

**Iran University of Science and Technology**

**Department of Foreign Languages**

**Master's Thesis**

**A Comparative Study of the Impact of Oral Conferencing and  
Consciousness-raising Instruction on Iranian EFL Learners'**

**Writing Performance**

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In the Name of God,

the Beneficent,

the Merciful.

## **Abstract**

The present study was an attempt to investigate the effect of written corrective feedback provided through oral conferencing with that of instruction in writing given through consciousness-raising tasks on the writing performance of 61 Iranian intermediate-level EFL learners studying at Kish Institute of Science and Technology. To this end, the participants under study were assigned to two experimental groups: the oral conferencing group and the consciousness-raising group. Prior to the treatment, to ensure homogeneity among the study participants, both groups took a proficiency test, i.e., the Preliminary English Test. In the course of the study, the participants in the oral conferencing group were required to write one-paragraph expository compositions on five topics. Subsequently, they received feedback on their compositions through oral conferencing. The participants in the consciousness-raising group, on the other hand, were taught writing through consciousness-raising tasks, accompanied by the strategy of input enhancement. To compare the writing performances of the two groups, a pretest prior to the treatment and a posttest after the treatment were administered, both in the form of in-class one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words within a time limit of 20 minutes. While both groups made statistically significant improvements, in terms of

writing, data analysis indicated the superiority of oral conferencing in comparison with consciousness-raising regarding the participants' writing performance on the posttest.

**Dedicated to**

**My Dear Parents**

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Background and Purpose**

The provision of written corrective feedback on FL/SL writing has long been regarded as an integral component of writing programs. This is specifically true now with the predominance of the process approach to writing that requires second party feedback, usually the instructor, on student drafts (Williams, 2002). In process-based, learner-centered classrooms, it is seen as an important developmental tool moving learners through multiple drafts towards the capability for effective self-expression (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). This aspect of language writing courses seems to be of utmost importance, since Kroll (1998) describes it as one of the two components most central to any writing course, with the other being the assignments the students are given.

Considering the effectiveness of various types of written corrective feedback, Vyatkina (2011) notes that “research on written corrective feedback in second language teaching has generated few recommendations on best practices, yet language teachers and program directors are faced with the day-to-day necessity of making decisions about how to respond to

student writing” (p. 63). Vyatkina further comments that the effectiveness of written corrective feedback has been investigated in contemporary scholarship from different perspectives. Among these perspectives are the following: impact on short-term learner revisions (e.g., Fathman & Walley, 1990; Ferris, 2006); long-term effects (e.g., Ferris, 2006; Polio, Fleck & Leder, 1998); and comparison of written corrective feedback versus no feedback as well as of different feedback types (e.g., Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2006; Lalande, 1982).

Although the body of research on the effectiveness of written corrective feedback is constantly growing, the findings of these studies appear to be inconclusive. Consequently, the pedagogical implications, derived from such studies, are conspicuously disparate, ranging from claims that corrective feedback is ineffectual, unhelpful, or even harmful to student writing development (Sheppard, 1992; Truscott, 1996; Vengadasamy, 2002) to vehement contentions supporting the provision of written corrective feedback (Binglan & Jia, 2010; Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2004; Maftoon & Zareh Ekbatani, 2005). Despite these controversial findings, there is general agreement that written corrective feedback effectiveness is highly context-dependent and that specific feedback types may be beneficial to the

development of particular L2 learner writing skills in specific educational contexts (Ellis, 2009a).

Despite the fact that the related literature abounds with various feedback types on FL/SL writing, modification in writing pedagogy and insights gained from research studies have fundamentally transformed feedback practices, with teacher written comments now often combined with feedback types in accordance with the principles of alternative assessment, which stand in sharp contrast to the practices of conventional assessment methods; writing workshops, peer feedback, computer-mediated feedback, portfolio assessment, and oral conferencing are but some of the alternative feedback types which are utilized in today's writing classes.

Among these alternative types of feedback is oral conferencing (OC) which takes place in writing conferences where there is potential for meaning and interpretation to be constantly negotiated (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). According to Bayraktar (2009), this feedback type is, in the literature and by various researchers, identified and “referred to as response sessions, assisted performance, face-to-face interaction, one-to-one teaching, conversation about the student's paper, and meaningful contact” (p. 11). Much of the literature on advice for effective writing centers on practices

and the ways that writing conferences may need to be adapted to the L2 context (see Chapter II, p. 27, for a full account).

Concerning the instructional aspect of writing, over the last two decades, many second and foreign language programs have gradually moved away from a strictly product-oriented approach to writing towards writing as a process (Viatkina, 2011). Many ELT researchers encourage teachers to adopt a dialectic approach, combining both process and product (e.g., Nunan, 1988), and “to support writers through multiple drafts by providing feedback and suggesting revisions during the process of writing itself, rather than at the end of it” (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 77).

Regarding instruction and due to the enormity and complexity of language, in general, and writing, in particular, the provision of a comprehensive description of language as a whole is simply not feasible. Given the regularities and discernible patterns residing in English, EFL/ESL teachers can, nevertheless, provide learners with precise guidelines and, more specifically, with tasks which encourage them to reflect on samples of language. These samples should highlight these existing, discernible patterns and regularities so as to help learners reach their own conclusions regarding how language is used (Willis & Willis, 1996).

Tasks of this type are generally referred to as consciousness-raising (CR) and have been a component of language teaching for quite a long time. Ellis (1997, cited in Mohamed, 2004) defines a CR task as

a pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some form and required to perform some operation on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic property or properties of the target language. (p. 160)

Despite the fact that CR tasks, as an alternative type of instruction, seem to have considerable potential for enhancing language learners' abilities in various language skills and components, they have thus far mainly been utilized to improve grammar instruction (e.g., Fotos, 1994; Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Hendricks, 2010; Sugiharto, 2006). Similarly, while both students and teachers consider feedback provided through OC an integral aspect of L2 writing, there is an ongoing debate in the current literature whether this alternative feedback type could serve the intended purpose, i.e., enhancement of the performance of learners in FL/SL writing.

Therefore, this study addressed this research gap by exploiting the untapped potential of these two alternative types of instruction and

corrective feedback, comparing their respective impact on EFL learners' writing performance.

### ***1.1 Statement of the Problem***

The present study aimed at investigating whether there is any statistically significant difference between the writing performance of the participants receiving oral feedback through conferencing and those participants receiving instruction through CR tasks.

### ***1.2 Research Questions***

The research questions formulated for the purpose of this study were as follows:

Q1: Is there any statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving teacher oral feedback through conferencing?

Q2: Is there any statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving instruction through CR tasks?

Q3: Is there any statistically significant difference between the posttest writing scores of the participants receiving feedback through conferencing and those participants receiving instruction through CR tasks?

### ***1.3 Statement of Research Hypotheses***

The present study aimed at investigating the following null hypotheses:

H<sub>0</sub> (1): The pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving teacher oral feedback through conferencing are not significantly different.

H<sub>0</sub> (2): The pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving instruction through CR tasks are not significantly different.

H<sub>0</sub> (3): The posttest writing scores of the participants receiving feedback through conferencing and those participants receiving instruction through CR tasks are not significantly different.

### ***1.4 Significance of the Study***

While both EFL/ESL teachers and learners deem writing an essential component of language and a useful skill to be mastered, there seems to exist an impasse, passing through which is somehow not feasible. In other words, whereas all parties, involved in EFL/ESL acquisition, unanimously

agree upon the paramount significance of writing, not much is either known or has been done to enhance its status. Writing instruction/acquisition is fraught with complexities, the fact of which culminates in its mastery becoming an onerous task. Apparently, a tacit consensus governing ELT lies in the fact that teachers tend to be of the idea that enhancing learners' writing proficiency can potentially be arrived at either through sound instruction or appropriate feedback.

Whereas the previous studies have attempted to shed light on various aspects of writing pedagogy, the research evidence on the effects of error correction on students' writing skills, as well as the impact of instruction on learners' writing achievement, is far from conclusive (Ferris 1995). Further, although a score of studies have aimed at statistically demonstrating the usefulness of feedback and instruction provided through OC and CR tasks, almost no research study exclusively compares the effectiveness of feedback through teacher-student OC sessions with that of instruction through CR tasks on students' achievements in FL/SL writing.

Moreover, with respect to the related literature, past research mainly has compared the effectiveness of OC with some conventional way of giving feedback. In addition, despite the fact that CR tasks could potentially serve to enhance language learning in various areas, they have,

so far, principally been utilized to improve grammar instruction/learning (Fotos, 1994; Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Hendricks, 2010; Sugiharto, 2006).

Taking into consideration the aforementioned points, it seems of utmost importance to conduct a research study which particularly focuses on the comparison of the effectiveness of live teacher-student conferences with that of instruction provided through OC on the achievement of students in writing.

### ***1.5 Definition of Key Terms***

The following are the key terms used throughout this study:

***CR Task:*** A pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some form and required to perform some operation on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic property or properties of the target language (Ellis, 1997).

***Corrective Feedback:*** A fundamental element of a process approach to writing which takes the form of input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision (Keh, 1990).

***Feedback:*** In a broad sense, conceptualized as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding

aspects of one's performance or understanding (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

***Negative Input Enhancement:*** A CR strategy thought to facilitate the transformation of input into intake by highlighting errant forms (Sharwood Smith, 1993).

***OC:*** Oral feedback which takes place in writing conferences where there is potential for meaning and interpretation to be constantly negotiated (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

***Positive Input Enhancement:*** A CR strategy thought to facilitate the transformation of input into intake by highlighting the salience of correct forms in the input (Sharwood Smith, 1993).

***Textual Enhancement:*** A strategy utilized to enhance the perceptual saliency of target structures by highlighting certain features of input that might go unnoticed under normal circumstances, involving the typographical manipulation of such structures through boldfacing, italicizing, underlining, or capitalizing (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004).

## ***1.6 Limitations of the Study***

Several limitations to this study must be noted. First, it should be pointed out that the whole sample of participants included in the study was composed of male EFL learners. Moreover, all these participants varied in

age from 16 to 44. Therefore, neither female nor young EFL learners could be studied. Furthermore, due to logistical considerations, the amount of time allocated to providing the participants in the OC Group with feedback was limited, i.e., 15 to 20 minutes for a group of three or four participants. Similarly, and owing to the same reason, CR Group participants were provided with instruction in writing through CR tasks in fairly short time periods, i.e., 15 to 25 minutes once every three sessions.

### ***1.7 Delimitations of the Study***

A number of delimitations, imposed upon the present study by the researcher, should be mentioned. First and foremost, the study was limited to written production, and hence did not take account of oral production. In order to investigate the effectiveness of live teacher-student conferences with that of instruction provided through CR tasks on the participants' writing performance, the teacher-researcher decided to only study intermediate-level EFL learners. Finally, to enhance the writing performance of the participants, the researcher could only make use of one feedback type, OC, and one instruction type, that is, CR. As such, the impact of other feedback types, as well as other types of instruction, on the participants' writing performance was not studied.

All the aforementioned limitations and delimitations, of which the reader should be cautious, imply the fact that the results cannot be generalized to other dissimilar contexts.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Review of the Related Literature**

In Chapter II, first a concise background on writing instruction is outlined, adopting a historical perspective on the development and progress of this domain of ELT. Following this, the genesis of the very concept of CR is discussed and, reviewing a number of studies conducted in this area, its recent role in writing instruction considered.

Subsequently, a brief background to written corrective feedback is provided, accompanied by a review of a number of studies that seem to be of more prominence in this respect. Finally, it attempts to present background information on the emergence and significance of OC as an alternative to more conventional means of supplying written corrective feedback. In so doing, certain key issues pertaining to the practice of OC are addressed. In the final part, a number of earlier, as well as more recent, studies are presented and their results briefly discussed.

## ***2.1 Writing Instruction Background***

The status of writing within the field of TEFL/TESL has changed considerably during the past 60 years. Richards (2002) believes that

The idea that writing is simply “speech written down” and therefore not worthy of serious attention has been replaced by a much more complex view of the nature of writing with the growth of composition studies and the field of second language writing. (p. 21)

In order for writing teachers to have a better understanding and richer awareness of current attitudes towards and common practices in writing instruction and to know how we have gotten where we are today, it is of paramount importance to historically review the development and progress of this domain of ELT.

Prior to the mid-1960s, teaching writing to native English speakers at the high school and college levels primarily focused on responding in writing to literary texts (Kroll, 1998). Kroll further adds that the model for teaching composition was fairly standard and included the following steps:

- 1) Instructing the students in principles of rhetoric and organization, presented as rules of writing;

- 2) Providing a text for classroom discussion, analysis, and interpretation;
- 3) Requiring a writing assignment, accompanied by an outline, based on the text;
- 4) Reading, commenting on, and criticizing student papers prior to beginning the next assignment in this cycle. (p. 219)

This approach to the instruction of writing was then referred to as the *product approach* since the main concern lied not in the strategies and processes student writers were engaged in during composition but in the completed written product. In other words, writing teachers, following this approach, generally focused their attention on evaluating student essays and tended not to take account of the composing processes involved in writing; this completed essay, however produced, was considered the principal criterion for assigning scores.

In the 1960s, ESL composition teaching in North America, according to Kroll, was dominated by a *controlled composition model* whose origins were in the oral approach promulgated in the 1940s by structural linguists. Kroll further comments that

While the written product was also the focal point of evaluation and concern as in first language writing (L1), the approach for English language learners differed in that the stimulus for second language (L2) student writing was rarely a genuine text, and written tasks were not meant to elicit interpretive commentary on texts. (p. 220)

In other words, whatever writing took place was meant to serve primarily as reinforcement of language rules, and not for example for such purposes as addressing a topic or communicating with an audience, and the writing task was tightly controlled in order to reduce the possibility for error, hence, the term controlled composition.

Similarly what the seventies observed, according to Hyland (2002), was the fact that “learning to write in a second language was mainly seen to involve developing linguistic and lexical knowledge as well as familiarity with the syntactic patterns and cohesive devices that form building blocks of texts” (p. 13). In other words, learning to write involved no more than mere imitation and manipulation of models supplied by the teacher, the process of which was closely connected to learning grammar. Richards (2002) depicts the sequence of activities in this approach as follows:

- 1) Familiarization: learners study grammar and vocabulary, usually through a text.
- 2) Controlled writing: learners manipulate fixed patterns, often from substitution tables;
- 3) Guided writing: learners imitate model texts.
- 4) Free writing: learners use the patterns they have developed to write a letter, paragraph, etc. (p. 21)

Richards also points out that “activities based on controlled composition predominated during the period that sought to prevent errors and develop correct writing habits” (p. 21). Moreover, regarding the controlled composition model, Farhady, Ja’farpur, and Birjandi (1994) note that “typically, a controlled task consists of a written model of some type with directions for conversions or specific language manipulations in rewriting the model” (p. 264). Building from given prompts, building from responses to questions, transforming given sentences, organizing paragraphs, and completing paragraphs exemplified some of the most common kinds of controlled composition activities.

Later, according to Richards (2002), the focus in teaching writing shifted to the *paragraph-pattern approach* with an emphasis

on the use of topic sentences, supporting sentences, and transitions and practice with different functional patterns of narration, description, comparison-contrast and exposition. It was not until then that writing teachers, as well as researchers, came to the conclusion that the ability to write well required more than the mastery of grammar rules and vocabulary items.

In other words, the period observed a shift of focus from mere attention to the structural aspect of writing, mainly addressing intra-sentential relationships, to one attending to both structure and content, addressing inter-sentential, as well as intra-sentential, relationships. The consequence of this shift of focus was an emerging attention, requiring sentences to be cohesive, and the whole text coherent. This era in the teaching and learning of writing was also marked by the rigorous study of model texts. Accordingly, students would study the features of a model text and then write their own paragraphs following the model.

In the 1990s, according to Richards, “the *process approach* introduced a new dimension into the teaching of writing with an emphasis on the writer and the strategies used to produce a piece of writing” (p. 21). When the term first appeared on the scene, it was mainly used in the context of writing pedagogy to contrast the newly emerged classroom ideology with

that espoused by the *product approach*. Writing, in the process approach, is viewed by Silva and Matsuda (2002, cited in Richards, 2002) as “a complex, recursive and creative process that is very similar in its general outlines for first and second language writers: learning to write requires the development of an efficient and effective composing process” (p. 261).

In other words, what the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than through a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without initially going through the stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts (Kroll, 1998). The different stages student writers are meant to go through are labeled *composing processes* by Richards and Schmidt (2010) and are as follows:

- 1) Rehearsing (also known as prewriting) refers to activities in which writers look for a topic or for ideas and language related to a topic before beginning writing.
- 2) Writing (also known as planning, drafting, or composing) refers to activities in which writers note down ideas in rough form.

3) Revising (also known as editing, or postwriting) includes activities in which writers check, revise and rewrite what they have written. (p. 97)

Due to the fact that writing is composed of recurring processes, it should be borne in mind that these stages do not necessarily occur in a linear fashion. In other words, these stages may recur throughout the composing process. As a result, a sound form of process approach to the teaching of writing should have as its aim the encouraging of EFL/ESL learners to go through all these stages, the result of which could be a final, revised draft.

More recently, FL/SL writing pedagogy has witnessed the emergence of a *genre approach*. This approach looks at the ways in which language is used for particular purposes in particular contexts, i.e., the use of different genres of writing. Writing is seen as involving a complex web or relations between writer, reader, and text (Richards, 2002). Bhatia (1993) defines genre as “a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs” (p. 43).

Richards (2002) further comments that “the genre approach seeks to address not only the needs of ESL writers to compose texts for particular readers but also examines how texts actually work” (p. 22). Similarly, Hyland (2002) points out that “contemporary views of L2 writing see writing as involving composing skills and strategies for drafting and revising but also a clear understanding of genre to be able to structure their writing experience according to the demands of particular contexts” (p. 15). Hyland goes on to distinguish three broad approaches to genre, each of which conceptualizes and analyzes genre in a different way. They are as follows:

- 1) A Systemic Functional view: A genre is defined as a staged, goal-oriented social process. This involves the interaction of participants using language in a conventional, step-wise structure.
- 2) An ESP perspective: A genre comprises a class of communicative events linked by shared purposes recognized by the members of a particular community. These purposes are the rationale of the genre, and help to shape the ways it is structured and the choices of content and style it makes available.

3) A New Rhetoric view: This gives less emphasis to the form of discourse and more to the action it is used to accomplish, seeking to establish the connections between genre and repeated situations and to identify the way in which genres are seen as recurrent rhetorical actions. (p. 17)

Taking into account the evolutionary line of development in various approaches to writing instruction, one might expect to observe the existence and practice of the most recently developed approach to the teaching of writing. What close observation of today's writing programs reveals, however, is the coexistence of more than one approach in any one writing program. Indeed, what we find today is that multiple approaches to teaching writing coexist, often presented by outspoken proponents with passionately held beliefs that greatly diverge from equally passionate claims presented by proponents of other camps. In a concluding remark, it should be noted that the practice of writing instruction is fraught with uncertainties, varieties, and at times discrepancies. It, thus, seems necessary for EFL/ESL writing teachers to be equipped with adequate scholarly knowledge about various approaches to writing. This knowledge can help choose methodologies and materials based on principled decisions so as to best suit a given group of EFL/ESL student writers' needs.

## **2.2 CR Instruction**

### **2.2.1 Emergence of CR**

Regarding the history of language teaching/learning, its oldest accompanying component could be claimed to have been the practice of grammar instruction. Schmidt (1993) contends that “the debate concerning whether and how grammar should be taught is as old as the language teaching profession and may never reach any definitive conclusion” (p. 217). What has driven this debate appears to rest on disparate expectations of grammar instruction. In other words, the kind of knowledge ELT theoreticians and practitioners require of EFL/ESL learners to master seems to have been the driving force behind the specific practice of grammar instruction to be corroborated and exercised.

With respect to knowledge types, the concepts *implicit knowledge* and *explicit knowledge* have widely been used in various forms in the literature on language instruction. Explicit knowledge, broadly speaking, denotes a conscious analytic awareness of the formal properties of the target language, whereas implicit knowledge means an intuitive feeling for what is correct and acceptable (Bialystok, 1978, cited in Sharwood Smith, 1981).

Later on, the notions implicit and explicit knowledge were equated with the synonymous terms *unanalyzed* and *analyzed* knowledge. As Bialystok (1982, cited in Brown, 2000) explains while “unanalyzed knowledge is the general term form in which we know most things without being aware of the structure of that knowledge, analyzed knowledge refers to the kind of knowledge of whose structure learners are overtly aware” (p. 183). For example, Brown (2000) points out, “at the unanalyzed extreme of this knowledge dimension, learners have little awareness of language rules, but at the analyzed end, learners can verbalize complex rules governing language” (p. 286).

In a similar, but more recent vein, Ellis (2004, cited in Ellis, 2010) characterizes explicit knowledge as conscious, declarative, accessible only through controlled processing, verbalizable, learnable, and typically employed when learners experience some kind of linguistic problem. Moreover, Ellis believes that implicit knowledge, in contrast, is unconscious, i.e., we are not aware of what we know implicitly. It is further commented that implicit knowledge is “procedural, accessible for automatic processing, not verbalizable, acquirable, i.e., can be internalized implicitly, and typically employed in unproblematic, free-flowing communication” (p. 7).

Concerning this dichotomy of knowledge types, Sharwood Smith (1981) points out that whereas “this binary distinction does serve to highlight generally different kinds of outcome resulting from the process of learning a new language, the ultimate, most highly prized goal of learning, i.e., spontaneous, unreflecting language use, is uncontroversial” (p. 159). Yet, however, what is of considerable controversy in the field of ELT seems to be recognized by the presence of two extreme approaches to the teaching of grammar, each leading to either knowledge type.

