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The Impact of Positive Peer Feedback on Second Language Writing Accuracy

Olumlu Akran Geribildiriminin İkinci Dilde Yazma Doğruluğu Üzerindeki Etkisi

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Abstract: The current study aimed to compare the effects of direct focused peer feedback vs. direct focused teacher feedback types on writing accuracy of Turkish EFL students with regard to tense uptake. For this purpose, 58 students within the age range of 18 to 21 were selected from foreign language school in Agri, Turkey to take part in the current study on 2019. After homogenizing the participants using the Nelson English language test, the classes were randomly set as experimental groups. Before starting the treatment in direct focused peer feedback groups and direct focused teacher feedback groups, in order to compare the performance of the participants at the beginning of the study with their performance at the end, participants of all groups took a writing pretest. In direct focused teacher feedback group, the learners were asked to write their essays on a piece of paper out of class and hand them to the teacher in the class every session. The teacher collected the writings, provided direct focused feedback on grammatical errors with regard to verb tenses, and gave them back to the learners while in the other group the teacher modeled how to give feedback and divided the students into subgroups of 6 students. In each subgroup, the students were supposed to write their essays on a piece of paper out of class. Then, students were expected to read, provide direct focused feedback, and give them back to the owners the following session. After giving the post-test to the participants, the data were analyzed. The comparison of pre and post-test results indicated that direct focused peer corrective feedback had a significant effect on learners' writing accuracy. Furthermore, the findings of the study showed that the direct focused teacher corrective feedback also had a significant effect on improving learners' writing accuracy during the treatment period. Further investigation of the results clarified that direct focused peer corrective feedback had a greater improving effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy in comparison to direct focused teacher corrective feedback.

Structured Abstract: Regarding the four skills in English language learning i.e. reading, listening, speaking and writing, according to Alias and Hussin (2002), the most difficult thing to do in language learning is probably producing a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing. Accuracy in writing is the most important factor of evaluating students since in many educational settings, teaching writing is examination-oriented (Pincas, 1982). Accordingly, one of language teachers' main concerns in their profession is finding an appropriate way to help their learners produce accurate writings and a suitable way to deal with their errors.

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Regarding the errors, Ferris (2004) proposes providing corrective feedback as one of highly recommended techniques to deal with the accuracy problem of writers. However, there is a problem in using corrective feedback that Sheen (2007) poses as unawareness of most teachers of the effects of different types of feedbacks; furthermore, whether teachers should give feedback on second language students' grammatical errors or whether the feedback should be given by the teacher or the peers to be the most effective are the topics which are highly controversial in the field of language teaching. Hence, the present study tackled to investigate the effect of implementing two different kinds of direct focused feedback types namely, direct focused peer feedback and direct focused teacher feedback on EFL learners' writing accuracy in Turkey, 2019. In the present study, the following research questions were included:

1. Does direct focused peer feedback have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?
2. Does direct focused teacher feedback have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?
3. Are there any significant differences between effects of direct focused peer feedback and direct focused teacher feedback on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?

Regarding the first research question of this study, the results manifested that there was a critical difference among performance of the participant from pre to post-test. That is, the comparison of pre- and post-test results indicated that direct focused peer corrective feedback had a significant effect on learners' writing accuracy. The findings of the present study considering second research question revealed that the direct focused teacher corrective feedback also had a significant effect on improving learners' writing accuracy during the treatment period. The question remained that which of the aforementioned feedback types outperformed the other. The results of the study concerning the third research question clarified that direct focused peer corrective feedback had a greater improving effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy in comparison to direct focused teacher corrective feedback.

The outcomes of this research approved the necessity of claim posed by Schmidt's (1995) noticing hypothesis which refers to the noticing as the linguistic equivalent of attention. He considers noticing as a cognitive activity that is used by language learners when they consciously focus on a linguistic structure in the input. Accordingly, corrective feedback can be considered as a cognitive focusing device for learners' attention helping them to notice the gap between their own output and the target language input.

The findings of this study can also be justified by Swain's (1985) modified output hypothesis. According to her hypothesis learners' production provides opportunities for corrective feedback since she believes that learners do not gain high-level grammatical competence since they do not receive negative evidence and as a result they do not pay attention to the form. Consequently, learners receiving corrective feedback on their output helps them notice their errors and try to practice or correct themselves.

Furthermore, the findings of the study concerning the outperformance of peer corrective feedback over the teacher can be well supported by the claims of a number of researchers (Chaudron, 1984; Arndt, 1992; Villamil, & Guerrero De, 1996) who believe that peer feedback is more effective than teacher feedback. They claim that peer feedback is more informative and constructive than teacher feedback since it is based on learners' developmental level and learners' interest. They also argue that peer feedback increases the awareness of audiences and assists them to see the egocentrism in their writing.

