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Investigating Oral and Written Corrective Feedback on Language Learners' Grammar

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of explicit oral and explicit written corrective feedback on Iranian EFL learners' correction of grammatical structures and their attitudes towards C.F.. For this to achieve, the performance of the learners as a result of two types of feedback, namely, Explicit Oral Feedback (EOF) and Explicit Written Feedback (EWF) in the form of metalinguistic feedback (error code and explanation), was studied. Sixty homogeneous Iranian EFL female high school students were randomly assigned to oral and written experimental groups. Afterwards, a grammar test was administered to see the effect of the two types of corrective feedback. The statistical techniques employed to measure such effects were a series of independent paired samples t-tests to analyze the data. The results indicated a significant impact of EOF and EWF groups on correcting grammatical structures, although the EOF outperformed the EWF group.Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with five randomly selected students from each experimental group to check their attitudes about the corrective feedback they had received. The students considered EOF more beneficial than EWF.Implications of using these kinds of feedback in EFL classes and avenues for further research are discussed.

Keywords: Attitudes; Correction; Grammar; Oral feedback; Written feedback

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INTRODUCTION

The effect of different forms of corrective feedback on second language learners' production has recently attracted the attention of SLA scholars (Le, 2010; Lee &Lyster, 2016; Lyster& Saito, 2010; Zhai& Gao, 2018). Despite the efficacy of communicative language teaching in developing learners' fluency, they still have difficulty in L2 grammar (Richards, 2006). Many significant L2 grammatical errors went unnoticed due to attention to fluency (Ortiz et al., 2020). Thus, if these errors are not appropriately addressed when needed, they will be fossilized and become one of the teachers' significant problems. The corrective feedback can function as a remedy for the lost identity of grammar and structure (Esmaeili&Afshar, 2017). Over the last few years, the role played by corrective feedback in language acquisition has become a highly crucial issue (Karim &Nassaji, 2019; Lee, 2019; Sheen, 2007; Zhang & Ma, 2010). From the interactionists' perspective, corrective feedback (C.F.) supplies the learners with negative evidence for understanding what is unacceptable in the target language (Long, 2006). Proof of this necessity for language acquisition can be observed in content-based and immersion instructional contexts in which students may improve their language fluency. However, they fail to exhibit high-performance levels in some aspects of grammar even after several years of full-day exposure to positive evidence of the target language (Bitchener, 2012). Thus, positive evidence alone is not enough for acquisition; negative evidence supplied by C.F. or grammar instruction is essential for students to control and modify their output. It is generally believed that teachers' corrective feedback assists students in obtaining correct linguistic forms and structures (Ellis, 2009). Consequently, they have been concerned with exploring the most beneficial ways of providing corrective feedback so that learners could develop the accuracy of their written performance.

There has been a burgeoning interest in researching different aspects of correct feedback in the past two decades. For example, Ellis et al.(2006) studied the effects of two kinds of feedback (explicit and implicit) on the acquisition of a grammatical structure in English. The results showed no significant difference between the two groups which received different instructions. However, the explicit feedback group scored higher under metalinguistic feedback. This could be partly due to providing the learners explicitly with the opportunity to diagnose their language errors.

In another study, Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2018) investigated the effects of metalinguistic feedback on the grammatical accuracy of L2 learner's writing ability. The findings revealed that the metalinguistic feedback had a significant effect on the improvement of writing skill. So it can be claimed that learners' writing quality may be due to the output-triggering nature of metalinguistic feedback.

Apart from teacher feedback in the written form, oral feedback also plays a crucial role in improving students' writing. This kind of feedback can be employed to a whole class to

discuss and challenge the learners' errors. It can also be used in person between a teacher and one learner in a one-to-one conference. Previous research (e.g., Cepni, 2016; William, 2003) depicted that oral feedback makes corrective feedback given by a teacher more beneficial since it provides both teachers and learners a chance to clarify their doubts. Furthermore, according to Sobhani and Tayebipour (2015), oral feedback significantly reduced learners' grammatical errors. Therefore, they pointed out that oral feedback should be given with the written one to be more beneficial. In the same vein, Cepni (2016) discovered the efficiency of oral corrective feedback in that it assisted the learners to use past tense and English articles correctly.

