



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# THE IMPACT OF "RECAST" AS INDIRECT CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON WRITING AND THE LEARNING OUTCOME IN GRADES EIGHT AND NINE

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### ABSTRACT

Giving feedback is a crucial part of the language acquisition process, but there has always been confusion about the kind, timing, and delivery of feedback. While some people are in favour of indirect corrective feedback, others are in favour of direct corrective feedback. Six EFL classes in Grades 8 and 9 were examined in this study, with one serving as the control group and the other as the treatment group. The former group received direct correction from the teacher, who provided the model, while the latter group received indirect correction from the teacher, who pointed out the error's location and frequency. The group was then given their papers back by the teacher, who instructed them to revise them at home and return them for the final grade. This would aid in determining whether putting such a technique into practice enhances language acquisition more than using the models and solutions offered by conventional methods. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study's data collecting and analysis from study participants. There was both primary and secondary analysis. In addition, the results of three writing assessments given at three different times throughout the term were compiled to determine how successful the two forms of feedback were. In order to ensure that the teacher gave each group in the study the necessary corrective comments, the researcher carefully reviewed the compositions of the students. Ultimately, the researcher conducted an interview with the instructor, inquiring about her experiences with the two classes following the experiment's execution.

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## INTRODUCTION

This study examined some types of correction feedback to see whether some types are more effective in language learning than others in Grades 8 and 9 at 2 private schools in Lebanon. For years English language teachers, parents, and officials in the Ministry of Education in Lebanon have expressed concern about their students' abilities to use correct English in speaking and writing. In spite of six years of English instruction, with an average of six hours a week, most high school students graduate with little skill in expressing themselves well in the English writing. Unfortunately, no proper evaluation has been done to see the reasons for that, but some put some blame on the direct correction provided by the teachers, which goes completely unnoticed by the learners (El-Husseini, 1992). Foreign language teachers, concerned with the identification, correction, and prevention of spoken and written errors made by their students, can profit greatly from language acquisition research. Years ago, a significant and positive change occurred in the attitudes of second language learning researchers towards learners' errors. This attitude is summarized by George (1972) when he states that "at the beginning of the sixties the word 'error' was associated with correction, at the end with learning." (p. 112)

In order to determine which correction feedback formats are best for language acquisition in Grades 8 and 9 at two private schools in Lebanon, this study looked at a variety of formats. Concerns over their pupils' proficiency in speaking and writing proper English have been voiced by English language instructors, parents, and Ministry of Education officials in Lebanon for a long time. Despite receiving six years of English education, or an average of six hours per week, the majority of high school graduates struggle to write clearly in the language. From this angle, language learning scholars have developed a growing interest in the examination and interpretation of students' mistakes (Taylor et al., 1975, p. 23). They also suggest that mistakes made by language learners should be recognised and expected as a normal part of the process. The majority of research has focused mostly on trying to comprehend the mechanisms behind second language acquisition. Researchers tried to deduce the most effective strategy to deal with faults to support language development based on students' observed written sentences or spoken utterances (AlBuainain, 2007, Ferris, 2002, Mosbah, 2007). Numerous studies on error analysis have been carried out with adult and paediatric language learners. The researchers provided some theoretical insights and useful recommendations about the causes of mistakes, learner

techniques, and the pedagogical importance of learners' errors (Taylor, 1975, pg.23). They also came to the conclusion that children learning their first language (L1) make similar mistakes to those made by adults learning a foreign language (Dulay and Burt, 1974, p. 82). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research on the most effective error correction techniques for language learners. This results from both the unreliability of data collecting and analysis techniques as well as the limitations of error analysis studies (Tarone, et al., 1976, p. 24). Gradman (1978) puts this concisely when he says, "The tools for analysis are not precise enough for totally accurate characterization of the real linguistic performance of second language learners. Inferences are made which seem reasonable, given the limitations of the tools, but it should be remembered that linguistic research in second language learning remains to a large degree speculative." (p. 96)."