The findings of the present study are consistent with a number of studies such as Gitsaki and Althobaiti (2010), Rahimi (2010), Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2011), Eslami (2014) and Vahdani Sanavi and Nemati (2014). The results of this study revealed that feedback is effective in improving learners' writing which are in line with the one carried out by Vickers (2001) which explored the effect of corrective feedback in second language writing comparing learner output to input in increasing the accuracy of grammatical form in L2 writing. Based on the findings of their study, it was revealed that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on both the posttest and the delayed post-test. Similarly, the results of this study agrees with the Rahimi and Asadi (2014) investigating the effects of different types of feedback (direct, indirect, and content) on EFL learners' writing accuracy and overall writing quality. Based on the findings of which it was revealed that all types had a significant effect in improvement of writing accuracy.

Key words: EFL, feedback, direct focused peer corrective feedback, direct focused teacher corrective feedback, writing accuracy

Öz: Bu çalışmada, doğrudan odaklı akran geribildiriminin doğrudan odaklanmış öğretmen geribildirim türlerinin Türk EFL öğrencilerinin yazma doğruluğu üzerindeki etkilerini gergin kavrama açısından karşılaştırması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla, 16-21 yaş aralığındaki 58 öğrenci, mevcut araştırmaya katılmak üzere 2019 yılında Ağrı'daki yabancı diller Yüksekokulundan seçilmiştir. Katılımcıları Nelson İngilizce dil testi ile homojenize ettikten sonra, sınıflar rastgele deney grupları olarak belirlendi. Doğrudan odaklı akran geribildirim grupları ve doğrudan odaklı öğretmen geribildirim gruplarında işlem başlamadan önce, katılımcıların çalışmanın başındaki performansları ile sondaki performanslarını karşılaştırmak için tüm grup katılımcılarına yazma ön testi uygulandı. Doğrudan odaklanmış öğretmen geribildirim grubunda, öğrencilerden denemelerini sınıf dışındaki bir kağıt parçasına yazmaları ve bunları her oturumda sınıftaki öğretmene vermeleri istenmiştir. Yazıları toplandıktan sonra, fiil zamanlarına ilişkin gramer hatalarına doğrudan odaklanmış geri bildirim sağlandı ve öğrencilere geri verildi, diğer grupta nasıl geri bildirim verileceği modellendi ve öğrenciler 6 kişilik alt gruplara ayrıldı. Her alt grupta, öğrencilerin denemelerini sınıf dışında bir kağıda yazmaları gerekiyordu. Daha sonra, öğrencilerden okumaları, doğrudan odaklanmış geribildirim vermeleri ve bir sonraki oturumu sahiplerine geri vermeleri beklendi. Katılımcılara son test verildikten sonra veriler analiz edildi. Test öncesi ve sonrası sonuçların karşılaştırılması, doğrudan odaklı akran düzeltici geri bildiriminin öğrencilerin yazma doğruluğu üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, araştırmanın bulguları, doğrudan odaklı öğretmen düzeltici geri bildiriminin de tedavi süresince öğrencilerin yazma doğruluğunu artırmada önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuçların daha fazla araştırılması, doğrudan odaklı akran düzeltici geri bildiriminin, doğrudan odaklı öğretmen düzeltici geri bildirimine kıyasla EFL öğrenenlerinin yazma doğruluğu üzerinde daha büyük bir iyileştirme etkisi olduğunu açıklığa kavuşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Geribildirim, EFL, doğrudan odaklı akran düzeltici geri bildirim, doğrudan odaklı öğretmen düzeltici geribildirim, yazma doğruluğu

1. Introduction

Learning English and specially learning to write well in English has always been of utmost importance and has gained precise attention in recent times. As Pincas (1982) states since English has become a global language, English learning and the ability to write well in English in different settings and for different purposes has turned into a crucial issue in language education programs. Most of language learners including Turkish EFL learners face serious problems in English writing all over the world because the ability to write in English requires the learners to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge and also to be familiar with the organization of English language sentences and text governing rules and principals to a desirable extent. Rouhi and Samiei (2010) assert that English writing has almost been ignored or neglected in English as a foreign language learning despite all the efforts and investment devoted to other aspects of English teaching.

