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The Efficiency Of Feedback Strategy Of Homework On The Development Of 10th Grade EFL Writing Skill In Al - Karak Educational Directorate

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the efficiency of feedback strategy for homework on the development of EFL 10th grade students of writing skill in Al-Karak Directorate of Education during the second semester 2010/2011. The study attempted to answer the following two research questions: First, Is there any statistical significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th grade students' writing skill due to the teaching method (homework feedback strategy and the conventional method) in English language? Second, Is there any statistical significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on 10th grade students in writing skill that is attributed to gender? The sample of the study consisted of (102) male and female 10th graders' (63 female students and 39 male students) who were intentionally selected from Alkarak secondary school for boys and Alkarak secondary school for girls. The sample of the study was assigned into two groups: the experimental group (48 male and female students) which was taught using the feedback strategy and the control group (54 male and female students) which was taught using the conventional methods. The researchers constructed an achievement pre/post-test where reliability and validity of the tests were ensured. The results of the study indicated that there were significant statistical differences between the control and the experimental groups at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th graders achievement scores on writing skill on the post-test in favor of the experimental group and no significant statistical differences revealed that were attributed to gender. According to the findings of the study, the researchers suggested some recommendations to the concern.

Keywords : Homework, Student

Introduction

It is a clear fact that there are many complaints from learning English language as a foreign language in Jordan, these complaints come not only from students, but also from English foreign language teachers' who face great challenges in teaching English language, and from parents who want their children to be fluent in English as a foreign language or for the purposes of success at school and finally pass the general secondary education exam successfully (Rababah, 2003).

One of the most crucial elements of the teaching-learning process generally and in English language specifically is the writing skills, and as we know Students in high school particularly, are often expected to compose narrative, persuasive, and informational essays to advance from grade to another. Writing is an integral part of the curriculum in secondary schools; indeed, written expression is the primary medium students use to demonstrate conceptual knowledge and communicate their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs (Ibnian, 2010).

Writing skill is not a challenge that ends by passing a particular school stage, but rather it becomes more and more difficult with each new stage at school, so there must be an identification for new and efficient strategies to help students overcome the problem of writing in acquiring a new language. Writing skill in English language is an important component in both acquiring English language generally and teaching

English language at school particularly.

Writing has always been considered an important skill in the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Firstly, it inspires logical thinking, pushes students to focus their attention and sort out their ideas, and develops their ability to summarize, analyze, and criticize. Secondly, writing enhances learning by thinking in, and reflecting on the target language (Luchini, 2010).

Literature on writing skill have focused generally on two kinds of strategies: first, planning strategies, in which writers 'concentrate on working what they want to say before setting pen to paper, and only start to produce full text once they have worked out what they want to say, and second revising strategies, in which writers work out what they want to say in the course of writing and content evolves over a series of drafts (Marleen, Gert, David, and Huub, 2007).

Alawneh (1985) stated that the evaluation of writing skill has received high attention recently because of its direct effect on improving, refining, and shaping the students' ability of writing. Also to some extent it is neglected at schools and is not done objectively, one of the reasons beyond this is that teachers are inexperienced in evaluating and correcting students' compositions.

As one might imagine, dynamic homework annotation holds the promise of delivering far more effective personalized feedback to students in order to enhance their understanding of course material (Brian, 2006). Homework feedback is a strategy that enables teachers to be a ware of the progress of

Students' need homework and feedback to practice and learn about their mistakes and weaknesses, and thereby improve their skills. Homework is a safe place to practice skills ; it is similar to practice sessions for a musician or athlete. When homework is reviewed a teacher can learn what students know and what they need to learn to reach the targeted goals (Sharon, 2008).

Thus, homework feedback is a strategy that offers both teacher and student a significant opportunity to evaluate the written task by checking their spellings, writing errors, grammatical errors of the side of the teacher, and to know the mistakes he/she has done and working on avoiding them in the future from the side of the student.

The current study attempts to offer a new and efficient strategy to the pursuance of homework activities which may lead to an excellent output in writing skill in English language of 10th grade male and female students'.

The status of teaching English in Jordan

The growing importance of English as an international language is observed in all countries of the world among them Jordan where the government recognized the growing importance of teaching English, so it is taught in all stages as a basic subject from the kindergarten to university level (Abu Qbeita, in press).

English is taught from first grade at public and private schools in Jordan, and has become the language of instruction in the colleges of the whole scientific and medical major in Jordan.

