

T. R.

GAZIANTEP UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES TEACHING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM

**IRAQI HIGH-SCHOOL EFL STUDENTS' AND
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITTEN
FEEDBACK IN WRITING CLASSES: A CASE OF
SULEYMANIYAH AND RBIL**

Master of Arts Thesis

FATIH JAMAL GALALY

Gaziantep

July, 2017

APPROVAL OF THE JURY

Student: Fatih Jamal Galaly

University: Gaziantep University

Graduate School: Graduate School of Educational Sciences

Department: English Language Teaching

Thesis Title: Iraqi High-School EFL Students' and Teachers' Attitudes Towards
Written Feedback in Writing Classes; A case of Suleymaniyah and
Erbil

Thesis Date: 3/7/2017

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master
of Arts.

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Filiz Yalçın TILFARLIOĞLU)

Head of Department

This is to certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it is fully adequate,
in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

(Assist. Prof. Dr. Emrah CİNKARA
Supervisor

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate,
in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Masters of Art.

Examining Committee Members

Signature

(Assist. Prof. Dr.) Emrah CİNKARA

.....

(Assist. Prof. Dr.) Kadriye DILEK AKPINAR

.....

(Assist. Prof. Dr.) Mehmet KILIÇ

.....

It is approved that this thesis has been written in compliance with the formatting rules
laid down by the Graduate School Educational Sciences.

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. FATİH ÖZMANTAR)

Director

RESEARCH ETHICS DECLARATION

The information contained here is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with these guidelines, the University's policy on conflict of interest and any other condition laid down by the Gaziantep University Research Ethics Committee or its Sub-Committees. I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this research, and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I have declared any affiliation or financial interest in this research or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might present a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest, in accordance with Gaziantep University policy on Conflicts of Interest.

Signature:

Name: FATIH JAMAL AHMAD

Student ID Number: 201567682

Date: 3/7/2017

DEDICATION

To the spirit of my father in his grave, who was urgently waiting to complete my study even when he was about to farewell us and this world forever.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I would like to thank Allah the Almighty, who taught man what he did not know and gave me the strength to complete this thesis.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Gaziantep University's –English Language Teaching department for extending me the opportunity to pursue my Master's study. Especially, I would like thank my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. EMRAH CİNKARA for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His invaluable guidance has enabled me to complete this thesis.

My deepest heartfelt appreciation goes to members of the committee Assoc. Prof. Dr. KADRIYE DİLEK AKPINAR and Assist. Prof. Dr. MEHMET KILIÇ for their constructive comments, suggestions and valuable feedback.

Special thanks also belongs to my close friend and classmate Attaa Lateef, for his generous help and encouragement.

My profound gratitude belongs to my mother, who has never ceased in providing me continuous support and encouragement throughout my study.

I am also grateful to my loving and supportive wife Xunaw Ali, who has stood beside me with patience, and my four sons, Daniel, Imran, Marwan and Zahran, who have provided me unending inspiration.

Once again, I reiterate my great appreciation of all those who have aided me throughout this work.

ABSTRACT

IRAQI HIGH-SCHOOL EFL STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITTEN FEEDBACK IN WRITING CLASSES: A CASE OF SULAEIMANIYAH AND ERBIL

FATIH GALALY

MA Thesis, English Language Teaching Program

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. EMRAH CİNKARA

July-2017, 83 pages

The aim of this study was to investigate the attitudes of Iraqi high-school teachers and students towards teacher written feedback in writing classes in Suleymaniyah and Erbil. A quantitative method was conducted in this study. Two different instruments were used in the study; teacher questionnaire and student questionnaire. A total of 100 teachers (50 males and 50 females) and 200 students (100 males and 100 females) participated in filling the questionnaire then the collected data were analyzed through SPSS. The findings showed that teachers' written feedback generally plays a significant role in improving students' writing skills.

The study also showed that students are encouraged and improved when English teachers provide them with optimistic and constructive written feedback. It was also observed that students show high preference of specific written feedback to facilitate the correction of mistakes. The findings showed that teachers' positive written feedback on their daily assignments and paper tests was highly preferred by students. Additionally, the study showed that teachers' written feedback in its time has a powerful impact on students' writing skills. A *t*-test analysis indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers and also students towards teacher written feedback.

Keywords: Written feedback, Iraqi EFL learners, high-school students

ÖZET

IRAKTA BULUNAN LİSE DÜZEYİ EFL ÖĞRENCİLERİ VE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN YAZI DERSLERİNDE GERİ BİLDİRİM YAPILMASI DURUMUNDAKİ DAVRANIŞLARI: SÜLEYMANİYE VE ERBİL DOSYASI

FATİH GALALY

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. EMRAH CİNKARA

Temmuz 2017, 83 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı Irak'ta ve özellikle Süleymaniye ve Erbil'de bulunan lise öğretmen ve öğrencilerinin yazı derslerinde yazılı olarak geri bildirim yapılmasındaki davranışlarının araştırılmasıdır. Bu çalışmada nicel metod kullanıldı. Çalışmada öğrenci ve öğretmen anketi olmak üzere iki araç kullanılmıştır. Anketler 50'si erkek ve 50'si kadın olmak üzere toplam 100 öğretmen ve 100'ü erkek ve 100'ü kız olmak üzere toplam 200 öğrenci üzerinde uygulandı. Bu anketlerden toplanan veriler SPSS aracılığıyla analiz edildi. Ortaya çıkan bulgular öğretmenlerin yaptığı yazılı geri bildirimlerin genel olarak öğrencilerinin yazma yeteneklerinin gelişmesinde başarılı bir rol oynadığını ortaya koydu.

Yapılan bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenleri tarafından iyimser ve yapıcı bir şekilde yapılan yazılı geri bildirimin öğrencileri yazma konusunda cesaretlendirdiğini ve geliştirdiğini gösterdi. Bunun yanında, yazılı geri bildirimin, öğrencilerin hatalarını düzeltmesini kolaylaştırmada tercih edildiğini de gözlemledik. Bulgular, öğretmenlerinin günlük ödevlerine ve yazılı testlerine koydukları pozitif geri bildirimlerin öğrenciler tarafından son derece tercih edildiğini ortaya koydu. Ayrıca, bu çalışma zamanında yapılan geri bildirimlerin öğrencilerin yazma yeteneklerinin gelişmesinde güçlü bir etki yarattığını gösterdi. T-test analizi, kız veya erkek öğrencilerin yanısıra kadın ve erkek öğretmen olmanın öğretmenin yazılı geri bildirimi ile ilgili istatistiksel sonuçlar açısından önemli bir fark ortaya koymadığını gösterdi.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yazılı geri bildirim, Irak EFL öğrencileri, lise öğrencileri.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL OF THE JURY	i
RESEARCH ETHICS DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZET	vi
LIST OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem.....	1
1.2 Aim of the Study.....	3
1.3 Significance of the Study.....	4
1.4 Assumptions of the Study	5
1.5 Limitations of the Study	5
1.5.1 Limitation 1	5
1.5.2 Limitation 2.....	5
1.5.3 Limitation 3.....	5
1.6 Definitions	5

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 The Effects and Conditions of Teachers' Positive Feedback.....	8
2.3 Written Feedback Background.....	9
2.3.1 Types of written feedback.....	10
2.3.2 Types of written feedback preferred by students	12

2.3.3 Types of written feedback preferred by teachers	14
2.3.4 Teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback.....	15
2.3.5 Students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback.....	16
2.4 Content Written Feedback.....	17
2.5 Form Written Feedback.....	18
2.6 Levels of Written Feedback	19

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Study.....	21
3.2 Contexts.....	21
3.3 Participants.....	22
3.3.1 Teachers.....	22
3.3.2 Students.....	22
3.4 Research Design.....	23
3.5 Data Collection Tools.....	23
3.5.1 Teacher's attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire.....	23
3.5.2 Students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire.....	24
3.6 Data Collection Procedures.....	24
3.7 Data Analysis.....	24

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1 Presentation	26
4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis	26
4.3 The Results of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire.....	26
4.3.1 Item-based descriptive statistics for the teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback	27
4.4 The Results of Students' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire.....	43
4.4.1 Item-based descriptive statistics for the students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback	45
4.5 Summery of the findings	59

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Presentation.....	60
5.2 Discussion of the First Research Question.....	60
5.3 Discussion of the Second Research Question.....	61
5.4 Discussion of the Third Research Question.....	62
5.5 Discussion of the Fourth Research Question.....	62
5.6 Summary of the Discussion.....	63

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion.....	64
6.2 Recommendations	65
6.3 Implications.....	65
6.3.1 Implications for EFL teachers	65
6.3.2 Implications for EFL learners.....	66
6.4 Suggestions for Further Research.....	66
REFERENCES	68
APPENDICES	75
Appendix I:	76
Appendix II:	78
Appendix III:	80
VITAE	82
ÖZGEÇMİŞ	83

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Mean and standard deviation of teachers in terms of teachers' attitudes toward written feedback.	26
Table 2 Teachers' independent samples t-test results for gender differences concerning statistically significant differences.	27
Table 3 Mean and standard deviation of students in terms of teachers' attitudes toward written feedback.	44
Table 4 Student's independent samples t-test results for gender differences concerning statistically significant differences.	44



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Teachers' participants.....	28
Figure 2 Students' participants.....	29
Figure 3 The use of Teachers' written feedback as general on students' papers (daily assignments and tests).....	30
Figure 4 The use of teacher written feedback regularly in its time.....	31
Figure 5 Avoiding the use of negative and pessimistic written feedback by teachers.....	32
Figure 6 Teachers' feelings towards written feedback on students' improvement.....	33
Figure 7 The use of teachers' specific written feedback on every assignment	34
Figure 8 Teachers' focusing on grammatical.....	35
Figure 9 The use of 'Composition' To improve students' writing skills.....	36
Figure 10 The use of white board by teachers daily.....	37
Figure 11 The use of general feedback on white board.....	38
Figure 12 The importance of 'semantic'.....	39
Figure 13 The use of constructive expressions on student's papers.....	40
Figure 14 The use of teachers' written feedback and students' reactions...	41
Figure 15 Reading about written feedback by English language teachers...	42
Figure 16 The use of while giving written feedback.....	43
Figure 17 The use of 'Abbreviations' on the assignments.....	45
Figure 18 The use of codes on the assignments by ELT.....	46
Figure 19 Students participants in the survey.....	47

Figure 20 Students' attitudes toward getting benefit from teachers' written feedback.....	48
Figure 21 Students' understanding the meaning of teachers' written feedback	49
Figure 22 Students' reactions toward using positive feedback.....	50
Figure 23 Students feelings and its relation with teacher written feedback	51
Figure 24 Students' attitudes toward using red pens.	52
Figure 25 Students' attitudes toward using general written feedback.....	53
Figure 26 Students' opinions toward using codes on papers.	54
Figure 27 Students' opinions toward teacher written feedback regularly in its time.	55
Figure 28 Students' viewpoints on using grammatical written feedback	56
Figure 29 Students' attitudes toward using spelling and punctuation marks	57
Figure 30 Students' opinions toward 'Composition'.....	58
Figure 31 Students' point of view on the abbreviations	59

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WF: Written Feedback

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELTs: English Language Teachers

ELT: English Language Teaching

WCF: Written Corrective Feedback

TWF: Teacher Written Feedback

TF: Teacher Feedback

ESL: English as a second language



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem

Dealing with writing skills might not be easy compared with other elements of language such as speaking, listening and reading. Though each skill involves a particular set of learning techniques, writing demands more intense focus on grammar, spelling, punctuation, form, content and other elements of writing skills. This is why students should be provided with positive and constructive feedback by teachers so that they can attain satisfying levels of writing. Coffin (2003) states that improving writing takes a conscious effort on behalf of both teachers and students and that the provision of feedback on students' writing is a central pedagogical practice.

