who were exposed to online and offline applications in distance learning. The participants who provided data for this study were 30 intermediate EFL female learners. They were divided into control and experimental groups. First of all, they were asked to participate in the grammar test designed in Google Docs form- an online application- and the grammar test designed via the "Learn English Grammar application"- an offline application. Then, students shared the links through the WhatsApp application and the teacher checked their results in terms of grammatical accuracy. In the first phase of the study, the mean difference in their grammar accuracy was not significant. After examining their papers and finding some grammatical errors students faced, the teacher explained the grammatical points in LMS classes for the control group; while the same subjects were assigned to the experimental group to work with via application. The students were also examined via the application and the teacher's direct correction in 8 sessions. After treatment, the same test was held through the application and google docs. The result showed that participants of the offline group outperformed the groups whose errors were corrected by the teacher. Since the former could retake the test and choose the correct answers via application repeatedly, thus they learn better from their mistake as they were compared to the control group who were corrected by the teacher. The findings of this study offer promising implications for material developers, syllabus designers, EFL teachers, and learners.

Keywords: Distance learning; Grammatical accuracy; Off-line learning via application; Online learning via LMS and CALL.

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1. Introduction

Despite the fact that nowadays, the emerged revolution in the field of CALL and MALL changes every aspect of language learning, the roles of available applications, for instance in learning grammar, cannot be ignored. Haudeck has stated that a lot of learners have trouble internalizing language grammar rules; while the grammar rules have been taught in detail (1996, cited in European Commission, 2006). Mahdizadeh et al. (2008) also noted that utilizing a different application that is used for learning and teaching Language through mobile can persuade learners to understand better. To bridge the two mentioned statements, the researcher attempted to study mobile application development as a means of grammar learning. Thus, the present study investigated the role of mobile applications- online and offline applications- on grammar accuracy in distance education. Of course, there are some different studies in the mentioned field and the field of distance learning (Slamet, et al. 2021; Leleka, & Kapitan, 2021), and online learning (Castro, & Tumibay, 2021) but what made this study different from others was the fact that no research has investigated the role of online classes together with online and offline applications on the grammatical accuracy of the Iranian EFL learners in distance learning. Therefore, the following research question and hypothesis are presented to accomplish the aim of this research:

RQ1. Does corrective feedback via the online application and offline application have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical accuracy in distance learning?

H01. Corrective feedback via the online application and offline application has no significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical accuracy in distance learning.

2. Review of Related Literature

The extent to which an EFL learner profits from corrective feedback has been debated at length since Truscott (1996) mounted a case for its abolition. But little attention has been given to testing its efficacy over ten years and the investigated issue has not produced well-designed programs but conflicting ones (Ferris, 2004, 2006). Then, a number of controversies relating to how corrective feedback (CF) has been observed in Language pedagogy and in SLA arouse. These controversies address the

contribution of CF and L2 acquisition, the issue of error correction via the teacher or the learner him/herself, the most effective CF, and the best timing for CF whether delayed or immediate (Elis, 2009). In discussing these controversies, some general guidelines for oral and written CF were identified for conducting CF in language classrooms based on a sociocultural view of L2 acquisition and suggested some guidelines for teacher development (Lyster, 2013). Later, the impact of metacognitive instruction in conjunction with corrective feedback investigates the moderating effects of implicit corrective feedback (output-prompting clarification requests vs. input-providing conversational recasts) (Sato, 2018).

Afterwards, different studies compare different modes of online and offline corrective feedback. Avval, Asadollahfam, and Behin (2022) as the new dimensions of the educational process in Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) appeared. With the massive development of mobile technologies, MALL has become to an increasing extent common. It's important to recognize that MALL isn't a completely autonomous field. According to Hubbard and Stockwell (2013), the two main bodies that MALL depends on them are computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and mobile learning. Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) elucidate that CALL can unlike MALL select different types of manual technologies, mostly connected to the internet, from advanced laptops to mobile phones, smartphones, cameras, MP3 and MP4 players, and digital voice recorders. So, MALL is an embranchment of technology-based learning that consists face to face, online, or distance learning. In point of fact, MALL has the capacity to help students and to augment their education method at the correct point of need and with methods that are congruous by the student's position (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Then, MALL gives EFL students the chance to learn language not just in the class as well as away a class and wherever they are.

A nice English proficiency is due to a nice understanding of grammar. As noted by Canale and Swain (1980), one of the most important ingredients of a language is teaching and learning grammar. Therefore, teachers should use new technology to encourage learners to learn this important skill. Using various kinds of apps on a tablet, iPad and mobile

phone can permit learners to learn English grammar better and create conditions that learners to evaluate their knowledge on special subjects for example grammar points, tenses, prepositions, verbs, etc. (Wang, 2016).