The cultural environment of Jordan is distinguished by it is widespread use of English as a foreign language in addition to the use of Arabic, the native language, in formal and informal settings (Abu Samak, 2006).

At present, there is a serious gap and deficiency in Jordanian students' abilities to acquire and use spoken English effectively for the purpose of general and formal communication. Although English has become a common, global language for the purposes of industry, trade, education, and general communication (Herrera & Murry, 2004). In Jordan school systems particularly, Jordanian students sometimes have a challenging time acquiring the language, both in written and oral forms.

It is a fact that a challenge to effective EFL instruction in Jordan is that many EFL instructors are not very well educated and prepared in particular to accommodate and understand the unique linguistic learning styles of some native Jordanian students, which constitute a great problem that faces English language teaching in Jordan. Another problem is that the Jordanian EFL teachers revert back to the Arabic language to explain what a word means when students are unable to understand its meaning (Ovando, 1994).

Among the many challenges that face teaching the English language in the Jordanian public schools is the crowded classrooms.

Despite the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education in Jordan to develop students' EFL writing skills in general and creative writing, including short story writing in particular, most students still face difficulties in executing their writing tasks and show low level in their abilities to write in the target language (Ibnian, 2010).

For the Jordanian educational system, the Ministry of Education pointed out that at the end of the basic stage (tenth grade) students are expected to:

1. Write a 3 well- developed paragraphs on a topic of general interest.
2. Write a 3 well developed paragraphs explaining a concept (E.g.: what good citizenship means to me)
3. Write a story with a problem and solution (Ibnian, 2010).

Statement of the problem

Classroom teaching is regarded as a complicated and a complex process that is affected by many factors and variables. One of these variables, is home works which help in enriching learning, and also the feedback which represents another variable which is seen as a basic principle of human

learning principles nowadays, so a study that relates to feedback and the ways in which it is provided is a main target for educational institutions.

Since students' writing skill in Jordanian public schools is not satisfactory due to the clear lack for the new methods and strategies in teaching EFL writing skill, this study was conducted to investigate the efficiency of feedback strategy on Jordanian public schools students' achievement in writing skill.

Giving frequent, early, positive feedback that supports students' beliefs that they can do well was the first step that Barbara (1999) recommended to encourage students in order to become self-motivated independent learners.

The adoption of competency-based learning and engaging students in active learning by completing authentic assignments resulted in an exponential increase in teachers workloads. At the same time, it is commonly agreed upon that, providing students with frequent and detailed feedback on their work is something essential for the process of learning (Mulder & Pearce, 2007).

In this context the criteria for assessment and grading are very important and must be explained clearly to learners before they give their presentations.

In order to assess the written work done by learners, the teacher must:

1. understand the difference between close correcting and impression correcting.
2. decide on the assessment criteria; give positive feedback; and understand different types of errors.

Significance of the study

According to the need for constructing new and effective strategies to improve teaching EFL writing skill, this study comes to investigate homework feedback strategy as one of the new instructional methods that enhance the teaching-learning process within and outside the classroom.

Also, as to the researchers best knowledge, there were few related studies (Huntly, 1992) conducted in the area of using homework feedback in teaching English language, specifically in teaching the writing skill.

Purpose of the study

This study investigated the efficiency of feedback strategy for homework on the development of EFL 10th grade students' writing skill in Alkarak Directorate of Education during the second semester 2010/2011.

Questions of the study

1. Is there any statistical significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL 10th grade students' writing skill due to the teaching method (homework feedback strategy and the conventional method) in English language?
2. Is there any statistical significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL 10th grade students' writing skill that are attributed to gender?

Operational definition of terms

1. Homework: educational tasks assigned by teachers to be done by students' during non-instructional periods of the day (Cooper, 1989).

In this study, it is the writing tasks in English language assigned by the researcher to be written by 10th grade students'.

2. Feedback: a process in which the factors that produce a result are themselves modified, corrected, strengthened, etc. by that result and a response, as one that sets such a process in motion (Webster's new world dictionary of the American language, 2001).

In this study it is the strategy that was used to evaluate the progress of 10th grade students in writing activities and homeworks in English language through their achievement on the designed test that was prepared by the researcher.

4. 10th grade students : male and female 10th graders who had studied English for ten years and their age is around (16) years old.