Some researchers have demonstrated that students experience more difficulty in achieving writing skills than they do in performing the other three language skills. For example, Harmer (2012) thinks that students who make spoken mistakes can easily correct themselves or paraphrase their words to make meaning more clear, but writing requires more accuracy and people do not tolerate written mistakes in comparison with those that are spoken. Thus, giving written feedback (WF) on students' written assignments or paper-tests to improve writing skills is considered as one of the most significant aspects of language teaching. Hill and Flynn (2006) has stated that without feedback and correction, students are not able to progress and, thus, remain at the same levels of knowledge.

From the researcher's personal experience in Iraqi high school environment, the above challenges are proven true, as students are indeed weak in using writing skills. Many reasons may lie behind this problem. Providing good WF might be one of the factors that would treat the problem. Iraqi high-school students are required intensive practice and constant WF to develop autonomy in their writing skills because

usually they are not motivated towards writing techniques. Moreover, the process of writing is not like that of the other language skills in terms of dealing with many sub-skills such as grammar, spelling, punctuation marks, etc. When students begin writing, they must deal with at least four stages—planning, drafting (first attempt), reviewing and editing. Harmer (2012) believes that teachers' written feedback (TWF) usually takes the form of written comments on students' test papers, written assignments and first drafts. As a result, these kinds of WF have a tangible impact on students, as they improve students' writing quality, increase their motivation, and reinforce sub-skills. Montgomery and Baker (2007) have stated that the significance of the writing process is grasped by both teachers and students via WF.

There have been various critiques of teachers' WF. Zacharias (2007) has stated that while teachers provide students with general written feedback such as "revise your ideas", "many mistakes", "study better," etc., these types of feedback do not clarify for students what their specific mistakes are. As a result, they make the same mistakes again in the future. Similarly, positive expressions such as "Great job!" and "Well done" do not demonstrate for students what, exactly, they did well, just as negative expressions such as "Not quite there yet" do not indicate for students how they can improve in the future.

Some students complain that only their first drafts receive WF; moreover, these drafts are revised depending on the input that teachers provided without enabling students to understand their mistakes (Zacharias, 2007).

Another point is that using red pen is problematic when teachers deal with paper tests or daily assignments. Some students believe that the use of red pen psychologically affects them negatively. Black (2003) has asserted that students do not want their teachers to use red pens because they feel that it ruins their work.

On the other hand, English language teachers (ELTs) also have challenges when dealing with the provision of written feedback. Some challenges are related to the teachers themselves, and others are related to the delivery of feedback on students' papers.

Some ELTs believe that their goals are not achieved, especially when students do not benefit from their written or even oral feedback. They think that students do not

pay attention to their WF and have little motivation towards WF, which is why they repeat their mistakes (Zacharias, 2007).

Other teachers provide students general WF on their papers that does not help them in improving their writing skills and does indicate their definite mistakes. In addition, some ELTs do not employ WF on students' papers in a time-appropriate manner; thus, the students do not remember the exact materials included for the test. Other teachers give indirect WF to students that does not fulfill their needs therefore, they do not know what and where their mistakes are and in the end they repeat the same errors (Zacharias, 2007).

Another important point that should be mentioned is that students' preference of the use of types of feedback should be taken into the considerations of ELTs. That is, teachers would better imply the type of WF which is preferred by students because it may help them to improve the ability of writing skills more than the one that students do not like it or do not understand it.

More than that, lack of motivation and confidence in using written feedback by ELTs, make students feeble in writing activities. Therefore, it is believed that teachers can provide students with enthusiastic motivation to improve students' writing skills. In this case, students' ideas become more clear and more consistent, especially when the positive written feedback is implied (Al-Shamry, 2011).

1.2 Aim of the Study

The purpose behind this research is to examine the attitudes of Iraqi English language teachers and students towards written feedback (WF) at high-schools to improve students' writing skills. Srichanyachon (2012) has mentioned that students might benefit from WF when comparing their writing with the ideal draft and realizing their strong and weak points.

The point that makes this insight significant is that it is based on the attitudes of English language teachers and high-school students concerning the use of WF and students' preference of types of WF. This study is an attempt to show some facts concerning some issues that is not sufficiently researched within Iraqi contexts.

The study again tries to reveal the effects of employing written feedback (WF) and its tangible impact on students' written activities and assignments. In addition, it

is an attempt to answer, in detail, the research questions mentioned below. Finally, it will make high-school teachers aware of how much their students benefit from WF. The following research questions have guided this study:

1. What are Iraqi high-school teachers' attitudes towards their students' writing skills?
2. What are Iraqi high-school students' attitudes towards their teachers' written feedback?
3. Does any statistically significant difference exist between male and female teachers' attitudes towards written feedback?
4. Does any statistically significant difference exist between male and female students' attitudes towards written feedback?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Employing written feedback (WF) on high-school classes is generally important, but it is especially important for Iraqi students who lack stable and supportive educational environments due to wars and crises. Also the researcher has not found any research done at Iraqi high schools on the attitudes of teachers' and students' written feedback. For this reason, the study aims to fill this blank. Thornbury and Brown (2000) have stated that giving WF generally has been ignored systematically in past decades, but it is clear that students will not progress and remain at the same levels of knowledge if no feedback is given.

This study will illuminate teachers' and students' attitudes regarding the use of teachers' written feedback on students' paper tests and written assignments. The study also attempts to show teachers' and students' attitudes towards the effect of positive WF on high-school students to improve their writing skills, especially when it is applied in its time after the tests.

Another important point of the study is to shed light on the bad consequences of teachers' negative and destructive feedback on students writing skills and also the bad effect of using red pens and ambiguous codes on students' papers. In addition to that, the study investigates statistically significant difference between male and female teachers and students towards teacher WF.

Moreover, the study shows the preference of the types of feedback according to teachers and students and which types is the best to be applied during the class activities.

1.4 Assumptions of the Study

The sample participating in the study is assumed to reflect the population of the whole body of Iraqi high-school English teachers. This assumption is based on the fact that the selection of the sample was made in a way to assure that it represents the whole population. Additionally, all participants were informed about the nature of the study; therefore, it is assumed that all the questionnaires were answered sincerely.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

The following might be considered limitations of this study:

1.5.1 Limitation 1: The study concentrated only on Iraqi high-school EFL contexts, though some of the results may be applicable to other kinds of intermediate schools or EFL settings both in and out of Iraq.

1.5.2 Limitation 2: The results are only applicable for one part of the Iraqi education system because Iraq has two different educational systems, which are called Sunrise and Al-Rafidain.

1.5.3 Limitation 3: Suggestions are limited to the opinions of teachers and students who have answered the questionnaires.

1.6 Definitions

Merriam Webster Dictionary (2010) defined feedback as “a helpful information or criticism that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance, product, etc.” Ur (1996) defined feedback as “information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance”. Ferris (2002) defined the word feedback as “a reaction by the teacher that improves students' writing”. The definition of feedback in (Ellis, Loewen and Erlam, 2006) is as follows “a form of response to learners' production that includes errors”.

Written Feedback is defined as follows:

Mack (2009) defined written feedback as “any comments, questions or error corrections that are written on students’ assignments”. Absolum (2006) defined ‘feedforward’ as “situation in which pointing to the text’s learning steps illuminate aspects of current performance”. Another definition belongs to Absolum (2006) as “providing useful information to both the teacher and the student that helps them recognize gaps in student learning and use that data to move forward with the intent of closing the gap”.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Writing is considered as one of the most significant skills, especially during high-school education because students are prepared for academic writing in colleges and universities. This is why teachers should be aware of how to provide the best written feedback (WF) to their students.

WF in high-school EFL classes is a topic which has been much debated by both educators and learners. Different viewpoints have been observed among researchers in terms of the impact of positive WF, types of WF and how English language teachers (ELTs) can employ written feedback on students' paper-tests and written assignments to improve writing skills.

Feedback plays a significant role in the process of teaching and learning and has received much attention from researchers. Some have investigated the effect of WF on students' writing skills. Effective feedback is feedback that is focused, clear, applicable, and encouraging (Lindemann, 2001). When students are provided with this type of feedback, they are able to think critically and self-regulate their own learning (Nicol, Macfarlane & Dick, 2006; Strake & Kumar, 2010). This means that feedback guides students' paper-tests and daily assignments and indicates to students that their goals are achievable.

Researchers have held various perspectives towards feedback as a means of improving and encouraging students, especially over the past three decades. Each one of them has focused on an angle he/she supposed to be the most beneficial part of feedback. Razlina and Rohaiza (2014) focused on the importance of writing in ESL classrooms and using various strategies for improving students writing skills. Others

like Hyland (2010) have mentioned that students reflect both the growing interest in different areas of research regarding WF and continued search by teachers for more effective feedback practices.

Hannah and Nassaji (2010) have compared students' and teachers' attitudes towards WF, investigating how EFL learners and teachers benefit from the different types of and amounts of WF.