Likewise, Tayebipour (2019) investigated the effects of explicit written and oral corrective feedback on Omani students' use and retention of the passive voice. He found that the students benefited more from the explicit written feedback, probably due to the transient nature of the oral corrective feedback. In another study, Erlam et al. (2013) compared two learner groups' performances in two similar writing tasks. The explicit group was given explicit oral feedback in terms of the cognitive-interactionist model. In contrast, the graduated group was given a 'tailored' type of feedback in terms of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural model of feedback provision. The findings showed that learners in the 'graduated group' outperformed the 'explicit group' due to the lack of the degree of person-specific explicitness in the 'explicit group.' On the other hand, the 'graduated group' feedback was more explicit than the 'explicit group' feedback because it was 'tailored' to and matched with every student's specific level of attention, noticing, and awareness.

Finally, Roothooft and Breeze (2016) questioned 395 students and 46 teachers of English as a foreign language what their attitudes and feelings were concerning oral C.F. The results indicated that students showed more inclination to be corrected than their teachers did. Also, students were found to have a much more positive view regarding explicit types of C.F. than their teachers and to experience positive emotions when they are given C.F. However, other researchers (e.g.,Westmacott, 2017) confirmed that indirect C.F. influenced the reduction of grammar errors and also examined the profits of indirect feedback in grammatical accuracy. In an Iranian context, Rezazadeh et al. (2015), as a replication of Shintani and Ellis (2013), studied the impact of direct corrective feedback and metalinguistic explanation on the explicit and implicit acquisition of English definite and indefinite articles of EFL learners. The results indicated the positive effects of the metalinguistic description on explicit and implicit knowledge. Likewise, Almasi and Tabrizi (2016) carried out research to compare direct and indirect teacher feedback effectiveness. Their results also revealed that EFL Iranian learners who were given direct feedback type performed better than the other group who was not given C.F. regarding prepositions, articles, and past tense verb forms.

It has long been assumed by teachers of a second or foreign language and by researchers

investigating in the field of corrective feedback that corrective feedback provision by the teachers assists learners to acquire correct linguistic forms and structures. Consequently, they have been concerned with detecting the most beneficial ways of supplying corrective feedback so that learners boost the accuracy of their written performance.

Although these studies have dealt with different issues regarding corrective feedback, it seems that the effectiveness of explicit oral and written corrective feedback on learners' correction of grammatical structures and their attitudes towards the EOF and EWF have remained underexplored and would be worth doing.

This study is an attempt to address the problems mentioned above and fill the existing gap in the literature by providing answers to the following research questions:

1. *Does the teacher's explicit oral feedback lead to the correction of grammatical structures?*

2. *Does the teacher's explicit written feedback lead to the correction of grammatical structures?*

3. *Which type of teacher's corrective feedback, explicit oral or explicit written, is more significant in grammatical structures' correction?*

4. *What are Iranian high school students' attitudes towards their teachers' explicit oral and written corrective feedback?*

METHODS

Participants

Sixty pre-intermediate Iranian female EFL students selected through convenience sampling from a high school in Dahdasht, Iran, took part in this study. The participants were assigned to two experimental groups, namely explicit oral feedback and explicit written feedback groups. They were majoring in Mathematics and Experimental Science. These students were to begin the first semester of the Iranian school year. All the students at this level prepare to participate in the entrance examination for universities in Iran. Therefore, they were pursuing their studies with high motivation and great enthusiasm. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 18.

Instruments

Four types of instruments were used for the purpose of this study which are explained below.

Placement Test

Before conducting the treatment, the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) version 2 was administered to homogenize the selected participants regarding their general language proficiency in English. It is worth being noted that the test was designed and developed by Oxford University Press, University of Cambridge, and Local Examinations Syndicate (2001), and it can be used for English learners of all levels and ages. OQPT has two parallel

versions, including a computer-based version and a paper-pencil version. It should be pointed out that the paper-pencil version was used in the current study due to its ease of administration and logistical considerations. The test included 60 items in multiple-choice format taking approximately 30 to 45 minutes to be answered; it comprised three parts: reading, grammar, and vocabulary. This test is a standard test, and its reliability and validity were reported by Oxford University Press Web Site (2001) as high to be used as a placement test.