Theoretical framework

Teaching a foreign language is a great challenge that faces both teachers' and students a like in Jordanian schools specially public schools.

Writing is the productive skill in the written mode and it is more complicated than it seems at first. It is seen as the hardest among language skills, even for native speakers of a language, since it involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way (Al Nashash, 2007).

English language as a second language is regarded a subject that homework feedback may be given verbally or by checking the written tasks and adding comments or corrections for the mistakes made by the students. In either way, teachers can use this strategy as an effective one to instruct and guide students through the course of writing specially in English language. Homework is a formative assessment that allows you to adjust your instructional practice in order to meet the individual needs of students. When appropriate (this may mean daily or less frequently), you should design homework to deepen students knowledge of informational content or to have students practice a skill, strategy, or process. Homework is an opportunity for corrective feedback and should not be used as a formal assessment.

Al-Jarrah (2001) defines writing in a foreign or a second language as an overwhelming experience, particularly, for students whose native language is not similar to the target language, i.e. Arabicspeaking students writing in English.

Irons (2009) notes that formative assessment is non-graded communication, while feedback is any type of comment from another individual which might result in learning (whether the information is graded or not).

Homework feedback should be corrective, specific and timed strategy so as to enhance the teaching-learning process and save time.

The feedback type used in this study is the postponed written feedback as learner can return to any time he/she wishes. And this is applied by underlining the incorrect items or words with a red or any coloured pen and leaving the correct ones without underlining or comments.

Scott (1993) emphasized that writing is a skill that needed to be fostered and developed in the classroom through the feedback of the teachers'. Adopting feedback encourages students' to be more creative in their writing rather than concentrating on mistakes in spelling or grammar.

This strategy have been mentioned in literature as a crucial and important element for improving skills such as Sarah and Hannah, (2002) who mentioned that in dealing with homework, the teacher has to prepare the tasks, as well as mark and provide feedback on a completed work.

Also Brian (2006) mentioned that students' response to dynamic homework annotation positively as it is a way to receive homework feedback, which creates a positive side effect causes the students' to devote more time, energy, and focus toward understanding the feedback they receive.

MaCdonald (1991) reviewed the literature on feedback, then he came up with the following findings:

1. Teachers often write confusing or superficial comments that focus on surface errors.
2. Students often misunderstood the teachers' feedback.
3. Teachers' feedback about essay content is associated with better essays than feedback about language, grammar, and usage.
4. Many students do not read their teachers' written feedback and those who do read the comments seldom use them as guides in revising or writing papers.
5. Students primary interest is their grade on a given composition not teacher comments.

Burstein, Chodorow & Leacock (2004) stated that automated feedback systems when used as a supplemental instructional tool may help schools improve students' writing by providing formative feedback on students' essays and

allowing for revisions based on this accurate and specific feedback.

Building on Olson's work, Mellen and Sommers (2003) provided students in an English course with tapes containing audio feedback and conducted surveys and interviews at the end of the semester. Results demonstrated that students were likely to view audio feedback as being positive regardless of the context. Additionally, 70% of students' reported that they felt encouraged to revise their work as a result of receiving auditory feedback and 54% felt more confident about their writings.

Advantages of feedback strategy

Homework feedback as any other strategy has its own benefits if used properly with written tasks and homeworks. It is an opportunity for the students to learn from their mistakes when being corrected by the teacher who makes comments and gives instructions for the desired level of writing, and for the teacher to be aware of the progress and the level of his/her students' in writing activity.

Also, when be given verbally, feedback gives the students the opportunity to share in the correction process for each other (for example teachers may ask students' to correct the errors and mistakes for each other) which make this strategy a flexible and efficient one.

Disadvantages of feedback strategy

The disadvantages of this strategy are limited for the time required for making a sufficient feedback for the written tasks unless the written task is planned previously to be checked using this strategy with a planned time scale that does not consume most of the time of the class, a solution for this issue may be by specifying a weekly class for this purpose.