2.2 The Effects and Conditions of Teachers' Positive Feedback

Teachers' feedback is experienced by students both positively and negatively. Researches tell us, with accurate data, that sometimes teachers' written feedback positively affects students when it is used appropriately, but at other times it negatively affects them, especially when it is misused.

To determine whether teacher feedback is positive or negative, researchers have determined some criteria and conditions. For instance, (Boyle & Lo, 1994) indicated that the following conditions should be available in positive feedback: firstly, all feedback should be accurate, consistent and fair, particularly scores and grades because they should have high validity and reliability. Moreover, it should be constructive, and personal attack should be avoided. Secondly, to have a positive effect, feedback should focus on behaviors and qualities which can be observed or reliably judged and concentrate on certain language elements that are relevant to desirable learning or performance rather than shedding light on all techniques and skills. Thirdly, specific rather than general or vague comments are preferred, and the receiver (student) should be ensured in understanding the feedback so that he or she knows how to improve the writing. Furthermore, as an effective feedback, further learning opportunities and assessment activities should be considered such as tutorials, revision assignments or second-chance tests.

Others researchers have also elaborated some conditions for the provision of effective feedback. Gibbs and Simpson (2004) have stated that feedback must be given often enough and in sufficient detail to be truly formative, and it should concentrate on students' performance rather than their characteristics. Also, feedback must be provided in a time-efficient manner in order for students to employ it effectively.

Additionally, the design of the assessment should be taken into consideration while giving feedback.

Another point that Gibbs and Simpson (2004) have mentioned is that feedback should relate to students' understanding of what they are going to do in the future, and students must, in fact, receive feedback to be addressed independently.

2.3 Written Feedback Background

Teachers' written feedback can include comments on sub-skills such as grammar, punctuation, spelling, ideas and content. Since writing skills are relatively difficult to acquire, few studies on writing have been conducted. Moreover, as an experience high-school English teacher of eleven years, the researcher has observed among Iraqi students they face particular difficulties in vocabulary, spelling, and other writing sub-skills.

Regarding the definition of written feedback (WF), Wiggins (2015) has defined feedback more broadly as all various types of comments made after the fact, including advice, praise, and evaluation. More specifically, Mack (2009) has defined WF as any comments, questions or error corrections that are written on students' assignments.

There have been many studies conducted for the purposes of improving students' writing via WF. Lee (2008) examined the factors influencing students' responding practices. He also highlighted four important issues that have shed light on teachers' feedback practices: accountability, teachers' belief and values, exam culture, and lack of teacher training.

As an element of supporting students, Hyland (2006) mentioned that feedback is extensively seen as important for encouraging and reinforcing learning. The signification has also been realized by those working in the field of second language writing. Its value is approved in process-based classrooms, where it composes a key element of the students' growing control over forming skills, and by genre-oriented teachers employing scaffolded learning techniques.

Carson (2011) investigated that teachers are able to improve students' writing skills via the use of WF. Spivey (2014) Also mentioned the following questions: Should teachers handwrite or type the feedback? What color pen should teachers use? How much should teachers correct? The researcher focused on English as a second

language learners (ESL) instructors that can rely on the personal style inventory as a teaching tool to aid them in understanding writing as process and not just a product.

Probst (1989) stated that for the development of second language writing skills, feedback is essential, for its potential for learning and for student motivation. For instance, feedback is seen as a crucial beneficial tool moving learners in process-based, learner-centered classrooms, through different drafts towards the ability for effective self-expression. Feedback is seen as a significant factor of building the significance of reader responses in producing meanings from an interactionist viewpoint.

On the other hand, some researchers have concentrated their studies of WF solely on the development of particular writing sub-skills. For example, Nassaji (2011) conducted a study of WF in terms of students' grammatical errors, and Hyland (2000) focused on the development of learner autonomy via positive feedback.

Hubais (2014) examined the difference between learning and performance in giving feedback. He stated that learning means acquiring knowledge through the transfer of tasks. This implies that learning how to write can be achieved through writing new assignments. On the other hand, obtaining knowledge from repeated tasks, or performance, might be obtained by writing multiple drafts.

2.3.1 Types of written feedback

Written feedback (WF) in a writing context concerns not only indicating students' mistakes but also illuminating the next steps to be taken for improving their writing. Gibbs and Simpson (2004) have stated that the single most powerful influence on student achievement is feedback on assignments. Other researchers have mentioned general types of feedback, but some have focused exclusively on WF. Bitchener & Knoch (2008) have asserted that WF can be categorized into direct/indirect and focused/unfocused feedback. Bitchener, et al. (2008) clarified direct feedback by giving an example of crossing out a misspelled word and writing the correct spelling above the error. Also, sometimes a meta-linguistic explanation is provided at the end of the paper or the error is corrected by writing grammar rules on the paper. On the other hand, indirect feedback means indicating the exact error without correcting it and leaving the learner to determine the nature and location of the error by underlining or

circling an error, recording the number of errors in the margin of a given line, or indicating the existence of errors via codes with no correction (Mohebbi, 2013).

Mohebbi (2013) has explained focused feedback as that in which a specific category is regarded by the teacher, for example punctuation marks, grammar or spelling. Mohebbi also elaborates good and bad focused feedback by providing some examples. Good focused feedback involves commenting on the strong and weak points of a performance, commenting on the work process or instructions about the process of a work or study strategy that might support enhance the work, commenting on the position of the student as the one who chooses to do the work, and avoiding personal comments (Mohebbi, 2013). He defines bad focused feedback as comments that bypass the student—for example, instead of saying or writing, “You did a good job because...”, the teacher writes “This is hard” without offering any insight regarding how to improve the student’s language skill. Bad focused feedback also involves criticizing or making personal compliments or digs such as “How could you do that, idiot!” (Mohebbi, 2013).

Ellis (2009) has defined unfocused feedback as a means of providing error correction on all or most errors found, regardless of their error category. For example, marking spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure all at once is considered unfocused feedback. Harmer (2012) believes that if every element of language skills is corrected, then students may be demotivated by the number of corrections demanded by their teachers’ feedback. Zahida & Zaru (2013) have described three other types of WF (meaning-focused feedback, positive feedback, and form-focused feedback).

Another type of WF known as “appreciation” refers to encouragement and psychological support for students and writing expressions on their assignments and test papers, for example thanking students for spending time to learn something new. Appreciation comments do not have to be elaborate to have a positive impact. They can be as simple as “thank you for sharing this awesome (idea/question/thought) with us.” By receiving a positive, appreciative comment at the outset, students are more likely to feel respected and engage with any additional feedback teachers provide (Gaudreau & Liu, 2016).

Gaudreau and Liu (2016) have described another type of feedback known as “sayback.” This implies restating what students have written by writing some expressions like “I agree, [Sara],” which gains its value from repeating the student’s name and, thus, causing him/her to feel acknowledged and/or appreciated. Another type of feedback known as “links to resources” denotes correcting students’ written mistakes by providing the name of a related resource that might aid in the student’s correcting of such mistakes. Moreover, “questions feedback” refers to writing questions on students’ papers to engage them in conversations about their work. Many purposes might be achieved by providing questions feedback (e.g. “What did you mean by. . .?” or “Why did you. . .?”) such as causing students to think about their writing in a different way.

In addition to the above-mentioned types of feedback, others include “providing next steps” to acquire greater knowledge, “providing guidance” to scaffold student learning, “sharing personal experiences,” and “facilitators connecting learners” (Gaudreau & Liu, 2016). Furthermore, Hughes (2011) has asserted other kinds of feedback such as “personal praise” feedback, summative “right or wrong” feedback, “self-regulatory feedback” and “process feedback.” Finally, other types of feedback include evaluation, commenting and responding (Harmer, 2012).

2.3.2 Types of written feedback preferred by students

It is difficult to decide which type of written feedback (WF) is preferred by students because each type of feedback can be useful if utilized properly in terms of time, place, and situation. Moreover, sometimes students may not agree with a particular kind of feedback provided by their teachers. McCargar and Schulz (2001) believe that students’ preferences for some types of WF should be taken into consideration when examining writing skills because if a student believes of a certain type of feedback to be useful, he or she might pay more attention to the feedback than those who do not favor the feedback.

The results of a questionnaire administered by Hajian (2014) concerning students' preferences for types of feedback indicated that 68.8% of students preferred positive comments more than other types of feedback. They mentioned that positive comments encourage and motivate students. Moreover, about 67.5% preferred detailed

and specific comments because they believed that detailed and specific feedback is more clear and effective than general feedback (Hamouda, 2011).

Wang (2010) has stated that some students favor direct feedback as it increases their self-confidence in correcting their errors and motivates students.

According to Amrhein and Nassaji (2010), several researchers have suggested that effective feedback needs agreement between teachers and students in terms of developing students' writing skills. Hedgcock & Lefkowitz (1996) claimed that some students believe teachers' feedback on errors to be more useful than content feedback. Saito (1994) stated that for each type of feedback, direct written feedback could be useful for some students because they want their teachers to determine their mistakes directly or they may not benefit from their teachers' indirect written feedback or codes. Nevertheless, Lefkowitz (1994) asserted that indirect feedback on errors such as giving students clues is better for students than direct corrections since they realize that this kind of feedback encourages them to be more active. Still, Spivey (2014) thinks that direct feedback is helpful for many reasons because it is the simplest form and leaves no confusion or debate. Bitchener, et al. (2012) has demonstrated that students do not have to remember error codes and their meanings. Easy understanding is preferred rather than spending time searching for error correction and the reasons behind it.

Other studies such as that conducted by Ashwell, Leki, & Ziv (2000) have determined that the form of comments on content and ideas as WF as well as clarification of grammatical, structural, and surface errors are preferred by students. In a similar study conducted by Keh (1997), it was discovered that elaborated comments are more commonly preferred by students than one-word comments. Students also prefer that specific problems be highlighted.

Hajian (2014) demonstrated that many students prefer teachers' feedback because they believe it is the teacher's responsibility to correct their mistakes and because students trust their teachers and think that they are the source to which they may return for help.

Others prefer to teachers' feedback in its time because after the written assignments or tests, students urgently need to take their papers as soon as possible that is the materials they examined in, still present and exist in their memory. After

students' written assignment, feedback must be given back to the student not long as some researchers suggest that it is too late to give feedback one week after the student has written the assignment. (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). This is why to be useful to students, WF must be provided quickly enough. Therefore, teachers' written feedback regularly in its time provide students positive feedback with lots of fruitful information. On the contrary delayed feedback perhaps would not give students any constructive message and would be forgotten totally.