Grammar Test

For this purpose, the researchers chose a book named "Book 1. Grammar (9246 questions) Part A-Birmingham". This test included 40 multiple-choice items, which were equally distributed among four pre-determined target structures, namely articles, simple past, passive voice, and relative pronouns. This grammar test was also employed as a pretest, and a posttest (to assess students' progress in reducing and correcting grammatical errors across time) in the present study. Therefore, both pre- and posttests were the same in terms of the allotted time, item difficulty, and the number of items.The only difference between these tests was that the order of questions and alternatives were changed to wipe out the probable recall of pretest answers. In the pretest, and immediate posttest, the students were required to answer the items. The researcher did not give the students any information about the subsequent tests to ensure that they did not give more attention to the pretest items. A pilot study was conducted to calculate the reliability of the grammar test. Furthermore, The reliability of this grammar test was estimated through KR-21 after a pilot study as (r=.73). This test's content validity was also confirmed by two experts (at the PhD level) in Dehdasht language institutes.

Writing Tasks

After administering the pretest, during the treatment process, the students were required to write on the different assigned topics selected from their English textbook as a classroom assignment and received explicit oral and written corrective feedback in the form of metalinguistic information on the target structures and also other structures. Moreover, four writing tasks regarding various assigned topics were done by the students during treatment for receiving the teacher's explicit oral and written corrective feedback.

Semi-Structured Interview

Two sets of semi-structured interviews regarding explicit oral and written corrective feedback was employed to know about the attitude of the two experimental groups regarding the use of corrective feedback. The author developed interview questions and aimed to understand students' perceptions of O.F.and W.F., which one they had benefitted more from, and why. The interviews were audio-recorded for further analysis. Each interview took about 15 minutes, and the results were analyzed according to the established rules regarding the qualitative data analysis

procedure. For reliability purposes, inter-rater and intra-rater reliability means were utilized. The number of interview questions was seven questions.

Procedure

This study included an experimental design (a pretest and an immediate posttest), which took about nine weeks (18 sessions of the first semester). After getting the participants' consent at the outset of the study, the first aim of the researchers was to select a homogenous group of participants. For this purpose, before the experiment, the proficiency test was administered to 92participants. After getting the participants' scores and analyzing the test's results, 60 students who scored one standard deviation below and above the mean were classified as pre-intermediate students for the present study. Participants were randomly assigned to two experimental groups, i.e., explicit oral and explicit written, and each of the two groups included about 30 participants.

After establishing the homogeneity of the learners in terms of general knowledge of English through the proficiency test in the pretesting phase, another test (grammar test) as a pretest consisting of 40 items was administered to two experimental groups in which students were required to answer the items in 40 minutes.The pretest results were used for comparing them with those of the post-test to see if the learners' progress in reducing and correcting grammatical errors is due to the treatment they went through and for determining the learners' grammatical levels. Finally, learners' pretests were corrected and scored (on a scale ranging from zero to 20), and they were not given back to the participants.

The treatment process in this study was done as follows: In the first session of the treatment, the experimental groups were introduced to further explicit corrective feedback and precisely the metalinguistic C.F. types (error code and explanation). Metalinguistic feedback provided L2 learners with some forms of explicit comment about the nature of the errors they have made (Ellis, 2009). The explicit comment could take two forms. One was the use of error codes that consist of abbreviated labels for different kinds of errors. The labels could be placed over the location of the error in the text or the margin. Then, L2 learners should work out the correction needed from the clue provided (Ellis, 2009).