At one end of the scale is the zero position for grammar teaching corroborated by Krashen’s (1981) *acquisition hypothesis* which deems the teaching of grammar not only unnecessary but also impossible. Krashen’s *acquisition hypothesis* implies that “L2 grammar would indeed grow as exposure to input in the language increases, with some reservations made about the quality of the input” (McDonough, 2002, p. 66). What this point of view lends support to appears to be represented by such approaches to language teaching/learning as *communicative language teaching* and *task-based language teaching* which attempt to get the learner to perform in a life-like, communicative manner rather than in a strictly formal classroom context of the traditional type. Apparently, what this viewpoint encourages

is the development in language learners of an intuitive, spontaneous, unreflecting understanding of language, i.e., implicit knowledge.

The other end of the scale is marked by the stance which places heavy emphasis on the role of grammar in language learning and which espouses the practice of overt grammar instruction. This second viewpoint towards the practice of grammar teaching is what was once widely supported by the proponents of *grammar-translation method* where, as Celce-Murcia (1991) puts it, “there is little use of the target language for communication and where the primary focus is on grammatical parsing, i.e., the form and inflection of words” (p. 6). What this approach to language teaching results in is an explicit knowledge of the language which enables the learner to, by means of a metalanguage, verbalize complex rules.

Following the same line of argument, Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (1985) note that “if there is one thing taken for granted today in language teaching methodology, it would seem to be that teachers should give pre-eminence to creating an environment in the classroom which approximates to the real-life communicative use of language” (p. 274). They further comment that today teachers are generally encouraged to discard textbooks which draw attention to the grammatical forms of the target language, such attention being excluded seemingly for “its non-naturalistic character, i.e.,

because it is atypical of so-called normal everyday spontaneous language behavior” (p. 274).

Although this binary distinction and the pedagogical inferences derived from it sound to be self-explanatory and justified to be granted, Sharwood Smith (1981) argues that

A closer look at the issues reveals how simplistic such pedagogical inferences are and how dubious the distinction is between two theoretically distinct types of knowledge where no allowance is made for different degrees of explicitness and the possibility of interaction between different types of competence. (p. 159)

Speaking against the zero position, or known as the non-interface position, Sharwood Smith proposes the notion of *interface hypothesis*, according to which “a certain number of structures planned and performed slowly and consciously, i.e., explicit knowledge, can eventually develop into automatized behavior, i.e., implicit knowledge” (p. 166).

In arguing so, Sharwood Smith seems to be delivering a case for what he terms *language consciousness-raising*. In other words, it appears as though Sharwood Smith propounds this very concept so as to reconcile the differences arising as a result of adopting either approach to language

teaching, in general, and grammar instruction, in particular, namely, explicit and implicit teaching of language, and herein lies the rationale for the emergence of language CR instruction.

### **2.2.2 *Definition of CR***

Owing to the fact that CR is a complex and multi-faceted notion to define, it undoubtedly entails taking account of various aspects. Sharwood Smith, supposedly the researcher having first coined the term, points out that

What might be called *language consciousness-raising* in the classroom is sometimes assumed to consist of the pedantic giving and testing of rules and lists of vocabulary items, that is, a complete and unrelenting focus on the formal structure of the TL, the impression being probably the result of what people associate with the grammar-translation method. (p. 160)

It follows that the teaching of grammar rules or any other kind of formal feature of the language could be more, or it could be less, reduced to the commonly used metalinguistic prescriptions of traditional grammars, and in so doing, learners may not necessarily be required to actually produce those given prescriptions themselves. In other words, the act of

providing learners with linguistic rules or prescriptions about the formal features of language could be seen as the extreme endpoint of what is actually a continuum; learners' attention could be drawn, or attracted, to language forms without necessarily engaging them in metalinguistic discussion

Regarding language learning classrooms, the relevant information, provided to the learner through CR instruction, can vary in the degree of elaboration or conciseness with which it is presented, as well as the degree of explicitness or intensity in the way attention is drawn to the relevant regularities. Strictly speaking, the discovery of regularities in the target language whether blindly intuitive or conscious, or coming in between these two extremes, will always be self-discovery. The question, according to Sharwood Smith, is to what extent that discovery is guided by the teacher.

To clearly depict what is meant by language CR, Sharwood Smith presents four basic types of manifestation of CR instruction by means of a hypothetical 10-point scale. Figure 2.1 below presents his suggested model.

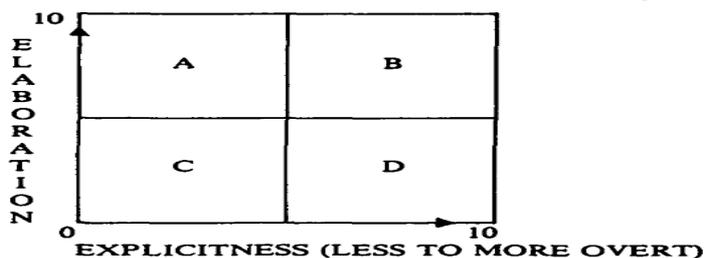


Figure 2.1 CR in language learning (after Sharwood Smith, 1981)

Of the four types, Type D, the most familiar and traditional type, is a completely overt form of CR which may be found in the typical grammar school and which is denoted by fairly concise prescriptions delivered in a metalanguage, seemingly within the reach of the teacher and learner alike. In other words, this is the CR type in which the highly conscious metalinguistic learning of rules and paradigms, much like that associated with grammar-translation methodology, is practiced.

Further, Type C could be defined as the drawing of learners' attention to language forms, or formal properties, through concise, indirect hints which, if practiced well, may give the learner a more profound feeling of self-discovery in that the form, or formal property, is only briefly hinted at, using a number of linguistic or non-linguistic clues. Since this type of CR instruction is recognized by covert attention to language forms and absence of elaboration on the part of the teacher, it may more easily be incorporated into some naturalistic exercise where relatively simple regularities in the

language could be drawn attention to and practiced, such as emphasizing the third person singular endings in the present simple tense.

In the third place comes Type B, namely, elaborated and explicit guidance. Accordingly, Landa (1976, cited in Sharwood Smith, 1981) developed an obvious procedure whereby an explanation is broken down algorithmically into easy, highly structured stages giving the relevant differentiations and decisions that the learner must make in order to use the particular pattern or rule correctly. This fully elaborate and explicit manner of presentation can, however, be done in a manner with lesser degrees of explicitness, that is to say, more covertly as Type A.

To sum up, Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (1985) define CR as “the deliberate attempt to draw the learner’s attention specifically to the formal properties of the target language” (p. 274). CR instruction can, nevertheless, be done with varying degrees of explicitness, as well as differing degrees of elaboration. The extreme types are Type B and Type C. In the former, the teacher spends most time, uses most space, and goes into most depth in drawing attention to some aspect of the language (fully elaborate); moreover, the teacher in this type of CR instruction overtly directs the learners’ attention to a specific language form (fully explicit). On the contrary, the latter is recognized by the least degrees of elaboration

and explicitness, i.e., the deliberate attracting of attention to a language form in question is done implicitly, without the teacher elaborating much upon it.

Closely interrelated with the concept of CR is *input enhancement*, a strategy attempting to transform *input* into *intake*. Traditionally, a distinction has been made between input which the learner has yet to process and intake, the mental registration of the input that occurs after processing (Corder, 1967, cited in Combs, 2005). Brown (2000) defines intake as “the subset of all input that gets assigned to our long-term memory store and that you take with you over a period of time and can later remember” (p. 280). What seems to be of paramount importance in the process of language learning is the transformation of input into intake. Input enhancement, a term first used by Sharwood Smith (1991), is a strategy which is thought to facilitate the instigation of this transformation.

Sharwood Smith (1993) proposes two types of input enhancement—namely, *positive input enhancement* and *negative input enhancement*. Positive input enhancement highlights the salience of correct forms in the input. An example of this would be visual input enhancement of a reading text in which targeted forms are bolded, underlined, capitalized, or italicized. On the other hand, negative input enhancement

would highlight errant forms. An example of this would be error flags which would draw the learner's attention to their errors. Moreover, two types of salience of input are introduced, *internally derived salience*, i.e., input which becomes noticeable to the learner because of internal cognitive changes and processes and *externally derived salience*, i.e., input which becomes more noticeable because the manner of exposure is changed.

Similarly, Nassaji and Fotos (2004) define *textual enhancement* as:

Highlighting certain features of input that might go unnoticed under normal circumstances by typographically manipulating them through boldfacing, italicizing, underlining, or capitalizing, the assumption being that such manipulations enhance the perceptual saliency of the target structures, and this, hence increases their chance of being noticed. (p. 134)

Looking from a different perspective at grammar instruction and the role of CR in this process, Ellis (1993) notes that "the term grammar CR is rather vague and is used with very different meanings" (p. 4). To Ellis, the essential difference between various approaches to grammar teaching rests on the role of learner production in grammar activities.

On the one hand, according to Ellis, are “grammar activities which require learners to produce sentences exemplifying the grammatical feature that is the target of the activity” (p. 5) and on the other are “activities which seek to get learners to understand a particular grammatical feature, how it works, what it consists of, but which do not require them to actually produce sentences manifesting that particular structure” (p. 5). The former is referred to as *practice* and the latter as *CR*.

Ellis (1997, cited in Mohamed, 2004) defines a CR task (CRT) as:

A pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some form and required to perform some operation on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic property or properties of the target language. (p. 160)

In other words, a CRT tends to encourage learners, with the teacher’s help, to attempt to discover a specific grammar rule and learn about it for themselves, the ultimate aim of such tasks being to help learners construct their own explicit grammar.

Ellis (2010) states that there are three tenets which underlie the common practice of CRT. First is the suppliance of L2 data which include the targeted feature. This data, drawn from texts, be they spoken or written,

should have already been processed for meaning by the learner and should have primarily been designed for communicative purposes. The second tenet of CRT is the attempt, on the part of the teacher, to isolate particular linguistic features for focused attention, on the part of the learner. In other words, from the pool of language data, provided to the learner through texts, certain features are identified, to which it is attempted to draw the learner's attention. The third and final tenet underlying CRT is the requiring of the learner to exert intellectual effort, the outcome of which should be the formation of hypotheses about how the targeted feature actually works.

Last but not least, Ellis enumerates the rationale for CRT as follows:

- 1) They develop explicit knowledge and this will subsequently facilitate the development of implicit knowledge by assisting “noticing” and “noticing the gap”.
- 2) They involve discovery-learning, and thus are more likely to result in long-term learning.
- 3) If performed in the L2, they also double up as unfocussed tasks, i.e., grammar becomes a content to talk about. (p. 6)

### **2.2.3 *Types of CRT***

The following is a list of possible CRT, proposed by Willis and Willis (1996):

- 1) Identify/Consolidate where students are asked to search a set of data to identify a particular pattern or usage and the language forms associated with it.
- 2) Classify (semantic; structural) in which students are required to work with a set of data and sort it according to similarities and differences based on formal or semantic criteria.
- 3) Hypothesis building/checking where students are given (or asked to make) a generalization about language and asked to check this against more language data.
- 4) Cross-language exploration which encourage students to find similarities and differences between patternings in their own language and patternings in English.
- 5) Reconstuction/Deconstruction in which students are required to manipulate language in ways which reveal underlying patterns.

6) Reference training where Students need to learn to use reference works, such as dictionaries, grammar books and study guides. (p.7)

#### ***2.2.4 Research Studies in CR***

Since CRT has been utilized in order to improve grammar instruction, as well as other language skills and components, this section first addresses research studies which had as their aim the enhancement of grammar instruction through CR. Following this part, the effect of CRT on writing pedagogy is dealt with, focusing on studies which researched this aspect of ELT.

One of the earliest studies on the effectiveness of CRT in relation to grammar instruction was carried out in Japan by Fotos and Ellis (1991, cited in Fotos, 1994). The study participants were young Japanese adults, half of whom were studying at a junior college and the other half at the university. The two groups included in the study--the grammar lesson and the CRT groups--were taught the same grammar rules, and were both presented with word order of direct and indirect objects, following specific verbs.

During the course of the study and in the CRT group, students were divided into pairs or into groups of four, and each student was given a card

with a sentence written on it. The procedure practiced involved each student's reading of his or her card to the group and the group deciding whether that sentence was correct or incorrect. The students were not allowed to show their cards to each other, but they could ask each other for repetition or clarification, if needed.

Fotos and Ellis stated that the interaction quality "was limited and that the negotiations made by both groups were found to be qualitatively limited in either language" (p. 617). In other words, these negotiations only aimed to investigate whether a sentence was grammatically correct or incorrect, asking the other party to repeat a sentence, part of a sentence, or a single lexical item, or making a comprehension check. The authors concluded by arguing that "the CR task seemed to have functioned equally well as the grammar lesson in the short term and was only slightly less effective in maintaining proficiency than the grammar lesson after a period of two weeks" (p. 619).

Adopting a similar approach, Fotos (1994) conducted a study with 160 Japanese university students, investigating three grammar CRT's dealing with English word order. The participants of the study made up three intact classes of first-year non-English majors. There were 53-54 learners per class, almost entirely male, and learner assignment into classes

was random. During the study, the learners had one required 90-min period per week of oral English with a native-speaker instructor who, in this case, was also the researcher.

Before the research began, all classes were administered a cloze test previously determined to be valid and reliable (Fotos, 1991) in order to investigate whether there were significant differences in integrative English proficiency among the three groups. A one-way ANOVA performed and did not indicate a significant difference among the test score means. In this study, one class received three teacher-fronted grammar lessons on adverb placement, indirect object placement, and relative clause usage, respectively. The second class performed three grammar tasks dealing with the same grammar structures, and the third class performed three communicative tasks, acting as CRT and matched to the grammar tasks in terms of length, format, instructions and, task features, but lacking grammatical task content.

The results of the study indicated no statistically significant difference between the teacher-fronted grammar lesson group and the CRT group with regards to learning the grammatical structure. The researcher claimed that “there was more negotiation of meaning in the CRT group than in the teacher-fronted grammar lesson” (p. 343). The study further indicated that

the CRT's successfully promoted participants' proficiency gains and L2 negotiated interaction. Therefore, grammar CRT could be recommended as one way to integrate formal instruction within a communicative framework.

A close look at the results of the experiments conducted by Fotos and Ellis (1991) and Fotos (1994) reveals the fact that CRT tends to produce positive results and that these tasks work as effectively as teacher-centered lessons in teaching grammatical structures. In addition to this, the amount of negotiated meaning, while very limited in the study by Fotos and Ellis (1991), was still more than that in teacher-fronted grammar lessons.

Another study, investigating the effectiveness of CR, was carried out by Yip (1994, cited in Sugiharto, 2006). In an attempt to probe the benefit of CR, Yip conducted a study on English ergative verbs, which apparently posed a logical problem of acquisition that could not be resolved by positive evidence. Using a grammaticality judgment task, which contains such ergative verbs, as shatter, break, melt, and happen, Yip found that many of the learners, including the advanced learner participants, rejected good ergative verbs as acceptable and judged these constructions to be ungrammatical. Alternatively, the learners corrected the constructions using their own knowledge.

What is interesting in Yip's study is that the learners marked the incorrect ergative constructions as acceptable constructions in English, and as such, judged them as grammatical. However, after undergoing CR instruction, Yip's learners indicated statistically significant improvement in that they became sensitive to the misapprehensions about the ergative construction in English. Based on this finding, Yip concluded that CR could be effective, at least in the short term, in directing learner's attention to the ill-formedness of the grammatical features of the target language.

In another study, adopting a rather different approach, Mohamed (2004) examined ESL learners' perspectives of the effectiveness of two types of CRT's--deductive tasks, providing explicit explanations of a grammar structure, and inductive tasks, requiring learners to discover grammar rules for themselves. In other words, the study investigated learners' preferences relating to deductive and inductive tasks, and aimed to provide a learner perspective of the effectiveness of such tasks.

The findings indicated that learners view both task types to be useful and that they have no strong preference for a particular type of task over the other. Further, it was shown that they viewed the tasks to be useful in assisting learners to learn new knowledge about language. The researcher concluded by pointing out that "this examination of CR tasks suggests that

both deductive and inductive tasks are effective learning tools that could be used in the language classroom to make learners aware of form, where explicit instruction is necessary” (p. 233). Mohamed further added that because of its novelty, less experienced and lower-level learners would need to be introduced gradually to CRT, to help them gain an understanding of how to best utilize them.

Similarly, Sugiharto (2006) investigated Indonesian students’ ability in understanding the simple present tense rules, which often pose a problem for these students. Using a grammaticality judgment task, Sugiharto compared the results from students’ pretest and posttest, and found that the learners’ performance was significantly better on the posttest. This study indicated that CR tends to be effective in helping EFL learners develop their explicit knowledge of the simple present tense.

In a more recent study, Moradkhan and Sohrabian (2009) attempted to compare the effectiveness of CR instruction with that of communicative techniques on the development of grammar knowledge. In so doing, from among 100 female intermediated-level learners studying at a junior high school in Iran, the researchers assigned 60 homogeneous EFL learners to the control and experimental groups following the administration of a standardized English proficiency test. Further, the researchers gave a

multiple-choice test of grammar, as the pretest, in order to ensure homogeneity regarding knowledge of grammar.

In the course of the study, the experimental group received instruction using grammatical CR activities, whereas the control group practiced grammar by means of communicative techniques. At the end of the study, both groups took a posttest, identical to the pretest, to determine the possible effects of the two approaches to grammar instruction. The results of data analysis demonstrated the superior role and effectiveness of CR instruction in enhancing EFL learners' grammar knowledge.

Rashtchi and Gharanli (2010) investigated the effects of noticing through input enhancement on the learning of conditionals. Fifty-two Iranian EFL learners were included in the study, half of whom formed the experimental group, receiving a set of materials in which the noticing of if-clauses was enhanced through enlargement and different combinations of bolding, italics, and underlining. The other group, being composed of 26 participants, received the same set of materials without any enhancement of if-clauses.

Prior to the treatment, and in order to ensure homogeneity among the two groups' participants, a language proficiency test was administered.

Further, to make sure the participants were unfamiliar with the target structures, a standardized pretest was given. At the end of the study and to determine the possible effects of the treatment, the participants took an achievement posttest, upon the analysis of the results of which the researchers found that there was a statistically significant difference between the performances of the two groups, hence the superiority of experimental group participants' performance in comparison with that of the control group.

Moreover, Hendricks (2010), conducting a study in Eastern Cape province of South Africa, investigated the impact of CR instruction on the correct use of English prepositions by South African ESL teachers and learners. This study took quite a different form in that it not only attempted to improve the correct use of English prepositions of the participants', but also aimed to enhance the ESL teacher participants' awareness of and proficiency in such prepositions. The researcher intended to do so since ESL teachers, considered to be the only source of English in this region, were not proficient enough in English.

To gather material for CR instruction, Hendricks reviewed students, as well as, teacher essays on certain topics and identified 14 sentences that contained preposition errors. The researcher then converted this list into a

wall chart by printing the 14 sentences in a large font on a piece of paper. Hendricks also included some tack adhesive and an envelope that contained 20 prepositions written on small squares of pink paper which were used at the start of each class to correct the sentences, containing proposition errors.

To conclude, the researcher noted that, as a result of this kind of CR instruction “teachers certainly noticed prepositions as an important part of speech, focused on the error, and worked collaboratively to discover the correct options” (p. 27). An added benefit of this kind of CRT, she added, is that the teacher participants learned how to expand their repertoire of activities in their own classrooms, to teach not only prepositions but also other aspects of grammar. The learners, participating in the study, were also reported to have greatly benefited from CR instruction.

Finally, Vaez Dalili, Ketabi, Kassaian, and Eslami Rasekh (2011) aimed to explore whether textual enhancement--a subset of CR instruction--could override explicit metalinguistic instruction in inducing system learning of English dative alternation. To investigate which instruction type, namely, textual enhancement or rule explanation, could achieve better system learning, two intact classes consisting of 64 lower-intermediate L2 learners served as the participants of the study. The participants were

assigned to two experimental groups labeled textual enhancement group and rule-oriented group.

To make sure the participants possessed comparable knowledge of English dative alternation, a pretest, in the form of a grammaticality judgment task, was given at the outset of the study. The participants then received instruction through either textual enhancement or explicit metalinguistic explanation, depending upon the group to which they belonged. To determine the comparative effects, a posttest, which took the same form as the pretest, was administered. The results of the study revealed the outperforming of the textual enhancement group by the rule-oriented group, hence casting “doubt on the effectiveness of the implicit instructional technique of textual enhancement in triggering system learning of the abstract knowledge underlying language structures” (p. 63).

Thus far and in the first part of this section, a number of studies, aiming to cast light on the impact of CR instruction on teaching and learning grammar rules, have been addressed. What follows is an account of a score of studies which focused their attention on studying the effects of CR on enhancing the achievements of EFL/ESL in writing or in other skills.

To begin with, Walsh (2005) investigated the effects of CRT on Japanese high school EFL learners' achievements in speaking and writing. The tasks were used with two different groups, each consisting of four classes of 40-41 learners in classes that were held once a week for 50 minutes. Task Type One was used with learners in the 10th grade, in a course entitled Oral Communication which focused on speaking and listening. Task Type Two was used in a writing course with eleventh graders. The writing class, in the course of the study, used an online computer essay writing evaluation system, every other week, aimed at developing the ability to write 250-400 word in-class argumentative or opinion essays. Task Type Two was part of this essay-writing portion of that class.

Task Type One took place in two stages. Learners first looked at an authentic text and while listening to it, being read out aloud by the instructor, filled in numbered blanks in the text where the prepositions by, in, and on had been removed. The next stage involved them in comparing the uses in the text with definitions and example sentences of several different uses of these prepositions found underneath the text. Two meanings for each of the prepositions and a seventh classification part of the idiom were listed. The learners were required to place the number of the

blank within the text into a box next to the definitions and example sentences found below the text.

CR Task Type Two, which had as its main aim the enhancement of cohesion in the learners' essays, was done as the outline below indicates:

- 1) The learners read the web page with the initial presentation and examples of linking with anaphora.
- 2) Next, the learners listened to the instructor verbally summarize the page.
- 3) Subsequently, they linked from that page to a multiple-choice quiz, specifically concentrating on devices helping achieve acceptable cohesion.
- 4) After completing the quiz, the learners were asked to read explanations of answers on the class web page.