Types of feedback strategy

There are many types of feedback strategy, and here is a description of the most frequent types used within classroom interaction in teaching-learning process generally and for correcting written texts particularly:

1. According to the direction of feedback: which contains two forms of feedback (Shdifat, 1992):
 - a. Positive feedback: informing the learner that an item is correct and hence helping the learner to increase the amount of the material to be remembered.
 - b. Negative feedback: informing the learner about the errors made in a task, and this way helps the learner to resist forgetting and to get a fast achievement.
2. According to the resource of feedback: includes two types as mentioned by Al-Muqatari (1989).
 - a. Internal feedback - refers to the information the individual derives directly from his/her own actions and experiences.
 - b. External feedback: information provided by teacher or any other resources.
3. According to the method of feedback: includes two types as seen by Shdifat (1992):
 - a. Apparent feedback: receiving information with one or more senses.
 - b. Interior feedback: through which the learner receive the information about his/her performance via the internal sense.
4. According to the nature of feedback: includes two types as seen by (Ewins, 2001):
 - a. Qualitative feedback: in which teacher provide with information about correct and incorrect responses.
 - b. Quantitative feedback: in which more detailed information is provided about responses.
5. According to the time of feedback, which includes two types according to Shdifat (1992):
 - a. Individual feedback: in which information is provided directly after the response or after one day of the task.

Delayed feedback: in which information is provided after a period of time the response or the task-not less than one day and not more than a week.

6. Functional-role feedback: as mentioned by Richards (2006) include four types: Informative feedback, corrective feedback, explanatory feedback and supportive or reinforcement feedback.

Pedagogical implications of feedback in the classroom

The ways in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains, and retrieves information are collectively termed the individual's learning style. Mismatches often occur between the learning styles of students' in a language class and the teaching style of the instructor, with unfortunate effects on the quality of the students' learning and on their attitudes toward the class and the subject. Teachers model that classroom practices online with the methods and the result of the various assessments that they employed and that assessment influences classroom teaching and student activities (Richard, 1995).

EFL teachers in Jordan would easily be able to exercise effective pedagogical strategies with learners from their own country as they can be active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs, given that research has indicated that teachers possess a vast array of complex beliefs about pedagogical issues including beliefs about students and classroom practices.

Feedback for teaching and learning:

Students have to be taught how to produce effective written communication between writers and readers. In this case, peer reviews and student-teacher conferences are very valuable to improve the content and the organization of student writing (Huntley, 1992).

(Ovando, 1994 and Luchini, 2010) highlighted the teaching and learning advantages of constructive feedback. These advantages are based on the principles of constructive feedback and fundamentally show the benefits of the principles involved in the process of constructive feedback.

There are 6 steps of constructive feedback that are beneficial from the teaching point of view and 8 steps that are advantageous for learning.

The 6 steps that facilitate feedback for teaching include: set a climate for trust and respect; clarify expectations of performance; gather significant information from students and others, i.e. ask questions about the class, request written comments, place a suggestion box in a convenient location in the classroom, etc, review each comment or piece of information and acknowledge it, adjusting teaching as needed by introducing pertinent modifications or using new strategies; evaluate effectiveness of modifications.

In constructive feedback, the 8 steps involved in a learning activity are described as follows: provide clear expectations about student learning and performance; explain specific criteria to judge students' achievements; collect pertinent information about students' progress; acknowledge accomplishments and students' progress; identify areas which need further study or additional practice; recognise students' efforts towards achievements of goals and objectives; suggest learning activities, learning tools and study techniques for additional study; encourage students to increase efforts.

The learner's role

The students have responsibility for their learning but through scaffolding, the teacher takes more responsibility than in a traditional class. Students' involvement in the teaching-learning process is important for there is much evidence to suggest that students' self-assessment helps improve their performance.

The learner's role in an autonomous environment is not that of a passive receiver of information. Learners are the makers of their own fortune and valued members of a learning community that is their class. Autonomous learners have the ability and willingness to learn on their own. Learners become successful if they take responsibility for their own learning. It is up to learners' if they want to learn.

Ashwell (2000) characterized learner autonomy by a readiness to take charge of one's own learning in the service of one's needs and purposes. Autonomous learners are those who understand why they are learning specific topics, accept responsibility for their learning, take the initiative in planning and executing learning activities and are willing to assess their own learning (Little, 2002).

Learners active participation in and responsibility for their own learning process are essential in the field of foreign language learning. The learner's need to be willing to act independently and in co-operation with others, as a socially responsible person.

Learner autonomy includes the learners' reflective involvement in all aspects of the learning processes. Learners' become autonomous by assuming responsibility for their own learning. This includes being involved in all aspects of the learning process: planning, implementation (monitoring) and assessment. Their autonomy grows as they become conscious of the process of learning.