Accordingly, during the treatment process, experimental groups received explicit oral and written corrective feedback in the form of metalinguistic C.F. separately.The students were supposed to write about a common topic for each session and then submit their essays to their teacher next week. The teacher did not only score the writings as the final product. Instead, He provided different forms of explicit corrective feedback (either explanation or error code) on students' grammatical errors (target structures) and returned the corrected writings to the students in the following session. The error code corrective feedback as an explicit C.F. was provided with correction codes in the margin so that students could understand their

mistakes quickly and corrected them properly (Ellis, 2009). In the explanation C.F. approach, students did not receive any correction symbols or clues. Instead, the teacher numbered errors in text and wrote a grammatical description for each numbered error at the bottom of the text. The students were required to study the comments and applied them in their subsequent writings (Ellis, 2009). In the case of explicit oral feedback, the participants' written sentences were read one by one by the teacher, and oral metalinguistic explanations were given to each student in a face-to-face manner (Ellis, 2009). The only difference between the two types/modes of feedback was that in the latter case, the feedback had to be vocalized and presented orally, while in the former, it had to be written and presented in a written form. The students were advised to review their corrected assignments of the last week and write their new writings. This process continued for eight consecutive sessions (two sessions every week).

One week after the last treatment session, a post-test was administered to the participants to determine the treatment effects. The learners' post-test was also corrected and scored on a scale ranging from zero to 20.

Qualitative phase

Students' attitudes were sought by employing two sets of semi-structured interviews to obtain the attitudes of the participants of the two experimental groups towards the two types of corrective feedback (explicit oral and written corrective feedback in the form of metalinguistic information), respectively. From each group (oral and written experimental groups), five students were selected randomly to reply to the interview questions. The semi-structured interviews were performed in a private room, with only the researchers present, to prevent the students' impact on the others and collect valid and reliable data. As the students mostly were at a low level of English proficiency, the participants' native language (Persian) was utilized for conducting the interviews, and their consent was obtained to record their voices for further analysis and then transcribed. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The interview process regarding the two modes of explicit corrective feedback (oral and written) in the form of metalinguistic information for the participants of two experimental groups took almost 3 hours for two days to accomplish. The participants were arranged to be present for the interview at a specified time. Before the interview session, for better clarification, the researchers provided the interviewees with the necessary instruction. By doing so, the interviewees could easily express their perceptions towards those kinds of feedback. For the reliability of the codes used for the interview analysis, inter-coder reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency between two independent coders of the data (Landis & Koch, 1977). The inter-coder reliability for the initial ten codes of interview data was found to be Kappa = 0.89, which is a significant result and considered to be a substantial agreement between two coders (Viera& Garrett, 2005).

Data Analysis

The one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to assess if the data were normally distributed. Inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. Two paired-samples t-tests and two independent t-tests were used to estimate the significance of O.F. and W.F.'s correction of grammatical structures. Likewise, the qualitative data were analyzed through structural (Saldaña, 2013) and open coding (De Cuir-Gunby, Marshall & McCulloch, 2011) by two independent coders.While the first reading was assisted by open coding to elicit the key concept from the raw data, in the second reading, structural coding was used to match the essential concepts with the R.Q. and reframe them as codes. After two coders compared each other's codes to check consistency, the inconsistent and overlapping codes were negotiated and modified or added as sub-codes to more extensive codes, which after a unanimous decision resulted in the formation of six codes in the final codebook. Then, the codes were classified into two themes, which respond to RQ5 of the present study.

RESULTS

The results are delineated in more detail on each research question posed earlier. Before that,as a prerequisite to running inferential statistics, the normality of the distributions was checked using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality. Moreover, the magnitude of the differences between the means, i.e., the effect size, was calculated using the eta-squared formulas for independent and paired–samples t-tests (Pallant, 2013) and the equality of the variances was measured using Levene's test.

Test of normality

To assess the normality of the distributed data, the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. Table 1 shows the results of the normality of the distributed data for the pretest and posttest of oral and written groups.

Table 1
Normality Test for Distribution of the Data

	Preoral	**prewritten**	**postoral**	**postwritten**
N	30	30	30	30
Kolmogorov-SmirnovZ	.883	.739	.736	.844
Asymp.Sig (2-tailed)	.416	.645	.650	.205

Based on Table 1, the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that the p-value for all the distributions was higher than 0.05 (P>.05), and the data were normally distributed (P= .416, .645, .650, .205> .05).

By comparing the mean scores of the groups in the pretest, the grammatical homogeneity of participants was examined. Tables 2 and 3 show the comparison between the pretest of

explicit oral and written corrective back on the grammatical test.