In the field of second language writing research there has been much lively discussion with regard to the role of writing in our global community. In today's information society, writing has become an essential tool for people of all professions; it has been considered a major accomplishment to be able to express one's thoughts in written form, something which once considered the domain of the elite and well-educated. The ability to write effectively allows individuals from different cultures and backgrounds to communicate (Weigle, 2008). Within this communicative framework of language teaching, as Olshtain (2001) puts it, the skill of writing enjoys special status; it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers. Weigle (2008) further goes on and adds that writing not only plays a vital role in conveying information, but it is also important in transforming knowledge to create new knowledge. Chastain (1988) also considers writing as a basic communication skill and a unique asset in the

process of learning a second language; both these aspects of writing are important and can serve to reinforce the other. As a result, writing can be considered as an act of communication, which demands an interactive process taking place between the writer and the reader through the text (Olshtain, 2001).

However, producing a coherent, fluent, and accurate piece of writing is a demanding task for a language learner, particularly an EFL learner who is going to study in a language that is not his/her own, as Nunan (2001) puts it. He further goes on and adds that until the mid-1970s, pedagogy was dominated by form-focused techniques and writing as a subservient skill supported the development of oral language. With the discovery of 'process' approaches which were becoming popular in the first language classroom in the mid-1970s the concentration was on creation of the text, rather than the 'product'. Nunan (2001) also maintains that "in a process approach teachers focus less on a perfect final product than on the development of successive drafts of a text. Here the focus, in the first instance, is on quantity rather than quality, and writers are encouraged to get their ideas onto papers without worrying too much about formal correctness in the initial stages. They then share their work with others, getting feedback on their ideas and how they are expressed, before revising" (p.272).

1.1. Types of Corrective Feedbacks

"Feedback has long been regarded as essential for the development of second language (L2) writing skills, both for its potential for learning and for student motivation" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 83). Brannon (2006) states that written corrective feedback is the most commonly used form of feedback that students receive on their written work and "it can be a powerful tool for helping students to move forward in their learning" (p. 84). Two most common methods to deal with performance failures and grammatical errors on students' written works according to Lee (2004) are direct and indirect corrective feedback. In general, when teacher writes the correct form on the student's paper, s/he is providing direct corrective feedback and when teacher marks the place of the error by underlining, highlighting or circling on the paper without correcting it, s/he is providing indirect corrective feedback (Lalande, 1982).

Guenette (2007) claims that direct feedback is better to be used for some types of errors than indirect feedback. For instance, if students are not instructed about irregular past forms and they write I waked up in the morning instead of I woke up in the morning, providing the direct feedback with explanation of the unknown concept is more useful than indirect feedback. On the other hand, if the same error is made by a student who is familiar with irregular past forms, indirect feedback is more appropriate.

Indirect feedback can be provided by coding or uncoding the errors. "Uncoded feedback implies situations when the teacher circles errors, underlines errors or puts a tally in the margin to offer learners a chance to diagnose and correct errors" (Lee, 2004, pp 126-127).

1.2. Feedback in ESL/EFL Writing

Many scholars in the field of ESL/EFL language teaching refer to the central role of corrective feedback in teaching writing. Kulhavy (1977) claims that learners' achievement will increase as they understand which parts of their texts need to be corrected and improved. Feedback is a useful factor in raising learners' understanding of rhetorical, informational, and linguistic expectations of the reader (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994). As noted by Cardelle and Corno (1981), feedback on students' writings will lead to better and effective learning since as learners receive more feedback for their performances, they understand which aspects of their writings need modification. Carless (2006) asserts that feedback can help learners focus their attention on the purpose of writing by modifying their thinking or behavior toward their work. Ashwell (2000) and Lamberg (1980)

conclude that as learners' focus on their writing mistakes, the doors of improving their writings open which, in turn, leads to accuracy in both form and content of writing.

With the shift of attention to communicative language teaching, the emphasis on learner-centered instruction, peer negotiation and strategy-based instruction also raised. This phenomenon led to the change in the role of the teacher in the classroom. In writing classrooms, CLT mainly focuses on process writing rather than product writing. It encourages students to build their own ideas, offer their own feedback, collaborate and brainstorm with other students in the process of writing. Accordingly, the teacher cannot be the dominant authority in the classroom, rather s/he should be a facilitator not a director (Brown, 2001).

Writing teachers should be a good model for the students by helping them gain invaluable insight into the writing process. The teacher can compose a sentence or write a piece of essay in front of the students for several times in order to assist students in the process of selecting structures and vocabulary, planning, writing, revising and editing the final draft (Freeman, 1996).

Writing teachers should also play the role of a coach by supporting students, establishing common goals and activities, building trust, maintaining a friendly relationship, encouraging risk taking and treating mistakes as learning. In the role of assessor, writing teachers should check each student's writing to find out their strengths and weaknesses. By assessing the quality of students' writing, the teacher will be able to guide instruction in the appropriate way (Rickards & Cheek, 1999).