The teacher's role

Cockborn (2005) mentioned that the fact that learners do not necessarily learn what we believe ourselves to be teaching... What we can do is give our learners' an awareness of how they think and how they learn an awareness which hopefully will help them come to an understanding of themselves and thus increase their self-esteem.

The traditional view is that teachers should be in control of the classroom and direct learning. To some, learner autonomy may sound more like bringing chaos in the classroom. Nevertheless teachers can successfully make the choice of relinquishing control and sharing it with the learners (Lacey, 2007).

Students may sometimes feel frustrated and confused when reading their teacher's suggestions and comments. Teachers' have to be clear about what parts of an essay need improvement, and what specific linguistic errors or issues that students have to improve (Zemach, 2007).

Dominant traditions in psychology and education see learning as internal to the individual, and it is clear that any substantial effort to learn within a traditional educational environment requires an exceptional individual effort. Thus, it is not surprising that teachers tend to think of their classes as collections of individual learners who may sometimes come together in small groups for purposes of practice (Turloiu & Stefánsdóttir, 2011).

Neither is it surprising that they tend to think that individual learning is in some way more economical and effective than group work. Social-interactive principles of learning, on the other hand, see the group as the primary focus of learning activity and individual learning as a matter of consolidating on past and preparing for future group learning.

Teachers in the process classroom should leave learners' ample free space to express their own personal meanings. To aid this sense of free space, various types of feedback are adopted for revision including peer review and teacher-student conference.

Doff (1993) suggested that the teacher should correct only the errors that seem most important, or only errors of a certain kind (e.g. items that were taught recently, or just problems with verbs).

A teacher that intends to foster his learners autonomy should not only introduce various learning strategies but also give his learners' ample opportunity to try them out in different circumstances.

It is necessary to build up an atmosphere in the classroom that invites such experiments and lets learners feel comfortable sharing their findings with their teacher and their classmates. Interaction in the classroom directly influences the learners learning processes.

ESL learners prefer teacher feedback when asked to state a preference. Teacher feedback is generally seen as far more credible and appealing than peer feedback to ESL writings (Zhang, 1995).

Importance of feedback

Feedback may play a crucial role and could be established as a corner stone in teaching-learning process, and hence can be one of the most effective methods that enhance learners and affect their learning.

Sarah and Hannah (2002) stated that feedback is needed for both individual and groups as it enables learners' to assess and evaluate performance and to compare the goals with the real behaviors, and hence employing these information as a guide for behaviors in the future.

According to Ellis (2009) teachers choose directive or facilitative strategies at different times to accomplish different purposes. For example, while directive feedback concerning error codes may be

helpful when students need to focus on sentence level issues, facilitative feedback such as questioning may be more useful when students are working on linguistic or organizational matters.

Al-Muqatari (1989) mentioned that feedback, with its various definitions, has a great importance in teaching-learning process as it is necessary for control, supervision, and modification associated with interaction and teaching-learning processes, and such feedback has no significant value unless is employed for mediating and developing behavior for the best direction.

How and when feedback is given

Feedback is given and applied in several ways, but the most common are these which are provided directly after finishing a task with providing with information about strengths and weakness (correct and incorrect) aspects in a written task or an exam, and as mentioned previously it is preferred to provide with feedback after one day of the task.

One of the elements used with feedback is peer feedback in which teacher or the feedback provider include learners to give feedback on their own tasks. Feedback is a form of communication that is crucial we receive if we are to remain well positioned in the social world. It is equally important to receive feedback in order that we can calibrate where we stand professionally. It can be challenging, as well as affirming; painful as well as nurturing; disturbing as well as reassuring. It should be given as close as possible to the observed event in order to catch the charge of the experience and to avoid 'drifting' (Melissa, Nelson and Schunn, 2007).

Related literature

Boramy (2010) investigated the use of two feedback strategies, directive and facilitative in essay writing classes in the English Language Support Unit (ELSU) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP).

The study investigated the effects of the two strategies in two types of essay, (1) classification and (2) comparison and contrast, examined the types of student errors, and explored their causes. Six students in two intermediate-level essay writing classes in the ELSU at RUPP participated in this case study. The findings of this study show that facilitative feedback may be more effective in improving certain revisions of essays, and directive feedback with others.

Kamal (2010) investigated whether EFL instructors in Gaza view writing as a process or a product, whether Gaza EFL instructors understand what writing is about, and whether Gaza EFL learners' possess an adequate linguistic

competence in general and practice enough writing. The school teachers' hold a bachelor degree in English, with 7- 15 year teaching experience at both junior and senior high schools.