Table 2
Sample Means and Standard Deviations for the Grammatical Test of Oral and Written Group

	N	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Oral Group	30	14.28	.86
Written Group	30	13.90	1.06

Table 3
Independent Samples T-Test for the Pretests of Explicit Oral and Explicit Written Feedback Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretests	.995	.323	1.53	58	.131

As Table 2 shows, the mean scores of the groups were 14.28 and 13.90, respectively. Since, according to Table 3, the significance level of the Levene's Test was more than 0.05, i.e., 0.323, only the "equal variances assumed" has been reported in the t-test table, and the equal variances not assumed has been omitted. Besides, as shown in Table 3, the p-value equals .131, which is more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be claimed that there was not any significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the grammatical test. Thus, they were homogenous in terms of their grammatical knowledge before the administration of the treatments.

The students' performance in pre- and posttest were analysed through paired and independednt t-tests to determine the effectiveness of different types of feedback that they had received.

Research Question 1

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to answer the first research question. The researchers compared the means scores of the participants on the pre-test and post-test of the explicit oral feedback group to investigate the effectiveness of EOFon the development of correction of grammatical structures. Tables 4 and 5show the results of the comparison between the pretest and posttest in a group that received explicit oral feedback.

Table 4

pretest-Posttest Comparative Data for Explicit Oral Feedback Group

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
pretest	30	14.28	.158
posttest	30	16.41	1.11

Table 5

Paired Sample Test for Explicit Oral Feedback Group

	Paired Differences				
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pretest-posttest	2.13	1.35	8.64	29	.000

The P value for the Levene's test was calculated to be 0.127 which was higher than 0.05 (F=2.4). In Table 4, it was shown that the mean scores for the pretest and posttest of the explicit oral feedback group were 14.28 and 16.41, respectively. As shown in Table 5, the probability of t (8.64) has a $p < .001$, which is lower than the significance level of .05. Also, the effect size between the pretest and posttest of the explicit oral group was calculated to be .72, which is considered appropriate (Pallant, 2013). Thus, it can be concluded that the mean scores of the pretest and posttest were significantly different. In other words, oral explicit corrective feedback under metalinguistic feedback significantly affected students'grammatical structures.

Research Question 2

To address the second research question, a paired samples t-test was also conducted to compare the means scores of the participants on the pretest and posttest of the explicit written feedback group to examine the effectiveness of EWF on the development of correction of grammatical structures. Tables 6 and 7 show the results of the comparison between the pretest and posttest in a group that received explicit written feedback.

Table 6

Pretest-Posttest Comparative Data for Explicit Written Feedback Group

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	30	13.90	1.06
posttest	30	15.36	1.12

Table 7

Paired Sample Test for Explicit Written Feedback Group

	PairedDifferences				
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pretest-posttest	1.46	1.65	4.85	29	.000

The P value for Levene's test was calculated to be 0.832 which was higher than 0.05 (F=.45).Table 6 illustrates that the mean scores for the pretest and posttest explicit written feedback groups were 13.90 and 15.36, respectively. Based on Table 7, the probability of t (4.85) had the P < .001, which is lower than the significance level of .05. The effect size between the pretest and posttest of the explicit written group was calculated to be .44, which is considered appropriate (Pallant, 1992). Hence, it can be concluded that the mean scores of the pretest and posttest were significantly different. On the other hand, written explicit corrective feedback under metalinguistic feedback significantly affected students' correction of grammatical structures.

Research Question 3

To answer the third research question, an independent samples t-test was run to answer the third research question. Then, we compared the participants' mean scores on the post-tests of the explicit oral and explicit written feedback groups to compare the effectiveness of both kinds of feedback on grammatical structures' improvement.

It is shown in Table 8 that the mean scores for the posttest of explicit oral feedback and explicit written feedback groups were 16.41 and 15.36, respectively. Therefore the explicit oral feedback group outperformed the explicit written feedback group in the posttest. Finally, table 9 shows the results of the independent t-test of the posttests for explicit oral feedback and explicit written feedback groups.