The study showed that both CRT types challenged the learner participants to examine the authentic texts closely, and the learners seemed thoroughly engaged during the tasks. The researcher arrived at the conclusion that this engagement, on the part of learners, was one of the benefits of CRT. Data analysis of the results indicated that both groups improved significantly regarding the target language areas the study had attempted to improve.

In another study, aiming to make use of CRT to improve written expression, Sangiamwibool (2007) experimented with EFL Thai learners. The subjects in this study were 90 second-year students from various faculties at Krirk University, consisting of Business Administration, Liberal Arts, Communication Arts, and Law. The participants were divided into three groups--two experimental groups and one control group. The two experimental groups received identical CR instruction, except that one of them was provided with task directions to search for the rules. The control group, on the other hand, received conventional instruction in writing.

This study employed a pretest-posttest experimental design. The testing points, based on the Structure and Written Expression included in TOEFL, included noun, pronoun, article, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, subject-verb agreement, infinitive and gerund, word order, parallel construction, adjective clause, adverb clause, and finally comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs. The results revealed that the posttest mean scores of all groups were higher than their corresponding pretest mean scores. The posttest mean scores of the three groups were ranked from the highest to the lowest. The CR instruction with directions to search for the rules ranked highest, while the other

experimental group, i.e., the CR instruction without directions to search for the rules, ranked second; the control group, in this study, ranked lowest.

Similarly, Xu and Pan (2011) investigated the effects of CR instruction on Chinese EFL college learners' writing achievements in three related areas, i.e., grammar, vocabulary, and discourse. The participants were composed of 30 sophomores. The researchers instructed the participants through CRT so as to "foster their cognition and subsequently their own exploration" (p. 468).

Having provided the participants with CR instruction in order to teach writing, the researchers conducted an interview to determine the learners' attitudes towards CR. What the interview indicated was the fact that the learner participants had found CR instruction more rewarding than traditional approaches to the teaching of writing, such as the product approach which is commonly practiced in China. It was further asserted that CR instruction had helped the participants become more independent, autonomous, and dynamic learners. Moreover, analysis of the results confirmed the effectiveness of CR in enhancing the quality of grammar, vocabulary, and discourse.

In a more recent study, adopting a quite similar approach as the previous study, Mirzaii (in press) investigated the effect of CR instruction and input enhancement tasks on the use of the mechanics of writing by 62 Iranian elementary-level EFL learners. The research method utilized was quasi-experimental; the participants under study were divided into two groups--the experimental group and the control group, comprising 30 and 32 eligible participants, respectively.

In the course of the study, the participants were required to write one-paragraph expository compositions on ten topics as part of the classroom activities. The participants in the control group received common instruction and practice in writing, while the experimental group was provided with instruction through CRT accompanied by input enhancement strategy. To compare the achievements of the two groups, a pretest prior to the treatment and a posttest after the treatment were administered, both in the form of in-class one-paragraph expository compositions of about 100 words within a time limit of 25 minutes. Data analysis indicated the effectiveness of CR regarding the experimental group participants' appropriate use of the mechanics of writing.

Last, Khomeijani Farahani and Sarkhosh (2012) investigated the differential effects of different textual enhancement formats (typographical

cues) on the intake of English subjunctive mood among Iranian EFL learners. The participants included 114 female upper-intermediate-level learners of English in an English institute. A reading text was prepared for five experimental groups, as well as one control group. In the course of the experiment, for each group, the target structure was enhanced differently (underline, bold, italic, background, and choice) in the text, but the passage was intact for the control group. The last two experimental formats, i.e., background and choice, were created by the researchers to examine their effectiveness on the intake of the target structure.

ANOVA analysis and post hoc Scheffe test were administered to analyze the data. Final results revealed that, in comparison with other formats, underline textual enhancement format was more effective in inducing the intake of target structure. However, background and choice did not prove to be effective textual enhancement formats. The findings of this study also indicated that a) enhancing a particular feature in a text is effective in triggering the noticing of that feature and its subsequent intake; b) different textual enhancement formats have differential effects on noticing and intake, i.e., there is an inherent saliency potential in each textual enhancement format, and they impact attention differently; c) the researchers' devised textual enhancement formats did not impact noticing

and intake of the target form, while the two most commonly used and popular textual enhancement formats, that is, underlining and using bold types, though not significantly, proved more effective.

### ***2.3 Written Corrective Feedback Background***

In a broad sense, feedback is conceptualized as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The provision of corrective feedback has long been regarded as an integral component of any writing program. This is even more so with the currently predominant status of the process approach to writing. Feedback in this context can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision. In other words, it is the comments, questions, and suggestions a reader gives a writer to produce reader-based prose (Flower, 1979, cited in Keh, 1990).

Although the suppliance of written corrective feedback has long been deemed imperative to FL/SL writing programs, it has not always been provided in the same manner. The conventional writing classroom used to abound with various forms of written corrective feedback, taking forms quite unlike what can, at present, be observed in genre-based, process-

oriented, learner-centered writing programs. Traditionally, corrective feedback tended to favor the written mode over the oral mode.

How teachers go about correcting FL/SL students' writing is a topic that has attracted enormous interest from readers and teachers alike. However, as a recent review of the literature (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), revealing the presence of a bulk of research on the role of feedback in FL/SL students' writing, indicates, it is not yet feasible to draw firm conclusions regarding readers' and teachers' queries. So, whereas feedback is considered an integral aspect of any writing program worldwide, Hyland and Hyland assert that the research literature seems not to be equivocally positive about its role in L2 development, and teachers often have a sense that they are not making full use of its full potential.

### ***2.3.1 Types of Written Corrective Feedback***

Ellis (2009b) presents a typology of teacher options for correcting linguistic errors in students' written work. Ellis points out the fact that these options have been identified by inspecting both teacher handbooks (e.g., Ur, 1996) and published empirical studies of written corrective feedback (e.g., Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2006; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986). The

strategies distilled from the literature and categorized by Ellis are presented in the following table:

Table 2.1

*Written Corrective Feedback Strategies*

Corrective feedback strategies	Description
1) Direct corrective feedback	The teacher provides the student with the correct form.
2) Indirect corrective feedback  a) Indicating+locating the error  b) Indication only	The teacher indicates that an error exists but does not provide the correction.  This takes the form of underlining and use of cursors to show omissions in the student's text.  This takes the form of an indication in the margin that an error or errors have taken place in a line of text.
3) Metalinguistic feedback  a) Use of error code  b) Brief grammatical descriptions	The teacher provides some kind of metalinguistic clues as to the nature of the error.  The teacher writes codes in the margin (e.g., ww for wrong word; art for article)  Teacher numbers errors in text and writes a grammatical description for each numbered error at the bottom of the text.
4) Electronic feedback	The teacher indicates an error and provides a hyperlink to a concordance file that provides

	examples of correct usage.
5) Reformulation	This consists of a native speaker's reworking of the student's entire text to make the language seem as native-like as possible while keeping the content of the original intact.

Ellis (2009b, p. 98)

Ellis also writes on the issue of the focus of feedback. This concerns whether the teacher attempts to correct all or most of the students' errors, or selects one or two specific types of errors to correct. Ellis comments that this distinction can be applied to each of the abovementioned written corrective feedback types. In elucidating this distinction, two forms of focus are introduced, namely, unfocused feedback and focused feedback. While the former is extensive, taking place without a clear linguistic aspect to correct in mind, the latter is intensive, having as its aim the correcting of a pre-specified aspect of the essay.

A second, and at the same time essential, issue which is closely interconnected to the initial suppliance of written corrective feedback concerns students' response to this feedback. In the era of the traditional paradigm—the product approach to writing—students were not required to revise their writing following teacher's feedback, whereas this is considered an important stage in the process approach to writing. In fact, the vast

majority of research studies, conducted in the domain of writing pedagogy, have concentrated their focus on whether or not students can potentially make use of the feedback they are provided with upon revision of the initial draft.

Moreover, in an earlier attempt to categorize written corrective feedback types, which are available to EFL/ESL teachers, Hyland and Hyland (2006) introduce a classification, comprising four types of written corrective feedback, which includes: 1) teacher written feedback, 2) teacher conferencing and oral feedback, 3) peer feedback and self-evaluation, and 4) computer-mediated feedback.

### ***2.3.2 Research Studies in Written Corrective Feedback***

In this section, a number of studies in written corrective feedback are presented.

Among all issues interrelated with the concept of written corrective feedback, error correction and its potential benefits to students' writing development could be claimed to have drawn most attention of researchers and practitioners. Research in this area, according to Hyland and Hyland (2006), has attempted "to explore whether error correction is effective and what strategies and treatments teachers use for error correction, and to

discover the effects correction has on students' immediate revisions and their longer term development as writers" (p. 78).

Tracing a predominant line of argument, a number of claims are made as to the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of feedback. Basically, these claims are predicated on the premise that "feedback on surface-level errors to SL/FL student writers tends to be discouraging and fails to enhance subsequent writing of these students" (Sheppard, 1992, p. 108).

Vengadasamy (2002), basing his contentions partly on findings of previous studies and partly on his experiment, argues that "in order for the feedback to be motivating, it should focus principally on content, claiming that too many surface-error corrections can be discouraging to the student writer" (p. 7). Not dissimilar to this line of argument is Truscott's (1996) well-known summary of the related literature which sees too negligible a benefit in this kind of feedback.

Regarding this viewpoint towards the provision of corrective feedback on surface-level errors, Cohen and Robbins (1976, cited in Park, 2006, p. 2), having provided three ESL advanced students with feedback on grammatical errors whose subsequent writing did not improve significantly, contended that grammar correction did not have the potential to improve learners' writing skills. Similarly, Zamel (1985) severely criticizes teachers

whose focus is primarily on grammar while providing written corrective feedback. Zamel claims that this kind of feedback tends to be incomplete, arbitrary, and inaccurate. Instead, it is believed that feedback should attempt to capture a wider perspective, turning its focus on content.

On the other hand, there are studies which lend credence to the provision of feedback and which claim that “the research on the lack of effectiveness of error feedback is not as conclusive as Truscott (1996) purports” (Ferris, 1999, p. 154). Hyland and Hyland (2006) believe that while a number of studies painted a bleak picture concerning the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in L2 contexts (e.g., Sheppard, 1992; Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2004; Zamel, 1985), “it is important to note that feedback research at that time was at its infancy and that ideas of best practice in both giving feedback and designing studies to describe it were rudimentary” (p. 78).

Among research studies which support the importance and effectiveness of written corrective feedback on subsequent writing are James (1998), Chandler (2003), Ferris (2004), Bitchener et al. (2005), Maftoon and Zareh Ekbatani (2005), and Binglan and Jia (2010). Regarding the significance of EFL/ESL learners’ roles in and viewpoints towards the provision of written corrective feedback as one of the parties actively

engaged in this process, James (1998) attempted to study what language learners believe in relation to feedback on writing. What the study indicated was the fact that concerning academic and professional audiences and student writers' viewpoints, accuracy in writing is of utmost importance since so-called L2 errors often stigmatize writers, hence the significance of written corrective feedback.

Chandler (2003), in two separate studies, investigated the efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. The first study, including 16 and 15 ESL East Asian students in the control and experimental groups respectively, revealed the fact that "to increase accuracy in student writing, teachers should give error feedback and require students to make correction" (p. 290). Chandler further contended that "students' correction of grammatical and lexical errors between assignments reduces such errors in subsequent writing over one semester without reducing fluency or quality" (p. 267).

Another research study aiming to lend support to the idea that feedback can help improve the writing ability has been conducted by Ferris (2004). To this end, Ferris first provides background information about error correction research in L2 writing. Subsequently, directions for future research and practice are outlined and finally further implications for

current L2 composition pedagogy are suggested. Moreover, it is mentioned that the published debate and several decades of research activity in this area are incomplete and inconsistent, and it would certainly be premature to formulate any conclusions about this topic. However, the positive role the provision of written corrective feedback can play in enhancing student writing ability is emphasized.

Yet another experimental research study, proving the positive impacts written corrective feedback can have on the development of writing, was conducted by Maftoon and Zareh Ekbatani (2005). In this study, the researchers compared Iranian EFL learners' writing performances upon receiving two different written feedback types: audio-taped feedback and minimal marking. To do so, eighty-four male learners were recognized as eligible participants upon the administration of a standardized homogeneity test. The participants were then divided into two groups. During the course of the study, the researchers required the participants to compose 150-word expository paragraphs, on which they subsequently received feedback through either type, i.e., audio-taped or minimal marking, depending on the group to which they had been assigned. The study arrived at the conclusion that the provision of written corrective feedback could be beneficial to student writers' writing ability and that the audio-taped feedback improved

the participants' writing performance at a statistically significantly higher level as compared to minimal marking.

To a similar end, Binglan and Jia (2010) utilized experimental and control group data to indicate that different teacher written corrective feedback types on students' compositions would result in a significant difference between the two groups concerning the long-term improvement of writing accuracy. The correction type employed for the experimental group included correction with corresponding explicit explanations, whose efficacy was clearly observed in this empirical study. On the other hand, the control group participants received no error correction but general commentary on their essays.

What this study revealed was the fact that the control group made much less progress in EFL writing accuracy than the experimental group. The researchers, therefore, concluded that "explicit explanations are more helpful to students' long-term progress in writing accuracy and should be applied to teaching EFL writing" (p. 18), hence the importance and effectiveness of providing written corrective feedback on student writers' essays.

With respect to the opposing stance, Truscott (2004) in a more recent article, once more but this time more emphatically, contends that error correction, focusing on the grammar aspect of writing, may not just be ineffectual but can even prove to be harmful to students' fluency in writing. It is further argued that the time spent correcting students' errors in class could more economically and effectively be spent on additional writing practice. Truscott concludes by noting, arguing against the results of the studies carried out by Ferris (1999) and Chandler (2003), that "the state of the evidence, especially regarding grammar errors, points to a clear conclusion: Correction is a bad idea" (p. 342).

Considering the related literature on the role, significance, and effectiveness of written corrective feedback, as was mentioned above, it appears as though no firm conclusions can be drawn since various studies, having adopted similar approaches to investigating this process, have arrived at disparate findings, and the debate over this very issue seems to be ongoing.

## ***2.4 Teacher-student OC***

### ***2.4.1 Emergence and Significance of OC***

The availability of various feedback types on FL/SL writing in the literature, modification in writing pedagogy, and insights gained from research studies have transformed feedback practices, with teacher written comments now often combined with feedback types in accordance with the principles of alternative assessment as opposed to the practices of conventional assessment methods; peer feedback, writing workshops, computer-delivered feedback, portfolio assessment, and OC are but some of the alternative feedback types which could be utilized in writing classes (Mirzaii, 2012).

Considering teacher-student writing conferences, Bayraktar (2009) notes that “over the last three decades, such conferences have been investigated under different names reflecting their multiple functions including response sessions, assisted performance, face-to-face interaction, one-to-one teaching, conversation about the student’s paper, and meaningful contact” (p. 11).

Considering the related literature on OC and how it may benefit writing pedagogy, the majority of studies have focused their attention on

practices and the ways that writing conferences may need to be adapted to the L2 context. For example, it has been argued that “the standard non-directive ‘hands-off’ mode of tutoring in the L1 context is not appropriate and that a more directive role for L2 tutors in their role as cultural and language informants is required” (Thonus, 2002, p. 124). Thus, it could be argued that OC, as an alternative to more conventional feedback types, has a considerable potential for instigating an atmosphere where the teacher as reader adopts a more directive role in guiding and attempting to improve student writers’ achievements in writing.

Research in this area has also focused on issues, such as the roles of participants in conferences, the duration of such conferences, and the stages and sequences involved. Regarding the common practices of conferencing, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) suggest that teacher-student writing conferences should be conducted within 5 to 10 minutes, focus on a single assignment in an early draft, balance criticism of student work with praise, incorporate student negotiation in the conference, conclude with students’ verbalizing what they will do next, and have teachers track student progress over the year, presumably through anecdotal comments and by maintaining a record of students’ revisions and grades.

### ***2.4.2 Types of OC***

Anderson (2000, cited in Bayraktar, 2009) explains that teacher-student writing conferences generally fall into one of the following four types:

- 1) Rehearsal conferences whose main aim is to help students find ideas to write about.
- 2) Drafting conferencing which are mainly intended to assist students with developing the big idea and determining which genre and style to write in.
- 3) Revision conferences whose main focus lies in helping students improve their initial drafts.
- 4) Editing conferences which principally aim at helping students become better editors. (p. 12)

In another attempt to classify various types of teacher-student writing conferences, Reigstad (1980, cited in Bayraktar, 2009) introduces a quite different categorization, enumerating three kinds of such conferences. To begin with, student-centered conferences, in which tutees are treated as conversational equals and fellow writers, give the tutees the opportunity to

initiate conversation about various problems with composing, as a response to which the tutor suggests strategies or alternatives. Second, it is quite conceivable to think of teacher-centered conferences where tutees tend to sit passively as the tutor reads through the draft and, pen in hand, corrects surface-level errors or supplies alternatives, improved sentences and paragraphs. Finally, collaborative conferences occupy the middle ground between the previously mentioned types; in collaborative conferences, the relationship between the tutor and tutees change from tutor-tutee to one of equal conversational partners; this type of conferencing is marked by the fact that both the tutor and tutees have equal opportunities to open, lead, and conclude the conversation.

Regarding their superiority in producing the desired results, Reigstad further argues that “student-centered writing conferences are better because they allow students to be more active and do most of the work by talking, finding problems, and discovering solutions” (p. 13).

### ***2.4.3 Characteristics of Effective OC***

It is widely held that teacher-student writing conferences are forums where both the teacher and the student can be notified about the student’s goals, interests, writing skills, and progress. Bayraktar (2009) comments

that in such conferences “students have opportunities to talk, ask questions, provide possible solutions, and get adequate feedback, from a more experienced writer, during one-to-one and welcoming writing conferences” (p. 13). Bayraktar further notes that in order for teachers and students to reach these positive outcomes, writing conferences need to be carefully planned and conducted according to these characteristics of effective writing conferences.

First and foremost among these characteristics is the fact that OC sessions should be predictable. It follows that, predictable conferences give the learners the chance to be familiar with the steps and the procedures, the fact of which also helps teachers save time. Second, effective writing conferences tend to be focused. When deciding on what to focus on, teachers need to remember two principles; the first principle concerns the fact that teachers should concentrate on one or two major erroneous parts in students’ texts during a single conference, while the second principle regards the fact that concerns related to the content and meaning of the texts, deep-level issues, should be dealt with before addressing usage and convention problems, surface-level issues. Moreover, effective OC is marked by the teacher’s providing solutions; teachers should unambiguously show what they mean rather than tell the student what to do

or what to write. One more characteristic of such conferences is the exchanging of roles between teachers and students; students should be encouraged to raise questions and think of solutions. Finally, incorporating humor can help enhance the quality of OC sessions.

To sum up, teachers wishing to improve their students' writing performance through effective writing conferences should bear in mind that effective OC sessions tend to have predictable steps and be focused on one or two major concerns in students' writing. Moreover, effective OC generally allows students to generate their own solutions to their composing problems. Further, during effective writing conferences, teachers and students exchange their roles back and forth, and they both have equal opportunities to initiate inquiries, describe their expectations and needs, clarify their problems, and conclude by stating what they will do next to improve the quality of the written product. Last, teachers engaged in the practice of OC should take account of the fact that criticism of students' text should be accompanied by humor.

#### ***2.4.4 Basis of OC***

Considering the basis for teacher-student conferences, Zamel (1985) asserts that "in an ideal feedback situation, teacher and student would meet

on a one-to-one basis as editor and writer to discuss the draft text” (p. 97).

Zamel further argues that “we should set up collaborative sessions and conferences during which important discoveries can be made by both reader and writer” (p. 97).

On the other hand, Keh (1990) comments that group conferences tend to be more successful than individual conferences probably because students feel more comfortable speaking in a group than one-to-one with the teacher. Keh also notes that “in group conferences, more discussion takes place as questions can be directed not only to the writer, but to peer readers as well, taking some pressure off the non-native speaker” (p. 300). It is further pointed out that discussions with student writers, too, indicate their preference for group conferences since they enjoy classmates’ ideas and can potentially learn from their classmates’ problems.

#### ***2.4.5 Stages of OC***

Reid (1993) describes the sequential stages of a typical conference as including openings, student-initiated comments, teacher-initiated comments, reading of the paper, and closings.

Moreover, Mi-mi (2009) believes that teacher-student conferences should be encouraged after the teacher looks over students’ annotations. The

operating steps, according to Mi-mi, are as follows:

Prior to conferencing, students first read the writing, underline and annotate the problems for teacher feedback; then, during the OC session, the teacher responds to the writing and replies to the written queries briefly and also adds further comments; finally, the teacher and student schedule a time to meet and the teacher explains the solution to the student' problems and points out the other important issues that the student may have ignored. (p. 62)

Finally, regarding the stages involved in teacher-student OC, Keh (1990) believes that student writers should be “given sole responsibility in deciding the agenda for the conferences and how the conferences will be run” (p. 301). These agendas, as Keh notes, may include an outline of who will speak first, what questions will be asked and how they will be asked. So, while some groups may decide to read aloud portions of their own papers for feedback, others may wish to read aloud their peer's papers with a comment about where they feel the paper sounds wrong and make suggestions for improvements.

#### ***2.4.6 Duration of OC***

Finally, regarding the duration of OC sessions, Anderson (2010) points out that her conferences lasted “between five and seven minutes long” (p. 17). Further, her conferences were done in groups of four, and sometimes five during a typical workshop period. But Keh (1990) mentions that "in implementing conferences with students, I have experienced individual conferences which last 10-15 minutes and group conferences (2-3 students per group) which last 20-30 minutes" (p. 299).

#### ***2.4.7 Research Studies in OC***

The vast majority of the studies, conducted in relation to teacher-student OC, have had as their main aims the investigation of the effects of writing conferences on students’ writing performance, the determination of the characteristics of effective and ineffective writing conferences, and the analyzing of interaction during writing conferences. What follows is a brief presentation of a number of studies carried out with these aims in mind.