Gradman (1978) puts this concisely when he says, "The tools for analysis are not precise enough for totally accurate characterization of the real linguistic performance of second language learners." Given the limitations of the instruments, valid inferences are drawn, but it's important to keep in mind that linguistic research on second language acquisition is still largely theoretical. Page 96. The feedback-giving process has never worked well. Since it takes time to edit pupils' writing, many teachers find it unpleasant to modify their work. However, the main objective of writing classes is to support students' performance in accurately producing written work in a variety of genres. This need for specific teaching in a number of areas, including idea generation and expression as well as language, punctuation, spelling, structure, and style. Tennant (2001:27) employed two techniques to edit and correct students' writing: (1) writing corrections directly on the paper and highlighting them with a red pen; (2) using a "more effective method" that involved writing long comments that clarified grammar points, raised issues with meaning and logical progression, offered substitute words, and rearrangement of the text. Some teachers will say something like "Oh, no" in response to such a task. Still, since pupils are able to study more effectively, the outcomes are satisfying. For instance, by demonstrating how a grammatical rule applies to a particular situation, students can be reminded of a rule they have previously studied. Thus, it is always beneficial for educators to go beyond straightforward criticism and offer justifications for any suggested modifications (AlBuainain, 2007a). Some research (Ferris, 2002) examined the impacts of correction in general on students' writing abilities, while other studies (Mosbah, 2007) examined the various forms of correction employed in the classroom without examining their impact on students' writing development. The researcher was unable to locate any research in the literature that examined the connection between learners' improvements in writing and the several categories of corrective feedback identified by Allwright (1988). The "recast corrective strategy" is meant to be more successful than the conventional approach to correction, which entails offering models and solutions with or without justification.

**Aim of the Study:** Numerous research on error analysis involving adult and paediatric L2 learners have been carried out. Regarding the causes of errors, learner strategies, and the instructional significance of learners' errors, the researchers offered some theoretical conclusions and helpful recommendations (Dulay and Burt, 1974, p. 82). They also came to the conclusion that children learning their first

language (L1) make similar mistakes to those made by adults learning a foreign language (Dulay and Burt, 1974, p. 8). There is no clear winner when it comes to error treatment studies (Johnson 2004; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Al Buainain, 2007). The aim of the study will be to compare two types of feedback to see whether the "recast" correction strategy is more effective than traditional method of direct corrective feedback and leads to better language learning especially writing.

**Significance of the Study:** In most Lebanese universities and schools, English is taught as a first foreign language. In addition to passing other subjects in school, pupils must pass their English proficiency exam in order to advance to the next grade. Six hours of English teaching are provided to students each week in both intermediate and secondary schools. Students in grades eight and nine are taught English for eight hours each week. Few English teachers are native speakers; the majority are from Lebanon, and they hold a B.A. or MA in the subject from universities in Lebanon. The great majority of educators are hired from throughout Lebanon. The majority of English lessons employ traditional teaching strategies, primarily based on the grammar-translation technique, with occasional additions from audio-lingual exercises. The Ministry of Education, a government organisation in charge of education, has set an English curriculum, which English teachers are obliged to observe and adhere to. The English syllabus, together with books and materials utilised, is intended to meet the aims of the Lebanese curriculum. In Lebanon, empirical research regarding students' performance at different levels of English learning is not only scarce but is well-needed. The implementation and effectiveness or "rewrite" is also to be investigated since it is believed to be the best way of error correction. It is hoped that this study will increase our store of knowledge in this field of corrective feedback and provide useful information for both curriculum designers, teachers and teacher trainers.

**Definition of Error:** It's challenging to define "error" accurately. Indeed, based on their theoretical stances, academics have defined it differently. According to George (1972:2), an "error" is any form that is not desired, particularly one that a particular course designer or teacher does not want. This concept is arbitrary and not predicated on any particular standards by which a speech can be evaluated. Due to this definition, early studies on error treatment, including Allwright (1975), Chaudron (1977), and Fanselow (1977), asserted that teachers' approaches to addressing students' errors were uneven.

**Recast:** Recast is a method of error correction in which a teacher points out where mistakes are occurring without characterising the errors or offering a solution, as is customary. The students are then asked to revise their compositions, making every effort to fix the errors by consulting dictionaries, other people, etc. Following the revising process, the teacher grades the papers.

**Statement of the Problem:** Giving corrective feedback, either direct or indirect, is a crucial component of education. However, some educators bemoan the fact that, even after multiple corrections, certain errors persist in their students' work. This gave the researcher the motivation to investigate and identify the issue. Upon reviewing the students' written work, he discovered that the teacher had made direct

corrections, but the students had failed to notice them because they were more concerned with their grades than with accuracy. Additionally, the teachers expressed dissatisfaction at the amount of time they spent on direct correction, offering solutions and examples, and covering the students' worksheets with red markings and comments. The primary inquiry for the research is:

Does "recast" offer a greater advantage over traditional feedback in terms of enhancing writing proficiency and learning outcomes?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review some of the major studies that are relevant to this subject, starting with the literature on language acquisition in children and adults, moving on to the literature on errors made by learners, and ending with studies that look at different forms of feedback and learning outcomes.