Hannah (2010) study also has provided information regarding the type of feedback students want and need. He stated that the majority of students realize the importance of seeing their mistakes, and they want their teachers to use WF as a tool for improve their writing. Moreover, most students prefer to see all of their errors in order to improve their writing.

2.3.3 Types of written feedback preferred by teachers

There has been much debate among teachers regarding which type of written feedback (WF) is more effective and useful, and these opinions have depended on personal experience, personal belief and personal preference. Zamel (1985) believed that it is most helpful for students if English language teachers (ELTs) concentrate on content more than form. Similarly, Sheppard (1992) thought providing corrective feedback on meaning to be more useful than providing it on surface-level errors, as WF on form increases students' awareness of sentence boundaries. Cohen & Cavalcanti (1990) determined that during the early 1990s, ELT began to focus more on vocabulary, content and organization. Fathman (1990) also held the similar view that giving feedback on grammar and content has a positive effect on rewriting, simultaneously or separately. Ferris (2003) has stated that ELTs tend to regard themselves mainly as language teachers, which means that they concentrate on pupils' language mistakes instead of focusing on structure, content, ideas, or organization.

Similar to the above views, Harmer (2012) believes that commenting on the content of students' work is more important than solely focusing on their language use. Moreover, Hyland (2003) claims that the English teacher should pay attention to both the form and ideas of his/her students and that one should not be emphasized over the other. Spivey (2014) has revealed that some ELTs pay more attention to language form

rather than the texts as a whole, and they are inclined to correct and locate errors for students. He also has stated that teachers react to students' weak points in writing (Spivey, 2014).

According to teachers' preferences of when to give WF, Akbar (2014) has illustrated different points of view. Some ELTs prefer to give feedback at the prewriting and evaluation stages, while others think that it might discourage students if teachers give feedback at these initial stages of writing (Hamouda, 2011). However, in composition, correcting students' errors at the final stage might not be suitable for improving students' writing. Other teachers claim that giving feedback may be helpful only at the evaluation stage of writing (Stanley, 2003). Akbar's (2014) study determined that 58.3% of teachers preferred to give feedback during the draft stage, and previous studies have demonstrated that giving feedback during the draft stage might be better than during the evaluation stage (Stanley, 2003).

2.3.4 Teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback

The necessity of giving positive and constructive feedback in order to enhance students' writing has been proven by several studies. Though students have expressed many valuable comments and viewpoints towards teachers' feedback, teachers' opinions also should be considered. Ferris (2007) believes that instructors desire written tasks, as they encourage learners to learn and practice academic writing. On top of that, McGrath (2011) has asserted that it is the teacher's duty to give more explanation on the margin of a student's paper so as to be rewritten again by them. This procedure promotes students' thinking skills, which are a path for learning.

Moreover, Farahani (2014) has determined that 83.3% of teachers in his study preferred students to correct written errors indicated by teachers, while some acknowledged the value of correcting written errors indicated students' peers. Neman (1980) stated that 58.3% of teachers think that students should correct themselves.

Other researchers believe that all possible positive effects of WF given by ELTs are rejected for the sake of enhancing their writing and reducing errors, especially grammatical errors (Truscott, 1996). Teachers' feedback on students' errors is ineffective and useless and should therefore be eliminated. Truscott claimed that it

is the responsibility of teachers to change students' perspectives regarding what they should expect from their teachers by adopting a 'correction-free approach' in their classrooms (Truscott, 1996).

On the other hand, Ferris (2003) has disagreed with Truscott's ideas and provided evidence of the positive impact of error feedback on L2 writing by administering surveys recording students' opinions about the importance of teachers' feedback. Additionally, studies of universities have clarified that at least some English-speaking universities are less tolerant of "typical" English-language errors than of typical native speakers' errors. Third, it is critical that students become more self-sufficient in editing their writing.

According to teachers' attitudes toward direct and indirect feedback, Frodesen (1991) explained that sometimes direct feedback is provided by ELTs when students' mistakes are too complex to be self-corrected or outside their students' abilities. Ferris and Hedgocok (2005) have stated that teachers' indirect feedback is provided when errors might be solved by the students themselves and when teachers want to influence learner autonomy. Again, Ferris (2003) has affirmed that most researchers agree that indirect feedback has more potential than direct feedback for long-term student improvement.

2.3.5 Students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback

Since writing demands the use of several techniques related to form, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, grammar, etc., high-school students usually have fear and anxiety, and they are not confident in their writing. Thus, written feedback (WF) is needed from English language teachers (ELTs). Kasper & Petrello (1996) stated that learners expect to perform badly on their writing; therefore, they have difficulties and tend to evaluate themselves as they write, which induces anxiety and inhibits the generation of ideas. Zhan (2016) has indicated that some learners pay close attention to almost all aspects of their writing, while some pay more attention to form and others to content.

One factor that may affect students' negative attitudes towards WF is that many ELTs do not think that errors are tools of learning, which means that the more students make errors, the more creative and skillful they will become. Thus, most students are

ashamed of their errors (Rotim, 2015). Kasper and Petrello (1996) asserted that writing teachers should decrease students' anxiety if they want to encourage their language acquisition.

In addition, due to the cultural belief that teachers control grades, students feel that they must do what their teachers demand (Zacharias, 2007). On an item of a questionnaire completed by one student, he/she answered “whenever I didn't revise according to the teacher feedback, I got a D.” Another stated that he/she wants teacher feedback because it enables him/her to get a high grade (Zacharias, 2007). This means that students are worried and feel uncomfortable while writing. Lee (2008) has demonstrated that most students are particularly positive about receiving feedback on language issues; however, they also want teachers' comments on content and ideas. Moreover, some students believe that if their teachers give too much feedback, they feel annoyed and discouraged to continue writing (Zacharias, 2007).

On the contrary, other students feel that their teachers' feedback gives them power and support. They believe that teacher feedback helps them to notice their mistakes (Zacharias, 2007). Lee (2008) has indicated that students have a wide variety of opinions concerning feedback. In a comparison of peer feedback and teacher feedback, he found that most students believe the best type of feedback to be the one that is given by teachers rather than by peers or even self-evaluation. A study of Hong-Kong high school students has demonstrated that they want their teachers to provide more written comments and they enjoy reading teachers' written comments (Lee, 2008)

2.4 Content Written Feedback

Teachers usually give their students content feedback or form feedback to aid their students in producing better written output. Bruton (2009) has claimed that correction helps to reduce students' errors in writing after they receive feedback from their teachers. Nevertheless, some teachers assert that feedback on content is just as important if not more important than feedback on form. A piece of writing is not simply a list of sentences based on the proper use of grammar rules. Rather, it is to some extent a flow of ideas and thoughts that prove the students' way of thinking, which is worth reading and appreciating. Therefore, ELT should not solely evaluate

the surface level of grammar and vocabulary, but also should acknowledge content (Baghzou, 2011).

Also promoting WF on content, Zamel (1985) claimed that teachers frequently misread students' texts and make random corrections. They also give ambiguous instructions while neglecting the core of the text, which includes the student's real and ideal thoughts and opinions. This means that there is a strong connection between the process of writing and the students' thoughts and points of view. Moreover, it might be unfair for a teacher to examine one angle and ignore others. Hyland and Hyland (2006) have argued that teachers' feedback should not be a simple interaction between teachers and texts; rather, the interaction should occur between the teacher and the pupil.

Toddel (1990) asserted that content feedback is essential for creating trust and building a good relationship between teachers and students, thus enabling students to improve their writing skills. Similarly, Ferris (1993) stated that content feedback improves students' cohesion in paragraph writing.

2.5 Form Written Feedback

Shamsudin & Reza (2012) have claimed that "form" refers only to grammar, but others like Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen (2001) believe it encompasses phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and even spelling. Ellis (2001) referred to form as any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form.

The importance of balancing feedback on content with feedback on form has been highlighted by several researchers (Ali, 2014). Furthermore, to help students learn from the feedback and improve their revised drafts, teachers should spend their spare time reading students' writings to provide powerful feedback. However, studies such as that of Biber, Nekrasova & Horn (2011) have demonstrated that it is more effective to focus on form and content together rather than on one without the other (Ali, 2014). Also, Shamsudin & Reza (2012) have stated that over the previous century, language form, grammar or structure instruction has been an agreeable and challenging topic among scholars.

2.6 Levels of Written Feedback

The purpose of acknowledging different levels of feedback is to offer constructive and effective feedback. Some researchers have clarified the levels of feedback generally and others have divided them into various categories.

Budimlic (2012) has written more than two thousand words about the levels of feedback. He has classified feedback according to four levels: feedback about the task, feedback about the processing of the task, feedback about self-regulation and feedback about the person.

The first level “feedback about the task” is based on the opinion that English language teachers (ELTs) must be more powerful in correcting misconceptions about the task itself rather than solely informing students of a lack of information (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback about the task provides information about students' mistakes whether something is correct or incorrect. Information about the depth or quality of students' assignments is also included alongside additional information.

The second level “feedback about process of the task” involves providing students information about how they access the task, information about the relationship between what they did and quality performance, and information about possible different methods which would also be fruitful. Hattie & Timperley (2007) have stated that some learners are able to convert feedback about the task into feedback about the process. While feedback about the process is given by teachers, this kind of transfer scaffolds all students. This is a very powerful way to help students in “learning how to learn.”

The third level ‘feedback about self-regulation’ means that while feedback is given to students, students must search, accept and interact with the feedback. Active students are those who try to invent internal routines to investigate the needed information, suggestions and impressive strategies to obtain the information feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Other students rely on external factors such as whether ELTs decide to provide feedback on this or that assignment. If students have self-confidence, they are more enthusiastic to expend effort on obtaining and dealing with feedback. For this reason, feedback about self-regulation is effective to the degree that it reinforces self-efficacy (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Dweck (2007) has denounced the fourth level of WF "feedback about the person." This generally is not a good form of feedback for two main reasons. Firstly, it does not contain information that can be used for further learning, so it is not formative. Secondly, it can contribute to students believing that intelligence is fixed. This implies that acquisition is out of students' control. This kind of belief eliminates the connection between student effort and achievement. In contrast, feedback about processes cause students to believe that achievement is related to specific strategies and kinds of effort out of their control rather than innate ability.