Among the studies on the effects of writing conferences on students’ writing performance is Goldstein and Conrad (1990, cited in Liu, 2009) which investigated the students’ input and negotiation of meaning in

writing conferences between one instructor and three students enrolled in an advanced ESL composition course. They also attempted to determine the relationships between the conference conversation and the successful revision of the following drafts by the students. In the course of the study, the students were required to write multiple drafts on expository topics and had scheduled 20-minute conferences every other week. The week they did not have a conference, the participants received written corrective feedback from the instructor.

Upon conducting the experiment, the researchers found that the students who had negotiated meaning in the conferences made revisions in the following drafts which enhanced the quality of the text, whereas those students who had not negotiated meaning tended either not to make any revisions or make mere surface-level modifications to their following drafts which did not result in significant improvement over the previous drafts. With respect to the fact that the conference discourse, as well as the tutor-tutee relationship, differ considerably from the classroom discourse, and the classroom status of the tutor-tutee relationship, respectively, Goldstein and Conrad emphasized that student writers need to be taught the purposes of conferences, and also how they operate. The researchers further commented that conference talk affected subsequent revisions on the following drafts.

Likewise Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) investigated the effects of writing conferences among four instructors and eight undergraduate students, four of them being strong students and the other half weak students. The five-week study intended to determine the different effects of conferences, if any, on stronger and weaker students. In conferences with stronger students, the teachers were generally less directive, and the students tended to be more assertive.

It was shown in the study that unlike weaker students who only revised their drafts upon receiving the teachers' suggestions during the conferences, stronger students produced more substantial revisions, the fact of which was indicative of "the systematic relationship between the conference interaction and the students' characteristics" (p. 38). Thus, the researchers concluded that while the conferences helped enhance the quality of the texts by both groups, stronger students benefited more from the conferences.

Unlike the previous two studies, which investigated ESL students in American colleges, Shi (1998, cited in Liu, 2009) focused on a group of Chinese students at the University of Hong Kong and examined the effects of writing conferences on student revisions. Shi noted the incorporation of most of the comments in the following drafts by student writers who had

been through conferences. The teacher-researcher also observed that those participants who had not participated in conferences tended to mishandle the written comment, provided through OC sessions, or leave some comments unattended.

This study indicated that OC could provide students with an opportunity to clarify written comments and negotiate revisions with the instructor. Moreover, it was found that individual students dealt with teacher comments in various ways, e.g., removing problematic texts, redrafting the text integrating the teacher's perspectives, and keeping one's own text to claim ownership. This was indicative of the fact that both students' perceptions towards conferences and teacher feedback are different.

In yet another more recent study, taking the form of action research spanning 13 weeks, Haneda (2000, cited in Bayraktar, 2009) analyzed the setting of goals for subsequent text revisions by examining a total of 27 audio-recorded writing conferences between nine college students and their instructor. Data included audio recordings of writing conferences and three retrospective interviews with the student writers. In addition to this, students' written products, both first and final drafts, and a questionnaire on students' language background were collected.

The study revealed that topic negotiability was higher between the teacher and students when they focused on meaning, content, and discourse organization of the text, but negotiation was less when they talked about surface-level language usage and mechanics. The research results also indicated that writing conferences had positive effects on student writers. In other words, they acquired specific information about their writing styles during conferences and used it to revise and improve their essays. Finally, quantitative analyses of data showed an enhancement of the students' writing ability. This enhanced writing ability was also perceived and expressed by the student writers themselves, hence the contribution of teacher-student writing conferences to students' subsequent revisions.

Another study, conducted by Bitchener et al. (2005), attempted to investigate whether the type of feedback (direct, explicit written feedback accompanied by student-researcher 5-minute individual conferences; direct, explicit written feedback only; and no corrective feedback) provided to 53 adult migrant students on three types of error, i.e., prepositions, the past simple tense, and the definite article, resulted in improved accuracy in new pieces of writing over a 12-week period. Whereas the study found "a significant effect for the combination of written and conference feedback on accuracy levels, no overall effect on accuracy improvement for feedback

types, when the three error categories were considered as a single group, was reported” (p. 191).

Direct effects of writing conferences on students’ learning and improved academic achievement have been investigated by Corden (2007). The study was an attempt to investigate the impact of explicit instruction of literary devices and a writer’s workshop approach, with frequent conferences, on the quality of children’s narrative writing. The study was carried out with eighteen teachers, working as research partners in nine elementary schools, over one school year. Each teacher worked with six case study students--two low-achieving, two average, and two high-achieving student writers between the ages of 7 and 11. The participants of the study were selected based on their academic achievements in writing as shown by administered national exams.

In the course of the study, daily literary sessions were complemented by weekly writing workshops where students had the opportunity to engage in authorial activity and experienced writers’ perspectives and readers’ demands. Samples of the students’ narrative writing were collected, and a comparison was made between the quality of their independent writing at the beginning and end of the research period. Methods for data collection also included video-recording of peer-peer and teacher-led group

discussions and audio-recording of teacher-student conferences. The audio-taped writing conferences were later on transcribed to determine whether the participants could show an awareness of audience and whether they could make effective revisions to enhance the quality of their writing.

Analysis of data revealed that students' first drafts 1) lacked a recognizable outline, 2) followed a linear pattern, and 3) had a limited vocabulary range with simple sentence structures. The students, having been through the experiment, however, showed the ability to produce high-quality texts with good openings, contextualized, rich settings, appropriate punctuation marks, a wider range of vocabulary items, varied and more complex sentence structures, and various connectives. The researcher, thus, concluded that writing conferences could improve writing performance by teaching students the characteristics of good writing and enhancing their voice, audience awareness, special literary skills, and the use of descriptive vocabulary.

The results of the study further indicated that student writers could “gradually develop a metalanguage and were able to use it effectively when discussing their own texts” (p. 29). Besides, the study showed that students, by the end of the experiment, “were able to integrate the stylistic and

organizational features of mentor texts into their personal repertoires and use them successfully in their own writing” (p. 29).

In a quite different study, Liu (2009) examined 110 students’ writing experiences and expectations of writing conferences, which they regularly went through, through a survey. It should be noted that the participants were composed of both native speakers of English (65 male and female students) and nonnative speakers of English (45 male and female students). Regarding the participants’ previous experiences, the study revealed that a much higher percentage of native speakers had experienced participating in teacher-student writing conferences than their nonnative counterparts. In other words, “the activities which are common practices in American writing classrooms, especially writing conferences and peer review, were not familiar to the majority of the ESL students” (p. 104).

With respect to the participants’ expectations of conferences, all of the American students and the majority of ESL students expected the instructor to give them suggestions on how to improve their following drafts. Moreover, about half of the students from both groups stated that “they enjoyed talking with the instructor privately and they thought conferences could help enhance a better personal relationship with the instructor” (p. 107). The difference between the two groups, however, lied in their

expectations as to which aspects of writing should be focused upon during conferences. While most ESL students expected the instructor to correct their grammar errors, the majority of native speaker students deemed surface-level correction of errors a “waste of time” (p.107), and instead favored the focusing of attention on meaning and content of their texts.

Whereas the studies mentioned thus far focused their attention primarily on the effects of teacher-student writing conferences on students’ subsequent achievements in writing, Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, and Nejad Ansari (2010) investigated the effects of such conferences on the periphery. In other words, they principally concentrated on the relationship between the use of portfolio assessment and Iranian EFL students’ writing ability and attempted to determine the peripheral impact of OC on this relationship. The experiment included 61 students of similar writing ability who were divided into two groups--the experimental group and the control group.

In the course of the study, while the control group underwent the traditional mode of assessment, the participants in the experimental group were asked to write essays on which the instructor left written comments concerning focus, elaboration, organization, conventions, and vocabulary. Upon the students’ self-assessment of the comments, the students consulted

their instructor to receive comments in one-to-one conferences. Having made the last revisions, the students put their final drafts in their portfolios. The findings of the study suggested that portfolio assessment, accompanied by OC sessions, could significantly enhance students' learning of EFL writing.

In another recent study, Mirzaii (2012) investigated the effect of two different feedback types--OC and peer response on the writing achievements of 74 intermediate-level EFL students. The participants under investigation were placed in two experimental groups--the OC and peer response groups, with each group comprising 37 eligible participants. In the course of the study, the teacher-researcher required the participants to write one-paragraph expository compositions on six topics.

Depending on the group to which they belonged, the participants received feedback through either live teacher-student writing conferences or peer response. To make writing achievements of the two groups' participants' comparable, a pretest prior to the treatment and a posttest upon the treatment were administered, both in the form of in-class one-paragraph expository compositions of about 180 words within a time limit of 35 minutes. Data analysis indicated the effectiveness and superiority of OC in

comparison with peer response regarding the participants' achievements in writing.

Thus far, a brief review of a number of studies on the effects of OC on students' writing achievements has been presented. In the following part, a number of studies, determining the characteristics of effective and ineffective writing conferences, will be addressed.

Walker and Elias (1987), in their attempt to investigate the content of conference conversations which the participants viewed as effective or less effective, conducted a study in which seventeen writing conferences at two universities were audio-taped and transcribed. Teachers and students were asked to reflect on the work carried out in these conferences and to express their level of satisfaction with that work. Based on the participants' reflections, transcripts of ten conferences in total--five successful and five less successful--were selected for further analysis. The researchers developed a discourse analysis system so as to analyze and compare the transcripts. In so doing, such issues as whether revisions were done during conferences, whether conversations were related to the topic, whether there was enough encouragement, whether the focus was chiefly on the mechanics and conventions of writing or on the content and meaning, and

the questions the teachers asked to help the student writers find appropriate solutions, were taken into consideration.

The analysis of the effective and less effective writing conferences indicated that in effective conferences instructors 1) explained the criteria for good writing and expected student writers to self-evaluate, 2) gave students the chance to set the conference agenda, and 3) made full use of student writers' expertise and knowledge when giving explanations and examples. On the other hand, in less effective OC sessions 1) the teachers took over the task and told students explicitly what to write, 2) the teachers themselves set their own agenda, upon which they focused throughout conference talk, and finally 3) the teachers took into consideration their own expertise, not that of the students.

The researchers concluded that “conferences devoted to the articulation of criteria for success in writing and to evaluation of the students' work, as opposed to conferences characterized by repeated requests for explanation, elicited the highest levels of satisfaction from both teachers and students” (p. 266). The study also found that “in successful conferences the focus is on the student, rather than on the tutor, and the student's work, while in unsuccessful conferences tutor dominance tends to exclude student participation in the evaluation process or to preclude

evaluation altogether” (p. 266). Finally, the researchers claimed that “how much students talk is not a key determinant of successful writing conferences” (p. 281). In other words, Walker and Elias asserted that what determined the overall success of writing conferences was what teachers and their students talk about, i.e., the agenda.

In a more recent study, Kaufman (1998, cited in Bayraktar, 2009) observed an experienced teacher’s practices to see what she did in order to conduct effective writing conferences. As a participant observer, the researcher took field notes, carried out surveys, collected students’ writings, audio- and video-taped the class sessions and writing conferences, and interviewed both the teacher and twenty-seven eighth-grade students. The interviews were intended to investigate students’ general feelings and ideas about the teacher, their learning, and the classroom atmosphere. In total, the researcher analyzed 21 transcribed writing conferences to determine what academic issues were more salient to the teacher and her conversational approach.

The teacher’s conversation analysis indicated the following conferencing stages: 1) Initiating the conference, 2) learning about students’ needs, 3) receiving texts, 4) providing positive feedback, 5)

providing questions, suggestions, and explanations, and 6) closing the conference.

Further, the case study participants, four student writers, were required to listen to the conferences and record their thoughts and feelings, as a result of which each case study participant analyzed the conference talk. Analysis of students' reflections showed that because the teacher 1) asked predictable questions which helped the students concentrate on and evaluate their own composition, 2) was a patient listener who heard and diagnosed her students' peculiar backgrounds, likes, dislikes, and needs, and 3) had a caring attitude and spoke indirectly when she had to criticize, the teacher was depicted as skillful in conducting effective writing conferences.

Regarding information distilled from the related literature, it can be noted that while effective writing conferences tend to primarily focus on content of the text and only secondarily on mechanics, build on students' expertise and responses, invite student writers to do self-evaluation, instigate a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, give students the opportunity to initiate the conference and share the control of conference talk, and add humor, Bayraktar (2009) claims, based on previous studies, that ineffective teacher-student OC is marked by the following practices: 1)

Ineffective writing conferences confuse quality with quantity and focus too much on mechanics and grammatical concerns; 2) teachers in ineffective writing conferences take control and keep power away from student writers; 3) teachers in ineffective writing conferences are not patient enough, the fact of which culminates in their pointing out and solving problems without engaging students' full potentials; 4) teachers holding ineffective OC sessions ask unrelated or too many questions; and 5) teachers doing ineffective OC do not understand students' purposes and provide complicated suggestions.

The first two parts in this section have dealt with research studies aimed at the investigation of the effects of OC on students' writing achievements and the determination of the characteristics of effective and ineffective writing conferences. In the final part, succeeding the first two parts, it will be attempted to enumerate and explain a number of studies which had as their main aim the analysis of interaction during teacher-student writing conferences.

To begin, Freedman (1987) analyzed student and teacher's interaction during writing conferences. In so doing, five naturally occurring OC sessions between a relatively low-achieving but highly motivated college student and an excellent teacher of college composition were investigated.

The conferences were one-to-one, tutorial meetings between the teacher and student writer which generally took place in the teacher's office, not in-class or during class time. The researcher segmented the conferences into five components: 1) opening accompanied by initial greetings, 2) student-initiated comments and questions, 3) teacher-initiated comments and questions, 4) reading of the composition, and 5) closing the conference session.

Analysis of the interaction during conferences indicated that the instructor raised questions which gave her information on which to base her later instruction. The student's responsibility, as observed in these five conferences, was to explain and think about her own writing. The student was also required to verbalize her thoughts. The teacher's role was to listen to the student, while assisting in identifying and solving problems. Moreover, "the pattern of IRF [Initiation, Response, Feedback] found in the conference talk predicts the point at which, generally, each participant exercises control over the flow of the discourse" (p. 57). In other words, since the IRF pattern involves question-answer sequences, the instructor seems to carry the control of the discourse. The end of each question, Freedman further commented, "signals the transition point at which the

teacher relinquishes her turn and her control and the student writer commences to exercise control” (p. 57).

In a similar, but more recent, study, Haneda (2004), arguing that meaning is jointly constructed in writing conferences, studied the development of the conference discourse so as to provide a better understanding of the nature of and interactions during OC sessions. Upon fragmenting conferences in a Japanese-as-a-foreign-language classroom into meaningful exchanges, sequences, and moves, it was recognized that such conferences generally “move back and forth from dialogic to monologic pedagogical sequences” (p. 178).

The teacher under study was found to frequently use the IRF pattern, triadic dialog, in varied ways to attain her instructional goals. The study found that although the teacher initiated most of the sequences, the student participants exercised their own agentive role by making significant contributions in order to prove their role as the primary knower in the exchanges they initiated. Haneda further pointed out that “the pattern of discourse that occurred varied according to the students’ self-selected revision goals, which were related to their level of target language proficiency, the choice of discourse topic, and the teacher’s underlying pedagogical goals” (p. 178). The researcher concluded that:

Both internal and external factors appear to have a large bearing on the joint construction of meaning, with internal factors including the selected topic and the teacher's strategies for handling it, and with external factors comprising students' characteristics and the quality of the students' first drafts. (p. 212)

In the same vein, Young and Miller (2004) investigated a learner's acquisition of an unfamiliar discursive practice, i.e., teacher-student writing conferences, in a longitudinal observation. The means the researchers used for this analysis included "the methods of conversation analysis and microethnography, involving close attention to the social-interactive context of the participants' talk, their gestures, and body movements" (p. 534). Further, their observation included the video-recording of a series of four weekly-held writing conferences between an adult beginning Vietnamese learner of English and his ESL writing teacher. It also aimed to study the effects of face-to-face interaction on the student's revision skills. The researchers utilized a classification of eight categories to code both participants' conference revision talk practice. They were as follows:

- 1) Attend: Both participants display attention to the student's paper.
- 2) Identify: Both participants identify a problem in the student's paper.

- 3) Explain: One participant explains or justifies the need for revision.
- 4) Direct: The instructor directs the student to produce a candidate revision.
- 5) Candidate Revision: One participant utters a candidate revision.
- 6) Direct Write: The instructor directs the student to write the candidate revision.
- 7) Write: One participant writes the revision.
- 8) Evaluate: The instructor evaluates the revision. (p.522)

The results indicated that the learner under study developed from peripheral to more active participation and performed many of the aforementioned acts that were formerly performed by the writing instructor. In other words, in the initial conference, the instructor was the active participant and generally performed the sequence of these eight acts. Put briefly, she detected the majority of the problems and offered solutions to amend them. The student's participation was, therefore, limited to redrafting the revisions as suggested by the instructor. Subsequently, however, the student became active in evaluating the texts, identifying problems, supplying possible solutions, and self-correcting without the

instructor's intervention. Learning, as a process, occurs as a context-embedded practice, not in an individual mind. The researchers concluded by commenting that "in the case of the situated practice of revision talk, the instructor and student jointly construct the changes in participation that we observe as the student develops from peripheral to fuller participation" (p. 533).

Taking a different approach from the previous studies, which merely concentrated on verbal communication, Chen (2005) analyzed both verbal and nonverbal interactions during OC sessions. The researcher used the term "healthy writing conferences" (p. 290) rather than successful or effective writing conferences since she believed it seemed difficult to measure the effects of writing conferences on future revisions. After all, Chen commented that student writers would always redraft and revise for a better score no matter whether they agree with the instructor's comments or whether they enjoy the conference or they find it useful.

A healthy writing conference, as Chen put it, consisted of many components. It was comprehensive and was "internally balanced" (p. 291). The author further added that an internally balanced teacher-student OC session takes into account and possesses four types of balance which are explained below:

1) Balance of power, roles, and responsibilities: A healthy writing conference sees the student taking a bigger role in determining the agenda of the meeting and the direction of the conversation, the fact of which stands in sharp contrast to traditional contexts where the learner is required to take a passive role listening to what the instructor prescribes and act accordingly.

2) Balance of attention to verbal and nonverbal behavior: A teacher's over-concentration on verbal communication and neglect of nonverbal behavior leads to unhealthy writing conferences. Chen further argued that care needs to be taken that verbal and nonverbal messages do correlate. When they are aligned, students are relaxed and stay connected with the teacher.

3) Balance of interaction parameters: In the examination of the dynamics of OC, it is insufficient to single out a verbal or nonverbal feature for in-depth analysis. To achieve a holistic understanding of a healthy encounter, various verbal and nonverbal interactions should be examined together so as to study their interplay, as well as their co-construction of and co-effects on communication.

4) Balance of the tangible (physical/technical) and the intangible (mental/social): The text and the revision of it are the seen part or the

tangibles of a writing conference, whereas attitude and affect are the unseen portions or the intangibles. While it is easy to concentrate on the seen, such as the strengths and weaknesses of the draft, it is essential that the unseen, such as the emotions, not be neglected.

And finally, adopting a similar approach to the investigation of interactions during OC sessions, Strauss and Xiang (2006) observed that the ESL student writers, participating in their study, displayed a gradual emerging agency. What the study revealed was the fact that the students under investigation were resistant to the assignments they were working on and this negative attitude was obvious in their first conference talk. In their following conferences, however, they showed an agentive stance by getting engaged in the assignment and taking charge as a writer. Similarly, in a single conference interaction, the student participants generally showed signs of nonagency at the beginning of the conference but later on demonstrated more agentive attitudes towards their writings.

This trend found in writing conferences with ESL students might imply the fact that for the students, coming from countries where the product approach to writing pedagogy is still predominantly operative, the writing conference is a new experience. It follows that ESL students tend not to be sure of their required roles and responsibilities in OC sessions, the

fact of which necessitates that writing instructors first attempt to familiarize student writers with the event and its common practices in order to enhance its productivity and usefulness.

Chapter II presented a concise background on four main issues, closely interrelated to the title of the present study. First, the chronological development and progress of ELT writing instruction was considered. Next, the emergence of CR, as well as a number of studies conducted in relation to CRT, was discussed. Following this, a brief background to written corrective feedback was presented, accompanied by a score of studies deemed to be of significance in this regard. Finally, the advent of OC, its prominence as an alternative to more conventional types of written corrective feedback, a number of relevant issues, as well as a number of studies done in this respect, were dealt with. What follows in Chapter III is a discussion of the various elements of the method adopted to achieve the purposes of this study, i.e., to compare the effectiveness of CR and OC in relation to EFL learners' writing performance.

## CHAPTER III

### Method

This study attempted to compare the effect of feedback provided through OC with that of instruction given through CR on the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners.

This chapter is mainly intended to explain such variables of the present study as the participants, instrumentation, procedure, design, and statistical analysis.

#### *3.1 Participants*

The participants of the study were selected from the whole population of EFL intermediate-level learners studying at Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Resalat Branch. The initial sampling, conducted upon all existing intermediate-level classes in this branch, resulted in the selection of 72 learners. This was done through cluster sampling since the unit of selection did not involve the assigning of learners, but classes of learners. These learners subsequently took a language proficiency test, i.e., the Preliminary English Test (PET), to homogenize the participants. Upon the

administration of this test, 61 learners, whose test scores were one standard deviation below or above the mean score of the whole sample, were assigned to either group of the study. The resulting sample was, therefore, composed of six classes, and included 30 and 31 eligible participants in the OC and the CR Group, respectively.

Regarding the participants' demographic information, they were all male learners and varied in age from 16 to 44 years with an average of 24. Figure 3.1 demonstrates various age brackets and the number of participants falling in each bracket.

