

The Impact of Written vs. Oral Corrective Feedback on Omani Part-time vs. Full-time College Students' Accurate Use and Retention of the Passive Voice

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Abstract—The present study was an attempt to discover the effects of explicit written vs. explicit oral corrective feedback on Omani part-time vs. full-time College students' accurate use and retention of the passive voice. The participants consisted of the students of six intact classes, i. e. three part-time and three full-time, who took an Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) as a general proficiency test. Following the proficiency test, the participants took three similar, but not identical, tests on the target structure as pretest, posttest and delayed posttest. In response to the errors made in the pretest, the experimental groups received explicit written and explicit oral corrective feedback in their treatment phase whereas the control groups did not receive such explicit written or explicit oral feedback. The accuracy of the use and retention of the passive voice was measured by a posttest and a delayed posttest. The results indicated a significant difference between the pretest performance of the experimental groups and their performance in the posttest and the delayed posttest. Similarly, the results showed a significant difference between the performance of the experimental groups and that of the control groups in the sense that the experimental groups outperformed the control groups. In addition, there was a significant difference between the performance of the part-time students and that of the full-time students in that the part-time students outperformed the full-time students. Finally, there was no significant difference between the experimental groups' performance on the posttest and their performance on the delayed posttest.

Index Terms—corrective feedback, explicit written, explicit oral, part-time, full-time

I. INTRODUCTION

Being skeptical about the effectiveness of corrective feedback (CF) in second language (L2) development (e.g. Krashen, 1982, Truscott, 1996, 1999) has sparked a good number of CF research in the last three decades or so (e.g. Doughty and Verela, 1998; Mackey, 1999; Ashwell, 2000; Chandler, 2003; Hattie and Timperley, 2007; Ferris, 1999, 2003; 2008; Bitchener and Knoch, 2008, 2009; Sheen 2007, 2010; Ellis, 2010, Lyster, Saito, and Sato, 2013; Vahdani Sanavi and Nemati, 2014; Rassaei 2015, 2017, to name but a few). With a robust literature, CF is now said to be “not only beneficial but... necessary for moving learners forward in their L2 development [due to playing] pivotal role in the... scaffolding that teachers need to provide ...learners...” (Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013, p.1 and p. 9).

However, the question as to which types/modes of CF play ‘pivotal role’, and are more effective in the development of L2 writing is still a matter of debate. In this respect, some researchers, such as Hyland and Hyland (2006, p.83), criticize feedback research for not being, “unequivocally positive about its role in the development of L2 writing.” According to Hyland and Hyland (2006) issues related to feedback have not been sufficiently investigated by the researchers. Others, such as Ellis (2009), address unresolved issues such as the role of CF in L2 development, the type of errors CF research should address, and the most effective CF strategy.

Although among the issues referred to by Ellis (2009), one, i.e. the most effective CF strategy, or as Ferris (2008) calls it the ‘mode of delivery’, seems to have been addressed more frequently (e.g., Lochtman, 2002; Bitchener and Knoch, 2008; Nassaji, 2009; Lopez and Manchon, 2010; Erlam, Ellis and Batstone, 2013, Rassaei, 2013, 2017; Lyster, Saito, and Sato, 2013; Lyster and Saito, 2010; Yang and Lyster, 2010, to name but a few), the problem is that there is still no unequivocal yes/no answer to the ‘mode of delivery’ question as it is not yet clear which structures are more amenable to which CF strategies. That is possibly why CF research has been described as lacking ‘ecological validity’. (Storch, 2010) According to Storch (2010, p.43) “Studies which provide feedback on one type of error and only on one piece of writing and in controlled environments are unlikely to be relevant to language teachers because they do not reflect real classroom conditions.” To address the ‘ecological validity’ issue and inconclusive nature of CF research, this study was conducted to investigate the impact of two types of corrective feedback, i.e. explicit written vs. explicit oral CF on Omani full-time and part-time College students' accurate use and retention of the passive voice.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Ellis (2010), CF research is carried out for theoretical as well as practical reasons. Theoretically speaking, researchers following Chomsky (e.g. Krashen, 1982; Truscott, 1996, 1999), assign little role to CF on the grounds that L2 acquisition occurs as a result of positive evidence, hence no need to provide L2 learners with negative evidence whereas those working in cognitive-interactionist domain (e.g. Long, 1996) attribute some roles to CF on the assumption that negative evidence can raise learners' awareness and help them bridge the gap between form and meaning when communicating. (Ellis, 2010) On the other hand, researchers working within Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind (e.g. Aljafreh and Lantolf; 1984, Nassaji and Swain; 2000) take a fine-tuned approach to feedback provision. The reason, in Ellis's (2010, p.336) word, is that "sociocultural theory rejects the view that a single type of CF is best for learning." From a practical perspective, novel ideas have been sought by CF researchers in that they have been keen to know how L2 learners may improve their L2 writing. In Ferris's view (1999, cited in Ellis 2010), the main concern of these researchers has been L2 learners' writing development.