Results of the study showed that school teachers give their learners' enough time to write many drafts, and they also give them enough feedback between drafts. Accordingly, they seem to follow the process approach in their teaching of EFL writing which is highly recommended by scholars.

Marleen, Gert, David, and Huub (2007) conducted a study on a sample of 113 high school students (10th grade), who were randomly selected, aimed to establish whether students will be more competent in managing the complexity of writing when writing instruction is adapted to their habitual writing strategy, thus resulting in better texts. Their results imply that students with strong tendencies to plan or revise profited from writing instruction based on a planning strategy, while students' with a low tendency.

Seyyed & Shiva (2007) explored the relationship between feedback expectancy of Iranian learners' of English and their level of education, achievement in English, and attitude toward peer and teacher feedback. To fulfill the purpose of this study, a sixty-item questionnaire focusing on issues related to feedback expectancy, peer feedback, teacher feedback, and cultural factors was developed. The sample of the study consisted of 533 junior and high school student's. The results of the study showed that feedback expectancy in higher levels of education is stronger, and positive and moderate correlation exists between feedback expectancy and learners' English achievements; high achievers of English expect more feedback. The results also indicated feedback received from teachers' is more expected than from peers and female learners sought more feedback from their peers and teachers than male learners.

John, Stuart & Denise (2005) investigated whether the type of feedback (direct, explicit written feedback and student-researcher 5 minute individual conferences; direct, explicit written feedback only; no corrective feedback) given to 53 adult migrant students on three types of error (prepositions, the past simple tense, and the definite article) resulted in improved accuracy in new pieces of writing over a 12 week period. The study found a significant effect for the combination of written and conference feedback on accuracy levels in the use of the past simple tense and the definite article in new pieces of writing but no overall effect on accuracy improvement for feedback types when the three error categories were considered as a single group.

Klassen, (2002) examined and summarized 16 research studies examining the writing self-efficacy beliefs of 6th- to 10th-grade students.

In the majority of the studies, self-efficacy was found to play a primary role in predicting student writing performance. Students' with learning disabilities were found to overestimate their ability to complete specific writing tasks. Several studies found gender differences, with boys rating their confidence higher than girls, although actual performance did not differ. Grade-level differences in perceived efficacy for writing were found in some studies, but not in others. Most studies emphasized that those working with young adolescents need to be aware of the importance of self-efficacy and other motivational beliefs in conjunction with academic functioning. Difficulties with specificity of self-efficacy measures, and with correspondence between measure and criterion task were found in several studies.

Hedgcock & Lefhowitz (1994) analyzed a 45-item questionnaire administered to (247) L2 (110 ESL and 137 FL) writers. The questionnaire elicited responses to a range of feedback conventions and intervention practices employed by instructors in ESL and FL courses.

The findings provide insight into teacher behaviors which function positively and negatively as apprentice writers create and modify text in highly traditional models of L2 writing instruction, where feedback or assignment consists merely in the assignment of a score or grade.

The teacher's role as respondent is not a very active one. teacher's response should take a form which helps writers in identifying and solving their writing problems. And they concluded that teacher feedback should aim at nourishing further creativity and at inducing problem-solving and critical thinking.

Huntly(1992) conducted a research on the feedback given to intermediate and advanced students in English as a second language(ESL) and second language composition. She concluded that there is a positive relationship between teachers' feedback strategies and their effect on student's writing and performance. She also suggested that an inspection of the feedback strategies currently in use may indicate important ramifications for the whole field of second language composition methodology.

As noted, rare are the studies that have been conducted on feedback strategy in Jordanian public schools, and those was about teaching writing skill in English in particular such as the study conducted by Khaled(1987) on a sample of 1st secondary grade students. Each study has discussed one or two aspects of feedback strategy.

Hence, this strategy is not completely addressed in any of the mentioned studies above as feedback is a strategy that involves many aspects and elements which are difficult to be discussed in one single study.

Therefore, the current study comes to contribute in enhancing applying feedback strategy for English written tasks within the classroom climate in the one hand, and to reinforce more future research on this crucial topic.

The population of the study

The population of the study consisted of (1835) female and male 10th grade students': (848) male students' and (987) female students' in Alkarak Directorate of Education during the second semester 2010/2011.