As a planner, the writing teachers must be knowledgeable about the requirements, which provide the foundation for the writing curriculum. Moreover, they should base their plans on students' needs based on the results of assessment. They should modify their instructions to meet the needs of students. By assisting students in the process of developing thinking habits as students mature in their writing abilities, the writing teachers play the role of a consultant (Anderson, 2000).

Keh (2003) and Hedgcock and Leftkowitz (1996) categorize the role of a writing teacher in providing written feedback for EFL/ESL students into four parts: 1) a reader or respondent, 2) a writing teacher or guide, 3) a grammarian, and 4) an evaluator or judge.

1) In the first one, the teacher plays the role of a reader or respondent interacting with the writers. The teacher responds to the content and provides some comments usually in the form of a positive feedback on the content of the essay such as "I agree with you" without giving any suggestions or corrections.

2) In the second one, the teacher still plays the role of a reader who does not provide any corrections with a difference that the teacher shows his/her concern about the illogical ideas in students' essays. The teacher asks for clarification which indicates that something is wrong. Afterwards, the teacher directs students' attention toward strategies for revision or provides some examples as a guide himself/herself.

3) In the third one, the teacher provides some comments on erroneous parts of the essays and corrects the students' grammatical mistakes. S/he may also provide some grammatical explanations about the correctness or suitability of some forms in order to help students improve their writing essays.

4) In the last one, the teacher takes the role of an evaluator or judge. S/he evaluates the quality of students' writing as an end product of a writing process and grades students' writing based on their evaluation.

1.3. The Nature of Teacher Feedback versus Peer Feedback

One of the major areas in the research on teacher feedback in second or foreign language is related to the error correction or corrective feedback and its effects on students' writing accuracy. Corrective feedback is a type of feedback which is mainly used to inform learners about their errors and help them in error correction process (Dempsey, Driscoll, & Swindell, 1993). Teachers can give corrective feedback through various responses they provide on students' errors. Responses from teachers to students' error are categorized by Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) into three forms or strategies. In the first strategy or form the teacher indicates that an error has been committed. In the second one, the teacher provides the correct form of the target language for the students, and in the last one the teacher provides a type of metalinguistic information about the nature of the error.

There are several contextual variables that need to be taken into account by teachers when they provide corrective feedback on students' writings. These variables are categorized by Evans, Hartshorn, McCollum, and Wolfersberger (2010) into three contextual variables namely learner variables, situational variables, and methodological variables.

Whatever learners bring to the learning experience that might influence their learning is called learner variables. Variables such as students' first language (L1), learning style, values and beliefs, culture and nationality, socioeconomic background, motivation and future goals, and etc, can be considered among learner variables (Evans et al., 2010). Guénette (2007) emphasizes the importance of learner variables, especially motivation when providing writing corrective feedback. She asserts providing suitable feedback which is given at the right time and at the right context is the key factor for students to correct their errors and mistakes successfully since it inspires learners to attend to the provided feedback and apply it to their writings. Nevertheless, any type of corrective feedback for which learners are not motivated is doomed to fail and will not result in any improvement in their writing accuracy (Guénette, 2007).

Situational variables refer to everything that can form the context of learning (Evans et al., 2010). Variables such as the teacher, the learning atmosphere, or the physical environment are considered among situational variables. Evans et al. (2010) claim that in spite of the minor effects of the situational variables on learning in some situations, they may also have great influence that may exceed the potential effects of learners and instructional methodology variables. For instance, in a situation where learners are highly motivated and instructional methodology is effective due to the existence of unfavorable situational variable such as too much noise which causes distraction, the learning process can be impeded.

Another type of contextual variable which is referred to as methodological variables or instructional methodologies "consist of the features of the specific design of instruction and include what is taught and how it is taught" (Evans et al., 2010, p. 450). Sufficient practice, appropriate sequencing of instructional material, effective pacing, and repetition are among the methodological variables. Evans et al. (2010) believe that teacher feedback will be useless if an instructional methodology lacks such factors. Furthermore, the learning will be hindered if the amount of feedback is very overwhelming since students may have problems in processing the information or learning from the feedback provided during the instruction. Consequently, it seems apparent that due to the significance of contextual variables, when providing corrective feedback for the students, teachers must take into account the above mentioned variables.

More traditionally, feedback was provided only by the teacher through paper medium. That is, teacher corrected the writing papers of learners by using red pen. Conventionally, however, feedback is provided not only by the teacher, but also by the learners too. In other words, learners comment on other learners' essays as well. The favorable effects of peer feedback have been documented by a number of researchers (Chaudron, 1984; Arndt, 1992; Villamil, & Guerrero De, 1996) who believe that peer feedback is more effective than teacher feedback. They claim that peer

feedback is more informative and constructive than teacher feedback since it is based on learners' developmental level and learners' interest. In addition, peer feedback increases the awareness of audiences and assists them to see the egocentrism in their writing. Generally speaking, the goal of the peer feedback, according to Kelly (2000) is promoting interaction among students in order to assist them to improve the quality of written assignments. Wooley (2007) maintains that "Robust peer review systems for student writing now offer solutions to many of the problems that have impeded peer review activities in the past" (p. 4).