To operationalize CF strategies, various classifications have been proposed by CF researchers. Lyster and Ranta (1997), for example, proposed six CF strategies: explicit, recast, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. Ranta and Lyster (2007) modified Lyster and Ranta's (1997) classification and put the six strategies under two broad categories: Reformulation and prompts. Reformulation included recasts and explicit correction while prompts included elicitation, metalinguistic clues, clarification requests and repetition.

Lyster and Saito (2010) amended Ranta and Lyster's (2007) taxonomy as a result of which the six strategies and the two broad categories were rearranged on an explicit/implicit scale. In the case of implicit reformulation, for example, one may conceive of conversational recasts, repetition and clarification requests while in the case of explicit reformulation, didactic recasts, and explicit correction with metalinguistic explanations can be conceived. Similarly, Ellis (2009) classified CF strategies into direct/indirect, focused/unfocused, electronic, meta-linguistic and reformulation strategies. In direct feedback, learners are provided with the correct forms while in indirect feedback, learners are given hints showing that there are some mistakes somewhere in their sentences hoping that learners will discover the correct forms themselves. According to Bitchener and Knoch (2008), direct feedback can have various forms:

Additional forms of direct feedback may include written meta-linguistic explanation (the provision of grammar rules and examples at the end of a student's script with a reference back to places in the text where the error has occurred) and/or oral meta-linguistic explanation (a mini-lesson where the rules and examples are presented, practised and discussed; one-on-one individual conferences between teacher and student or conferences between teacher and small groups of students).(p.1)

Direct feedback, in Sheen's (2010) study, included both oral and written feedback on an error along with some metalinguistic explanation. Oral feedback was operationalized as the "teacher's [oral] provision of the correct form following an error, together with metalinguistic information [while written feedback operationalized as] the provision of [written] metalinguistic explanation to justify the correct form when an error [was] made." (p.213)

The types of CF strategies mentioned above have been employed by teachers or researchers as oral or written CF. In the former, feedback is provided when L2 teachers/researchers have verbal communications with learners while in the latter, feedback is given when students' papers, scripts, and assignments are marked by teachers/researchers. In this respect, Ferris (2008) contends that some teachers prefer to provide written feedback on the same written text or in a separate sheet whereas some other teachers like better to sit with their students in a face-to-face manner and give them oral feedback with the intention that 'discussions of the student can be 'two-way' [and] clarification and explanation [can be] facilitated' (p.101).

III. ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

With respect to oral CF, there has been a tendency among CF researchers to compare recasts and explicit strategies. (e.g., Lochtmann, 2002; Nassaji, 2009; Erlam, Ellis and Batstone, 2013, Rassaie, 2013, Lopez and Manchon, 2010; Bitchener, and Knoch, 2008; Lyster, Saito, and Sato, 2013; Lyster and Saito, 2010; Yang and Lyster, 2010, to name but a few). Lochtmann (2002), for example, studied recast, explicit corrections, and teacher initiations and their impact on learners' uptake. It was initially hypothesized that explicit correction could be more salient than recast because it could make learners notice their errors without much effort and could lead to their higher rate of uptake. However, the results indicated a lower rate of learner uptake as a result of both recast and explicit corrections but a higher rate of uptake as a result of metalinguistic feedback and elicitations.

Similarly, Ellis, Lowen and Erlam (2006) studied recast and metalinguistic explanation and their impact on the acquisition of regular past tense morpheme *-ed*. The results indicated that explicit metalinguistic group outperformed the implicit one.

Likewise, Nassaji (2009) investigated the effects of recasts and elicitations on learning two linguistic items. To begin with, implicit and explicit forms of feedback were identified and their subsequent immediate effects were studied. Recast was overall found to be better than elicitation. However, learners performed better when they were provided with explicit rather than implicit feedback implying further that the more explicit the learners' feedback was, the better was their performance both in immediate as well as delayed posttest.