The sample of the study

The sample of the study consisted of two schools one for boys (Alkarak secondary school for boys) and one for girls(Alkarak secondary school for girls)which were intentionally selected at the beginning of the second semester for the academic year2010/2011.

The sample of the study consisted of 63 female students (29 in section A and 34 in section B) and 39 male students (19 in section A and 20 in section B) that were randomly selected. The (A) Sections in both schools were assigned as experimental group whose members received the feedback strategy and The(B) Sections in both schools were the control group whose members were taught by the conventional methods.

The instrument of the study

The instrument of the study consisted of the following compositions:

1. Energy is an important and a crucial element that effects all aspects of our daily life. In your own words, write an 80-words text talking about the effective practices for saving energy?
2. write a brief magazine article for your school magazine through which you discuss the phenomenon of juvenile smoking habit, the problem of smoking and offer solutions for such a problem?

Validity and reliability of the instrument

To ensure the validity of the compositions, it was given to a jury of TEFL specialists, professors, teachers and supervisors of English language. The jury members were asked to validate the compositions and their appropriateness and relevance to the content of 10th grade English students.

To establish test reliability, the test composition was conducted on a pilot sample consisted of (30) students to check the suitability of the test composition to the level of the students. This sample was excluded from the sample of the study. Two weeks later the same test was conducted again. Reliability coefficient of the scores of the two tests were

computed and calculated using Pearson correlation coefficients which was obtained as (0.75) and this value was appropriate for the purpose of the research.

The instructional material

The material adopted in this study was the English textbook Action Pack 10, by Haines, S, which was printed in 2008 and reprinted in 2009 is assigned for 10th grade.

Action Pack 10 consists of four modules, each module consists of three units that concentrate on one theme divided into sub-topics, each sub-topic is presented in one complete unit, and the format of the units is similar except for the content. For the purpose of applying the feedback strategy, module three entitled (Power) was selected which consists of units 7 (Power the alternatives), 8 (The Power of technology), and 9 (Money). According to the writing content of this module, the researchers selected two texts for writing which formed the material of both pre and post tests.

Procedures of the study

The researchers followed the followings steps in carrying out the study:

1. Obtaining the permission from Mu'tah University and the approval of the Ministry of Education to conduct the study.
2. The researchers obtained the approval of Alkarak Educational Directorate which provided her with the names of EFL 10th grade teachers, the names of the school they teach at, and the total number of male and female 10th graders.
3. The researchers selected the sample of the study from 10th grade students in Alkarak secondary school for boys and Alkarak secondary school for girls and the sample included four sections two sections were randomly chosen as the experimental groups which was taught using feedback strategy and the other sections were used as control groups which were taught using the traditional method (2 for boys and 2 for girls).
4. The researchers read about feedback strategy and how to use this strategy inside the classroom in order to be able to use and apply it effectively
5. A pilot study was conducted on 30 students from another schools.
6. After the consent of the principals of the subjected two schools for applying the strategy, the researcher met the teachers in both schools and clarified the main goals of the study and provided them with a clear idea about feedback strategy used with the experimental group.
- 7- The researchers asked the teachers to provide her with the scores of the first writing test for the second semester to be used as a pre-test scores.
8. The researchers ensured the equivalence of the experimental and the control groups.
9. The researchers asked the teachers to apply the feedback strategy for the experimental group for three weeks, two written tasks were given to the students every week, then teachers with the help of the researcher corrected these tasks by adding comments on students' errors in the first week, the second and the third weeks, students were asked to correct each others tasks following the same procedure that teachers followed at the first week. Whereas the control group was taught using the conventional way.
10. The researchers prepared the post test of the study.
11. The researchers administered the post-test on both the experimental and the control groups.
12. t-test was used to analyze the collected data.
12. By the end of the third week, the four groups were tested again at the end of the experiment by means of a post-test which was originally used as a pre-test to check the effect of using feedback strategy on writing skill achievement.
13. After applying the study, collecting data and analyzing these data, the researchers inferred the answer of the questions of the study.

Results and discussion of the results of the study

This study investigated the efficiency of feedback strategy for homework on the development of 10th grade EFL students' writing skill in Alkarak Directorate of Education during the second semester 2010/2011 on a sample consisting of 102 male and female 10th graders. Table (1) shows the results of the experimental and the control groups on the pre-test.