Liu and Hansen (2002) claim that in spite of having many advantages, peer feedback is constrained due to some reasons that must be taken in to account by the teacher in providing both paper-based and electronic peer feedback. First of all, the students' level of English proficiency determines whether the student have the capability to offer and comprehend peer feedback or not. Therefore, the students must be selected from roughly the same range of language proficiency. Second reason is related to the students' cultural and social backgrounds since they can affect students' classroom behaviors and the amount of participation in peer discussions; accordingly, the teacher must try to motivate learners to participate in the process of providing peer feedback without taking into account each other's' cultural or social backgrounds.

2. Methodology

The experimental phase of the present research was based on a pretest–posttest, quasi-experimental design. The design used here lacked a control group for several reasons. First, depriving the learners from a treatment would be a design defect, for which a lot of researchers have reservations and also it is unethical.

Furthermore, according to Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1996) and Mackey and Gass (2005), when participants are randomly assigned to one of the experimental groups, the comparison of groups receiving different treatment provides the same control over alternative explanations as does the comparisons of treated and untreated groups. They claim that instead of comparing a treatment group with a group receiving no treatment, it is better to compare groups receiving different treatments.

Since this study is an effort to find the effects of direct focused peer feedback vs. direct focused teacher feedback types on writing accuracy of Turkish EFL students with regard to tense uptake; hence, direct focused peer feedback vs. direct focused teacher feedback were considered as independent variables, and writing accuracy as the dependent variable.

The initial sample participants of this study consisted of 76 students within the age range of 18-21 studying in two classes of foreign language school in Agri, Turkey, 2019. The participants of classes were given Nelson English language test 200 A as a test of homogeneity adapted from Fowler and Coe (1976). Based on the results of this test 18 students whose scores fell one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean score were considered as outliers and omitted while the rest of the participants (N=58) whose score was within the range participated in this study. They had English course two times a week for about 3 hours. Their level of proficiency was intermediate at the time of research. The sample of students was selected from among those students with similar cultural background and mother tongue.

Consequently, the following instruments: (1) Nelson English language test 200 A, (2) Touchstone book series by McCarthy, McCarten and Sandiford (2018) (3) a pre-test, (4) a post-test were used to collect data for the study.

In the present study, the following research questions and related null-hypotheses were included:

Research questions:

1. Does direct focused peer feedback have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?
2. Does direct focused teacher feedback have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?
3. Are there any significant differences between effects of direct focused peer feedback and direct focused teacher feedback on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses?

Null-hypotheses:

1. Direct focused peer feedback does not have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses.
2. Direct focused teacher feedback does not have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses.
3. There are no significant differences between effects of direct focused peer feedback and direct focused teacher feedback on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses.

2.1. Procedures

The procedures used to collect data were as following:

Two intact classes with total number of 76 students were selected from foreign language school in Agri. Initially, the Nelson English language test was administered to 76 students, before the treatment, to make sure that the participants were homogeneous and had similar proficiency level i.e. intermediate level. After analyzing the data, 18 outliers whose scores fell one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean score were omitted based on their mean scores. Afterwards, the rest of the participants in intact classes (N=58) whose score was within the range and were in a similar proficiency level i.e. intermediate level were randomly assigned into two groups: one direct focused peer feedback groups and one direct focused teacher feedback group.

Before starting the treatment in direct focused peer feedback groups and direct focused teacher feedback groups, in order to compare the performance of the participants at the beginning of the study with their performance at the end, participants of all groups took a writing pretest. In order to prevent the trouble of topical knowledge, the topic of the pretest was chosen from Touchstone book series by McCarthy, et al. (2018) so that students would not experience any difficulty in comprehending the topic and finding appropriate structures and necessary vocabulary for writing their essays.

The treatments in two experimental groups were as following:

a) Direct Focused Peer Feedback Groups

In direct focused peer feedback group, the teacher modeled how to give feedback and divided the students into subgroups of 6 students. In each subgroup, the students were supposed to write their essays on a piece of paper out of class. Then, each session, the teacher made copies of each writing essay and handed them to the members of that subgroup in the class. Students were expected to read, provide direct focused feedback and give them back to the owners the following session. The learners were asked to underline the errors and suggest possible corrections in the feedback sheet. They were asked to provide direct feedback only on grammatical errors with regard to verb tenses. The researchers monitored and guaranteed the process of giving and getting feedback in the class.

b) Direct Focused Teacher Feedback Groups

In direct focused teacher feedback group, the learners were asked to write their essays on a piece of paper out of class and hand them to the teacher in the class every session. The teacher collected the writings, provided direct focused feedback on grammatical errors with regard to verb tenses and gave them back to the learners.