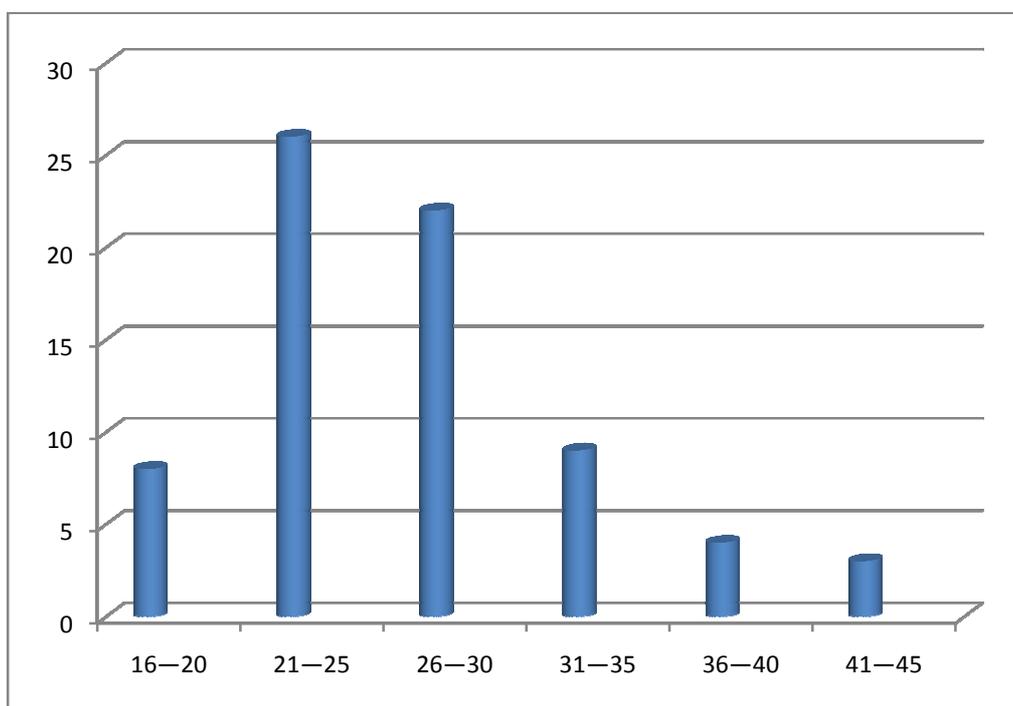


Figure 3.1 Age brackets and corresponding number of participants

Regarding educational status, 20 per cent of the participants were high school students, 58 percent university students, and the rest had either finished their university studies or had never been to university. Further, of the fifty-eight per cent of the participants who were then university students, 62 per cent were studying at the B.A./B.S. level, 30 per cent were M.A./M.S. students, and the remaining eight per cent were doing their postgraduate studies at the Ph.D. level (see Figure 3.2).

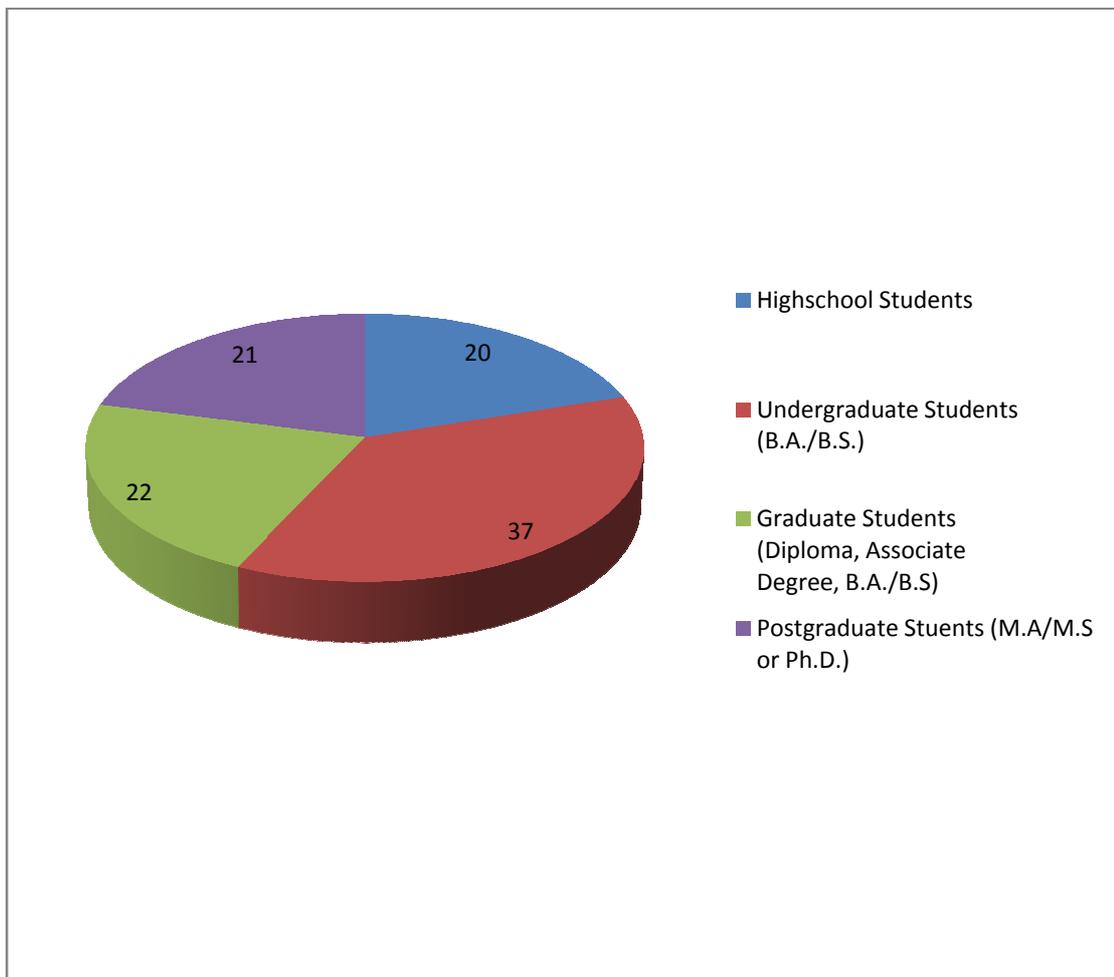


Figure 3.2 Educational status of the participants

With respect to first language condition, while the vast majority of the participants had Persian as their mother tongue (nearly 86 per cent), a minority of the participants had either Azeri or Kurdish as their mother tongue (see Figure 3.3).

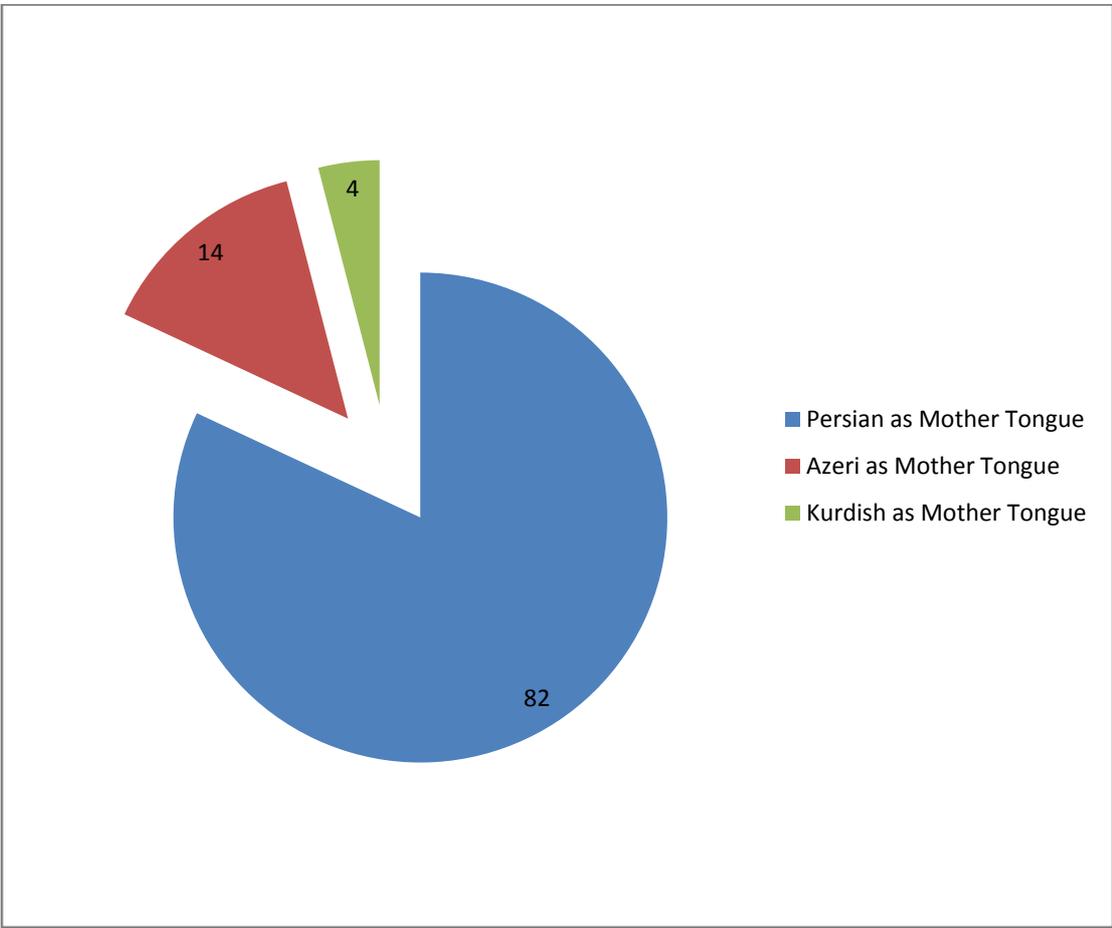


Figure 3.3 Mother tongue condition of the participants

### ***3.2 Instrumentation***

The instruments, used in the course of this study, included: 1) the Preliminary English Test, as a homogeneity measure; 2) two written English tests, in the form of one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words each, one serving as the pretest and the other as the posttest; 3) Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey's (1981) ESL Composition Profile, as an analytical marking scheme; 4) CRT, utilized in the CR Group to instruct writing; and 5) authentic texts, as a means of supplementing the texts used in the CR Group.

To begin with, the Preliminary English Test is planned, designed, and standardized by Cambridge ESOL Examinations center. In addition, it should be noted that the test is composed of three papers, the first of which is titled Reading and Writing, the second one Listening, and the third one Speaking. The test, excluding the speaking subtest, is composed of 75 items, with the first paper containing 50 items and the second paper comprising 25 items, with a time allocation of 90 and 30 minutes for each paper, respectively. The test, used in this study as the homogeneity measure, was adopted from PET Practice Tests (2009), published by Oxford University Press (see Appendix A).

The second instrument used in the study was the written English test. This served both pretest and posttest purposes, as well as the writing topics assigned to the participants in the two groups. The topics of these tests, as well as the corresponding instructions, time allocation, number of words, and additional explanations were adopted from Kaplan IELTS 2009-2010 Edition (see Appendix B).

Third was the Composition Profile which Jacobs et al. (1981) proposed as an analytical framework of writing criteria, claiming that it comprises all components of a writing piece which should be considered when assigning a grade. This analytical marking scheme includes five broad categories, namely, content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. These categories are further subclassified into more detailed components which form the basis of assigning grades to compositions (see Appendix C).

The fourth instrument used in this study was the CRT which the teacher-researcher designed, based on the texts found in the very course book of the participants, and utilized in the CR Group to instruct writing. These tasks were designed according to the list of possible CRT types, put forward by Willis and Willis (1996). In so doing, the teacher-researcher also took into consideration Jacobs et al.'s ESL Composition Profile, and

wrote the tasks in a way so as to encourage hypothesis testing among the CR participants in relation to writing criteria (see Appendix D).

And last but not least were a number of authentic texts which the teacher-researcher adopted from English magazines and newspapers, e.g., *The Economist* and *NewScientist*, in order to supplement the course book texts, used in the CR Group. Upon adopting appropriate texts, regarding the proficiency level of the participants, similar CRT was developed. (see Appendix E).

### ***3.3 Procedure***

The present study included a sample of 61 Iranian EFL learners who were homogeneous in terms of language proficiency levels, in general, and regarding writing ability, in particular. In order to arrive at this sample, the researcher, employing cluster sampling, selected 72 intermediate-level learners studying at Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Resalat Branch. To ensure language proficiency homogeneity, these learners sat a proficiency test, i.e., the Preliminary English Test. Upon the administration of this test, those learners whose scores were within  $\pm 1$  standard deviation of the test mean score were included as the eligible participants of the

study. The resultant sample, consequently, comprised 61 eligible participants.

In the second step, these participants were assigned to either the OC Group or the CR Group, as a result of which the two groups were composed of 30 and 31 eligible participants, respectively. Further, to make sure the participants, in the two groups, did not possess statistically significantly different abilities in terms of writing proficiency, a pretest was given, requiring the participants to write in-class one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words on a specific topic within a time limit of 20 minutes. The 61 compositions were then scored first analytically and later on impressionistically by three raters, scoring independently of one another.

The raters were experienced EFL teachers who were equipped with adequate knowledge regarding writing pedagogy. Nevertheless, to ensure consistent scoring among and within the raters, they were supplied with specific instructions, as well as sample compositions to grade in a briefing session. To further increase reliability in the grading process, all indications concerning the specific groups, as well as the names of the participants, were removed from the compositions. In other words, the only way to identify each composition was a corresponding code which had also been

recorded on a separate list for keeping track of the scores of the participants.

To score the participants' compositions in the pretest analytically, the Composition Profile, proposed by Jacobs et al. (1981), was utilized as the marking scheme. The researcher decided to make use of this marking scheme since Weigle (2002) introduces this as "a commonly used analytical scale" (p. 115).

Final scores on the pretest were arrived at by first adding the two sets, i.e., analytic and impressionistic, of the three raters' scores for each composition and then averaging them; the scores awarded ranged from a minimum of 49 to as high a score as 84 on a scale of 34 to 100 (see Appendix F).

To determine inter-rater reliability indices for the scoring of the compositions through the two aforementioned multi-rater procedures, i.e., analytic and impressionistic marking, the correlations among the three raters' awarded grades were averaged, and the resulting aggregate reliability index calculated for both analytic and impressionistic scoring methods was computed to be 0.89 (see Appendix G).

In the course of the study, the participants in both groups were assigned to write one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words each, on topics based upon the list of the topics introduced in Kaplan IELTS 2009-2010 Edition.

In total, seven topics were assigned, two of which served as the pretest and the posttest topics which the participants were required to write on within a time limit of 20 minutes. In order for the results to be comparable, the testing environment and the test rubrics were made as uniform as feasible for both groups. The remaining five topics were the out-of-class composition topics, in reply to which both groups wrote their expository paragraphs, under no time limit, and based upon which they received relevant treatment throughout the study.

Regarding the OC Group, the participants were supplied with feedback through live teacher-student conferences. Accentuating the effectiveness of this type of feedback, Keh (1990) concluded that group conferences were more successful than conferences conducted on a one-to-one basis. The participants were, therefore, assigned to groups of three or four and participated in live conferences, averaging between 15 to 20 minutes, once every four sessions. In keeping with what Mi-mi (2009) recognized as the preliminary phase of OC sessions, the teacher-researcher required every

participant to read their own writing, underline and annotate problems for teacher feedback, before the conference was held. Having first detected the problems and shortcomings in their compositions themselves, the participants took part in group conferences which were conducted according to the stages advocated by Reid (1993).

In so doing, the participants were first put at ease through friendly openings. The conferences then proceeded with student-initiated comments, mainly focusing on the problems and shortcomings they themselves had previously detected and marked in their compositions. This was followed by the teacher-researcher's providing feedback, initially, on the overall meaning and organization, and subsequently on more specific surface-level issues, e.g., vocabulary, language use, and the mechanics of writing, in reply to the participants' annotations, inquiries, and comments. Throughout this process, the participants were provided with feedback, concentrating on the same criteria, as proposed by Jacobs et al. (1981). The participants were then required to read their paper to further the process. Finally, they were encouraged to look over their composition and write a final draft which was supposed to be handed in prior to the assignment of a new topic.

In tandem with the treatment given to the OC Group, the participants in the other experimental group were supplied with instruction through

CRT. Following what Ellis (1997) has introduced as the principal characteristics of CRT, and what Willis and Willis (1996) proposed regarding the suppliance of data through texts, the teacher-researcher mainly used the participants' course book as the basic text for conducting CRT. To supplement the texts, nevertheless, a number of authentic texts with real-life language use were adopted from English magazines and newspapers.

Upon the selection of the appropriate texts, taking the language level of the participants into account, i.e., intermediate-level EFL learners, tasks of varied types were prepared in keeping with what Willis and Willis (1996) propose as possible CRT (see Chapter II for a full account). Moreover, considering the treatment practices the two groups were provided with, it should be borne in mind that whereas OC is regarded as a means of providing feedback in teacher-student writing conferences, CRT is more appropriately thought of as a way of instructing EFL/ESL learners in a particular area of language.

Taking account of this fact (the two experimental groups were provided with two dissimilar ways of enhancing writing performance, i.e., feedback through OC and instruction through CRT) and in order to make

the results of the study comparable, the CRT in question was designed, focusing attention on the same criteria, as proposed by Jacobs et al. (1981).

This CRT was, throughout the study, integrated within the main activities of this group. In the majority of activities, all the five components of writing criteria, content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics, were worked on. To make the components in the texts more easily noticeable, a strategy known as input enhancement (positive, negative, and textual) was made use of; font color changes, bold fonts, italics, underscoring, and circling the components, for instance, were utilized to make key areas of information more obvious.

Having provided the two groups with either type of treatment, all the participants took the posttest which was the same as the pretest in all respects aside from the topic assigned. The testing environment and condition were made uniform and were as similar as possible to those of the pretest. In order to avoid practice effect, however, the participants were required to compose 150-word expository writing pieces within a time limit of 20 minutes on a topic which was selected from Kaplan IELTS 2009-2010 Edition, but which was different from that of the pretest.

The scoring procedure was done in exactly the same manner as the pretest. The posttest raw scores can be viewed in Appendix F. These scores were arrived at through multiple marking, conducted by three independent raters, assigning grades to each composition both impressionistically and analytically. The inter-reliability index, for the three raters, was computed to be 0.91 (see Appendix G).

### ***3.4 Design***

This study had as its main aim the answering of the following question:

Does the provision of feedback on writing through teacher-student OC impact Iranian intermediate-level EFL learners' writing performance significantly, in comparison with another group receiving writing instruction through CRT?

With regard to the study question, it could be inferred that the study consisted one independent variable, that is, either of the two means of enhancing EFL learners' writing performance, known as OC and CR, and one dependent variable, writing performance.

Drawing upon Mackey and Gass (2005), the present study had a between-groups design. More specifically, since the two groups of the

study received different treatments, and there was no control group, the design took the form of comparison groups design, one of between-groups design types. The design could more properly be schematically illustrated as in Figure 3.4.

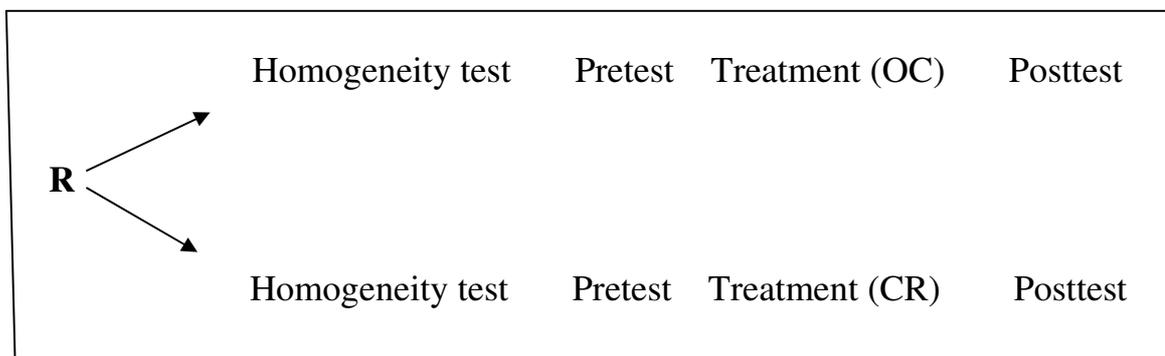


Figure 3.4 Study design and featured components

As can be observed in Figure 3.4, the design components included: 1) a language proficiency test, 2) a pretest, 3) two different treatments, and 4) a posttest.

Language proficiency test: Preliminary English Test (PET), used as means of further homogenizing the experimental groups' participants.

Pretest: Written English test, based on Kaplan IELTS 2009-2010 Edition, in the form of one-paragraph expository composition of about 150 words within a time limit of 20 minutes.

Treatment (OC): Feedback on writing through teacher-student OC sessions.

Treatment (CR): Instruction in writing through CRT.

Posttest: Written English test, based on Kaplan IELTS 2009-2010 Edition, in the form of one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words within a time limit of 20 minutes.

### ***3.5 Statistical Analysis***

Taking account of the research questions and the null hypotheses stated in the first chapter and regarding the fact that all the assumptions for parametric tests were met, to determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the language proficiency levels of the two groups before the experiment began, an independent-samples t-test was run on the language proficiency test mean scores of the two groups. Next, to investigate the first and second hypotheses, two separate paired-samples t-tests were run, one determining the pretest and posttest mean scores differences of the OC Group, and the other determining the pretest and posttest mean scores differences of the CR Group. Finally, to either confirm or disconfirm the third hypothesis, an independent-samples t-test was used to investigate the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the posttest. These analyses, as

well as corresponding interpretation, are all discussed at length in Chapter IV.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Results and Discussion**

This study attempted to compare the impact of OC with that of CR instruction on the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, a randomly selected sample of 61 EFL learners was taken from the whole population of intermediate-level learners studying at Kish Institute of Science and Technology. These learners were then assigned to either of the two experimental groups, the OC Group or the CR Group. Upon administering the pretest, in the form of in-class one-paragraph expository compositions of about 150 words on a specific topic within a time limit of 20 minutes, the participants in the OC Group were provided with feedback on their writing assignments through teacher-student live conferences in the course of the study. The CR Group participants, on the other hand, were taught writing through tasks engaging them in CRT. Finally, to see if the treatments had statistically significantly affected the writing performance of the two groups, a posttest, similar to that of the pretest, albeit on a different topic, was administered.