Table(1) : The results of the experimental and the control groups on the pre-test

Method	Means	Standard deviation	Number of students	Dif	Degrees of freedom	t value	T statistical sig.
Control group	10.66	5.08	51	1.15	100	1.102	0.273
Experimental group	9.51	5.24	51				

As shown in Table (1), there were no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th grade students' achievement in English writing skill on the pre-test in both the control and the experimental groups.

Accounted t value was (1, 102) at ($\alpha=0.273$) which has no statistical significant value at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) and hence, it could be inferred that both groups were equivalent on the pre-test.

To check for equivalence among the two groups a t-test was conducted to identify the differences in EFL 10th grade students' achievement according to gender variable (male / female) on the pre-test as shown in table (2).

Table (2) : The results of t-test to identify the differences in EFL 10th grade students' achievement according to gender variable (male / female)

Gender	Means	SD	Number of students	Dif	Degrees of freedom	t value	T statistical sig.
male	9.92	6.21	39	0.57	100	0.538	0.592
female	10.49	4.44	63				

As shown in table (2), there were no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th grade students' achievement in English writing skill on the pre-test due to gender (male / female) variable as t value was low (0.538) at ($\alpha= 5.92$) which has no statistical significant value at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

The reason behind the equivalence among male and female students could be that both male and female students were exposed to the conventional method.

Results related to the first question: Are there any statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th grade students' writing skills due to the teaching method (homework feedback strategy and the conventional method) in English language?

To answer the first question of the study, a t-test was conducted to identify the differences in 10th grade students' achievement scores on the writing skill test in English language for both the control and the experimental groups. Table (4) shows the results of t-test to identify the differences between 10th grade male and female students' of English language in both the control and the experimental groups.

The results of the first question of the study indicated that there were statistical significant differences between the control and the experimental groups at in 10th graders' achievement scores on writing skill on the post-test in favor of the experimental group which received the feedback strategy for three weeks.

This finding is consistent with the finding of Boramy (2010) who found that facilitative feedback may be more effective in improving certain revisions of essays, and directive feedback with others.

Table (3) : t-test results for identifying the differences in 10th grade students' achievement in English writing skill in both the

control and the experimental groups

method	means	Standard deviation	number	Mean dif	Freedom scores	T value	T statistical sig
Experimental group	13.10	4.24	51	3.160	95	3.432	0.001
Control group	9.94	4.82	51				

As seen in table (3), there were statistical significant differences between the control and the experimental groups at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th graders' achievement scores on writing skill on the post-test in favor of the experimental group as (t) calculated value that reached (3.432) at

($\alpha = 0, 001$) which was statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) with the experimental group having the highest mean score.

Results related to the second question: Are there any statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on 10th grade students' in writing skill that are attributed to gender?

To answer the second question of the study, a t-test was conducted to identify the differences in 10th grade students' achievement in English writing skill in that are attributed to gender. Table (5) shows the result of t-test to identify the differences between 10th grade male and female students' English writing skill that are attributed to gender.

Table (4) : t-test results for identifying the differences in 10th grade students' achievement in English writing skill that are attributed to gender.

gender	means	Standard deviation	number	Mean dif	Freedom scores	T value	T statistical sig
male	11.3590	5.66841	39	00.24447	100	0.245	0.807
female	11,6034	4.14619	63				

As shown in table (4), there were no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 10th graders' achievement scores on writing skill on the post-test that are attributed to gender as (t) calculated value that reached (0.245) at ($\alpha = 0.807$) which was not statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Regarding the second research question, the results showed no statistical significant differences between male and female 10th graders that are attributed to gender and that might be because EFL teachers are frequently supervised by the same supervisor in Al-Karak Educational Directorate additionally, students' parents (male and female students) pay a lot of attention to the progress of their children in English language so, the purpose of their frequent visits to the school is to monitor and attend a classroom situation during an EFL class and hence, teachers feel that they are monitored from both supervisors and parents which in turn is reflected on their adherence to teaching process. Also because both male and female students have the same view to English language as challenge and so do their best to overcome this challenge.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of the current study, the researchers recommend the following:

1. The Ministry of Education in Jordan should take in account the important role that new strategies play in teaching-learning process and to emphasize this role by training teachers on using strategies such as the feedback strategy within the classroom learning and teaching process.
2. Teachers should be provided with training programs so as to facilitate their use of such strategies in the whole curriculum at school setting.

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