Halford (2011) has elaborated five rather than four feedback levels. The first level involves creating safety, which means that teachers should create a safe environment in which students may feel comfortable in receiving feedback. If this kind of safety does not exist, it may cause the feedback to be unproductive. The second level involves being positive, meaning that teachers should give as much positive feedback as possible. Positive feedback encourages students and send positive signs to the brain. The third level of feedback includes being specific; that is, few students benefit from general feedback because they do not think specifically that they are the direct target. Therefore, teachers should ignore general expressions and statements. The fourth level is being immediate, which means that effective feedback should not be postponed, as this type of feedback may be too ambiguous and rely on memory.

Strang (2014) also emphasized timely feedback, meaning that teachers' feedback should be given in its time or it may lose its impact. Feedback needs to come while students are still mindful of the topic, assignment, or performance in question and students still think of the learning goal as a learning goal—that is, something they are still striving for rather than something they already have completed. Similarly, feedback should be given frequently.

The fifth level of feedback mentioned by Halford involves the attitudes of teachers toward students' mistakes. They should not judge the students as ignorant or failures, but rather they should continue to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner (Halford, 2011).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology of the study, which was conducted to explore Iraqi high-school teachers' and students' attitudes towards WF in developing students' English-writing skills as well as the effects of WF on students' writing.

3.2 Context

It is important to acknowledge that Iraq possesses two different educational systems. The educational system in northern Iraq (Erbil, Suleymaniyah and Duhok) differs from that in the middle and southern Iraq. Though each system has its unique characteristics and qualifications regarding English Language Teaching, high-school students remain most in need of improvement in both systems.

The educational system in the middle and southern Iraq consists of three levels of study: Elementary (six years), Intermediate (three years) and Secondary (three years). English instruction in the elementary stage begins at fifth grade, with four lessons each week. Each lesson lasts approximately 40 minutes. During the intermediate and secondary stages five English lessons are allocated each week. However, in northern Iraq, the educational system employs a 'Basic approach', which consists of twelve stages (Basic classes). The study of English language begins with the first basic class (usually six-year-old pupils) to twelfth basic class (usually eighteen- year-old pupils). Class 10, 11, and 12 is considered high-school level. Five English lessons are studied per week. Each lesson lasts approximately 40 minutes.

3.3 Participants

Three hundred students and teachers participated in this study. 100 was English-language teachers (50 males and 50 females) and 200 was high-school students (50 males and 50 females). The selection of the participants was based on quota sampling method in a population of approximately 20,000 from two cities (Erbil and Suleymaniyah). The native language of the participants was Kurdish.

3.3.1 Teachers

One hundred Iraqi high-school English language teachers participated in this study, and they were mixed in terms of gender. There were fifty male teachers and fifty female teachers. Almost all teachers held Bachelor's degrees in English Literature and/or English Education. The selection of the participants was based on quota sampling method in a population of 400 high-schools from two cities (Erbil and Suleymaniyah). The questionnaire, which included sixteen items regarding the role and effects of Written feedback, was prepared then distributed on the participants (see Appendix I). Some of the participants were contacted via emails, while others were visited by the researcher in their schools during the class time. The items of the questionnaire were explained to the participants to be more understandable.

3.3.2 Students

Two-hundred high-school students ranging in age from 16 to 19 years participated in this study. One hundred was male, while the other one hundred was female. All the participants were in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth stages. Both male and female students were in scientific and literary branches. Scientific branch is always better than literary branch in all lessons especially in English language.

It is worth mentioning that there is no proficiency language test in Iraqi educational system for accepting or refusing students at high-school stages and universities so far. The students that were chosen for the survey were from Erbil and Suleymaniyah governorate. The students were chosen based on Quota sampling and they were informed about the survey. They also were asked if they would like to participate the questionnaire or not. Once all participants agreed then the questionnaire was administered in Erbil and Suleymaniyah governorate and some other different districts.

3.4 Research Design

The current research was an attempt to reveal the attitudes of Iraqi English language teachers and high-school students toward written feedback and make comparisons between the two groups (teachers and students).

The research is a descriptive study that examines the results of both teachers' and students' questionnaires. The participants included both males and females. In order to obtain statistically predictable results, a quantitative method design was employed during data collection and analysis. Through two different questionnaires, the data was collected: teachers' attitudes toward written feedback questionnaires were consisted of 16 items and students' attitudes toward written feedback questionnaires were consisting of 15 items.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

Two different questionnaires were designed for teachers and students. Both questionnaires were based on those of a previous study (Al-Otaibi, 2005) which was conducted in Saudi Arabia. The Teachers' and students' questionnaires were developed and modified in order to be relevant and appropriate to this study. Some items of teachers' and students' questionnaires were taken out because of repetition and irrelevancy to the subject.

3.5.1 Teacher's attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire

Teacher's attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire consisted of 16 items. It was designed for the purpose of determining their attitudes toward WF. The survey was applied properly at Suleymaniyah and Erbil high schools. Each item was explained by the researcher. Some teachers were sent the questionnaire via emails. The teachers were given a few days to complete the questionnaires.

The teachers' responses to the items were indicated utilizing the following frequency scales: 'always' (95-100), 'usually' (80-90), 'often' (70-60), 'sometimes' (50-60), 'seldom' (20-10) and 'never' (0-0).

3.5.2 Students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire

Students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire consisted of 15 items. Students' questionnaire was translated from English language into Kurdish language. Each English questionnaire was attached with a translated one to be obvious for students and understand the meaning of each item. The survey was administered and collected during students' English class time. The following frequency scale was utilized: 'always' (95-100), 'usually' (80-90), 'often' (70-60), 'sometimes' (50-60), 'seldom' (20-10) and 'never' (0-0).

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The sample was comprised of 100 Iraqi English language teachers (ELTs) and 200 high-school students. The teachers were explained the aim of the study and the importance of teachers' written feedback. Then, they were given the questionnaire. Some of them were sent a paper-based version of the questionnaire, while others were contacted via email and messenger. After giving teachers enough time for choosing the answers, the questionnaires were collected.

As far as students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire concerned, all of them were at high-schools at tenth, eleventh, and twelfth classes in Erbil and Suleymaniyah and the selection of the students was based on quota sampling. The researcher visited some schools to distribute the questionnaires personally, while some students delivered the questionnaires themselves. Finally, the answered questionnaires were collected by the researcher from the teachers and students.

3.7 Data Analysis

Both teachers' and students' responses were recorded in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for statistical analysis. The frequencies of responses on the questionnaires and mean scores were calculated. Two independent samples *t*-test analyses were conducted to determine the differences between male and female participants and to show the statistically significant differences between male and female teachers and students.

More than that, both teachers' and students' data were transferred into Excel program so as to form figures and charts which were shown in the findings (Chapter

four). Also the figures were made to show the highest and the lowest rate of the participants.



CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1 Presentation

The questionnaire results are presented in this chapter to demonstrate both teachers' and students' reactions towards WF as well as the effects of WF on students' writing skills.

4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

Although this research is descriptive, the method used to analyze data was quantitative. That is, teachers' and students' attitudes toward WF are determined by questionnaire responses containing 16 and 15 items, respectively.

4.3 The Results of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire

The aim of the results of teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire was to examine statistically significant differences between male and female teachers' attitudes towards WF. For this purpose, a *t*-test was conducted. The results are presented in table 1 below:

Table 1

Mean and standard deviation of teachers in terms of teachers' attitudes toward written feedback.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total	male	50	48.4400	8.56705	1.21156
	female	50	49.3000	5.57784	.78883

According to table 1, male teachers reported lower than females with a mean of 48.44. For further analysis, Table 2 below shows whether there existed any

statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in terms of attitudes toward WF. For this purpose, an independent samples *t*-test (2-tailed) was conducted.

Table 2

Teachers' *independent samples t-test results for gender differences concerning statistically significant differences.*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total	Equal variances assumed	10.998	.001	-.595	98	.553
	Equal variances not assumed			-.595	84.215	.554

According to table 2 above, there was no statistically significant difference between the scores of male teachers ($M = 48.44$, $SD = 8.56$) and female teachers ($M = 49.30$, $SD = 5.57$), $t(98) = .595$.

4.3.1 Item-based descriptive statistics for the teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback

The aim of presenting the items of teachers' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire is to introduce the highest and the lowest rate of each item of the questionnaire.

The aim of Figure 1 below is to display how much English language teachers provide their students with written feedback on daily assignments and tests

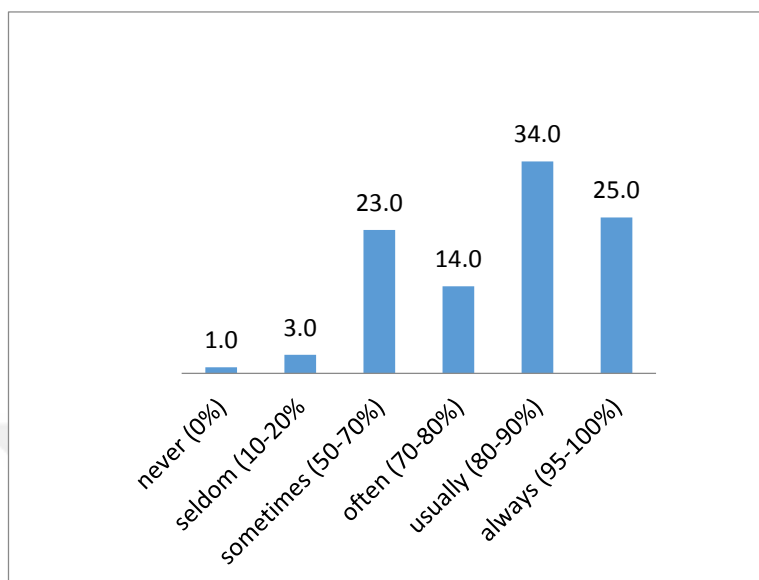


Figure 1 Generally, I give written feedback on students' papers (daily assignments and tests).

Figure 1 displays the results of the first teacher questionnaire item. It reveals that 25% of participants always give general WF, whereas 34% usually give written feedback on students' papers. 14% of teachers often give WF, while 23% sometimes give WF on students' papers, both daily assignments and tests. It is noticed that 3% seldom give general WF and, finally, 1% never give WF. This means that most participants give general WF to their students as a tool for enhancing their writing skills.

The purpose behind Figure 2 is to show teachers' attitudes toward giving written feedback regularly in its time on daily assignments or test to improve students' writing skills.