In a similar vein, Rassaei (2013) compared the effects of recast with explicit correction on learners' acquisition of definite article 'the' and indefinite article 'a'. The results indicated that explicit correction was more effective since learners could become more aware of the corrective force of explicit feedback compared to recast. According to Rassaei (2013), "learners who received explicit correction outperformed those who received recasts because the explicit correction group could more easily notice the gap or perceive the interlocutors' corrective utterances as corrective feedback." (p.482)

Erlam, Ellis and Batstone (2013) compared the performance of two groups of learners in two similar writing tasks. The first group, called the 'explicit group', received explicit oral feedback based on cognitive-interactionist model while the second group, called the 'graduated group', received a 'tailored' type of feedback based on Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural model of feedback provision. The results indicated that participants in the 'graduated group' outperformed the 'explicit group' because of the degree of person-specific explicitness which was lacking in the 'explicit group'. In other words, the 'graduated group' feedback was more explicit than the 'explicit group' feedback in the sense that it was 'tailored' to and matched with each and every learner's specific level of attention, noticing and awareness.

Finally, Lyster et al (2013) reviewed various theoretical and practical aspects of oral CF such as frequency, preferences, laboratory vs. classroom studies and the targets studied. According to Lyster et al (2013, p. 20) "classroom studies of CF consistently confirm that oral CF is significantly more effective than no CF and also reveal a tendency for learners receiving prompts or explicit correction to demonstrate more gains on some measures than learners receiving recasts."

As the above studies may have indicated, in oral CF, explicit correction is more effective because students may have opportunities of awareness raising when compared to implicit strategies such as recasts. Commenting on oral CF, Ellis (2010, p.173) also points out that "in classroom context, it would appear that explicit CF is more effective than implicit recasts."

IV. WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

As Bitchner and Knoch (2008) note, written CF studies have been a comparison between direct vs. indirect or between various types of indirect CF strategies. According to Bitchener and Knoch (2008), while Laland (1982) and Ferris and Helt (2000) report on the superiority of indirect CF, Chandler (2003) report on the superiority of direct CF. On the other hand, Robb, Ross and Shortreed, (1986) and Semke (1984) report no significant difference between the two types of CF, i.e. direct vs. indirect.

As for the comparison of different types of indirect feedback, no difference has been reported. (eg. Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Ferris et al, 2000; Robert et al, 1986, cited in Bitchner and Knoch, 2008, p.415). Although Bitchener and Knoch (2008) are critical of written CF studies on the grounds that they suffer from design limitations, the overall results indicate that explicit written CF has been more effective than implicit CF strategies. To explain the above-mentioned results, Ellis (2010, p.173), for example, maintains that such "studies have shown that focused error correction leads to gains in linguistic accuracy and that the more explicit the feedback is, the better the results."

Furthermore, Sheen (2007) studied the impacts of two types of written CF on the acquisition of articles. The groups were a direct-only explicit correction group, a direct metalinguistic correction group (more explicit CF), and a control group. The results showed that both experimental groups outperformed the control group on the immediate posttest. However, the direct metalinguistic group, i.e. the more explicit one, performed better than the direct-only correction group in the delayed posttests. The results showed that written CF which was focused on one linguistic item was more effective especially when it was supported by metalinguistic explanations.

Considering oral vs. written CF, a number of studies have compared the effectiveness of the two types and/or modes of CF. For example, Bitchener and Knoch (2008) compared direct corrective feedback, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback and written metalinguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback only; and no corrective feedback. The results indicated that learners who received written CF performed better than those who did not receive written CF, including those who received oral CF, and that they could retain the accuracy level for several weeks. Similarly, Bitchener and Knoch (2009) found that learners who received written CF outperformed the control group on all four post-tests on both functions.

Lopez and Manchon (2010) investigated the effects of two direct CF strategies, i.e. error correction and reformulation on noticing and uptake in the written output of a group of EFL learners. The results confirmed the positive effects of written CF with a clear advantage of error correction over reformulation as far as uptake was concerned.

Finally, Sheen (2010) compared the effectiveness of oral vs. written CF on learners' correct use of English articles. Five groups were compared: oral recast, oral metalinguistic, written direct correction, written direct metalinguistic and control. The results indicated that the three CF types, i.e. oral metalinguistic, written direct and written direct with metalinguistic explanations but not oral recasts were effective. The point was that the degree of CF explicitness did matter for the effectiveness of the three types of CF strategies.