In all groups, participants under study were supposed to write 10 essays within 10 weeks, one essay each week. In all groups, they were asked to read their essays after feedback was provided and try to observe and apply the corrections in their later writings. Immediately after ten weeks, the learners were asked to write an essay in the class as a post-test to check the effect of different types of feedback on their writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses. It is worth mentioning that the teacher of all classes were the same.

3. Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was done using SPSS statistics analysis software version 20. In order to answer first and second research questions and to see whether direct focused peer feedback and direct teacher feedback had any significant effect on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses in each group, the obtained descriptive statistics and two paired samples t-tests were used to analyse the pre-test and post-test scores of each group. Later, addressing the third research question investigating any possible difference in the performance of two groups affected by the feedback type, the researcher utilized an independent samples t-test on the post scores of both groups.

3.1. Results and Findings of the Study

In order to address the research questions of the study, the researcher made use of a number of statistical analyses. The statistical analyses and related tables are presented and discussed in detail in the following subsections.

3.1.1. Statistical Analysis of Pre-test scores of both Groups

As mentioned before, to ensure that no significant difference in terms of writing ability existed between the two groups, participants were asked to write an essay in the class, as a pre-test before starting the experiment. However, before moving to the analysis of the pre-test data, the normality of the scores distribution was checked using a one-sample Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The following table shows the analysis results.

Table 3.1: Checking the Distribution Normality of the Pre-test Scores of the Participants

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Pretest
N		58
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	13.47
	Std. Deviation	2.113
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.139
	Positive	.139
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Negative	-.123
		1.058
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.213

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

In the table above, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic are given. This assesses the normality of the distribution of scores. According to the results ($Z = 1.05$, $P = .21$) a non-significant result ($p > 0.05$) as is observed here which indicates normality for pre-test scores. Having assured the normality of scores distribution; the researchers used an independent samples t-test to check the existence of any difference in the learners' initial writing proficiency before the start of treatment. The results are abridged in Tables 3.2 and 3.3.

Table 3.2: Descriptive Statistics in the Context of Pre-Test for both Experimental Groups

Group Statistics					
feedbacktype		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Direct peer feedback	27	13.93	2.200	.423
	Direct teacher feedback	31	13.06	1.982	.356

The descriptive statistics of the pre-test scores including the mean scores and standard deviation revealed that the mean scores of Direct Peer Feedback and Direct Teacher feedback groups equaled $SD = 2.2$, $M = 13.93$ and $SD = 1.98$, $M = 13.06$ respectively. Comparing the mean scores shows that the performance of groups is slightly different in the pre-test. To check the significance of the difference the results of independent samples t-test are analyzed in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Independent T-test for Comparing the Performance of the both Groups in the Pre-test Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.383	.539	1.569	56	.122	.861	.549	-.239	1.962
	Equal variances not assumed			1.557	52.860	.125	.861	.553	-.248	1.971

According to the statistical analysis in Table 3.3., p value (Sig.) equaled 0.12 which was higher than the significant level of 0.05 indicating that the two groups did not differ significantly in their performance on the writing pre-test indicating that participants in both groups were relatively similar in terms of writing accuracy.

3.1.2. Statistical Analysis of Post-Tests of Two Experimental Groups

After implementing the 10-week training program, all the participants in the two groups were given the writing post-test, similar to the pre-test before starting the training, in the post-test, participants were asked to write an essay in the class after being provided by two types of treatment (either direct focused peer feedback or teacher direct focused feedback) to check the effect of feedbacks on their writing accuracy. Similar to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test carried out on the pre-test scores, the researcher analyzed the distribution normality of the post-test scores in order to determine whether the parametric or non-parametric tests should be applied. The following table shows the analysis results.

Table 3.4. Checking the Distribution Normality of the Post-test Scores of the Participants

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Posttest
N		58
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	16.02
	Std. Deviation	2.402
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.147
	Positive	.147
	Negative	-.117
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.118
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.164

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

The data obtained from the normality test revealed that ($Z = 1.11$, $P = .16$) which is an indicator of a non-significant result at the set alpha level for this study i.e. $p > 0.05$. Accordingly, as it is observed here the post-test scores have got a normal distribution. Having assured the normality of scores distribution; the researchers used two paired samples t-tests to address the first and second research questions and check the existence of any improvement in the learners' writing performance regarding accuracy in the groups from pre-test to post-test. The results are abridged in Tables 3.5 to 3.8.