Table 8

The Comparative Data of Posttests in Explicit Oral and Explicit Written Feedback Groups

	N	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
posttest	30	16.41	1.11
posttest	30	15.36	1.12

Table 9

Independent Samples T-Test for Explicit Oral and Explicit Written Feedback Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest-posttest	.059	.809	3.63	58	.001

Since, according to Table 9, the significance level of the Levene's Test was more than 0.05, i.e., .809, only the "equal variances assumed" has been reported in the t-test table, and the equal variances not assumed has been omitted. Moreover, As shown in Table 9, the probability of t (3.63) had the P <.001, which is lower than the significance level of .05, and the effect size between the posttest of explicit oral and written feedback groups was calculated to be .18, which is considered as appropriate (Pallant, 2013). It is concluded that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the posttest for the two groups, and the oral feedback group outperformed the written feedback group in terms of the overall performance of the correction of grammatical structures after the treatment.

Research Question 4

To answer the fourth research question, the students' interviews were thematically analyzed and six main themes (valuable, problematic, beneficial, negotiation, problem-solving, meaningful) were extracted from the data pertaining to attitudes about W.F. and O.F. Accordingly, reflections on W.F. were different. Two of the five students appreciated W.F. as a helpful type of feedback; The first student referred to W.F. as beneficial for his writing performance and reduced grammatical errors. It has problem-solving, diagnostic nature and allows examining the feedback at home. Similarly, the second student referred to W.F. as helpful for his writing performance and reducing grammatical errors because it is so clear and understandable and has problem-solving nature, and it can be practised at home in the absence of the teacher. The following extracts are evidence of this:

"Yes, because when I went home, I examined that written feedback, and I saw that this was my problem, so I did not have to make the previous mistake in the next essay, so that is fruitful and very good." (Mina)

"exactly, since when I wanted to write the next writing task, I did not commit those previous grammatical errors. So, I am sure that this writing development is due to W.F., and it is beneficial." (Sahar)

While the other three students were more sceptical and had some criticism on written feedback, they said that W.F. is not clearly understood, meaningless due to its lack of

interaction and negotiation. The following comments evidence it.

"Not much, since when the teacher took notes, sometimes I could not understand. He used some unique signs. They were not very useful." (Negar)

"I think it did not have any effect on me. I think written feedback was not crucial and essential for me. Sometimes, I read the comments, but I just looked at my score and did not think of anything in written feedback. The teacher just gave the paper and gave it back." (Hasti)

"in my opinion, W.F. did not allow me to have a mutual communication with the teacher during the correction of errors, and it did not have a discussable nature. So, it was not so useful." (Fatemeh)

When students were asked to describe oral feedback (O.F.) and some other questions regarding O.F., the students express their attitudes towards O.F. as follows:

"I think it was okay because when I spoke with the teacher face to face, I could easily understand him, and communication became easy, and when teachers love you or want to solve your problems, it can be useful." (Zohreh)

"When my teacher corrected my mistakes orally, in this case, I could see my mistakes, and sometimes I criticized and discussed with the teacher." (Rose)

"I think that with oral feedback, I asked questions, and I learned a lot, and also I could be involved in the process of correction of mistakes. Besides, oral feedback could be remembered easily. I could see my mistakes, and sometimes I criticized and discussed it with the teacher." (Nassim)

"When teachers love you or want to solve your problems, it can be useful. I never used relative pronouns and definite articles in my first writing task, and my sentences were very concise. However, when my teacher gave us corrective feedback orally and talked to us face to face, he could solve everything. After that, I used more long sentences and more grammatical points." (Nilofar)

"After writing the task, we checked our mistakes with our teacher, and he said that 'this is wrong or this is correct,' and after this, I raised my scores. It had a tremendous impact on me. I talked about what I can write here, and he (the teacher) stated that 'you can write this or this way,' and I learned it." (Maryam)

Accordingly, all students mainly showed positive attitudes towards EOF and were unanimous in their view that O.F. is very beneficial since O.F. is meaningful, problem-solving, and involving negotiation and interaction with the teacher. In addition to the profits mentioned earlier, students refer to O.F. as beneficial because it permits the teacher to deal with their personal needs and individual problems in writing.