As the above brief review might have indicated, the extent to which CF strategies (written or oral) have been explicit may explain the reason as to why they have been more effective. The point is that various types of explicit feedback have rarely been compared. As Sheen (2010, p.172) argues, "to date, the effects of oral and written CF have been investigated independently of each other, and no study has systematically examined the relative efficacy of oral and

written CF.” Likewise, Bitchener and Knoch (2008) complain that “less attention has been given to a comparison of different direct feedback options.” (p.415)

Addressing the ‘ecological validity’ issue in CF research (Storch, 2010) on the one hand and Sheen’s (2010) and Bitchener and Knoch’s (2008) concerns regarding the lack of comparison between types of direct feedback, this study was conducted to probe the efficacy of two types of explicit feedback, i.e., explicit written vs. explicit oral CF on Omani full-time vs. part-time College students L2 writing development. To operationalize the present study, Lyster et al’s (2013) classification of CF was adopted. According to Lyster et al (2013), CF can be reformulations or prompts and both can be explicit or implicit. In explicit reformulation, explicit correction plus some metalinguistic explanations are provided. This study is, therefore, an attempt to make a comparison between explicit written vs. explicit oral CF on Omani full-time vs. part-time College students’ accurate use and retention of the passive voice.

V. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

Based on the convenience sampling, six intact classes took part in an Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) as a general proficiency test. Following the test rubrics, those who scored low were selected as the sample of the study since no one was supposed to know the target structure in advance.

B. Target Structure

The passive voice was selected as the target structure because of three reasons: The first reason was to address Storch’s (2010) ‘ecological validity’ issue because it was part and parcel of the participants’ curriculum and their classroom context. Secondly, as part of the participants’ learning outcome, the passive voice was expected to be learned and utilized by the students in their end of the semester writing assignment. Third, and following Storch (2010) argument against CF’s narrow scope, a less researched (Algarawi, 2010) target structure was selected.

C. Participants

The participants consisted of six intact classes who had registered in ARWB (Academic Reading and Writing for Business) module in the first semester of the academic year 2017-2018. Three classes included full-time students who attended their morning classes from 9:00 to 11:00 AM twice a week. Three classes included part-time students who attended their evening classes from 5:00 to 8:30 PM. Both full-time and part-time students studied at the Faculty of Business Management (FoBM) pursuing different pathways. The mean age of the full-time and part-time students were 20. The participants in the six classes were mixed-gender. Therefore, gender was not controlled in the study.

D. Research Questions

RQ1. Do types/modes of corrective feedback (explicit written vs. explicit oral) and modes of teaching (part-time vs. full time) have any differential effects on Omani College students’ accurate use of the passive voice?

RQ2. Do types/modes of corrective feedback (explicit written vs. explicit oral) and modes of teaching (part-time vs. full time) have any differential effects on Omani College students’ retention of the passive voice?

E. Data Collection

Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) was administered as a general proficiency test. Based on the test results and the rubrics of the test, and for homogeneity reasons, those who scored high, i.e., upper intermediate and intermediate, were excluded from the study. This means that from among 150 students who took the proficiency test at the initial stage, 50 students were eventually selected. 27 students were full-time and 23 students were part-time students. The selection process was influenced by two factors: high score and low attendance. The students who scored high in the proficiency test and the students who did not attend either the pretest, or the posttest or the delayed posttest were dropped from the analysis.

Having taken the general proficiency test, the participants took a test as the pretest which was on the passive voice. The pretest consisted of 20 multiple-choice recognition and production items on the passive voice including four tenses: simple present, simple past, simple future and present perfect. The reason why the four tenses were included was that they were all part and parcel of the teaching materials and none of them could be eliminated from the syllabus of instruction.

The multiple choice items consisted of one recognition item and four production items for each tense. The rationale behind having recognition items before the production ones was that recognition was thought to be instrumental to the more difficult stage of production. In the recognition items, participants had to differentiate between a passive and an active structure whereas in the production items, they had to change a given active voice into a passive voice following an example given or had to produce passive structures on their own.

The pretest papers in the experimental groups were collected, and marked by two markers: The researcher himself and one of the two colleagues already mentioned. Following the pretest, the students in the experimental groups were provided with relevant explicit written and explicit oral CF. In the case of explicit written CF, the students’ erroneous sentences were corrected by the researcher and written metalinguistic explanations were provided at the end of their

papers. To do so, the erroneous word or structure was underlined and explanations were given at the end of their question papers. For example,

Student's writing: The books is written by a well-known author.

Teacher's written explanations: The books are written by a well-known author. [Explanation: Please note that the books are plural so 'the books' should be followed by an appropriate plural auxiliary verb. In this particular case, 'are' rather than 'is' should have been used.]

In the case of explicit oral feedback, the participants' written sentences were read one by one by the researcher and oral metalinguistic explanations were given to each and every student in a face-to-face manner. The only difference between the two types/modes of feedback was that in the latter case, the feedback had to be vocalized and presented orally while in the former, it had to be written and presented in a written form.