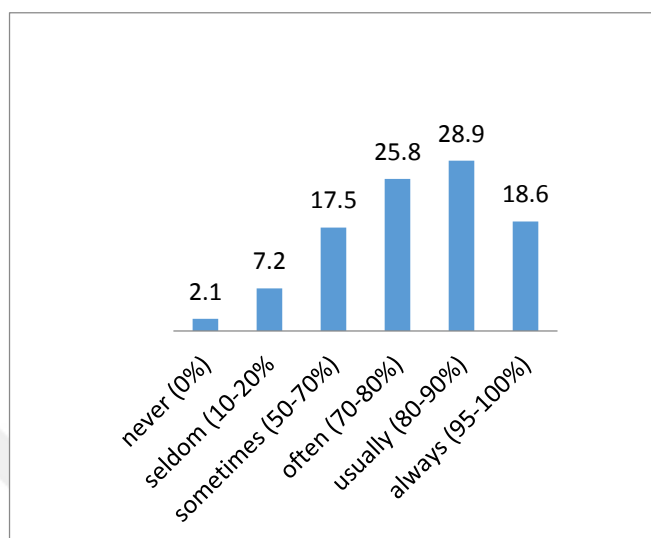


Figure 2 I give students' written feedback regularly in its time.

Figure 2 has shown that 18.6% of teachers chose always to give written feedback regularly and in a time-efficient manner, while 28.9% usually do so. 25.8 % often do this, whereas 17.5% sometimes do. Moreover, 7.2% seldom give time-efficient feedback. Finally, 2.1% never give this type of feedback. It is worth mentioning that most participants give WF regularly and time-efficiently (usually and often). The two options “always” and “usually” should have had the highest rate due to the significance and effect of this item on students' writing skills.

Figure 3 aims to demonstrate the viewpoints of English language teachers regarding the use of negative and pessimistic written feedback to decrease the bad consequences on high-school students.

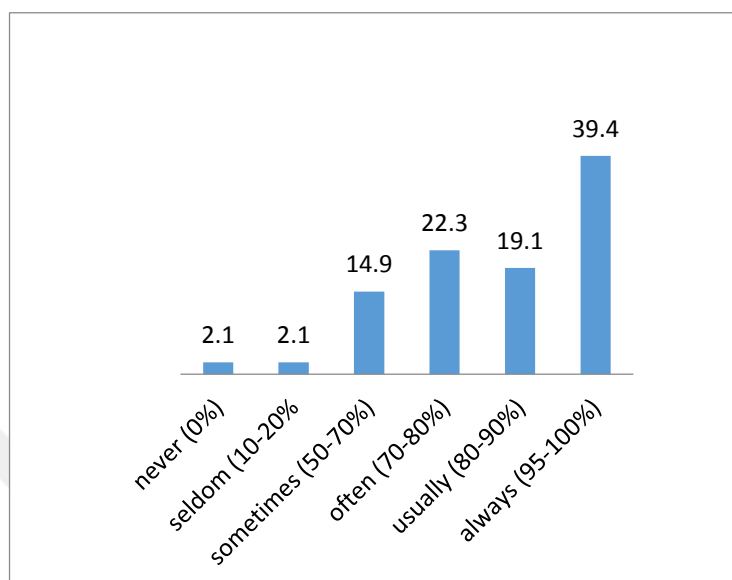


Figure 3 I prevent myself from negative and pessimistic written feedback.

On one hand, the effect of negative feedback is generally destructive, especially in the process of teaching and learning. In addition, teachers' pessimistic feedback decreases students' enthusiasm toward the language content. On the other hand, teachers' optimistic expressions, even single words such as "good" and "excellent" positively affect students. Figure 3 illustrates teachers' points of view toward the use of negative and pessimistic WF while dealing with students' papers. 39.4% (the largest number) always prevent themselves from giving negative and pessimistic WF, whereas 19.1% usually do this. 22.3% often refrain from using negative and pessimistic WF. 14.9% sometimes do this, while 2.1% seldom do. Finally, 2.1% never prevent themselves from giving pessimistic and negative WF. The above-mentioned results imply that most of the teachers (about 58.5 %) believe that to build excellent students, teachers should use optimistic and positive WF while dealing with students' papers.

The purpose behind Figure 4 is to show how much teachers feel about students' written feedback on papers or daily written assignments to improves their writing skills.

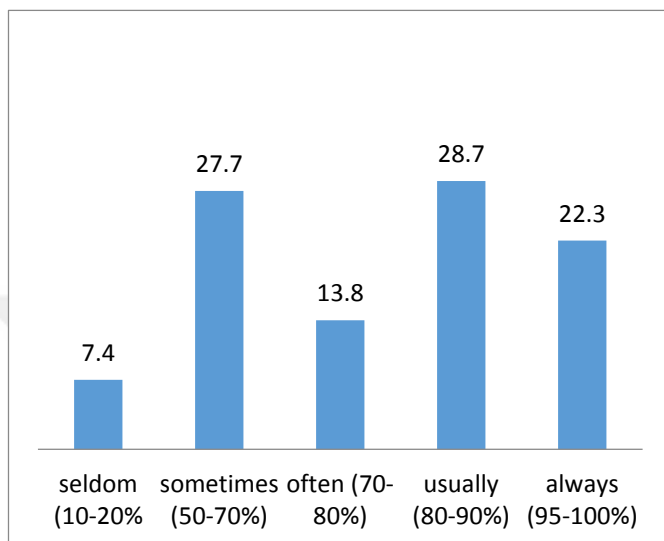


Figure 4 I feel that my written feedback on students' papers improves their writing skills.

In Figure 4, it is observed that 22.3% of teachers always feel that their written feedback (WF) improve students' writing skills, while 28.7% usually feel this way. 13.8% often feel that WF on students' papers improves their writing skills, while 27.7% sometimes feel this way, and 7.4% seldom do. No teacher selected "never." The above results demonstrate that the better teachers' attitudes are toward the value of their WF, the more students improve their writing skills.

Figure 5 aims is to determine how often teachers use specific written feedback (WF) on written assignment. As students always have a desire to know exactly what their mistakes are, teachers' feedback should prevent them from repeating their mistakes. But sometimes the problem arises in which teachers give general feedback that does not indicate their mistakes precisely. As a result, students repeat their mistakes. This kind of feedback produces a negative reaction from students. On the other hand, other teachers give positive expressions and constructive comments that are general, such as “well done” and “great job,” but still the students do not know which part of their writing deserves this praise

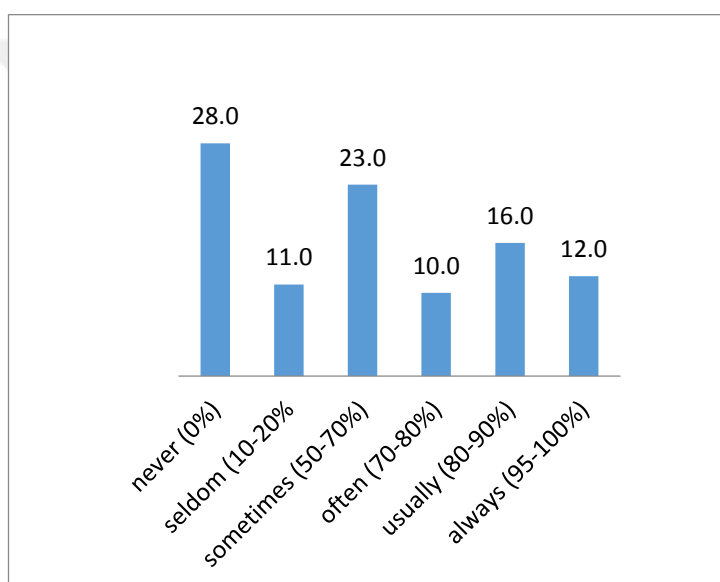


Figure 5 I use specific written feedback on every assignment.

Figure 5 shows that 12% of teachers always give specific WF on every assignment, while 16% usually give specific WF. Also, only 10% give this feedback, whereas 23% sometimes do. In addition, 11% seldom give specific WF on every assignment, while 28% never use specific feedback.

The purpose of Figure 6 is to demonstrate how much English language teachers pay attention to provide students with grammar as a feedback as compared with other elements of writing such as vocabulary and spelling.

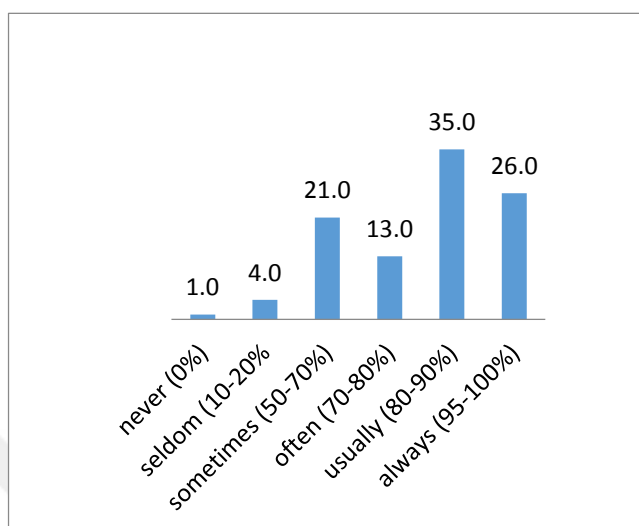


Figure 6 I focus on grammar more than other elements of writing.

The eighth item of the questionnaire focuses on grammatical WF. Figure 6 stated that 26% of teachers always focus on grammatical WF, while 35% usually do so, 13% often do, and 21% sometimes do. In addition, 4% of the teachers seldom focus on grammar, while 1% never do so. From the above results, it can be observed that most high-school ELT focus on grammar when dealing with students' papers because more than half of the teacher participants (35% - 26%) chose "always" and "usually."

The purpose of Figure 7 is to show how much English language teachers pay attention to provide students with feedback on grammar as compared with other elements of writing such as vocabulary and spelling. Some high-school English language teachers focus on composition as a device for improving students' writing skills. This means a lot to them because they realize that the more students use their pens to write about a subject, the more their writing skills improve. Taha (2014) has examined the difficulties that face EFL students of writing composition in Iraqi Preparatory Schools. He claims that when composition homework is given to the students, they are more focused and capable of writing skillfully.

Figure 7 below shows teachers' point of views on giving written feedback on composition as a means of improving students' writing skills.