**Learners' errors:** Concentrate on evaluating students' mistakes from many sources; several studies on error analysis have been conducted. Some theoretical and practical conclusions and recommendations on the causes of errors, learners' tactics, and the pedagogical significance of learners' errors emerged from these studies (Allwright and Bailey 1996). The techniques used by students and the reasons behind their mistakes are of interest to error analyzers. In order to achieve this, they assess students' performance in foreign language acquisition and make an effort to analyse mistakes made by students in order to comprehend the methods and approaches used by students as they advance to become proficient in the target language. Error, according to Corder (1974), is a linguistic departure made by students as a result of not understanding the proper rule. Chomsky's (1965) differentiation between competence and performance had an impact on Corder. According to Chomsky, performance entails both language output and understanding, whereas competence is the mental representation of linguistic rules. Corder's definition is objective, in contrast to George's, which was previously mentioned. It entails comparing the speech to specific language norms. Ellis (1986) noted that the utterances that the learner generates are seen as windows through which the internalised rule system can be observed because it is impossible to see directly into the thoughts of learners. 'A failure to communicate' is how Delisle (1982:39) described error. Grammar rules can be broken, but a statement is not always incorrect if it conveys the intended meaning. Early communicative language instruction adopted this viewpoint, which was sparked by sociolinguists like Hymes (1974), who highlighted the significance of usage rules in addition to grammatical rules for successful communication. This prompted educators teaching second languages, such as Widdowson (1978), to draw distinctions between appropriateness and correctness.

Even though a sentence is grammatically correct, it could not make sense in the context. "The use of a linguistic item (e.g., a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language would not use" is the definition of error given by Richards et al. (1985:95). As to the definition provided by Richards et al., errors are recognised based on the grammar rules and use approved by proficient or native language speakers. Therefore, even though the intended meaning of a statement like "My father is a teacher" is obvious

even without the copula, it is incorrect because it demonstrates an insufficient understanding of the language system. Delisle defines error as not occurring in the same sentence. This example demonstrates how hard it is to define mistake in a way that makes sense. The definition of error gets more nuanced when mistakes, slip-ups, and lapses are differentiated. Different classification schemes have been employed by various second language researchers. For example, two general categories of linguistic aberration have been distinguished by Corder (1974), Edge (1989), and James (1998). First of all, errors can be defined as slips of the tongue or pen, which the student can correct if they are pointed out to him. Secondly, there are systematic errors that arise from a lack of knowledge of the rules; these are the responsibility of the teacher to address, but the dilemma of "how to deal with errors?" persists.

The aforementioned definitions make clear that mistake has been examined from a variety of perspectives, and each term represents a particular theoretical stance. Context has been recognised as a crucial component in determining an error in more recent times (Chaudron 1986; Lennon 1991; Allwright and Bailey 1996; and James 1998). When identifying an error, Allwright and Bailey (1996) stress the significance of considering the immediate context of the statement in question, the teacher's and student's intent, and the students' prior knowledge. It is evident that these contextual factors must be taken into account while defining error. As a result, when defining mistake, academics have often used an operational definition. The definitions of error above make clear that the concept has been approached from several perspectives, and each definition represents a particular theoretical stance. Context is a crucial component in defining a mistake, as has been recognised more lately (Chaudron 1986; Lennon 1991; Allwright and Bailey 1996; and James 1998). Allwright and Bailey (1996) stress how crucial it is to consider the teacher's and the student's intent, the students' past knowledge, and the immediate context of the statement in question when identifying an error. It is obvious that while defining error, these contextual factors must be taken into account. As a result, researchers have a tendency to apply an operational definition of error. This suggests that the definition they provide primarily relates to their research. Error is defined as "a form unwanted by the teacher in the given teaching/learning context" in this study. The study examines student compositions to determine what kinds of mistakes seventh-graders make, how teachers handle these mistakes, and how these treatments relate to students' writing success and learning objectives.

**Treatment of Error:** When someone says or writes something incorrectly, people with greater competence typically respond negatively to people with less competence.