The data gathered throughout the study included: 1) the participants' language proficiency test scores; 2) the participants' two pretest scores, one arrived at through analytic marking and the other through impressionistic marking; and 3) the participants' two posttest scores, one obtained by means of analytic marking and the other one through impressionistic marking. To simplify computations, the pretest scores of each participant were averaged. The same was done for the posttest scores, as a result of which each participant possessed three scores; one score for the language proficiency test and two average scores relating to the pretest and posttest. The corresponding data analysis is presented below.

#### ***4.1 Data Analysis and Research Hypotheses Investigation***

Upon the administration of the language proficiency test, the following analysis was carried out.

With regard to the fact that all the assumptions for parametric tests were met, to determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the language proficiency levels of the two groups prior to the experiment, an independent-samples t-test was run on the participants' mean scores on the Preliminary English Test of the two

groups. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 indicate corresponding descriptive statistics and the t-test result on the language proficiency test scores, respectively.

Table 4.1

*OC and CR Groups' Homogeneity Test Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
OC Group	30	25.00	45.00	70.00	59.90	7.38
CR Group	31	24.00	45.00	69.00	58.10	6.87

The result of the t-test comparison is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

*Independent-samples T-test on Homogeneity Mean Scores*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval	
	F	Sig.					Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	.475					.494	.987
Equal variances not assumed			.988	58.91	.32	1.80	-1.85	5.46

As can be observed in Table 4.2, since the Sig. value of the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the variability in the two conditions was about the same. The  $T_{\text{observed}}$  value was, therefore, 0.987, at 1 and 59 degrees of freedom. Since the Sig. (2-tailed) was greater than 0.05, this statistical test proved that there was no statistically significant difference between the language proficiency levels of the OC and CR Groups at the beginning of the study.

Further, to investigate the first and second hypotheses, two separate paired-samples t-tests were run, one determining the pretest and posttest mean scores differences of the OC Group, and the other determining the pretest and posttest mean scores differences of the CR Group.

*Investigation of Null Hypothesis 1.* Taking into consideration the mean scores of the OC Group on the pretest and on the posttest, i.e., 61.21 and 70.26, respectively, and the corresponding standard deviations (see Table 4.3) a considerable difference between the two sets of scores could be observed. To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, nevertheless, a paired-samples t-test was utilized.

Table 4.3

*OC Group's Pretest and Posttest Descriptive Statistics*

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair	PreOC	61.21	30	6.09	.45
	PostOC	70.26	30	6.24	.47

Table 4.4

*Paired-samples T-test on OC Group's Pretest and Posttest*

		Paired Differences					t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval			
					Lower	Upper		
Pair	PreOC - PostOC	-9.05	5.43	.40	-9.85	-8.25	-22.36	0.001

As Table 4.4 indicates, the  $T_{\text{observed}}$  absolute value, at 1 and 29 degrees of freedom, was 22.36. Since the Sig. (2-tailed) was less than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that the difference in mean scores of the pretest and posttest was statistically significant. This finding was not in conformity

with the claim of Null Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis was, consequently, statistically rejected.

*Investigation of Hypothesis 2.* To determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the results of the CR Group's pretest and posttest, a similar approach was adopted. The relating descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

*CR Group's Pretest and Posttest Descriptive Statistics*

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair	PreCR	63.70	31	7.47	.55
	PostCR	67.65	31	6.73	.49

As it is evident in Table 4.5, the pretest mean score of the CR Group was 63.70, while that of the posttest was 67.65. Although this difference between the two mean scores seemed to be less than the mean scores difference of the OC Groups' pretest and posttest, a paired-samples t-test was run to see if this difference in the CR Group was statistically significant (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6

*Paired-samples T-test on CR Group's Pretest and Posttest*

		Paired Differences					t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval			
					Lower	Upper		
Pair	PreCR - PostCR	-3.95	3.88	.28	-4.51	-3.38	-13.87	0.001

Regarding the  $T_{\text{observed}}$  absolute value which, at 1 and 30 degrees of freedom, was computed to be 13.87, and taking the value of the Sig. (2-tailed) into account, 0.001, it was proved that the difference between the mean scores differences was statistically significant. This meant that the participants in the CR Group had performed significantly better on the posttest, hence, the rejection of Null Hypothesis 2.

To investigate Null Hypothesis 3 and to see whether there existed any difference between the writing performance of the participants receiving feedback through OC and those of the participants receiving instruction through CRT, an independent-samples t-test was used to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the posttest.

*Investigation of Hypothesis 3.* To investigate this hypothesis, first descriptive statistics, relating to the posttest results of the OC and CR Groups, were calculated. These statistics are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7  
*OC and CR Groups' Posttest Descriptive Statistics*

	IVGroup	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
DVoccr	1	30	70.26	6.24	.47
	2	31	67.65	6.73	.49

With respect to the pretest and posttest mean scores, whereas the OC participants gained a mean score of 61.21, which was lower than the pretest mean score of the CR participants (63.70), they performed better on the posttest and obtained a mean score of 70.26, as compared to that of the CR participants (67.65). In other words, the mean gain of the OC Group was computed to be 9.05, while that of the CR Group was calculated to be 3.95. In order to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the posttest, an independent-samples t-test was run.

Table 4.8

*Independent-samples T-test on Posttest Mean Scores*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval	
	F	Sig.					Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	4.22					.04	3.83
Equal variances not assumed			3.84	58.91	.001	2.61	1.27	3.94

As Table 4.8 indicates, the Sig. value of the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was less than 0.05, it was concluded that the variability in the two conditions was not the same. The  $T_{\text{observed}}$  value was, therefore, 3.84, at 1 and 58.91 degrees of freedom. Moreover, since the Sig. (2-tailed) was lower than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that there was a statistically significant difference between the writing performance of the OC and CR Groups. This hypothesis was, therefore, statistically rejected.

## ***4.2 Interpretation of the Results***

The abovementioned statistical analyses indicated that that the two experimental groups possessed nearly equal levels of language proficiency before the study began. Next, it was shown that the participants in the OC Group, who had been provided with feedback on their writing assignments through teacher-student live conferencing sessions, made statistically significant achievements in writing, hence the confirmed significant role of this kind of feedback can play a part in enhancing writing performance. This finding was specifically consonant with the earlier findings of Goldstein and Conrad (1991) who contended that OC had a considerable potential to improve EFL learners' writing performance. The researchers, however, believed that this improvement would result provided that learners were willing to negotiate meaning with the instructor and focus on both content and meaning, as well as more surface-level issues, such as the mechanics of writing, grammar rules, and vocabulary items. Since the OC participants of the present study deemed writing an essential skill to be mastered, they willingly and quite enthusiastically took part in the conferences with the teacher-researcher. Besides, they were encouraged to attend to both deep-level and surface-level issues in their texts while doing

conferencing, the fact of which was probably the main reason for their making significant improvement in writing.

The participants in the other experimental group, the CR group, too, made statistically significant improvements in their writing performance in the course of the study. This result was in conformity with the findings of Sangiamwibool (2007) who, having studied the impact of CRT on EFL Thai learners' writing ability, claimed that CR instruction could significantly enhance writing expression. The present study similarly arrived at the conclusion that CRT has a great potential to engage EFL learners in cognitive hypothesis testing through requiring them to exert intellectual effort.

Furthermore, to see which approach had more profoundly affected the participants' writing performance, an independent-samples t-test was run on the two groups' mean scores on the posttest, as a result of which it was shown that the OC participants had made more significant improvements. This finding was similar to that of Mirzaii (2012) who concluded that OC had a great potential to improve EFL learners' writing performance. While in the former study, Mirzaii (2012), the researcher compared the impact of OC with that of peer response on Iranian EFL learners' writing performance, the present study aimed to compare the effects of OC with

that of CRT on the same variable, that is to say, Iranian EFL learners' writing performance. What both studies arrived at was the conclusion that OC affected writing performance more profoundly and resulted in statistically significant writing performance.

Chapter IV first provided a brief review of the procedure adopted to conduct the present study. Taking the participants' raw scores into consideration, the study hypotheses were, subsequently, investigated. Finally, the findings were interpreted in light of earlier, relevant studies, as well as the specific parameters of the present study. In Chapter V, conclusions arrived at as a result of these findings are discussed, pedagogical implications of various kinds stated, and suggestions for further research proposed, taking account of the limitations and delimitations of this study.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Conclusion, Pedagogical Implications, and Suggestions for Further Research**

In the first part of Chapter V, a summary statement of the problem, research questions and hypotheses, as well as a review of the procedures adopted in the course of this study, are presented. Next, pedagogical implications are addressed, and in the third part of Chapter V, suggestions for further research are presented.

#### ***5.1 Summary Statement of the Problem, Research Questions and Hypotheses***

The present study attempted to examine the potential impact of feedback on and instruction in writing, through teacher-student OC and CRT. Regarding the related literature and taking account of the fact that the research evidence on the effects of error correction on students' writing skills, as well as the impact of instruction on learners' writing achievement, is far from conclusive, this study had as its aim the analysis of the following research questions:

Q1: Is there any statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving teacher oral feedback through conferencing?

Q2: Is there any statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving instruction through CR tasks?

Q3: Is there any statistically significant difference between the posttest writing scores of the participants receiving feedback through conferencing and those participants receiving instruction through CR tasks?

Accordingly, the following null hypotheses were stated, at either confirming or disconfirming of which this study was aimed:

H<sub>0</sub> (1): The pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving teacher oral feedback through conferencing are not significantly different.

H<sub>0</sub> (2): The pretest and posttest writing scores of the participants receiving instruction through CR tasks are not significantly different.

H<sub>0</sub> (3): The posttest writing scores of the participants receiving feedback through conferencing and those participants receiving instruction through CR tasks are not significantly different.

To either prove or disprove these hypotheses, seventy-two Iranian EFL learners were selected, through cluster sampling, from among the whole population of EFL learners, studying at one of the branches of Kish Institute of Science and Technology. Subsequently, 61 learners, whose scores on the language proficiency test were within  $\pm 1$  standard deviation of the whole sample mean score, were recognized as the eligible participants. They were assigned to one of the two experimental groups, OC or CR. These eligible participants were also pretested through a written test, in the form of an in-class one-paragraph expository composition of about 150 words on a specific topic and within a time limit of 20 minutes.

Considering the treatments, the participants in the OC Group were assigned to write expository compositions on various topics, upon the writing of which they participated in OC sessions where they were provided with feedback on their compositions; they were then required to write a final draft, taking into account the feedback they had been supplied with. The CR participants, on the other hand, were taught writing through CRT. These tasks mainly required the participants to look at texts, with either authentic or pedagogical purposes, in which certain features, through input enhancement, had been isolated for focused attention. Having read the

texts, the teacher-researcher provided the CR Group with tasks which engaged them in exercising intellectual effort to form hypotheses as to how the specific writing criterion, isolated for focused attention through input enhancement, operated. At the final stage, the two groups did a posttest, which took quite a similar form to that of the pretest, i.e., an in-class one-paragraph expository composition of about 150 words on a specific topic and within a time limit of 20 minutes.

The statistical analyses, performed in Chapter IV, disconfirmed the three null hypotheses. In other words, this study indicated that the participants in both groups made statistically significant improvements in relation to writing, that feedback provided through live teacher-student OC, as well as instruction in writing given by means of CRT, had the potential to improve the status of participants' writing performance. Moreover, to determine which group had achieved more in the course of this study, an independent-samples t-test was run on the results of the posttest. As a result of this analysis, it was shown that OC outperformed the CR Group.

The findings of this study can be further interpreted, drawing upon the earlier findings of a number of research studies. To begin with, the results of the present study echo the findings of Walsh (2005) who argued that CRT had a great potential for engaging learners in authentic texts, thereby

giving them the opportunity to notice targeted features, the result of which would be the enhancement of such features. Further, Xu and Pan (2011) confirmed the effectiveness of CR in improving the quality of grammar, vocabulary, and discourse in relation to writing, the fact which was also reflected in the present study. Finally, the outcome of this study was also in line with what Mirzaii (in press) stated with respect to the positive impact of CR instruction and input enhancement tasks on the appropriate use of the mechanics of writing by EFL learners. A close look at the analytic scores, the participants of the present study had been given on the posttest, revealed the fact that the CR Group had made significant improvement concerning the use of the mechanics of writing.

The results of this study, in relation to the OC Group, support the earlier findings of Bitchener et al. (2005) and Wallis (2010) who proposed that the focused and effective feedback that students receive during teacher-student OC sessions could lead to better achievements in writing. Moreover, Patthey-Chavez and Ferris' (1997) contention that OC sessions helped to enhance the quality of writing is similarly reflected in this study. Finally, these results could be interpreted in light of the findings of Mirzaii (2012) who conducted a study to investigate the effect of two different feedback types, i.e., OC and peer response on the writing achievements of

EFL learners. What both of these studies share in common is the superiority of OC in comparison with two other techniques of enhancing EFL learners' writing performance, namely, peer response, studied by Mirzaii (2012), and CR instruction, investigated in the present study. In other words, OC, in both studies, proved to have greater potential for improving EFL learners' writing ability.

## ***5.2 Pedagogical Implications***

In light of the results of the present study, a number of pedagogical implications, categorized under such rubrics as implications for teaching and learning, implications for instructional programs, and implications for curriculum development were arrived at and are briefly discussed below.

### ***5.2.1 Implications for Teaching and Learning***

First and foremost, the findings of this study indicated the plausibility of the application of CRT and its impact on an area of language learning other than grammar instruction, that is to say, writing pedagogy. It is, therefore, highly recommended that the practice of CR instruction be extended to enhance the quality of other language learning areas, such as skills work, vocabulary learning, and pronunciation practice. Moreover, the findings of this study indicated the effectiveness of CR instruction in

rendering language learners more consciously aware of various components of writing, in particular, and the whole context of language learning, in general. It follows that the procedure, adopted to conduct CR instruction, namely, the provision of L2 data, the isolating of specific language features for focused attention, and the requiring of learners to exert intellectual effort to arrive at and test hypotheses regarding how these specific features operate, could sensitize EFL/ESL learners to pay a more careful attention to their very process of language learning. As a result of this procedure, the CR participants would probably be more cognizant of the formal properties and features of language, as well as more meaning-focused aspects of language, and would, in all likelihood, take advantage of this cognizance to perfect the correct use of such features and aspects, be they grammar or any other feature of language. Finally, it can be claimed that, based on the observation of the CR participants in the course of this study, CRT could aid learners in becoming more independent, hence, the occurrence of more autonomous, and consequently, more meaningful learning.

On the other hand, considering the provision of feedback on writing through OC, it could be argued that since learners are required to first detect errors and erroneous parts themselves, they, gradually grow more metacognitively capable, i.e., while detecting the areas in which they need

remedial help, they necessarily center, arrange and plan their learning, and both during and upon such conferencing sessions, evaluate what they have acquired. Furthermore, since teacher-student OC, by its very nature, engages learners in lengthy conversation with teachers, this gives these learners the opportunity to not only better their achievements in writing, but to also improve their speaking ability.

In addition, owing to the fact that speaking and writing mainly operate on quite the same grammar rules and vocabulary items, and taking account of the fact that feedback on speaking tends to be transient, hence depriving learners of reflection, the very act of providing feedback on writing gives learners a better chance of enhancing their speaking ability, reflecting upon the points made by the teacher. This was actually what a considerable proportion of OC participants uttered, having gone through a number of OC sessions. Finally, OC, as opposed to more conventional ways of supplying written corrective feedback, could be viewed within a humanistic/constructivist perspective where learners are first regarded as whole persons, and their language learning status, in general, and their writing ability, in particular, are merely two of a number of components, in need of amelioration. It follows that whereas more traditional types of feedback are provided in isolation, where there is almost no room for

negotiation of meaning, in holding OC sessions, learners are given the opportunity to sit one-to-one or in groups with the teacher and converse for quite lengthy periods, the result of which can be a sense of self-esteem, self-agency, and self-worth, emerging out of these sessions.

### ***5.2.2 Implications for Instructional Programs***

Regarding CR and the beneficial effects it has on nearly all aspects of language instruction, it is advisable that the practice of CRT be applied to other language learning areas, such as skills work, vocabulary learning, and pronunciation practice. This would, nevertheless, necessitate that EFL/ESL teachers be informed of the premises upon which CR instruction is predicated. These teachers should then be trained in the ways in which it operates. It is recommended that teacher trainers be familiarized with CRT, how it can be designed, and how it can be applied to various areas of language learning. Having done so, teacher training courses would then be able to devote a number of instructional hours to familiarizing student teachers with the potential CR instruction has for improving language teaching/learning status.

With respect to OC, it should be borne in mind that this alternative way of supplying written corrective feedback can greatly benefit both

teachers and learners. But here, too, since teacher educators are rather unfamiliar with the very concept and its great potential, it is suggested that they first be given instruction in its fundamentals, in how it works best, in its variations, and in how it can benefit both learners and teachers. As with CR, this knowledge could then be promulgated to student teachers and to practicing teachers during pre-service and in-service training programs.

### ***5.2.3 Implications for Curriculum Development***

Owing to the fact that materials developed for EFL/ESL instruction are widely used by numerous universities and language schools/institutes, they play an important role in broadening the employment scope of both CR instruction and OC practices. In other words, curriculum developers, by designing and including CRT in English textbooks, can expedite the process of language learning. Similarly, where, in English textbooks, learners are given writing topics, materials developers can include introductory sections on how OC operates and what its benefits are. Upon doing so, teachers and learners could be asked to arrange such conferencing sessions and participate in them.

### ***5.3 Suggestions for Further Research***

As was stated above, the provision of corrective feedback has long been regarded as an essential part of the pedagogy of writing. This was formerly done through more conventional types of feedback and the related literature bristles with numerous studies attempting to elucidate the strengths and weaknesses of such ways of supplying feedback. In recent years, however, there has been a dramatic shift in this area towards more alternative ways of providing feedback and this seems to be transforming, at least to some extent, the writing pedagogy. The present study aimed at casting light on the effectiveness of one of these alternative feedback types, that is, OC. The related literature concerning alternative feedback types, nevertheless, seems to be scanty and far from conclusive. Interested researchers could, thus, further delve into the effectiveness of such alternative feedback types as OC, peer response, portfolio assessment, self-assessment, computer-delivered feedback, and writing workshops on the achievements of EFL/ESL learners in writing.

Moreover, due to the limitations this study suffered from, future studies could be conducted, supplying both genders with feedback through teacher-student conferences, so as to determine which gender benefits more from such conferences. One could also do such research, taking advanced-

level, as well as intermediate-level, EFL learners as its participants, in order to investigate the level at which participants most benefit from OC. Further, regarding the fact that the literature proposes two variations as the basis of OC, one-to-one or group conferencing, interested investigators can carry out research, comparing the effectiveness of these variations with each other. In addition, one could employ OC so as to provide feedback on other areas of language, e.g., grammar or pronunciation, and determine whether it can improve these other areas as well. Last but not least, it is suggested that future research be done, varying the language factor. In other words, future research could provide feedback to EFL/ESL learners through OC in two separate, experimental groups, in one group through English, and in the other through the participants' mother tongue, and determine which group would make more progress in terms of the language area in question.

Considering CR and taking into consideration the limitations, imposed upon the present study, future research studies may investigate the effectiveness of CRT on other language skills and components. These studies may also be conducted with participants of the opposite sex, female learners, or may be carried out with participants within two different age ranges, young learners and adult learners. Finally, the language level of the participants could as well be taken into account, that is, to investigate

whether CR instruction tends to be more effective at a certain level of language proficiency.

#### **5.4 *Final Remark***

Although the related literature on the emergence, status, and effectiveness of OC, as an alternative to more conventional feedback types, and CR instruction abound with various studies, the present study could be regarded as being unique in that it attempted to compare the impact of these two techniques of enhancing writing ability. In other words, while numerous studies have aimed at shedding light on the effectiveness of either approach to enhancing writing pedagogy, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research study, to date, has compared their effectiveness with each other. It is noteworthy to further point out the fact that while both OC and CR instruction improved the writing performance of the participants of this study, feedback provided through OC proved to result in significantly better writing performance, when compared with CR instruction.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX (A)

### Preliminary English Test (PET)

#### *Paper 1 Reading and Writing (1 hour 30 minutes)*

#### Reading

#### Part 1

**Questions 1–5**  
Look at the text in each question.  
What does it say?  
Mark the correct letter A, B or C on your answer sheet.

**Example:**

0

**Use these doors only  
in an emergency.**

A You must never leave by these doors.  
B The doors can be used if necessary.  
C Only some people can use these doors.

Answer: 0 

A	<b>B</b>	C
---	----------	---

---

1

**Jaques**  
Can you tell Louisa I can't go out tonight? I've lost her phone number and I don't know her address! Thanks.  
Marco

What does Marco want Jaques to do?  
A tell him Louisa's phone number  
B give somebody a message  
C visit Louisa at home

2

*Please ask at hotel  
reception for a copy of  
our winter prices.*

A The price of some rooms has increased.  
B Prices are the same all year.  
C The receptionist has a list of how much rooms cost.

3

## Warning

Road works starting next month.  
Please use other routes where possible.

- A There are traffic problems on this route today.
- B You should start planning to travel a different way.
- C There will be delays for the next four weeks.

4

## NOTICE

### Exam Students

Please hand in your entry forms by 16th March. Anyone who does not will not be entered for the exam.

- A You can only take the exam if you have completed an entry form.
- B It is possible to take the exam if you give in a form after 16th March.
- C You cannot take the exam if you have failed it before.

### Tip

If there are negative words like *no*, *not*, *no one*, etc. think carefully about the meaning.

5

## MESSAGE

To: Jaime  
From: Your English Teacher

Jaime – The bus didn't arrive and there isn't another one for thirty minutes. We'll add an extra hour to next week's lesson instead.