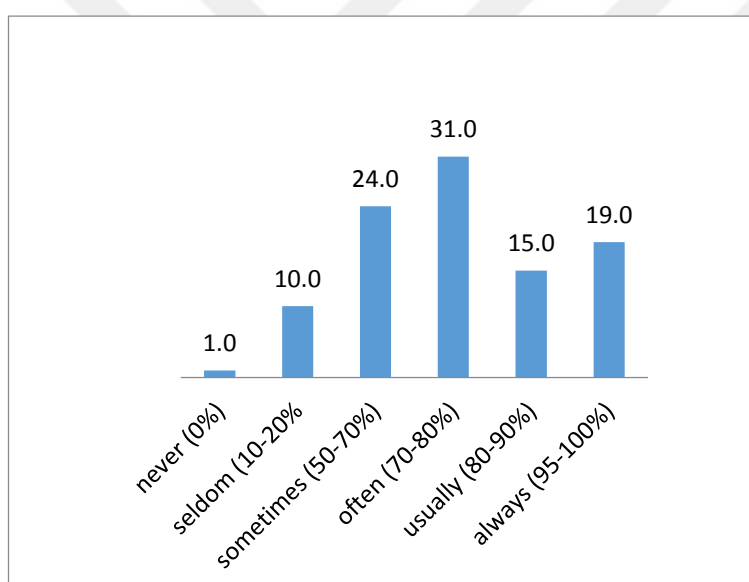


Figure 7 To improve students' writing skills, written feedback on "composition" means a lot to me.

Figure 7 demonstrates that 19% of the teacher participants always give written on composition to improve students' writing skills, while 15% usually do so. 31% often do this, and 24% sometimes do. In addition, 10% seldom give WF on composition, while 1% never do so. It seems that most participants selected the first three choices (19%, 15%, 31%). This may indicate that they take the issue seriously for the sake of improving students' writing skills.

Figure 8 aims to show how often English language teachers use class white board during the lessons as a daily written feedback so as to share students to take part in written class activities. When teachers give daily written feedback on class white board, they guide students to the elements of writing skills such as grammar, spelling, punctuation or contents.

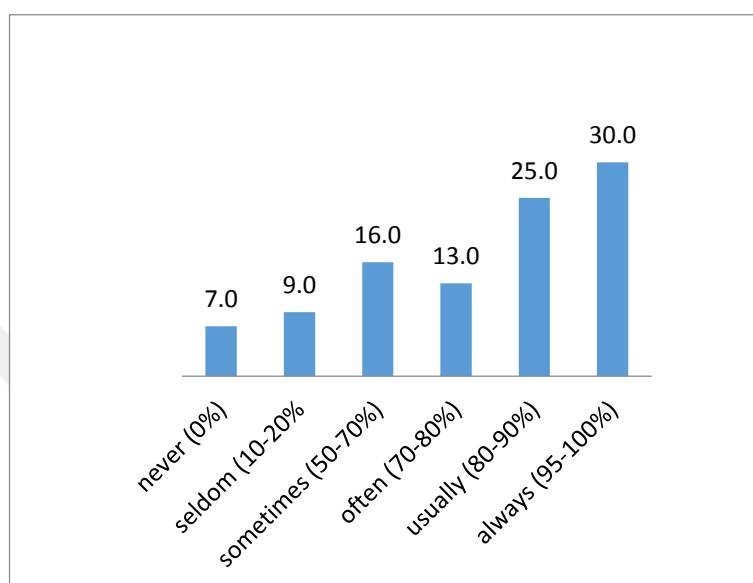


Figure 8 I use daily written feedback on the white board while students take part in some written class activities.

Figure 8 demonstrates that 30% of the teacher participants always use daily WF on the white board while students take part in some written class activities, whereas 25% usually do so, 13% often do so, and 16% sometimes do. Also, 9% seldom use this method, while 7% never do. The data above indicates that more than half of the teachers use daily WF on white board in order to improve students' writing skills. Thus, this method might be considered a positive way of enhancing students' writing ability.

Figure 9 introduces the opinion of teacher languages how often they provide students with general feedback on class white board because after every test, students usually want their teachers to provide them with feedback because the material is still in their memory. This demonstrates the importance of giving written feedback (WF) immediately or soon after tests.

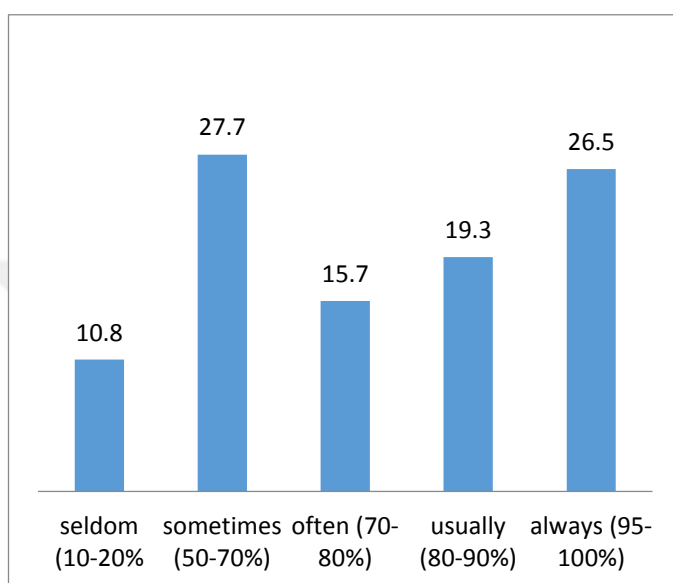


Figure 9 After the test, I give students some general feedback on the white board.

Figure 9 indicates that 26.5 % of the participants always give students some general feedback on the white board after tests, while 19.3 % usually do this, 15.7 % often do, and 27.7% sometimes do. Moreover, 10.8% of the participants seldom give this feedback, while 28% never do. None of the participants never give this type of feedback. The first three choices (26.5% ,19.3%, 15.7 %) indicate that more than half of the participants give WF on the white board after English tests.

Figure 10 aims to demonstrate how do English language teachers look at the importance of ‘semantics’ while giving written feedback to students.

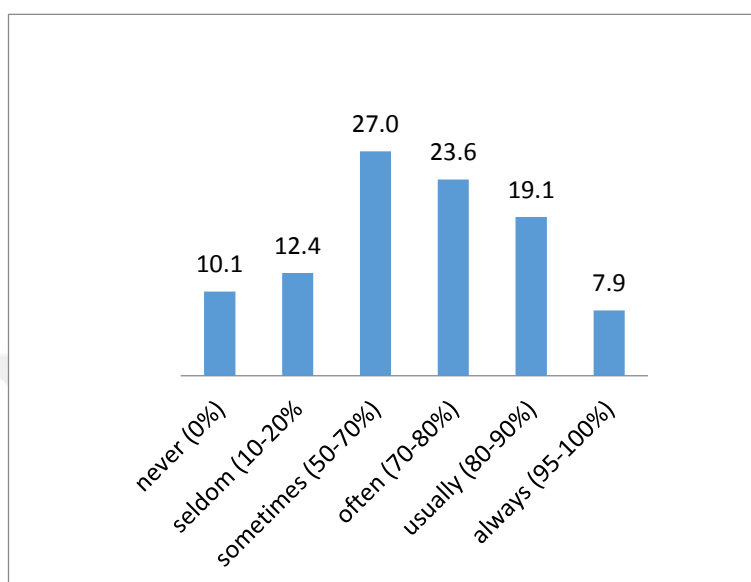


Figure 10 The importance of “semantics” is emphasized when giving written feedback.

There are some written exercises in Iraqi high-school textbooks that emphasize semantics, for example “unit tasks” (Sunrise 10-11- and 12). Teachers benefit from this focus as they help them to improve students’ expressions, word play and/ or sentence power. Figure 12 demonstrates that 7.9% of the participants always focus on semantics when giving written feedback (WF), whereas 19.1 % usually do so, 23.6 % often do, and 27% sometimes do. 12.4 % seldom focus on semantics, while 10.1% never do so when giving WF. The data reveals that the lowest number of participants (7.9 %) deal with semantics while giving WF, which might indicate that semantics play a minor role in improving students’ writing skills.

Figure 11 shows the opinion of English language teachers of using some constructive and optimistic expressions on students' papers such as 'excellent', 'very good', 'great job', 'well done' as written feedback to reinforce students psychologically and give powerful effects. Particularly inactive students usually require extended expressions such as the following: "I'm sure you will do better next time," "You will get higher marks if you study accurately" and "You are a clever student but you might have had some problems." These kinds of optimistic expressions certainly encourage students and make them self-confident.

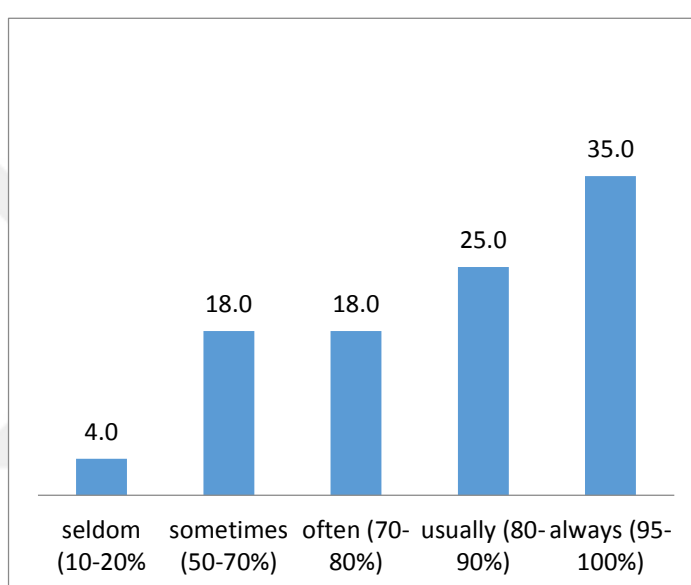


Figure 11 I write some constructive WF on students' papers such as 'excellent', 'very good', 'great job', 'well done'.

Figure 11 indicates that 35 % of the teachers always use constructive expressions when providing feedback on students' papers, whereas 25% usually write encouraging words. 18% often do this, while another 18% sometimes do so. Moreover, 4% seldom provide such feedback. None of the teachers selected "never." Most teacher participants (35% and 25%) believe that writing constructive phrases and optimistic statements on students' papers affects them positively and increases self-confidence.

The purpose behind Figure 12 is to show teachers' reactions towards students' paying attention to written feedback (WF). It is clear that even the most impressive teachers cannot influence students if the students themselves do not acknowledge their teachers' written WF. The more students follow their teachers' guidance; the more benefit they obtain.