Different names for this response have been given depending on the direction and field of the study. Discourse analysis refers to it as repair; psycholinguistics and mother tongue research refer to it as negative evidence; and second language acquisition refers to it as corrective feedback. Despite using diverse names, studies in the field of mistake correction show that academics have a high degree of agreement on what correction actually entails. Enabling the learner to identify the error, fix it, and change the underlying rule that caused it is the ultimate purpose of error correction. It is not simple to change the underlying rule that caused the incorrect response, though, and to make sure that students don't make the same error

twice. Longitudinal studies would be necessary to investigate this. According to James (1998), it can be challenging to draw a clear distinction between remediation and correction because, at times, students will revert from remediation to correction and vice versa until the underlying rule has become engrained in their internalised grammar. According to Kulhavy and Stock (1989), students' primary concerns during error treatment are their grade and the teacher's comments when the emphasis is on offering solutions, models, and explanations. "Most teacher's corrections go unnoticed" in this instance. On the other hand, when we correct according to the "recast" strategy proposed in this study, the learner has to go and read, research, ask, consult and write again correcting errors indicated by the teacher. Is this not the aim of teaching in the first place? Do we not want learners to do all these things?

In this study, treatment refers to teachers' reactions when an error is committed. Unless clearly stated, the terms treatment and correction are used interchangeably in this study. Used in this sense, treatment embraces Allwright's (1988) classification of errors, Long's (1977) notion of feedback and James's (1998) notions of feedback and correction. It is very much the same as used by Fanselow (1977) and is, to a considerable degree, in line with Allwright and Bailey's (1996) notion of treatment. It closely resembles Fanselow's (1977) usage and aligns, at least in part, with Allwright and Bailey's (1996) conceptualization of treatment.

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used in this study's data collecting and analysis from study participants. There will be both primary and secondary analysis. The term "primary data collection method" refers to the practice of exclusively using first-hand sources for data collection. The nicest thing about the laborious, time-consuming, and exhausting process of data collection and gathering is that using both ways yields the most accurate and pertinent information. The scientific method of quantitative research is applied to investigate a phenomenon or to address and address an issue associated with the phenomenon (O'Cathain, Murphy & Nicholl, 2007). This scientific study methodology is being applied with the hope that the outcome will be free from bias and that validity and reliability will have improved. Throughout the quantitative analysis method of scientific research, the validity of the data gathered from the respondents or participants is predicted (O'Cathain, Murphy & Nicholl, 2007). The qualitative analysis and approach is the other scientific research methodology.

This approach differs from the quantitative research approach in that its primary goal is to address the study's research questions. Additionally, it makes an effort to support the investigation of novel and advanced levels of knowledge in a natural setting (Creswell, 2008). The primary support for the quantitative research technique comes from the instrument, which consists of writing examples and teacher feedback gathered over the course of the academic year. This will cover all written assignments, examinations, projects, and any other written work that the teacher grades.

**Data Collection Technique:** In this study, two main types of data gathering methods were employed: secondary research methods and primary research methods. Gathering data related

to the subject's comprehension and the study's central idea constitutes the first step. This is applied to the data that the literature review presents. Secondary data was gathered from other sources in order to complete the literature review. The second most crucial method for gathering data is primary research. The instruments or tools used in this approach will be things like exams, interviews, and observations. It should be mentioned that in order to locate the most recent, correct, relevant, trustworthy, and unbiased data, the researcher must also adopt the most critical and meticulous execution. According to Creswell's (2008) research, fieldwork is frequently used to classify primary research (p. 65). This is as a result of the researcher's approach to the field and data collection, which includes community centres, schools, and organisations.

**Participants of the Study:** The significance of sample selection and the tight criteria used to ensure that the correct individuals are chosen for the research were stressed in the Kumar (2007) study. A sufficient sampling technique helps to save time and money while also guaranteeing the correctness of the information and data gathered. This would facilitate the process of not only identifying the most suitable study volunteers but also enhance the impartiality of the participant selection process.

Students in grades 8 and 9 from two private schools make up the study's population. There are 174 pupils from both schools in the sample size of the participants. They were numbered as S1, S2, S3, ... to avoid using students' real names for ethical purposes. The participants were divided into control group and treatment group, and all students were taught by 3 teachers at both schools. The treatment group classes were taught and correcting using recast, while the control group classes were corrected in a traditional manner (direct corrective feedback).

### Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

**Process of Data Collection:** At the start of the term, the researcher administered the same pretest to both groups and tallied the results. Reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and composition made up this test. Then, at the conclusion of the term, the results of a comparable test were gathered to assess the students' writing progress. To ensure that the instructor used the "recast" strategy when giving feedback to the treatment group and the conventional correction method for the control group, the assignments and projects that the teacher had corrected were also examined.

**Data Analyses:** Following the collection of participant scores at the start and end of the term, an analysis was conducted to determine whether the students in the treatment group outperformed the control group in terms of achievement and writing improvement. The compositions of the students were also examined to determine if the instructor had given the appropriate correction to the appropriate group. It is true that a researcher can apply a range of statistical techniques in their work. This is so that the quantitative data gathered for a certain study can be given meaning thanks to statistical analysis. The data that was gathered was presented using descriptive statistics. The results were provided as frequencies. Every assertion was computed using descriptive statistics.

# RESULTS

This chapter details the findings of the study.

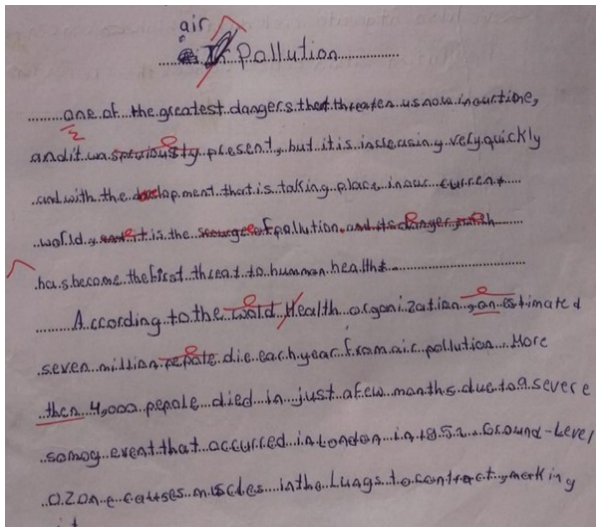


Figure 4.2. A sample of indirect corrective feedback

In this composition on pollution, the teacher corrects the errors indirectly by indicating them only since this student belongs to the experimental group. The teacher has indicated the error of subject/verb agreement (*One of the greatest dangers that threaten ...*). Another example on S/V agreement is (*it present*) instead of *presents*. Another example on S/V agreement is (*and it seriously present...*). The teacher also indicated spelling errors like *development* and *World Health Organisation...* In the figure above, grammatical and spelling errors were corrected directly with remedy provided next to the error. Figure 4.3 is a composition done by a student from the same class. The teacher used the sample to demonstrate to the students the idea of using paragraphs in writing a composition:

**Methods and Types of Feedback:** The teachers in both groups (i.e. experimental and control) implemented the way they were supposed to do; teachers in the control group, provided direct correction (i.e. they corrected the erroneous items by providing the model next to the error), and teachers in the experimental group only underlined the students' errors and asked them to go home and correct them without identifying their type.

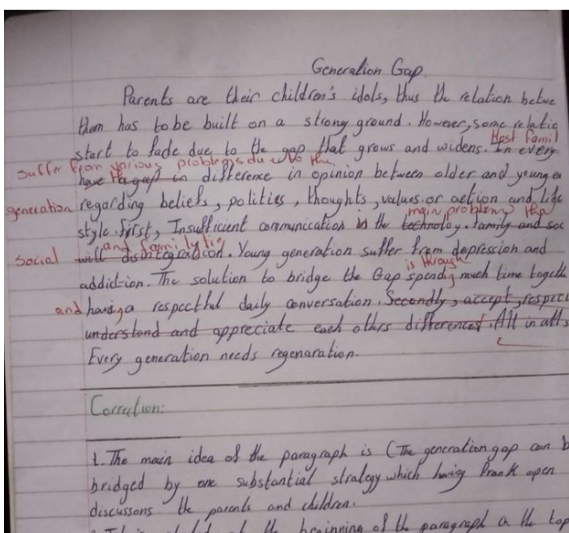
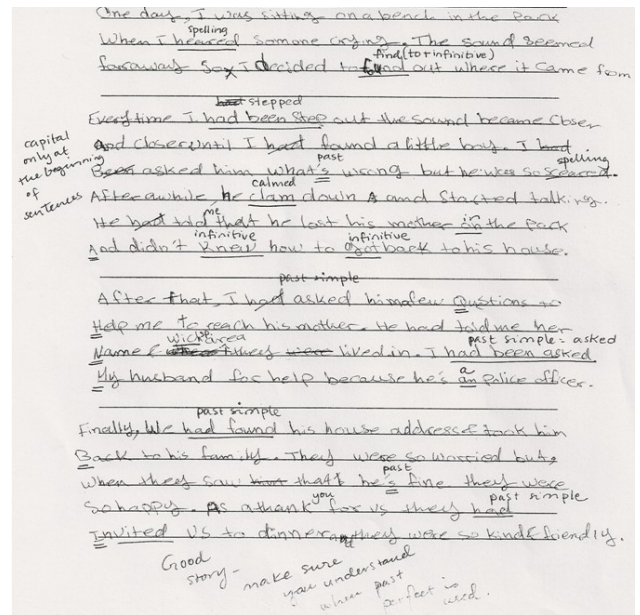