Jaime's English teacher is going to

- A cancel next week's lesson.
- B increase the time of next week's lesson.
- C arrive late for next week's lesson.

## Reading

### Part 2

#### Questions 6–10

The people below are all planning to take up a new activity. On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight classes. Decide which class would be the most suitable for the following people. For questions 6–10, mark the correct letter (A–H) on your answer sheet.

When you have chosen your answers, check once again that the three you haven't used from A–H don't match any of the people.

6



Pablo works with computers and feels he needs to do something that will keep him fit. He isn't sure what to do so he'd like to be able to try an activity before making a final decision.

7



Sally is a waitress and works a lot of hours at different times of the day and evening. She'd like to be able to do something creative in her own time.

8



Maria is a student and would like to do an activity during the day. She enjoys team games and is keen to play regularly.

9



Robert wants to take up an activity that will give him plenty of contact with other people. He is confident and enjoys performing.

10



Helen has a busy and stressful job and wants to find a way of relaxing that she can also do at home. She wants to look better and feel better!

## Free Time

### A **Art Scene**

You don't have to be Picasso to learn to draw and paint in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Our evening course includes trips to art galleries and visits by local artists.

### B **Pen to Paper**

To help you become a first-class writer, we offer you a home-study course. We have excellent tutors who will guide you through the course and show you how to make the most of your ability. Write and study when and where you want. It couldn't be easier.

### C **Mind and Body**

Try yoga to help you deal with life's worries! It can also help improve the way you look and develop concentration. Best of all, once you've learned the basics, it's something you can do anywhere.

### D **Lunchtime Fun**

Fed up with sitting about in your lunch hour wondering what to do? Get your sports clothes on and come down to Rivertime Leisure Centre for lunchtime basketball. Every Tuesday and Thursday.

### E **Get started in IT**

If you're interested in computers and you're not sure what direction to take, try a weekend course at one of our centres. Get familiar with computer basics, then move on to one of our 12-week courses.

### F **What's Cooking?**

Would you like to create fantastic meals and dinner parties for your friends, or do you simply have trouble making an omelette? If the answer is 'yes' to either of these questions, why not try one of our Friday evening cooking classes? You'll always have ideas for the weekend!

### G **Salsa for Beginners**

Dancing is great exercise! Find out if it's for you with our free 'Salsa for Beginners'. Spend an hour having fun in a lively class. We're sure you'll want to book straight onto one of our courses after that!

### H **On Stage**

If you'd like something new and interesting to do, why not join the Talking Theatre Group? We work hard but we have a lot of fun too! We put on two shows a year for local people, which are always very popular.

## Reading

### Part 3

#### Questions 11–20

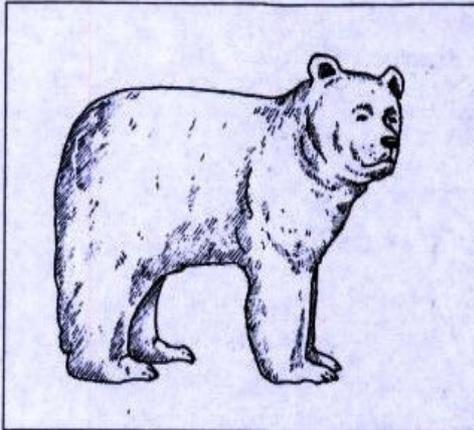
Look at the sentences below about trips to the Great Bear Rainforest.  
Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.  
If it is correct, mark **A** on your answer sheet.  
If it is not correct, mark **B** on your answer sheet.

- 11 The Great Bear Rainforest is divided into several parts.
- 12 Spirit Bears can only be found in the Great Bear Rainforest.
- 13 You can have various kinds of holiday on the island.
- 14 People who live in the area welcome tourists.
- 15 The bears appear when the fish are returning to the Pacific Ocean.
- 16 Knight Inlet is in the middle of the rainforest.
- 17 Guests at Knight Inlet travel straight to the river by boat.
- 18 There is a choice of places to see the bears from.
- 19 Tourists can watch the bears all year round.
- 20 All tourists must sleep more than one night at Campbell River.

#### *Tip*

Check your answers carefully: match the words you underlined in 11–20 with the meaning in the text.

## Explore The Great Bear Rainforest



The Great Bear Rainforest is on an island on British Columbia's central coast, in Canada. The rainforest is the largest remaining piece of unbroken rainforest in the world and is full of interesting plants, birds and 5 animals, including the Spirit Bear. It is thought that there are no more than 400 of these bears in the whole of the Great Bear Rainforest – and they don't exist anywhere else in the world.

The Island is a fantastic place to go bear and whale 10 watching. It is also a great place to go diving, snorkelling and fishing. Even better, tourism is

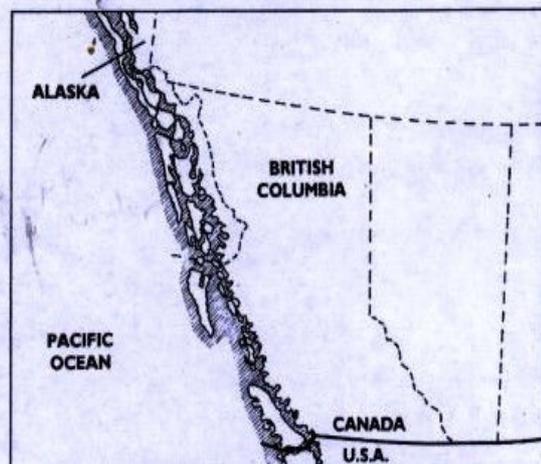
encouraged by local people and conservationists, as it shows that money can be made from the island without changing it, and this helps to protect the rainforest.

One of the best times to visit the island is mid-September. This is when salmon return in great numbers from 15 the Pacific Ocean to the streams and rivers of British Columbia's west coast. It is also when the bears come out to hunt them!

Knight Inlet is a place well known for its population of grizzly bears. It is on the southern edge of the Great Bear Rainforest. There can be up to 40 bears within a few miles during autumn when the fish are swimming up the river. Guests who stay at Knight Inlet start their adventure with a boat ride. They then board a small 20 bus and travel through the northern rainforest to the river. They can go to five different viewing platforms, in three different areas, which are specially built to provide a safe and comfortable place to watch the bears from. It is not uncommon to see 10–15 bears on the river at a time.

Autumn isn't the only season that grizzly bears go to the area. Starting in April, when they've woken from their winter sleep, both black and grizzly bears arrive to feed on the new spring growth. Even in mid-summer, 25 when many of the bears have moved into the forests for their food, you can see several bears each day.

Knight Inlet offers wildlife viewing holidays ranging from one to seven nights for our spring, 30 summer and autumn bear viewing. All their holidays begin at Campbell River and include one night in one of the two hotels there. This is essential because the plane journey to Knight Inlet starts very early in the morning.



## Reading

### Part 4

#### Questions 21–25

Read the text and questions below.

For each question, mark the correct letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet.

### Are you shopping too much?

Shopping used to be my favourite activity. It started when I was a teenager and I worked in a clothes shop. I had a staff discount in the shop and I used to spend all my wages on clothes. When I got a job in an office I carried on spending all my spare money on clothes – even after I had got married, bought a house and had children!

- 5 I used to go shopping every weekend and I probably spent about £500 a month on clothes. It wasn't something I only did when I wasn't very happy, I always went shopping however I felt. Sometimes I'd look for ages to find what I wanted. Other times, I'd just buy the first thing I saw.

- 10 Most of the things I didn't need. One day I bought three pairs of boots, even though I already had another ten pairs at home. I never even took the most expensive pair out of the box!

- 15 I realised I had a problem when one day my five-year-old daughter looked into my wardrobe and asked me why I had so many handbags. I counted them. I had seventy-five handbags and they must have cost me thousands of pounds. I couldn't believe what I'd done!

First of all, I threw away my credit card. Then I gave away all the clothes that I'd never worn. After that I made arrangements every Saturday to visit friends or go on a day trip, so I wouldn't be able to go shopping.

- 21 What is the writer's main aim in writing the text?
- A to advise people how to shop sensibly
  - B to talk about her expensive way of living
  - C to describe her addiction to shopping
  - D to talk about different fashions
- 22 What does the writer say about herself after she got married?
- A She tried to stop spending so much.
  - B She managed to spend less than before.
  - C She continued spending unwisely.
  - D She became depressed about her spending.

- 23** What does the writer say about her past shopping habits?
- A She only bought expensive clothes.
  - B She always thought carefully about what she bought.
  - C She liked to buy something different every day.
  - D She sometimes bought things she already had.
- 24** How did the writer feel when she realised she had a problem?
- A shocked
  - B embarrassed
  - C angry with herself
  - D miserable
- 25** Which of the following is the best description of the writer?
- A The woman who grew up loving clothes and looked fantastic in everything she wore.
  - B The woman who recognised her problem but failed to change herself.
  - C The woman who loved collecting clothes and succeeded in fighting her habit.
  - D The woman who shopped and shopped until she had no money left to spend.

## Reading

### Part 5

#### Questions 26–35

Read the text below and choose the correct word for each space.

For each question, mark the correct letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet.

Example:

0 A in B on C at D of

Answer: 0 

A	B	C	D
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### The Cannes Film Festival

The Cannes Film Festival is the most famous film festival (0) ..... the world. (26) ..... a film is presented there it is immediately famous. The festival is (27) ..... where some of the film industry's most important business takes place and where many actors and directors (28) ..... stars.

The (29) ..... began in 1939 when the French government (30) ..... to have an international festival. They chose Cannes, (31) ..... is in southern France, because it is a sunny and beautiful town. In fact, Cannes was (32) ..... seen as a fashionable place to go. The festival was put (33) ..... until after the war and finally took place on September 20, 1946. At (34) ....., the festival was mainly a tourist and a social event. However, as more and more films were (35) ..... it was seen as something much more important. Today it has become the most important event of the year for the film industry.

- 26 A Although B Whether C If D As  
27 A and B too C also D else  
28 A become B turn C get D change  
29 A fact B idea C opinion D view  
30 A decided B thought C considered D wondered  
31 A where B what C who D which  
32 A yet B even C already D ever  
33 A off B away C on D through  
34 A least B first C once D last  
35 A done B had C tried D shown

#### Tip

When you have finished read the whole text again to check your answers make sense.

## Writing

### Part 1

#### Questions 1–5

Here are some sentences about television.

For each question, complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first.

Use no more than three words.

Write only the missing words on your answer sheet.

You may use this page for any rough work.

Example:

0 We left the cinema because the film was so boring.

It was ..... a boring film that we left the cinema.

Answer: 0 such

1 You should switch off the TV and do something more interesting.

If I were you ..... switch off the TV and do something more interesting.

2 When I was a child I loved watching cartoons.

I used ..... watching cartoons when I was a child.

**Tip**

Be careful with verbs. Make sure that the tense or form you write is correct.

3 I prefer watching films to watching documentaries.

I like watching films ..... watching documentaries.

4 That programme was made in America.

They ..... that programme in America.

5 I find games shows boring.

I get ..... by game shows.

## Writing

### Part 2

#### Question 6

You forgot your friend Paul's birthday.

Write a note to Paul. In your note, you should

- apologise for forgetting his birthday
- suggest you take him out for a meal
- say when you are free.

Write 35–45 words on your answer sheet.

#### Tip

Look at the verbs like *thank, suggest, tell, offer, invite, etc.* Don't just repeat these verbs in your answer – think about what to write that has the meaning of these verbs.

## Writing

### Part 3

Write an answer to one of the questions (7 or 8) in this part.  
Write your answer in about 100 words on your answer sheet.  
Put the question number in the box at the top of your answer sheet.

#### Question 7

- Your English teacher has asked you to write a story.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

*I was surprised when I arrived at the bus stop.*

- Write your story on your answer sheet.

#### Tip

Plan your ideas before you start.  
Think of the best order to put them in.

#### Question 8

- This is part of a letter you receive from your English penfriend, Jane.

I really like basketball. What's your favourite sport?

- Now write a letter to Jane, telling her about your favourite sport.
- Write your letter on your answer sheet.

#### Tip

Begin 'Dear ...' and write a suitable ending, e.g. 'Love from ...'.

**Paper2 Listening (about 30 minutes)**

**Listening**

**Part 1**

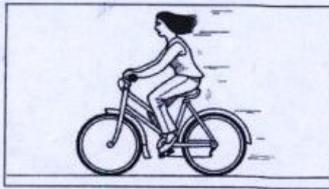
**Questions 1–7**

There are seven questions in this part.

For each question there are three pictures and a short recording. Choose the correct picture and put a tick (✓) in the box below it.

Example: How does the woman travel to work?

Mark in pencil the answer you think is right. Check it on the *second* listening. Don't worry if you can't do one question, leave it and go on to the next one.



A

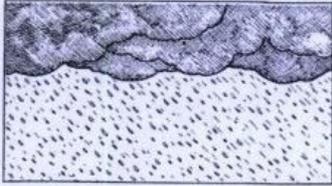


B

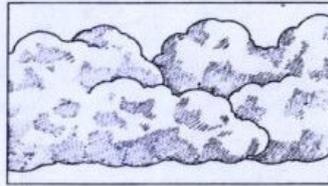


C

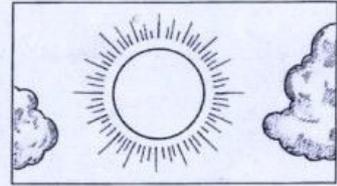
1 What will the weather be like tomorrow?



A

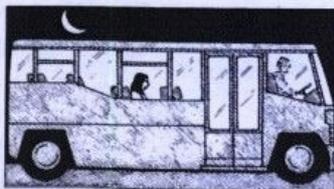


B



C

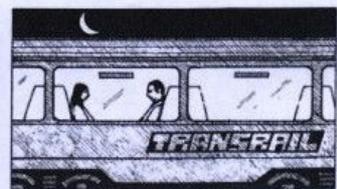
2 How did Sarah get home last night?



A



B



C

3 What would the man like to do on his birthday?



A

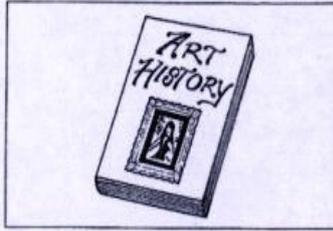


B



C

4 Which book did the woman buy?



A

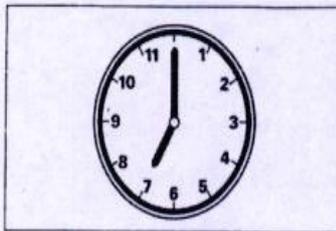


B

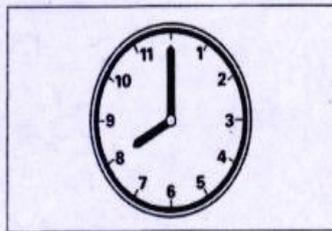


C

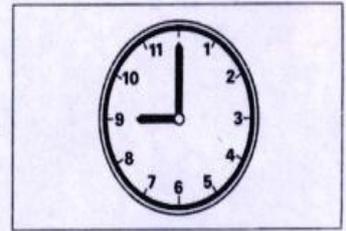
5 What time does the supermarket close today?



A



B

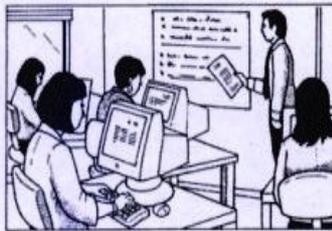


C

6 Where is Mary?



A



B



C

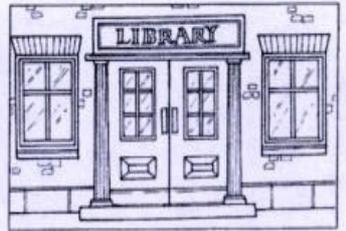
7 Where are they going to meet?



A



B



C

## Listening

### Part 2

#### Questions 8–13

You will hear an interview with an organiser at a tennis club.  
For each question, put a tick (✓) in the correct box.

- |   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 8 Chris hopes to                                      | A encourage people to join the club.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B discover new talented players.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C find more people to teach players.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 What does Chris say about club nights?              | A They are held only in the summer.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B There is sometimes a small charge.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C Refreshments are provided each night.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 The teaching programme                             | A is offered to people with membership only.            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B is available to people wanting to learn on their own. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C must be paid for in advance.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 From spring, the tennis club is going to           | A introduce junior club night.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B encourage parents to help with teaching.              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C provide snacks on junior club night.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 Who is responsible for organising the club nights? | A unpaid members  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B various office workers                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C the teaching staff                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 The junior competition is                          | A intended as practice for more serious competitions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | B for advanced players only.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | C held in March.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Tip

When you tick the box make it clear so you are sure of your answers when you write them on the answer sheet. Make sure you put the right answer with the right question number.

## Listening

### Part 3

#### Questions 14–19

You will hear somebody talking about trips on the river.  
For each question, fill in the missing information in the numbered space.

If the answer is a number, you can write a word or a number. Be careful with numbers like 13 and 30.

### River Cruises

#### Private parties

Groups: Minimum 10 people

Maximum (14) ..... people

Available all year round

Trips last 2–5 hours in the evening or (15) .....

Food: Cold buffet or (16) .....

Must be ordered at least (17) ..... before

#### Cost

Boat hire includes disco or (18) .....

Extra cost for live entertainment

#### Bookings:

Through website, by telephone or at the (19) ..... in the leisure centre.

## Listening

### Part 4

#### Questions 20–25

Look at the six sentences for this part.

You will hear a conversation between a girl, Maria, and a boy, Dominic, about keeping fit.

Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.

If it is correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under A for YES. If it is not correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under B for NO.

#### *Tip*

Make sure you know who is speaking.

There will always be one male and one female speaker.

	A	B
	YES	NO
20 Maria and Dominic agree that running a marathon would be enjoyable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 Maria is worried that running will be boring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 Maria regularly does exercise classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23 Dominic thinks Maria will feel uncomfortable running in public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 Dominic would feel happier running alone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 Dominic thinks Maria needs to make an effort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX (B)

### Written English Test

#### *Topic 1*

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**The Local Council in the area where you live has decided to demolish an old historical building to build a shopping centre. Write a letter to the head of the Council. In your letter:**

- **explain why it is important to preserve the building**
- **suggest how the building can be used to benefit the local community**
- **suggest another place for the shopping centre**

Write at least 150 words.

#### *Topic 2*

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**You are planning to spend a two-week holiday in an English-speaking country where you have a friend. You need some advice about travelling there. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter:**

- **explain why you have decided to visit the country and give some details of your trip**
- **ask about the places you should visit**
- **ask if you can stay at your friend's place for a few days**

Write at least 150 words.

### ***Topic 3***

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

**In some countries, young people often decide to work or travel for a time before they start their university studies. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of doing this.**

**Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.**

Write at least 250 words.

#### ***Topic 4***

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

**The Internet has dramatically changed the way we access information. Some people think that there is a lot of harmful content with very little regulation online, and argue that strict policies are needed to regulate the Internet. Others oppose this view and think that the Internet should not be regulated.**

**Discuss both of these views and give your own opinion. Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.**

Write at least 250 words.

#### ***Topic 5***

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

**Some people are concerned that children spend too much time on computers- playing games, chatting and watching videos. But all this time is actually good preparation for children, who will have to spend**

**many hours working on computers throughout their education and their working lives.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.**

Write at least 250 words.

### ***Topic 6***

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

**Some countries invest a lot of money in space research. While some people believe that this money could be better used to solve other problems on Earth (for example, environmental problems), others argue that space research brings many benefits for life on Earth.**

**Discuss both of these views and give your own opinion. Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.**

Write at least 250 words.

*Topic 7*

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

**Some people think that recent innovations in technology have made life more comfortable and helped us to be more efficient by saving us time, while others argue that technology has made us less efficient.**

**Discuss both of these views and give your own opinion. Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.**

Write at least 250 words.

## APPENDIX (C)

### Jacobs et al.'s (1981) ESL Composition Profile

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE			
STUDENT	DATE	TOPIC	
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>CONTENT</b>	30-27 26-22 21-17 16-13	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic <b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail <b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic <b>VERY POOR:</b> does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	20-18 17-14 13-10 9-7	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/ supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive <b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing <b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development <b>VERY POOR:</b> does not communicate • no organization • OR not enough to evaluate	
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	20-18 17-14 13-10 9-7	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> sophisticated range • effective word/ idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register <b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage <i>but meaning not obscured</i> <b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • <i>meaning confused or obscured</i> <b>VERY POOR:</b> essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate	
<b>LANGUAGE USE</b>	25-22 21-18 17-11 10-5	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions <b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions <i>but meaning seldom obscured</i> <b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • <i>meaning confused or obscured</i> <b>VERY POOR:</b> virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate	
<b>MECHANICS</b>	5 4 3 2	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing <b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing <i>but meaning not obscured</i> <b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • <i>meaning confused or obscured</i> <b>VERY POOR:</b> no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	

## APPENDIX (D)

### Sample Coursebook Texts and CRT

#### Coursebook Text 1 and CRT

3.2

**Reading**

5 Read the text about top cities. Does it mention any of the cities you thought of in Ex. 4b?



### Top Cities

Have you ever walked around a city and thought, 'this is Paradise'? Or maybe, 'this is the ugliest, most polluted, dangerous, frightening place I've ever been to and I can't wait to get out'?

Most of us have. And that's why most of us like to know about the place before we go there. One thing we can do is read a good guide book. Another is to look at a new survey conducted by William Mercer, one of the world's largest Human Resources consultancies.

Mercer decided to judge some of the world's great cities. They produced their results by giving marks for various criteria. These included political, economic and social environment, healthcare, educational provision, recreation and transport infrastructure.

So, which are the best cities to live in, and which should we avoid? In joint first place were Vancouver, Bern, Vienna and Zurich while Sydney, Geneva, Auckland and Copenhagen came second. Swiss cities occupied three of the top ten

places, making it the single most successful country of all those surveyed. New York was used as the base city with a score of 100, which put it in 50th place. Overall, US cities suffered because of high crime rates. The highest ranked US city was Honolulu with 104 points.