The first research question dealt with investigating the effect of direct focused peer feedback on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses. Hence, the performances of the participants of the mentioned group in pre-test and post-tests were compared using a paired sample t-test, the results of which are reported in the following tables.

Table 3.5. Descriptive Statistics in the Context of Pre-Test and Post-test for Direct Focused Peer Feedback Group

Paired Samples Statistics				
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Peerpretest	13.93	27	2.200
	Peerposttest	16.74	27	2.280
				Std. Error Mean
				.423
				.439

Table 3.5 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of the group from pre-test to post-test. According to the above table the standard deviation and mean scores of pre and posttests were $SD = 2.2$, $M = 13.93$ and $SD = 2.28$, $M = 16.74$ respectively. Comparing the mean scores, an improvement from pre-test to post- test is observed. To ensure whether the difference in the mean scores is statistically significant, the scores are compared using a paired samples t-test. The results are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6. Paired Samples T-test for Comparing the Performance of the Direct Peer Feedback group from Pre-test to Post-test

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Peerpretest – Peerposttest	-2.815	1.415	.272	-3.375	-2.255	-10.335	26	.000

Data obtained from t-test in Table 3.6, $p = .00$ reveals that the increase in the mean scores of participants between pre and post-test was statistically significant indicating that using the direct peer feedback had a positive effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses. Hence, it was concluded that the first null hypothesis of the study stating that direct focused peer feedback does not have any significant effects on Turkish EFL students' writing accuracy with regard to verb tenses was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted.

In the same vein, to check the existence of any significant difference among the performances of the participants of direct focused teacher feedback group from pre to post test, another paired sample t-test was run on the data, the results of which are abridged in tables 4.7 and 4.8. Table 4.7 shows the descriptive statistics of scores in the pre and posttest.

Table 3.7. Descriptive Statistics in the Context of Pre-Test and Post-test for Direct Focused Teacher Feedback Group

		Paired Samples Statistics			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Teacherpretest	13.06	31	1.982	.356
	Teacherposttest	15.39	31	2.362	.424

A brief look at Table 3.7 and according to the mean score and standard deviation of the pre-test i.e. $M = 13.064$, $SD = 1.98$ and post-test i.e., $M = 15.39$, $SD = 2.36$, it becomes evident that there was an increase in the mean score of the students' performance from pre to post test in direct focused teacher feedback group. As previously done for the direct focused peer feedback group, a paired sample t-test was run on the pre-test and post-test scores of direct focused teacher feedback group to check whether the observed difference in the mean scores was statistically significant or not. The results are summarized in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8. Paired Samples T-test for Comparing the Performance of the Direct Teacher Feedback group from Pre-test to Post-test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Teacherpretest – Teacherposttest	-2.323	1.400	.251	-2.836	-1.809	-9.239	30	.000

According to the significance level obtained from the above table i.e. $p = .00$ shows that the increase in the mean scores of participants between pre and post-test is statistically significant indicating that the second null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis stating that using direct focused teacher feedback has a statistically significant effect on EFL Turkish students' writing accuracy with regard to the verb tenses was accepted. Moreover, in order to address the third research question and compare the performances of both groups and accordingly find the most effective feedback technique an independent sample t-test was carried out.

Table 3.9. Descriptive Statistics in the Context of Post-Test for Direct Focused Peer Feedback and

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	.097	.756	2.212	56	.031	1.354	.612	.128	2.579
	Equal variances not assumed			2.218	55.383	.031	1.354	.610	.131	2.577

Direct Focused Teacher Feedback Groups

		Group Statistics			
	Feedbacktype	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	Direct peer feedback	27	16.74	2.280	.439
	Direct teacher feedback	31	15.39	2.362	.424

Table 3.10. Independent T-test for Comparing the Performance of the both Groups in the Post-test

Having compared the performances of both groups and finding out that there was meaningful difference between the participants' performances from pre to post-test and also taking the fact that there was no difference between the groups in pre-test, the researcher used posttest scores to compare the effect of these two kinds of feedback type on writing accuracy of Turkish EFL students. Based on the data depicted on table 3.9, the mean scores of peer and teacher groups equaled $SD = 1.28$, $M = 16.74$ and $SD = 2.36$, $M = 15.39$ respectively. It seems that the mean scores of the groups are different; hence, an independent samples t-test was used to determine the significance of the difference and the outperforming group.