Figure 4.2. Writing Sample with Direct Feedback



Then they were asked to bring them back to the teacher for discussion before s/he gave them the final grade. The teachers in the two groups provided feedback according to the experiment; the teacher who provided direct feedback had class discussion with the students about their errors. Some students really wanted to know their problems; however, others argued with the teacher about the grade. The teachers who provided the students with indirect feedback gave the compositions back to the students to redraft them after consulting the net, parents, friends, books, etc. They corrected the errors, but whenever they could not understand something, they asked the teacher in class. They then submitted the last draft, which was graded. Most students in the experimental group found it interesting to go find solutions to their errors themselves, but a few of them complained and wanted direct correction because they thought it was a shortcut provided by the teacher. This section presents the results of the experimental study on the effects of different types of feedback. First the results of the pretest are outlined, followed by the results of the post-test and a discussion on the effects of feedback on the students' accuracy and complexity in the post-test.

- Column 1: the 4 classes in the treatment group
- Column 2: The pretest class scores mean
- Column 3: The posttest class scores mean
- Column 3: The difference between the means of both school tests
- Column 4: The 3 classes in the control group
- Column 5: The pretest class scores mean
- Column 6: The posttest class scores mean
- Column 7: The difference between the means of both tests

Now let us check the means of the classes in the 2 groups; in the treatment group, the mean for class 9A is 19.5, for class 8A is 21.5, for class 8B is 22.8 and for class 8C is 20.3. On the other hand, and in the control group, the mean was as follows: mean for 9A is 19.5, for 9B is 20.5 and for 8A is 19.7. The descriptive statistics in the pre-test and post-test are presented in table 4.4. We can see that the means of the two groups in the pre-test are not significantly different; the mean of the pre – tests for the control group (A) is 11.9 and for the experimental group (B) is 12.9 with the difference of "1" only.



**Table 4.3. The mean of the pre and post test scores and the difference between them on the school test**

T (B)	Pretest mean	Posttest mean	Diff	C (A)	Pretest mean	Posttest mean	Diff
9 A	19.5	23	3.5	9A	19.4	18.8	-0.57
8A	18.6	18.7	5.05	9B	18.9	20	1.08
8B	19.5	23	3.5	8A	16.6	16.4	-0.2
8C	19.3	22.3	3.02				

However, in the post test the difference is considerable; the mean for the control group (A) is 14.1 and for the experimental group (B) is 18.1 with the difference of "4". This again proves that the implementation of the treatment for group B was beneficial and led to the increase of the scores for the group. This supports the results of the translation test where the directions are the same.

**Table 4.4. Pre-test and Post-test Results for Groups A and B**

Group	Mean pretests	Mean post tests	Difference	S.D.
A	11.9	14.1	2.2	0.5
B	12.9	18.1	5.2	0.5
Difference	1	4	3	

Having presented the results of the pre-test, we see that the students' mean scores are similar. The results show that there is no significant difference between groups at the start of the treatment. Thus, we should not attribute any improvement noticed in the post-test to initial differences between groups before the experiment.