Having provided the students with relevant written or oral feedback, the posttest was administered in the following session. The question items in the posttest were similar to the pretest items. The reason for having similar test items was to be consistent in terms of test construction and test administration. The posttest was marked by the researcher twice and an intrarater reliability of 0.99 was obtained. In addition, the same colleague who marked the pretest, marked the posttest and an interrater reliability index of 0.97 was obtained. One week after the posttest, the delayed posttest was given. The same markers marked the delayed posttest and a similar interrater reliability index of 0.97 was obtained.

F. Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using SPSS software employing Two-way ANCOVA was employed. Two-way ANCOVA's assumptions such as normality of the data, reliability of instruments and homogeneity of variances were met. In addition, a selected sample of the students' end of semester writing assignments were analysed to find out if the participants were affected similarly or differently by the two explicit types of feedback.

VI. RESULTS

With respect to Two-way ANCOVA's assumption, normality of the data was obtained as the absolute values of the ratios of Skewness and Kurtosis over their standard errors were all lower than 1.96. As for the reliability of the instruments, a KR-21 reliability was performed. Table 1 displays the KR-21 reliability indices for the proficiency test, the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest. The reliability indices for the four tests were .88, .83, .98 and .95 respectively.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND KR-21 RELIABILITY INDICES

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	KR-21
Proficiency	50	3	30	18.04	6.960	48.447	.88
Pretest	50	0	40	15.10	8.481	71.929	.83
Posttest	50	5	90	33.40	26.696	712.694	.98
Delayed	50	0	75	25.00	17.814	317.347	.95

Regarding homogeneity of variances was met because the results of the Levene's test ($F(5, 44) = .890, p = .496$) indicated that there were no significant differences between the groups' variances. (Table 2)

TABLE 2.
LEVENE'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCES ON PROFICIENCY TEST

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Proficiency	Based on Mean	.890	5	.496
	Based on Median	.562	5	.729
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.562	5	.728
	Based on trimmed mean	.834	5	.533

Note. The Levene's test based on median was reported

Based on the results displayed in Table 3, ($F(2, 44) = .264, p = .769$, partial $\mu^2 = .012$ representing a weak effect size) it can be claimed that there were not any significant differences between the three groups' means on the proficiency test. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their general language proficiency prior to the administration of the treatments.

TABLE 3.
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS; PROFICIENCY TEST BY TREATMENT BY MODES OF TEACHING

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Treatment	25.207	2	12.604	.264	.769	.012
Mode	29.422	1	29.422	.616	.437	.014
Treatment * Mode	233.260	2	116.630	2.440	.099	.100
Error	2103.175	44	47.799			
Total	18646.000	50				

The results displayed in Table 3, ($F(1, 44) = .616, p = .437, \text{partial } \mu^2 = .014$ representing a weak effect size) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the two modes of teachings' means. As shown in Table 4, the part time ($M = 17.12, SE = 1.45$) and full time ($M = 18.66, SE = 1.33$) groups had almost the same means on the proficiency test.

TABLE 4.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PROFICIENCY TEST BY MODES OF TEACHING

Mode	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Part Time	17.122	1.452	14.196	20.047
Full Time	18.667	1.331	15.985	21.348

And finally, there was not any significant interaction between types of treatment and modes of teaching on the proficiency test ($F(2, 44) = 2.44, p = .099, \text{partial } \mu^2 = .100$ representing a weak effect size) (Table 3). As displayed in Table 5, the full time mode of teaching had the highest means across all treatments, except for the oral group where the part time mode had a negligibly higher mean.

TABLE 5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PROFICIENCY TEST BY TREATMENTS BY MODES OF TEACHING

Treatment	Mode	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	Part Time	13.286	2.613	8.019	18.552
	Full Time	20.778	2.305	16.133	25.422
Oral	Part Time	18.857	2.613	13.591	24.124
	Full Time	18.778	2.305	14.133	23.422
Written	Part Time	19.222	2.305	14.578	23.867
	Full Time	16.444	2.305	11.800	21.089

Testing the first research question

The first research question asked if the types of feedback, i.e. explicit written vs. explicit oral and the modes of teaching, i.e. part time vs. full time, had any differential effect on Omani students' accurate use of the passive voice in the posttest. A two-way ANCOVA was run to investigate the effects of types of treatment and modes of teaching on the performance of the participants on the posttest, while controlling for the possible effects of their entry knowledge on passive voice as measured through the pretest. Two-way ANCOVA's assumptions such as normality of the data, reliability of instruments, homogeneity of variances, linear relationship between the covariate (pretest) and (posttest) and homogeneity of regression slopes were met. The former two assumptions were reported earlier. As for homogeneity of variances, the groups enjoyed homogenous variances on the posttest after controlling for the effects of the pretest ($F(5, 44) = 2.07, p = .086$) (Table 6)

TABLE 6.
LEVENE'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCES; POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS BY MODES OF TEACHING WITH PRETEST

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.078	5	44	.086

The significant results of the linearity test (Table 7), ($F(1, 41) = 20.48, p = .000$) rejected the assumption that there was not any linear relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable. Thus it can be claimed that there was a linear relationship between pretest and posttest.