Teaching and learning English grammar based on mobile approach is unique because it allows the English learners to use the learning process in an inclusive and rather personalized method (Azizan & Gunasegaran, 2013). Also, this approach can diversify traditional methods of learning grammar, as it is designed digitally and pliable –in other words, anywhere and anytime. Many studies have been accomplished on the use of mobile phones to better various language skills for example writing, reading, pronunciation and listening (Abbasi & Behjat, 2018; Xodabande, 2017). Other researches specifically centered on grammar and considered the effect of MALL on EFL students 'grammar learning. (Alkhezzi & Al-Dousari, 2016; Clifton, 2006; Wang & Smith, 2013). Clifton (2006) explored the impact of CALL on grammar. The results indicated that the use of e-learning simplified totally grammar learning. In other study, Smith and Wang (2013) inspected the limitations and possibilities of developing English grammar and reading   skills via mobile interface. As an example, AL-Dousari and Alkhezzi (2016) in their study examined the effect of utilizing mobile applications on teaching and learning English in the field of English for specific purposes (ESP). The results displayed that the using mobile phone applications to educate English language skills has an effect on students' understanding of grammatical rules and vocabulary.

In the present article, the researchers are going to study the role of grammatical accuracy via online and offline corrective feedback, ie. Google doc and Grammar learning application.

3. Method
3.1. Participants and setting

The population of the research were chosen from a Language Center in Khorramabad. There were 100 English learners between 16-18 years old in that center. Those whose oxford quick placement test were between 30-49 assigned as intermediate participants of the present study. Their first

language was Persian and they had no experience of living in English language country. The participants of the study were chosen none-randomly among all the English learners of a institute in Khoramabad.

3.2. Grammar Learning Applications

Learn English grammar application is an offline application. You don't need an internet connection to use this application. It's designed in beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. With this application, the students can learn grammar effectively and quickly. This application consists over 2000 grammar exercises and questions across 10 unique activity types, including find the mistake in the text, reordering words and labelling, fill-in-the-blanks, to improve students' grammar skills (Grammar learning app, 2019).

Google docs is an online word processing application that is accessible as a mobile application and web for Android, IOS, Windows, and Mac operating systems. In fact, It is possible to log into Google account and access the document from any device at any time. This adds a level of flexibility to how to work. With Google Docs, you can create and edit text documents right in your web browser and no special software is required.

3.3. Materials and Instruments

The following materials and instruments were used for data collection:

3.3.1. Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT).

In this study, an item contains 60 questions OQPT (UCLES, 2001) of language proficiency was used to determine the participants' skill level and ensure homogeneity of them. This test contained 60 multiple-choice questions covering comprehension, vocabulary and grammar. Fifty questions were selected from 60 questions for the exam and the Participants' responses were obtained on a scale 50 points, so with each correct answer awarded one point. The credibility of this test was measured by Cronbach Alpha and it had the good reliability (0.88).

3.3.2. Pre-test.

For the pre-test a grammar test was selected from the questions of Learn English Grammar application. The current package consists 2000

of multiple questions formed on elementary, intermediate, and advanced level. Twenty questions from the package were extracted for this research. All the questions were selected among those which were provided for intermediate level. Also, these questions were designed for the online group in the Google Docs form. The current questions were submitted to all the participants as pre-test to be answered in 30 minutes. 1 point is considered for every question and the total score is 20. The credibility of this test was measured by Cronbach Alpha and it had the good reliability (0.87). It's worth mentioning that the current test was represented to 5 teachers in the institution and they confirmed the test. So, the validity of the test was obtained.

3.3.3. Post-test.

The present research used the post-test to evaluate the learners 'grammatical accuracy after treatment. For the post-test the same grammar tests were designed for the online group in the Google Docs form and the offline group in the application

3.4. Procedures

To run this research, the researcher cooperated with A private language institute in Khorramabad. In this institution, the participants of the research were chosen none-randomly among all the English learners. Accordingly, an oxford quick placement test was submitted to all the learners to find female intermediate learners. 30 participants were chosen among intermediate learners. After that, these 30 participants were divided to two experimental groups. One group was called online group and another one was used as offline group. Each group had 15 participants. The researcher asked the participants to take part in pre-test to measure the grammatical accuracy of them before treatment. The treatment was hold in nine sessions. One session for placement test, one for pre-test, one for post-test, and six sessions for performing the process of treatment in online and offline platform. In this way, the students in experimental groups were assigned some questions which contain some sentences with special grammar points. The content that teacher tried to work with the participants were past continuous, past perfect, present perfect, past tense questions with how long, usage of in spite of, despite,

although, even though, and though, usage of so and such, wish and if only, participle clauses.