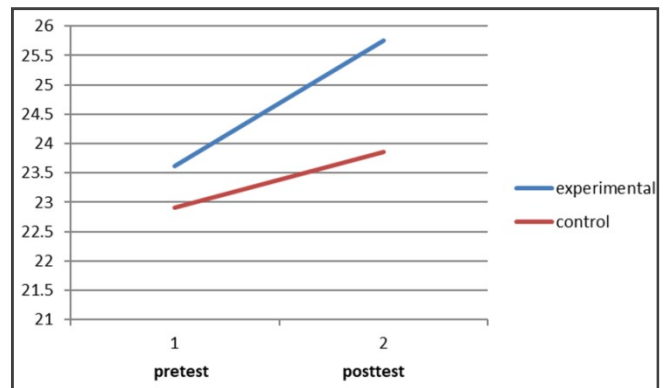
**Post-test Results for Groups A and B:** The results show that the mean of the control group in both schools of the pretest was 25.9 where the average of the post test was 35.1, which means that there was considerable improvement in that group which included 92 students (1.00). The standard deviation of the experimental group (A) of the schools was 0.5. Results also show that the mean of improvement for the experimental group was 4.7 with SD = 0.5. This proves that this group improved considerably. The results of the control group (B) on the other hand, show that the mean of improvement was 1.55 for all the students with SD = 0.5. These results support the claim that indirect correction had better results with the experimental group than direct correction with the control group. Table 4.5 shows the overall results of both groups:

**Table 4.5. Mean of improvement of control and experimental groups**

Groups	Mean of improvement	SD
A (experimental)	4.7	0.5
B (control)	1.55	0.5

Table 4.5 shows that despite the fact that control group had traditional direct feedback, it still improved slightly with 1.55 as mean of improvement, while the experimental group's mean of improvement is 4.7. Of course, traditional teaching and feedback is not useless, and this improvement could be due to the teaching methodology which was the same for both groups. The results of the school tests support those of the translation test. The mean of improvement for the experimental group, however, improved much more than the control group. Mean = 4.7. This means that despite the fact that the teaching methodology was the same for both groups, the experimental group improved more than the control group, and this can be attributable only to the indirect feedback provided by the teacher to the experimental group. Figure 5.1 displays the difference in means of improvement of both groups.

The difference in the means of improvement and the standard deviation indicate that the scores of students in both groups are close to each other. The teachers of both groups are treating all learners (weak and strong) the same. This means that most students were too close to the  $\bar{x}$  although there are a few students who are  $\nu$  weak and others who are  $\nu$  strong; for instance, S18 in Grade 9A in the treatment group had a score of 3.5 over 35 in the pretest and S14 in the same group had a score of 22.75 over 35 on the same test. See Appendix XXXXX for details of grades.

**Figure 4.1. Shows the trends of the pretests and posttests of both groups and the direction of the mean of improvement on the translation test**

The presence of significant difference between the experimental and control groups is interesting, and there are a number of possible explanations. Firstly, it may be that feedback, of whatever type, does indeed have some effect on the accuracy and complexity of students' writing. This goes in line with previous research that found such an effect for feedback on students' writing (e.g. Bitchener and Knoch, 2009a; Chandler, 2003). Bitchener and Knoch (2009a) investigated the effect of three types of feedback (direct correction of errors, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct correction of error and meta-linguistic explanation; direct correction of errors only). These types of feedback were given to three experimental groups. Yet, the focus of the research was only on two functional uses of the English article system (the indefinite article 'a' and the definite article 'the'), while this study's scope is broader as it focuses on general accuracy, specific accuracy and grammatical and lexical complexity. It is also important to mention that Bitchener and Knoch (2009a) did not use a control group but only three experimental groups, which, according to Truscott (1996, 1999, 2007), does not answer the question of whether there is difference between giving feedback or no feedback as this question can only be answered by comparing the results of students who received feedback to the results of students who did not receive feedback. Turning to other studies which found an effect for feedback on writing (e.g. Chandler, 2003), we can also note a number of differences. For example, Chandler (2003) found that direct correction was "best for producing accurate revision" while simple underlining was best for students' learning and benefit (p.