TABLE 7.
TESTING LINEARITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRETEST AND POSTTEST OF ACCURATE USE OF PASSIVE VOICE

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Posttest * Pretest	(Combined)	14758.738	8	1844.842	3.751	.002	
	Between Groups	Linearity	10071.716	1	10071.716	20.480	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	4687.022	7	669.575	1.362	.247
	Within Groups		20163.262	41	491.787		
	Total		34922.000	49			

And finally; the non-significant three-way interaction between types of treatment, modes of teaching and covariate ($F(2, 38) = 2.73, p = .078, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .126$ representing a moderate effect size) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met.

TABLE 8.
TESTING HOMOGENEITY OF REGRESSION SLOPES

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Treatment	610.610	2	305.305	1.412	.256	.069
Mode	868.745	1	868.745	4.019	.052	.096
Pretest	683.824	1	683.824	3.163	.083	.077
Treatment * Mode	1585.805	2	792.903	3.668	.035	.162
Treatment * Pretest	43.688	2	21.844	.101	.904	.005
Mode * Pretest	8.534	1	8.534	.039	.844	.001
Treatment * Mode * Pretest	1181.834	2	590.917	2.733	.078	.126
Error	8214.715	38	216.177			
Total	90700.000	50				

A two-way ANCOVA was run to investigate the effects of types of treatment and modes of teaching on the performance of the participants on the posttest, while controlling for the possible effects of their entry knowledge on passive voice as measured through the pretest. Based on the results in Table 9, ($F(2, 43) = 13.30, p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .382$ representing a large effect size) it can be claimed that there were significant differences between the three groups' mean values on the posttest.

TABLE 9.
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS; POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS BY MODES OF TEACHING WITH PRETEST

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest	1998.176	1	1998.176	8.540	.006	.166
Treatment	6225.399	2	3112.699	13.304	.000	.382
Mode	5225.157	1	5225.157	22.333	.000	.342
Treatment * Mode	4191.391	2	2095.695	8.957	.001	.294
Error	10060.554	43	233.966			
Total	90700.000	50				

Table 10 displays the descriptive statistics for oral, written and control groups on the posttest after controlling for the effects of the pretest. The oral group ($M = 44.06$) had the highest mean value on the posttest, followed by the written ($M = 39.95$) and the control ($M = 16.38$) groups.

TABLE 10.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS WITH PRETEST

Treatment	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	16.380 ^a	4.072	8.168	24.592
Oral	44.069 ^a	3.862	36.279	51.858
Written	39.958 ^a	3.709	32.479	47.438

The results of the post-hoc comparison tests (Table 11) indicated that explicit written group ($M = 39.95$) significantly outperformed the control group ($M = 16.38$) on the posttest ($MD = 27.68, p = .000$); that explicit oral group ($M = 44.06$) significantly outperformed the control group ($M = 16.38$) on the posttest ($MD = 23.57, p = .000$); and that no significant difference was observed between explicit oral ($M = 44.06$) and explicit written ($M = 39.95$) groups' mean values on the posttest ($MD = 4.11, p = .443$).

TABLE 11.
PAIRWISE COMPARISONS: POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS WITH PRETEST

(I) Treatment	(J) Treatment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Oral	Control	27.689 [*]	5.671	.000	16.252	39.125
	Written	4.110	5.314	.443	-6.606	14.827
Written	Control	23.578 [*]	5.712	.000	12.060	35.097

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Finally, based on the results displayed in Table 9 above and Table 12 below, ($F(1, 44) = 22.33, p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .342$ representing a large effect size), it can be claimed that the part time group ($M = 43.78$) had a significantly higher mean than the full time group ($M = 23.15$) on the posttest.

TABLE 12.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST BY MODES OF TEACHING WITH PRETEST

Mode	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Part Time	43.781 ^a	3.212	37.303	50.260
Full Time	23.156 ^a	2.950	17.207	29.106

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pretest = 15.10.