DISCUSSIONS

The discussion of the above results is elaborated more in conjunction with the findings of the previous studies reviewed.The answer to the first research question shows that explicit oral feedback was effective in correcting grammatical structures. This finding

is in line with Bitchner and Knoch (2008), who found that explicit feedback did help learners clarify the points for themselves by making the presented learning input salient, thereby assisting them in removing any possible doubts or misunderstandings. Likewise, they said that explicit oral feedback did help learners to notice issues containing grammar, assisting them with their hypothesis making and testing. Similarly, the result of the study partly echoes the studies of Lyster et al. (2013), who found out that oral C.F. is significantly more fruitful than no C.F. and also reveals a tendency for learners receiving prompts or explicit oral correction to depict more gains on some measures than students receiving recasts. They suggested that the addition of oral metalinguistic explanations may have been a crucial factor in facilitating increased accuracy.

The results related to the second research question applying t-test provided evidence that the performance of the explicit written group was significantly different in the posttest compared to the pretest. It implies that students of the written feedback group benefited from written metalinguistic feedback concerning reducing grammatical errors. As Rassaei (2015b) pointed out, the provision of pushed feedback (i.e., metalinguistic feedback) improved L2 learners' grammatical accuracy, so it can be claimed that the development of the participants'grammatical accuracy shows the output-triggering nature of metalinguistic feedback. Furthermore, the results of this study are in line with some researchers, such as Shintani and Ellis (2013), who examined the effects of direct and metalinguistic feedback on the development of ESL learners' grammatical knowledge. Their findings indicated that metalinguistic feedback was more helpful than direct feedback in developing L2 development. In the same vein, Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2018) also examined the differential effects of metalinguistic feedback on 52 Iranian L2 learners' grammatical accuracy (English indefinite and definite articles). Their results indicated that metalinguistic feedback significantly led to the learners' grammatical accuracy development in the treatment groups.

Concerning the result related to the third research question, it was revealed that the explicit oral group outperformed the explicit written group in the correction of grammatical structures, because during the oral metalinguistic session the teacher had the chance to interact with the learners. Therefore, the input (teacher's comments) was interactionally modified, and modified input is understood more readily by the students. This notion appears to be well substantiated by Long's (1985) interaction theory which shows that corrective feedback has an essential role in language learning (Bitchener 2012). According to this theory, the interaction between more fluent and less fluent speakers and between teachers and students can boost language learning. Through interaction, input is modified, and modified input is more comprehensible and more available for learning (Long 1985). This result is also supported by Clarke (2003), who pointed out that oral

feedback is a powerful and interactive force for students' development.

According to the qualitative data (participants' attitudes of both oral and written groups) in this study, students view O.F. as more effective since, unlike W.F., it involves negotiation and interaction with the teacher. In this respect, Pirhonen (2016) pointed out that oral feedback was respected slightly more than written feedback by the learners. They thought it was important that oral feedback is motivating, thought-provoking, explicit, and developing. Moreover, Brookhart (2008) mentioned that oral feedback has an essential role in motivating students, whereas Alvira (2016) found that students' use of both written and oral feedback is widely accepted. Finally, the qualitative results are supported by some studies in the literature (e.g.Ewert, 2009; Freedman, 1981; Goldstain& Conrad, 1990) which claimed that students benefit more from O.F. when they actively take part and negotiate with their teacher.

CONCLUSION

According to the study results, explicit written and explicit oral C.F. are both helpful in raising the learners' awareness to reduce grammatical errors and write correctly in their subsequent writing. However, there was a significant difference between the two types of corrective feedback in the posttest showing that explicit oral feedback could be more significant in correcting grammatical structures since, during the oral metalinguistic session, the teacher had the chance to interact with the learners. Therefore, the input (teacher's comments) was interactionally modified, and the modified input was understood more readily by the students. Taken together, the findings of this study can motivate teachers to use a wider variety of error correction techniques, move from implicit toward explicit feedback types, in the form of oral and written, to make their teaching more useful. However, it is plausible that some limitations could have influenced the results obtained. The present study was limited to four grammatical targets, including relative pronouns, passive voice, verb tense, articles, and just explicit feedback. Prospective researchers can investigate the effect of these two types of corrective feedback on other grammatical structures.

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