267). That study had one experimental group and one control group with a total of 31 students. This study, however, differs from Chandler (2003) in the experiment design. The current study used two groups, one experimental and one control. The experimental group received one type of indirect feedback and the control group received direct feedback. By contrast, Chandler (2003) gave two types of feedback to the experimental group and the control group as well which might raise the question of whether the experimental group differed from the control group. Chandler (2003) asked students in the experimental group to re-draft their writing after receiving feedback, while students in the control group received the same feedback given to the experimental group but did not have to re-draft their writing. In the current study, the students of the experimental groups were asked to re-draft their writing and the control group did not have to hand in a second draft. In this case, it seems that Chandler's (2003) study was supposed to test the influence of re-drafting on students' writing instead of the influence of feedback on students' writing. A further crucial point is that Chandler (2003) gave the experimental and the control groups frequent practice in the genre of writing they were tested on, "describing events, people, and places" (p. 272), and students were allowed to use the items they practiced in their assignments. In the current study, however, students were exposed to a variety of genres during the teaching, and the pre-, post- and delayed post-tests were based on topics different from what students learned in class because the researcher did not want students to write compositions based on previously practiced topics. It is possible, therefore, that the differences in the results between this study and other studies stem from the differences in the research design (*see Chapter 2 for more discussion on the difference between this study and other similar studies*).

## CONCLUSION

The data and the analysis (*ANOVA*) show that there is significant effect of feedback, especially indirect feedback, on the students' development. This suggests that the students benefited from the feedback they received and that the benefit they made was significant. Analyzing individual students' writing during revision (i.e. after the pre-test and before the post-test) showed improvement in specific accuracy (mainly in the use of tenses) although this may be an indication that feedback, especially indirect feedback, is important in the teaching process. The results also suggest that the success of feedback could be negatively or positively influenced by factors such as students' proficiency level of English and the length of the experiment. The findings of the quasi-experimental study are not consistent with the findings of some previous research (e.g. Ashwell, 2000; Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Truscott and Hsu, 2008) in that written corrective feedback did not show effect on students' writing. The findings are also not consistent with studies that found no difference between different types of feedback (e.g. Lalande, 1982; Semke, 1984; Robb et al., 1986). However, there are studies which do show that written corrective feedback has a positive effect on the accuracy of students' written work (e.g. Bitcheher et al., 2005; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, 2008). In section 2.3.3.2, the reasons for these contrasting findings were discussed, which include different research methodologies and different student samples.

Based on the research findings, a number of theoretical and practical issues arise regarding L2 feedback and the teaching of L2 writing at Lebanese schools. The teaching of L2 writing is not effective and there is a lack of awareness of L2 writing methodologies. In addition, students have weaknesses in language skills and writing in particular. These are deeply-rooted in Lebanese schools, and universities in Lebanon complain about the students' level of English when they admit them. This may be attributable mainly to the school administrations' attitude about languages. During entrance exams to any school whether private or public the students are told to pass scientific subjects and they will admit them even if they fail languages. The learner, in this case, does not give any importance to languages in his studies and focuses on scientific subjects only.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below focus on the situation at Lebanese schools in terms of entrance exams, teaching of L2 writing, giving feedback and students' motivation. These recommendations are made to school administration, Ministry of Education and teacher trainers. First, when giving new students entrance exams, the administration of all schools should give importance to languages the same way they give it to science and Math. Students should never be told that they would be admitted even they fail languages. This creates permanent negative attitudes towards languages.

## CONCLUSION

This study has answered some questions on the effect of teacher corrective feedback on students' general accuracy, specific accuracy and complexity and resulted in a number of implications and recommendations that could be taken into consideration. It aimed to contribute to the literature of corrective feedback and to find solutions for improving the feedback practice and L2 writing teaching at the Lebanese schools. Although this study has accomplished its aim, the debate on the effectiveness of corrective feedback and its types will be ongoing as further research is required to address the many unanswered."

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## APPENDIX

## Subject Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you try to learn or use English outside of school?

 Yes       No

2. Are you interested in learning English?

 I am highly interested. I am moderately interested. I am not interested.

Kindly rate the following questions to the extent you agree or disagree where 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= No Opinion, 4= Disagree and 5= Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
Item No.	A.Ways learners perceive error treatment	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	EFL teacher's corrections of students' errors must focus on developing the meaning of the foreign language.					
2	EFL teacher's corrections of students' errors must focus only on the accuracy of English (i.e. grammar, spelling and syntax).					
3	EFL teacher's corrections of students' errors must focus only on the fluency.					
4	Correction of students' errors is seen as a natural part of the learning process					
5	Correcting all learners' errors out of context can lead to effective learning of English.					
6	EFL teachers must minimize their attempt to correct students' errors.					
7	Traditional way of correction leads to good learning					
8	"Rewrite" correction method leads to good learning and improves writing					
9	I care about the grade I get on my compositions					
10	I care about my errors and do my best to correct them					

## The Translation Tests

These would be given according to learners' proficiency after that is determined with the help of the teachers concerned.

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