The results displayed in Table 9, showed that there was a significant interaction between the types of feedback and the modes of teaching on the posttest ($F(2, 43) = 8.95, p = .001$, partial $\mu^2 = .294$ representing a large effect size).

Testing the second research question

The second research question asked if the types of feedback, i.e. explicit written vs. explicit oral and the modes of teaching, i.e. part time vs. full time, have any effect on Omani students' retention of the passive voice in the delayed posttest. A two-way ANCOVA was run. Before discussing the results, it should be noted that the groups enjoyed homogenous variances on the delayed posttest ($F(5, 44) = .962, p = .451$).

Based on the results displayed in Table 13 ($F(2, 44) = 10.29, p = .000$, partial $\mu^2 = .319$ representing a large effect size), it can be claimed that there were significant differences between the three groups' mean values on the delayed posttest.

TABLE 13.
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS; DELAYED POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS BY MODES OF TEACHING

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Treatment	3335.939	2	1667.969	10.291	.000	.319
Mode	2261.422	1	2261.422	13.952	.001	.241
Treatment * Mode	2386.128	2	1193.064	7.361	.002	.251
Error	7131.746	44	162.085			
Total	46800.000	50				

Table 14 displays the descriptive statistics for oral, written and control groups on the delayed posttest. The written group ($M = 35.27$) had the highest mean on the delayed posttest, followed by the oral ($M = 23.33$) and the control ($M = 15.59$) groups.

TABLE 14.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; DELAYED POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS WITH PRETEST

Treatment	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	15.595	3.208	9.130	22.060
Oral	23.333	3.208	16.868	29.799
Written	35.278	3.001	29.230	41.325

The results of the post-hoc comparison (Table 15) tests indicated that explicit written group ($M = 35.27$) significantly outperformed the control group ($M = 15.59$; $MD = 19.97, p = .000$) on the delayed posttest; that there was not any significant difference between the explicit oral ($M = 23.33$) and control ($M = 15.59$) groups' mean values on the delayed posttest ($MD = 7.81, p = .233$) and that the written group ($M = 35.27$) significantly outperformed the oral group ($M = 23.33$) on the delayed posttest ($MD = 12.15, p = .029$).

TABLE 15.
PAIRWISE COMPARISONS; DELAYED POSTTEST BY TREATMENTS WITH PRETEST

(I) Treatment	(J) Treatment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Written	Control	19.97*	4.374	.000	8.88	31.05
	Oral	12.15*	4.374	.029	1.07	23.24
Oral	Control	7.81	4.501	.233	-3.59	19.22

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Based on the results displayed in Table 13 above and Table 16 below, ($F(1, 44) = 13.95, p = .001$, partial $\mu^2 = .241$ representing a large effect size), it can be claimed that the part time group ($M = 31.50$) had a significantly higher mean than the full time group ($M = 17.96$) on the delayed posttest.

TABLE 16.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; DELAYED POSTTEST BY MODES OF TEACHING WITH PRETEST

Mode	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Part Time	31.508	2.673	26.120	36.896
Full Time	17.963	2.450	13.025	22.901

VII. DISCUSSION

The first research question asked if the types of feedback, i.e. explicit written vs. explicit oral and the modes of teaching, i.e. part time vs. full time, had any differential effect on Omani College students' accurate use of the passive voice in the posttest. The results indicated that both explicit written and explicit oral CF did have significant effects on Omani College students' accurate use of the passive voice in the posttest. However, no significant difference was found between the effects of explicit written and explicit oral on the students' accurate use of the passive voice. This may mean that explicit written and explicit oral have been equally effective.

With respect to the modes of teaching (part time vs. full time), they were found to be differentially effective in the sense that part time students had a significantly higher mean value than that of the full time students in the post test meaning further that part time students benefitted more from the feedback provided than the full time students in using the passive voice accurately.

The second research question asked if the types of feedback, i.e. explicit written vs. explicit oral and the modes of teaching, i.e. part time vs. full time, had any differential effect on Omani students' retention of the passive voice. The results indicated that while explicit written CF did have a significant effect on Omani students' retention of the passive voice, explicit oral CF did not. In other words, there was no significant difference between the effect of explicit oral CF and the control group. In addition, a significant difference was found between explicit written CF and explicit oral CF on the students' retention of the passive voice in the delayed posttest meaning that explicit written was found to be more effective on the students' performance. Finally, With respect to the modes of teaching (part time vs. full time), they were found to be differentially effective in the sense that part time students were found to have benefitted more from the feedback provided compared to the full time students.