Then, the teacher tried to use some examples to explain grammar and the students should find the relationship between the examples. This way, the students were encouraged to comprehend the grammar completely and discover the desired points. The role of teacher was supposed to monitor the time and conduct the learners to accomplish the class activities rather than teaching deductively. After that, the teacher asked the participants to Participate in the grammar test prepared in Google Docs form and shared through WhatsApp application for language learners. The only difference of these two groups was that, in online group the teacher corrected the exams of the participants in 30 minutes but, in offline group, the teacher checked them after 2 hours. It must be mentioned that participants in the online group had no permission to edit the test questions that were sent. The same test was taken from the offline group through Learn English Grammar application. In this way, the participants of offline group were able to correct their questions if they thought there were some errors in the tests. Then, the post-test was submitted to the participants.

After performing the post-test, there was row data that could not be analyzed. Accordingly, the current row data was submitted to SPSS (version 20) software to get clear description of the learners' performance. At first, normality test was used to see if the learners scores were normally distributed or not. Normality of the data is an assumption for a parametric test.in this study, the normality of the data was achieved.

4. Results

The data gathered in this research was analyzed using statistical analysis of independent-samples t-test. The independent-samples t-test consists two hypothesizes; homogeneity of variances of groups and data normality. The assumption of normality was probed by computing skewness and kurtosis ratios compared to presented mistakes. Since these ratios (Table 1) were within the ranges of +/- 1.96, it was concluded that the present data did not show any significant deviation from a normal one. It should be noted that the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their standard errors are analogous to standardized scores, and the criteria of

+/- 1.96 are the critical value of standardized scores at .05 levels of significance. The homogeneity of variances assumption is reported while discussing about the original results.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics; Testing Normality of Data*

Group		N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Offline	OQPT	15	.761	.564	-.300	1.091
	Pretest	15	.159	.564	-1.104	1.091
	Posttest	15	-.127	.564	-1.599	1.091
Online	OQPT	15	-.251	.564	-.864	1.091
	Pretest	15	-.030	.564	-.656	1.61
	Posttest	15	-.663	.564	.956	1.091

Prior to treatments administration, the oxford quick placement test was presented to both offline and online groups to confirm their homogeneity based on knowledge on general language proficiency. Table 2. displays the offline and online groups' means on the OQPT. It was concluded that they both groups acquired the same mean in oxford quick placement Test.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics; Oxford Quick Placement Test by Groups*

	Group	N	M	St. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
OQPT	Online	15	39.94	5.209	1.302
	Offline	15	39.00	5.586	1.396

As it can be observed in Table 2, the offline group (M = 39.00, SD = 5.58) and online group (M = 39.94, SD = 5.20) acquired near same mean on the OQPT. The results of the pretest of grammatical accuracy by groups shows in Table 3.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics; Pretest of Grammatical Accuracy by Groups*

	Group	N	M	St. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Offline	15	13.50	2.530	.630
	Online	15	13.94	2.265	.566

As it can be observed in Table 3, the offline group (M = 13.50, SD = 2.53) and the online group (M = 13.94, SD = 2.26) acquired near same

mean on the pretest of grammatical accuracy. The means on pretest of grammatical accuracy by Groups shown in figure 1.
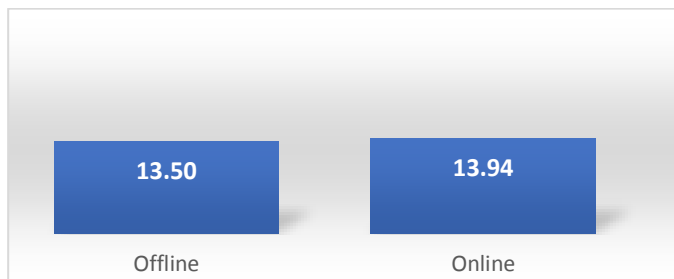

Figure 1. Means on pretest of grammatical accuracy by Groups

The results of the independent-samples t-test; pretest of grammatical accuracy by groups are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Independent-Samples t-test; Pretest of Grammatical Accuracy by Groups Difference*

Levene's Test for Equality					t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig 2-tailed	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	.467	.499	.515	30	.610	.438	.849	-1.296	2.171
Equal variances not assumed			.515	29.640	.610	.438	.849	-1.297	2.172

As it can be observed in Table 4, Since the p-value of .61 is greater (t=.515, df=30, p=.610, Sig. 2-tailed) than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and there is no statistically significant difference between online and offline groups on pre-test of the grammatical accuracy. Table 5 shows the offline and online groups' means on the posttest of grammatical accuracy. The results showed that offline group had a higher mean on posttest of grammar.