The significance level for the independent test comparing the groups to find out the outperforming one was $p = .03$ which implies the statistical significance of the difference in mean

scores. Accordingly, the researcher investigated the mean difference and concluded that the direct focused peer feedback techniques was able to improve the learners' writing accuracy better than the direct focused teacher feedback type.

4. Conclusion

In this study, two of the corrective feedback types namely, direct focused peer and direct focused teacher feedback for the students' writing accuracy were looked into, and the focus was on the tense uptake.

First of all, it worth re-mentioning that learning English and specially learning to write well in English has always been of utmost importance and has gained precise attention in recent times. In this vein, Pincas (1982) as discussed earlier, states that since English has become a global language, English learning and the ability to write well in English in different settings and for different purposes has turned into a crucial issue in language education programs. However, it shouldn't be neglected that as Rouhi and Samiei (2010) assert most of language learners face serious problems in English writing all over the world because the ability to write in English requires the learners to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge and also to be familiar with the organization of English language sentences and text governing rules and principals to a desirable extent. One of highly recommended techniques according to Ferris (2004) to deal the accuracy problem of writers is providing corrective feedback. The question here is whether the correction or the corrective feedback should be given by the teacher or the peers to be more effective. Hence, the current study corrected learners' accuracy problems in one of the groups by teacher and in the other by the other students i.e. peers, then compared the variances between the pretest and post-test as well as the performances of the groups in the posttest.

The current study moved further to compare the sources of given feedback which here are the teacher and peers. Based on the done analyses, it was manifested that both types of corrective feedback caused a critical difference among performances of the participants from pre to post test. That is, the comparison of pre and posttest results indicated that direct focused peer and teacher corrective feedback types both had significant effects on learners' writing accuracy. Therefore, it can be concluded that using direct focused feedback to deal with the learners' errors is of important role which can decrease the incidence of further errors and problems and also enhance their learning and proficiency. Furthermore, the findings of the present study considering the difference between the results of these two feedback types clarified that direct focused peer corrective feedback had a greater improving effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy in comparison to direct focused teacher corrective feedback. What's more is that the conventional forms of feedbacks mainly and merely focusing on the teacher of these classes are expiring as EFL writers prefer to get feedback from peers rather than the single classroom teacher.

4.1. Pedagogical Implications

Findings of the present study can have pedagogical implications not only for teachers and learners but also for language experts. The results of this study are important not only for the improvement of students' writing skill, but also for bringing a new approach to the concept of learner correction. The following pedagogical implications might be taken from the current study:

- One of the remarkable contributions of the present study is helping language teachers to find the most effective types of corrective feedback to deal with learners' written errors.
- Using the results of this study teachers and syllabus designers can pave the way for using peer corrective feedback in EFL writing classes dealing with grammatical accuracy errors at intermediate proficiency level.

□ Using direct focused peer corrective feedback may contribute to reduction of learners' stress and make them feel much more motivated during the process of providing feedback through interacting with their peers without having the teacher at the center of all tasks.

□ The other implication of the findings of this study contributes to students in demonstrating the importance of employing feedbacks. If the students become aware of their errors whether through their teachers' or their classmates' assistance, their future learning may be enriched if they maintain their strengths and improve their weaknesses.

4.2. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

As far as the nature of human being is concerned, nothing can ever be perfect. Hence, this study has certainly got its own limitations as well. Thus, the findings of the study need to be interpreted after the due considerations of this drawback. Catering for these limitations may also provide some applicable insights to conduct further studies.

A major limitation of the study is that since the participants at intermediate level came from different classes of the same school and consequently had to take the tests under different environments, environmental extraneous variables might have affected their performance. Among the environmental variables that could possibly contribute to differential performance of the participants in this study are "noise, temperature, adequacy of light, time of day, and seating arrangements" (Brown, 1995, p. 30).

An important delimitation which can be associated with this study is that its results may not be generalizable to other skills and components of language. This study sought to determine the effect of peer and teachers direct focused feedback on writing; hence, the results may not be generalizable to other language skills and components like grammar speaking, etc. Another delimitation of the study was related to gender variable. Since it was hard to take into account both female and male school students, participants' gender was not considered as a variable in the study.

4.3. Suggestions for Further Studies

- The participants of the present study were selected from among intermediate level excluding the elementary and advanced levels. Hence the current study can be done by other researchers with learners of elementary and advanced levels.

- The study was carried out at a language school. The same study can be carried in schools where the students lack the required proficiency despite the amount of material covered during an educational year.

- In order to achieve more generalizable and stronger results the same research can be done with larger population.

- The study was carried out on English studying students, conducting the study on different language learners than English or on even different fields of study can lead to different and more interesting findings.

- The total period of treatment was 10 weeks for current study. Hence, by making the treatment duration longer or shorter, different results may come up.

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