For Londoners, the news was not too bad. London was slightly ahead of New York with 101.5. The report named London's good international relations as a positive point. Its poorest scores – six

out of ten – were awarded for its climate and traffic. Bottom of the list was Brazzaville, in the Congo, where there has been a civil war for many years.

Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, last night said it was unfair to compare large international cities with small cities since the smaller ones were far easier to run. 'You have to look at cities of five million people plus. On that basis we're much better than Tokyo and New York,' said Mr Livingstone.

Adopted from *Total English: Students' book* (1<sup>st</sup> ed., Vol. 4)

**Answer the following questions on your own.**

- 1) What is the main idea of the text?
- 2) When reading through the text, can you notice any specific examples, details or facts which support the main idea of the text?
- 3) Read the text and list all the tenses used. Why has the writer used different tenses? Do different tenses serve different purposes?
- 4) Circle all the punctuation marks in the text. Do you think it is possible to use one punctuation mark with another one, for instance, a *comma* in place of a *full stop*?

What purposes do punctuation marks serve? Is the proper use of them important? If yes, why?

- 5) Underline all the articles used in the text. Can you classify them into two groups?

How does the application of *the definite article* differ from that of *the indefinite articles*?

**Now check your answers in pairs/groups.**

## It's never too late ...

### Ella Scotchmer, 104

Ella took up solo travelling at the age of 96, touring the USA for three months on a Greyhound bus. She enjoys exercising, and has recently taken up tai chi.

'I don't think I look my age, so people don't believe I'm 104. Up until a couple of years ago, I was still bowling and swimming and doing all manner of things. I can't remember how many cruises I've been on since I turned 100. I've done the Norwegian fjords, the Canaries, the Caribbean. In the future, I'd still like to go to Mexico, and I haven't been to Malta or Gibraltar yet. I'll just have to wait and see what happens.'



'I don't think I look my age, so people don't believe I'm 104.'

### Elizabeth Collins, 94

Elizabeth Collins is the wife of the famous British artist Cecil Collins, but she is also an artist herself. In her nineties, she was able to sell some work to the Tate Gallery, London.

'When my husband died eight years ago it made work easier – although in some ways much harder. Alone, you can easily get into a negative hole. But I think my painting now is wiser, more understanding about life, and innocent. It's not about being old; you paint when you have time or possibility. I have that possibility now. I've thought of dying quite a lot. I like the idea. But it's got to be the right time. I walk into the traffic all the time without looking. I could get hit but I don't. Obviously, it's not the right time for me yet.'



**Answer the following questions on your own.**

1) What is the first sentence of the text? Is it related to the title of the text?  
If yes, how?

2) Look at the other sentences of the text. Are they related to the first sentence of the text? If yes, how?

3) Look at the highlighted words. What part of speech are they? Where are they used in relation to verbs, nouns or adjectives?

4) Find all the pronouns in the text. Are their referents clear?

5) Which words are written in capitals and why?

**Now check your answers in pairs/groups.**

## APPENDIX (E)

### Sample Authentic Texts and CRT

#### *Authentic Text 1 and CRT*

**How can we produce more energy but lower carbon emissions?**



**Livio Accattatis has an answer.**

Shell believes that most global businesses could significantly reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions. And to prove it, we started with our own. Livio Accattatis is Principal Consultant on Energise™, a Shell initiative designed to drive energy efficiency and reduce emissions across our businesses globally. Livio and his team have already cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 620,000 metric tonnes\* a year from eight Shell manufacturing plants alone. It's about satisfying the growing demand for energy across the globe, without sacrificing our environment in the process. Find out how we're reducing greenhouse gas emissions at [shell.com/livio](http://shell.com/livio)

Energise™ is a Shell Group Trademark  
\*equivalent of 683,000 short tons

Adopted from *NewScientist* (2006, December 2).

**Answer the following questions on your own.**

1) What message does the writer intend to convey? (What is the text about?)

2) Are any examples, details or facts provided to support the writer's message? Do you think they are enough?

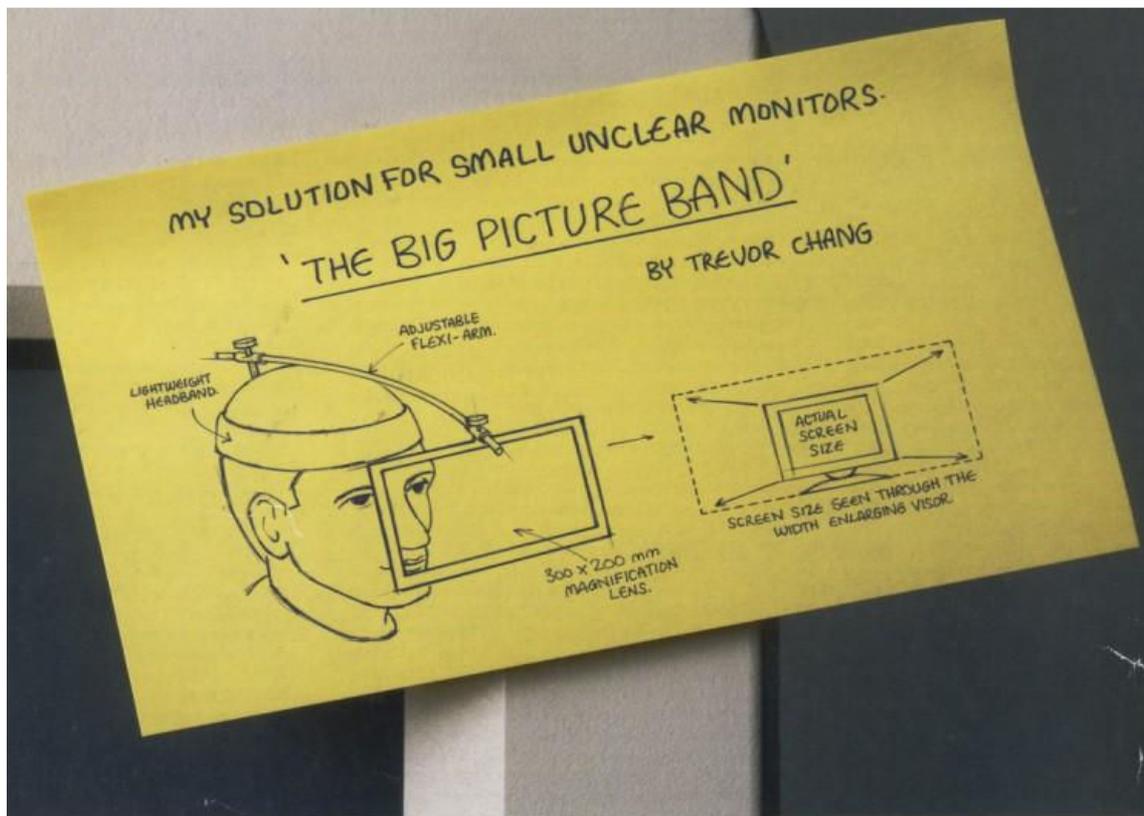
What examples, details or facts would you provide if you were to write on the same topic?

3) Which words in the text can you find that are related to one another, either in meaning or in grammar? Do they help the reader to better understand the text?

4) Which words are written in capitals and why?

**Now check your answers in pairs/groups.**

*Authentic Text 2 and CRT*



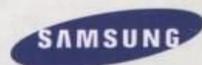
**Samsung SyncMaster 225BW specifications**

Efficient business working by:

- 22" viewable screen with 1680 x 1050 resolution for viewing multiple documents
- Height adjustable up to 10cm
- One-touch automatic set-up

Whereas, the new Samsung SyncMaster 225BW 22" widescreen monitor increases the clarity of your screen images without doing damage to your personal one.

Imagine how much better it would be if you could view multiple documents at the same time without having to strain your eyes staring at small images on your monitor. Especially when you're stuck behind your desk for most of the day. The new Samsung SyncMaster 225BW widescreen monitor has a 22" screen and a resolution of 1680 x 1050 – producing clearer, sharper images that won't damage your eyes. Just another example of the care and attention we put into the design of our business products. To see the other ways our reliability and innovation can make your business better visit [www.makingbusinessbetter.com](http://www.makingbusinessbetter.com) With Samsung it's not that hard to imagine.



"Samsung" and the Samsung logo are registered trademarks of Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd with trademark registrations being held in/covering Korea and/or other countries around the World in which Samsung Electronics operates.

Adopted from *NewScientist* (2006, December 2).

**Answer the following questions on your own.**

- 1) What is the text about?
- 2) Which sentence in the text shows the main idea of the text?
- 3) Read the text carefully and write down all the words which are repeated and all the words which are related to one another (in meaning).

Repeated words	Related words

Why do you think these words are used? Don't they make the text boring and difficult to read or is it vice versa?

- 4) Look for the punctuation marks used and determine where and why each is used?

**Now check your answers in pairs/groups.**

*Authentic Text 3 and CRT*

*bright futures*

Diamond Light Source is currently building the largest scientific research facility to be built in the UK for 30 years. The Diamond synchrotron will produce extremely intense light beams, mainly as X-rays, that can penetrate deep inside all kinds of matter from proteins to plastics to support world class research. The synchrotron is being built 10 miles south of Oxford and the first beamlines will be operational in early 2007.

*World leading facility requires world class scientists*

**Detector Group Leader** Ref. DIA0269/SB  
**Detector Scientist** Ref. DIA0270/SB

The Detector Group in Diamond is responsible for the specification, procurement, installation and commissioning of detector systems. These systems will ensure that the superb capabilities of the beamlines can be fully exploited to deliver high quality data to users. The Detector Group is also responsible for a detector development programme which will have significant benefits for beamline operation.

**Advanced dichroism experiments (BLADE) Beamline Scientist** Ref. DIA0271/SB

We are looking for a world-class scientist who can contribute to the detailed design, construction and operation of the advanced dichroism beamline. The beamline will operate in the soft X-ray region and will be equipped for both x-ray and electron spectroscopy. It will be a key resource for both UK and international scientists working in the field of magnetism in low dimensional systems.

We offer a competitive salary (dependant upon qualifications and experience), comprehensive benefits, a final salary pension scheme and flexible working hours.

**Please visit [www.diamond.ac.uk](http://www.diamond.ac.uk) for further information about our vacancies. Electronic application forms are preferred. These are available from our website and should be submitted to [recruitment@diamond.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@diamond.ac.uk). Application forms are also available by telephoning our recruitment line on 01235 778218 (answerphone) or by faxing 01235 778171, quoting the appropriate reference number.**

*Closing date: Friday 5th January 2007*  
*Interviews: February 2007*

 **diamond**

Diamond Light Source Ltd, Diamond House, Chilton, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 0DE

Adopted from *The economist*. (2007, August 25).

**Answer the following questions on your own.**

1) What is the title of the text?

2) Look at the first sentence of the text. Is it related to the text title?

3) Now read the following sentences. Are they related to the text title and the first sentence of the text or are they about different subjects?

4) Find and write down all the words in the text that are written in upper case. Why do you think this is?

5) When reading through the text, is it easy for you to follow the writer's train of thought? If yes, how do you think this is possible?

**Now check your answers in pairs/groups.**

## APPENDIX (F)

### Raw Scores of the Participants on the Pretest and the Posttest

#### *OC Group*

PreImp1	PreImp2	PreImp3	PreAna1	PreAna1	PreAna2	PostImp1	PostImp2	PostImp3	Postana1	PostAna2	PostAna3
63.0	72.0	61.0	61.0	71.0	60.0	73.0	82.0	73.0	71.0	81.0	71.0
50.0	67.0	57.0	51.0	67.0	58.0	61.0	76.0	68.0	59.0	72.0	69.0
56.0	65.0	64.0	54.0	62.0	57.0	63.0	73.0	73.0	62.0	72.0	71.0
60.0	66.0	65.0	62.0	64.0	62.0	69.0	73.0	74.0	67.0	71.0	73.0
55.0	57.0	58.0	51.0	53.0	51.0	67.0	67.0	68.0	66.0	62.0	65.0
60.0	62.0	61.0	59.0	61.0	61.0	72.0	73.0	74.0	71.0	70.0	71.0
70.0	73.0	74.0	70.0	71.0	70.0	79.0	81.0	82.0	76.0	78.0	76.0
57.0	59.0	61.0	54.0	57.0	62.0	63.0	68.0	67.0	61.0	67.0	64.0
56.0	57.0	58.0	54.0	52.0	52.0	69.0	71.0	70.0	67.0	70.0	68.0
65.0	68.0	69.0	62.0	63.0	65.0	74.0	75.0	76.0	71.0	72.0	74.0
63.0	65.0	67.0	62.0	62.0	61.0	72.0	77.0	76.0	69.0	74.0	75.0
57.0	57.0	59.0	54.0	53.0	56.0	75.0	75.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	71.0

52.0 53.0 58.0 51.0 51.0 56.0 58.0 57.0 58.0 57.0 56.0 56.0  
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60.0 61.0 61.0 57.0 60.0 59.0 75.0 76.0 74.0 72.0 78.0 79.0  
56.0 57.0 59.0 53.0 54.0 58.0 72.0 73.0 78.0 71.0 77.0 79.0  
55.0 55.0 58.0 52.0 53.0 54.0 69.0 68.0 70.0 69.0 71.0 72.0  
54.0 58.0 56.0 53.0 56.0 51.0 53.0 56.0 56.0 56.0 58.0 58.0  
75.0 73.0 78.0 72.0 73.0 71.0 84.0 83.0 82.0 80.0 79.0 79.0  
68.0 69.0 69.0 63.0 68.0 61.0 75.0 78.0 76.0 74.0 75.0 79.0  
67.0 69.0 62.0 68.0 63.0 65.0 74.0 78.0 76.0 71.0 73.0 79.0

65.0 66.0 66.0 62.0 61.0 64.0 67.0 67.0 67.0 62.0 65.0 68.0

59.0 60.0 61.0 57.0 59.0 64.0 67.0 63.0 67.0 65.0 61.0 63.0

66.0 69.0 68.0 65.0 63.0 67.0 74.0 72.0 75.0 71.0 69.0 72.0

### ***CR Group***

PreImp1	PreImp2	PreImp3	PreAna1	PreAna1	PreAna2	PostImp1	PostImp2	PostImp3	Postana1	PostAna2	PostAna3
59.0	61.0	62.0	57.0	59.0	61.0	71.0	72.0	69.0	67.0	68.0	67.0
57.0	57.0	53.0	52.0	54.0	51.0	58.0	59.0	56.0	57.0	57.0	54.0
59.0	59.0	62.0	57.0	56.0	57.0	62.0	65.0	65.0	60.0	62.0	62.0
59.0	59.0	58.0	59.0	61.0	62.0	63.0	67.0	65.0	60.0	64.0	61.0
63.0	64.0	65.0	63.0	61.0	62.0	66.0	67.0	67.0	61.0	62.0	63.0
55.0	55.0	57.0	52.0	53.0	58.0	62.0	64.0	65.0	60.0	60.0	61.0
67.0	68.0	69.0	62.0	63.0	64.0	72.0	73.0	74.0	68.0	67.0	73.0
69.0	69.0	72.0	64.0	63.0	71.0	74.0	75.0	74.0	71.0	72.0	71.0
73.0	71.0	73.0	72.0	68.0	72.0	75.0	74.0	76.0	72.0	71.0	73.0
73.0	72.0	74.0	72.0	74.0	71.0	76.0	75.0	78.0	74.0	73.0	74.0
75.0	76.0	77.0	71.0	73.0	70.0	74.0	73.0	74.0	71.0	70.0	73.0
52.0	53.0	49.0	41.0	46.0	52.0	61.0	63.0	62.0	60.0	64.0	64.0
58.0	56.0	61.0	51.0	52.0	58.0	64.0	65.0	64.0	62.0	63.0	63.0
59.0	59.0	58.0	61.0	62.0	61.0	63.0	63.0	62.0	60.0	61.0	62.0
68.0	68.0	63.0	69.0	67.0	65.0	72.0	67.0	71.0	68.0	67.0	69.0
72.0	71.0	72.0	70.0	71.0	69.0	73.0	72.0	71.0	71.0	71.0	70.0
75.0	74.0	75.0	76.0	72.0	76.0	74.0	73.0	74.0	75.0	73.0	75.0
74.0	76.0	74.0	73.0	71.0	73.0	76.0	79.0	78.0	73.0	76.0	75.0
68.0	72.0	71.0	62.0	64.0	62.0	74.0	76.0	71.0	72.0	73.0	72.0

71.0 69.0 72.0 70.0 65.0 70.0 74.0 75.0 75.0 76.0 73.0 75.0  
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71.0 72.0 75.0 68.0 65.0 69.0 73.0 78.0 78.0 71.0 73.0 74.0  
69.0 68.0 69.0 71.0 73.0 68.0 77.0 79.0 81.0 73.0 72.0 76.0  
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61.0 62.0 68.0 62.0 63.0 62.0 68.0 67.0 67.0 67.0 65.0 67.0  
62.0 61.0 58.0 61.0 60.0 59.0 60.0 61.0 62.0 60.0 58.0 59.0

## APPENDIX (G)

### Inter-Rater Reliability Coefficients

#### *Correlation Coefficients (Pretest)*

		PreImp	PreImp	PreImp	PreAna	PreAna	PreAna
		1	2	3	1	2	3
PreImp 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.901**	.926**	.953**	.854**	.912**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PreImp 2	Pearson Correlation	.901**	1	.892**	.881**	.930**	.868**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PreImp 3	Pearson Correlation	.926**	.892**	1	.887**	.836**	.895**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61

PreAna	Pearson	.953**	.881**	.887**	1	.896**	.919**
1	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PreAna	Pearson	.854**	.930**	.836**	.896**	1	.851**
2	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PreAna	Pearson	.912**	.868**	.895**	.919**	.851**	1
3	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61

*Correlation Coefficients (Posttest)*

		PostImp	PostImp	PostImp	PostAna	PostAna	PostAna
		1	2	3	1	2	3
PostImp 1	Pearson	1	.897**	.936**	.971**	.858**	.887**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
N		61	61	61	61	61	61
PostImp 2	Pearson	.897**	1	.935**	.866**	.945**	.903**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
N		61	61	61	61	61	61
PostImp 3	Pearson	.936**	.935**	1	.908**	.893**	.933**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
N		61	61	61	61	61	61

PostAna 1	Pearson Correlation	.971**	.866**	.908**	1	.864**	.886**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PostAna 2	Pearson Correlation	.858**	.945**	.893**	.864**	1	.925**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61
PostAna 3	Pearson Correlation	.887**	.903**	.933**	.886**	.925**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01.

بسمه تعالی

چکیده پایان نامه

عنوان پایان نامه:

بررسی تطبیقی تاثیر بازخورد به صورت گفتگوی شفاهی و آموزش ضمنی از طریق ارتقا سطح

آگاهی، بر نحوه نگارش زبان آموزان فارسی زبان انگلیسی

نگارنده: مصطفی میرزایی

رشته تحصیلی: آموزش زبان انگلیسی

استاد راهنما: دکتر پرویز مفتون

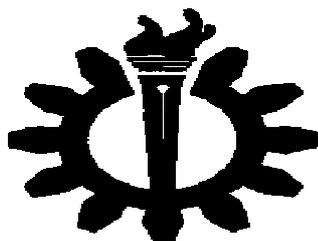
استاد مشاور: دکتر شهین واعظی

تاریخ نگارش: شهریور ماه 1391

هدف از انجام این پژوهش، مقایسه میان تاثیر دو نوع روش متفاوت بهبود نحوه نگارش زبان آموزان فارسی زبان انگلیسی، بازخورد به صورت گفتگوی شفاهی و آموزش ضمنی از طریق ارتقا سطح آگاهی، بوده است. بدین منظور، شصت و یک زبان آموز در مقطع متوسطه در موسسه علوم و فنون کیش، واحد رسالت (برادران)، پس از گذراندن آزمون همگون سازی

انتخاب شدند. سپس، این زبان آموزان در دو گروه آزمایش قرار گرفتند. به منظور حصول اطمینان از همگون بودن سطح دانش و نحوه عملکرد این دو گروه در ارتباط با نگارش زبان انگلیسی، پیش آزمونی، در قالب نگارش متن ۱۵۰ کلمه ای در مدت زمان 20 دقیقه، برگزار شد. در طی انجام پژوهش (20 جلسه آموزشی)، محقق از طریق گفتگوی شفاهی با زبان آموزان گروه آزمایش اول اقدام به دادن بازخورد بر متون نگارش یافته این زبان آموزان کرد. از طرفی دیگر، زبان آموزان گروه آزمایش دوم از طریق انجام فعالیت های آموزشی افزایش دهنده سطح آگاهی در ارتباط با نگارش زبان انگلیسی، طراحی شده توسط محقق، بر روی متون انگلیسی تمرکز کردند. در پایان پژوهش، پس آزمونی در قالب نگارش متن ۱۵۰ کلمه ای، در مدت زمان 20 دقیقه، در هر دو گروه برگزار شد. بررسی نحوه تاثیر بازخورد به صورت گفتگوی شفاهی و آموزش ضمنی از طریق ارتقا سطح آگاهی بر نحوه نگارش زبان آموزان در این دو گروه، با بهرگیری از تحلیل های آماری، نشان داد که هر دو روش در بهبود نحوه نگارش زبان آموزان تاثیر معناداری داشته است، اگر چه روش اول، بازخورد به صورت گفتگوی شفاهی، اثر بیشتری بر میانگین اکتسابی زبان آموزان گروه آزمایش دوم در پس آزمون داشته است.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



دانشگاه علم و صنعت ایران

پایان نامه:

جهت اخذ درجه کارشناسی ارشد

موضوع:

بررسی تطبیقی تاثیر بازخورد به صورت گفتگوی شفاهی و آموزش ضمنی از طریق ارتقا سطح

آگاهی، بر نحوه نگارش زبان آموزان فارسی زبان انگلیسی

استاد راهنما:

دکتر پرویز مفتون

استاد مشاور:

دکتر شهین واعظی

نگارش:

مصطفی میرزایی

شهریور 1391