Based on the post test results, three differences can be identified. The first difference is between the experimental groups' pretest and their posttest performances which is significant as both groups' pretest scores and their posttest scores are significantly different from each other showing improvement from the pretest to the posttest while this is not the case in the control groups. The second difference is between explicit written and explicit oral groups' performances on the posttest which is NOT significant. The third difference is between part-time vs. full-time students' performance on the posttest which is significant. This shows that students in part-time vs. full-time have not benefitted from the given feedback in the same way as part time students did benefit more from the feedback given. There may be reasons for the differences observed.

Similarly, and based on the delayed posttest results, a couple of differences can be identified. The first difference is between explicit written and explicit oral on the one hand and explicit written and control group on the other. In other words, while explicit written CF group seem to have been significantly affected by the feedback provided, explicit oral group does not as explicit oral group did not perform better than the control group who did not receive any feedback. This may mean that participants in explicit oral group may have forgotten the feedback they received two session ago. Their performance was no different from that of the control group.

There might be reasons for the difference pointed out. Regarding the difference between the experimental groups on the one hand and the control groups on the other, feedback can be the reason as to why they performed better than the control groups in the posttest. In other words, the fact that feedback was explicit rather than implicit can explain why experimental groups outperformed the control groups. The difference can be attributed to the explicit feedback effect and the input enhancement effect they may have had leading to the experimental groups' better performance given that similar difference has already been observed by other researchers. For example, Bitchner and Knoch (2008) found out explicit feedback did assist learners clarify the points for themselves by making the presented learning input salient thereby helping them remove any possible doubts or misunderstandings of the input. Likewise, they pointed out that explicit feedback did assist learners to notice issues including grammar thereby helping them on their hypothesis making and testing. Finally, as Scrivener's (2005) points out, explicit feedback can be the fastest, and most helpful type of help that each and every student may be provided with. Though in this case written explicit seem to have worked better in the delayed posttest if not in the posttest. Finally, Carroll's (2001) views may be noteworthy here to note that explicit feedback can be more effective than implicit feedback. However, the aforementioned result is not in line with what Ellis et al (2013, p.363) proposed that "the advice given to teachers is to try to elicit self-correction from the learners rather than to correct them directly and explicitly."

With respect to part-time and full-time students' difference, there can be a number of explanations. The first reason can be attributed to the students' study behaviour. While full-time students had not been employed before attending their class, part-time students had been employed. The reason as to why part-time students attended evening classes was that they were busy with their jobs in the morning and they had no option but to attend their evening classes. Furthermore, and based on their class attendance record, part-time students did have better class attendance despite being busier with their work during the day. Besides, they showed more motivation to get involved in class activities. Finally, part-time students were seeking carrier promotion in addition to their higher education degree.

The second reason can be attributed to nature of the part-time and full-time students' classes. While part time students do attend from 5:00 to 8:30 in the evening, they are given a 20 minutes break after 110 minutes of teaching. This is not the case with full time students who attend their class in the morning and a break of 24 to 36 hours is given before they attend their second session of the week. This 20 minutes vs. 24/36 hours break difference might explain the reason as to why full-time and part-time students performed differently. Another reason is that full-time students may have been preoccupied with other modules so that they may have forgotten about the feedback they were provided with. The third reason can be attributed to the fact that part-time groups and full-time groups did not have the same teachers. Although for the sake of consistency, the researcher did attend both part-time and full-time classes and administered the tests, marked the tests and provided them with the required feedback, full-time students may not have taken the feedback they received as seriously as they did in the part-time groups who were sitting in the researcher's class as the regular students.

VIII. CONCLUSION

To conclude, and based on the results, it may not be too unrealistic to say that explicit written and explicit oral CF are both effective in raising the students' awareness to write correctly in their subsequent writing. Although there was no significant difference between the two types of feedback in the posttest, there was a significant difference between the two in the delayed posttest showing that explicit written could last longer due to the nature of the medium. In other words, while both types of feedback have been effective, explicit written feedback has been more effective in the delayed posttest. This may have been due to the possibility that explicit oral feedback may have had less lasting and more ephemeral effect. In other words, those receiving oral feedback, because of poor listening skills, may have been suffered and poor listening skills may have been responsible for the participants' performance in the post test and in the delayed posttest in that their feedback experience has been affected negatively. Indeed, some kind of initial comprehension check could have been given indicating that the feedback had actually been registered. Like any other study, this study has some limitations. The first limitation is the nature of the sampling which was convenience sampling. The second limitation could be the type of treatment provided which was based on the errors participants had made while answering the pretest items. This can be addressed in future studies where random sampling and writing samples can be employed.

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