Table 5. *Descriptive Statistics; Posttest of Grammatical Accuracy by Groups*

	Group	N	M	SD	St. Error Mean
Posttest	Offline	15	17.94	1.806	.452
	Online	15	15.31	20213	.55

As it can be observed in Table 5, The offline group (M = 17.94, SD = 1.80) had a better mean than the online group (M = 15.31, SD = 2.21) on the posttest of grammatical accuracy. The results of the independent-samples t-test; posttest of grammatical accuracy by groups are shown in table 6.

Table 6. *Independent-Samples t-test; Posttest of Grammatical Accuracy by Groups*

	Levene's Test for Equality		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval Difference		
									Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.088	.763	3.676	30	.001	2.625	.714		1.157	4.083
Equal Variances not assumed			3.676	28.844	.001	2.625	.714		1.154	4.086

As it can be observed from the Table 6, Since the p-value of .001 is less (t=3.676, df=30, p=.001, Sig. 2-tailed) than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and there is statistically significant difference between online and offline groups on posttest of the grammatical accuracy. The means on posttest of grammatical accuracy by Groups shown in figure 2.
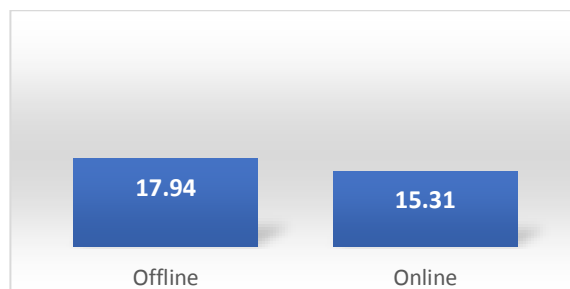
Figure 2. Means on posttest of grammatical accuracy by Groups

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that offline group had a higher mean on posttest of grammar. It's better to say that offline group had better performance in comparison with online group.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Regarding the hypothesis of the study: "Corrective feedback via the online application and offline application has no significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical accuracy in distance learning", the result showed that the grammatical accuracy of the offline users of the "Grammar learning application" was more significant than the online ones due to the fact that self-correction promotes the students' awareness of their errors and make them pay more attention to the subject as they correct the errors themselves.

The findings of this review study are in line with the previous experience with corrective feedback as the majority of the instructors have not received any systematic training on how to spread corrective feedback when using digital media for L2 acquisition (cf., Ene & Upton, 2014, 2018; (Mahapatra, 2021); (Sauro, 2009); (Tang et al., 2021).

The researcher's aim of using distance learning was also to facilitate the process of online and offline learning which could be obtained through mobile phones. After the treatment the results of statistical analysis were represented to answer the research questions and accordingly, to make a conclusion.

In this regard, the results of the current research were consistent with research conducted by Kizgin, et al. (2021). They studied the role of online and offline platforms in the learning process. The results of their

research showed that participants in both online and offline groups had better performance in comparison with their performance in the pre-test and also it was shown that the offline group had better scores because they had a little stress during the administrating their process. In addition, another research proved the idea that offline learning can improve English language skills. In this case, Brown (2008) conducted a study based on online and offline learning and in his research re-evaluated the online and offline as a tool to investigate how ninth-grade students could improve their learning English language. The results showed that those participants who took part in offline learning procedures had better performance in comparison with online classes. He also proposed that the reason that led to current results was the time of learning. he proposed that in the offline platform, students had much more time to work on their projects.

Moreover, the results of this research were consistence with other research that works on the comparison of online and offline classes in the process of grammar learning through task-based learning (Leleka, & Kapitan, 2021). In this study, they proved that offline learning can decrease the stress of the students, and also this phenomenon can improve the performance of participants in the offline group. There are also some studies that have different results in comparison with all about mentioned studies. A study conducted by Ghabeli et al. (2021) to survey the effects of online cooperative teaching through a strategy-oriented method on the skills of listening and speaking of the EFL learners, has shown that online group participants perform better than traditional offline classes. They asserted that the reason was having a better condition to make interaction with the teachers and the other students.

Moreover, there are other studies that refute the results of the current paper. In this study, Fazza and Mahgoub (2021) aimed to recognize the challenges of student involvement in offline and online learning at the Qatar branch campus of Georgetown University in the United States. They proposed that according to the challenges of the offline and online learning process, the students were willing to take part in offline classes, and also, they proposed that the performance of students in an online class was better than that of the offline student. They asserted that offline

classes had more time to practice their project and that's why they acted better.

Funding: This research received no external funding from any agency.
Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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