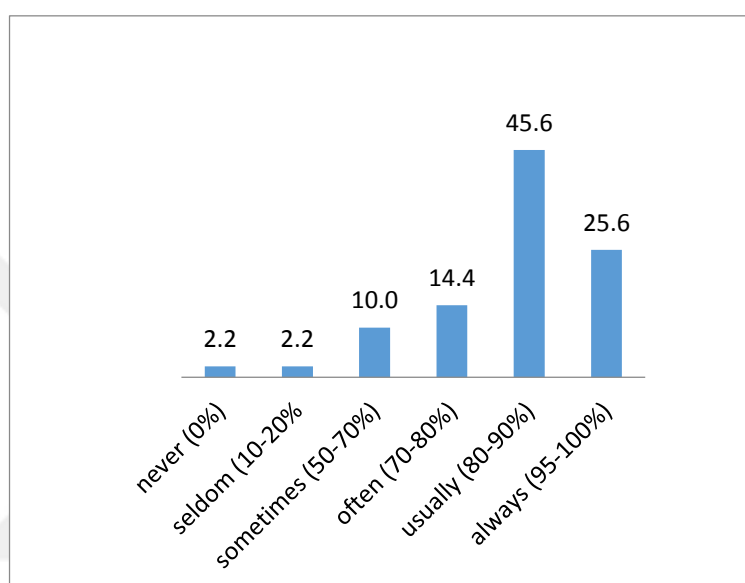


Figure 12 My giving written feedback depends on students' paying attention to it.

Figure 12 demonstrates that 25.6% of the teachers always believe that giving WF to students depends on the extent to which students acknowledge their feedback. The highest amount of participants (45.6%) indicated that they usually agree with this mindset, 14.4 % indicated that they often agree, and 10% stated that they sometimes agree. 2.2% seldom feel this way, while 2.2% never feel that their WF depends upon student response.

More than 70 % of the participants believe that WF has no power without students' sincere reactions, and also they think that the benefits of WF depend on students' acknowledgement of the feedback itself.

The purpose behind figure 13 is to understand how familiar the teachers are with general feedback and written feedback and how much information do they have through reading books, magazines, newspapers on feedback. It is obvious that the more information teachers have about WF, the more they increase their abilities to provide quality feedback

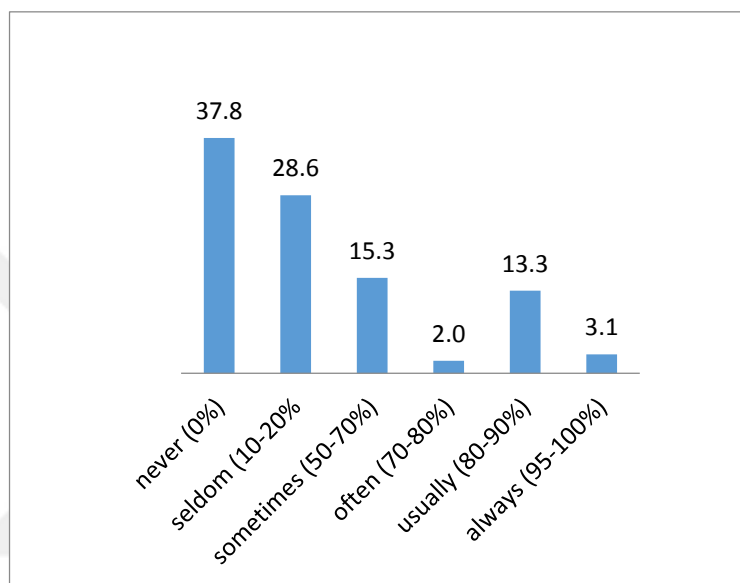


Figure 13 I have read a book, newspaper, magazine, booklet, etc. on general feedback and, more specifically, WF.

Figure 13 demonstrates that 3.1% of the participants always read books, newspapers, magazines, or booklets on general and written feedback, whereas 13.3% usually read books, newspapers, magazines, and booklets on feedback. 2% often do so, while 15.3 % sometimes do. 28.6 % seldom read these materials, and 37.8 % never read about feedback. The above data indicates that most teachers (66.4%) are not knowledgeable about the feedback process because they have not read any books, magazines or even booklets on it.

Figure 14 shows English language teachers' attitudes towards using red pens and the effects on students. In the past, most teachers traditionally were using red pens while giving written feedback without realizing the negative effects of the use. In a study involving approximately 200 students, Dukes & Albanesi (2013) found that students perceive teachers' comments more negatively if they have been written in red pen. In addition, red feedback may unintentionally convey negative emotions

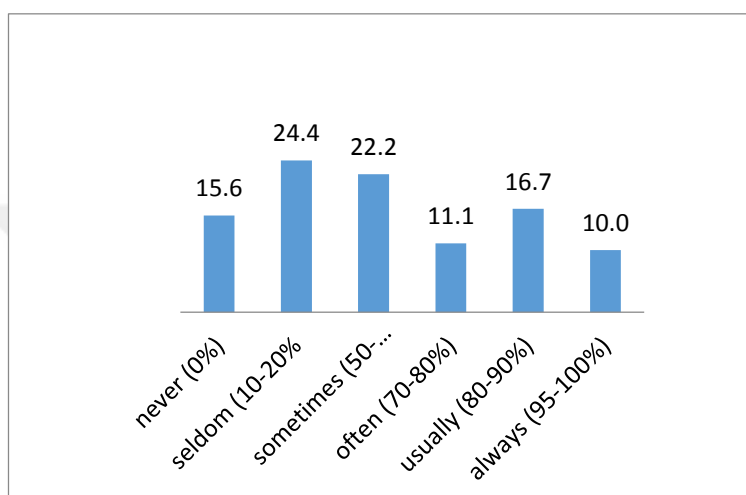


Figure 14 I use red pen while giving written feedback.

Figure 14 indicates that only 10% of the participants always use red pens when giving WF, whereas 16.7% usually do so, 11.1% often do so, and 22.2% sometimes do. On the other hand, 24.4% seldom use red pens when giving feedback, while 15.6% never do so. The largest amount of participants (24.4%) seldom use red pens. This might mean that several teachers are aware of its negative connotations. However, a similar number of participants sometimes use red pens. This might imply that more than half of the participants do not care about using specific colors for WF on students' papers, which is why 28, 11, and 23% chose never, seldom and sometimes.

The purpose behind Figure 15 is to demonstrate how time constraints influence teachers' written feedback, especially in terms of abbreviation use. Some abbreviations utilized by English language teachers include “gr” (grammar mistakes), “sp” (spelling mistakes), and pun (punctuation mistakes).

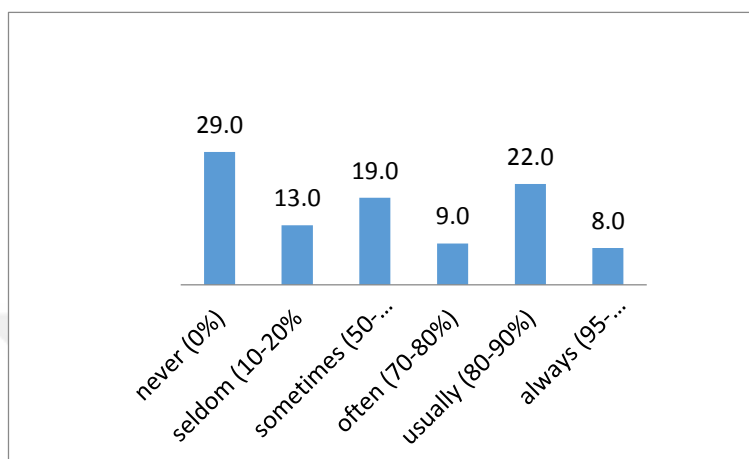


Figure 15 I use abbreviations on assignments rather than detailed WF in order to save time.

Figure 15 indicates that 8% of the participants always use abbreviations rather than detailed WF in order to save time, while 22% usually do so and 19% sometimes do so. In addition, 13% seldom use abbreviations for this purpose, while 29% never do. Most of the teachers evaluated in this study do not use abbreviations or pay serious attention to this item.

Figure 16 aims to show the use of codes as written feedback (WF) on assignments after giving students the meaning of the codes. Teachers' use of codes as a kind of facility on students' papers may have both positive and negative effects. Before utilizing codes, teachers should ensure that students understand their meanings. For example, the number 1 might represent grammar mistakes, the number 2 might represent spelling mistakes, the number 3 could mean punctuation mistakes, and so on. Sometimes letters can be given instead of numbers. This mutual understanding between teachers and students makes the WF process easier. Moreover, it is time-efficient and encourages students to think about their mistakes independently.

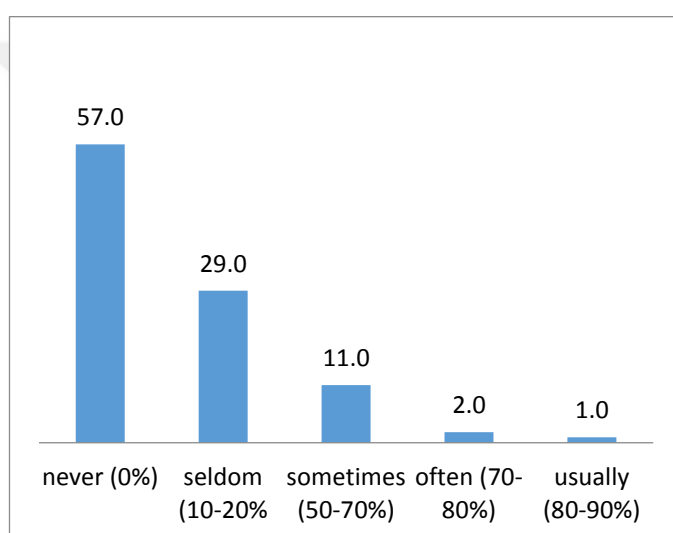


Figure 16 I use codes as WF on assignments after giving students the meaning of the codes.

Figure 16 indicates that 1% of the participants always use codes as WF, while 2% often use them. Also, only 11% usually utilize codes in WF, while 29% sometimes use them. 29% seldom use codes, while 57% never utilize them. The results indicate that most of the participants do not use codes as a form of WF. This might imply that most of them are unaware of codes as a WF tool.

4.4 The Results of Students' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire

The aim of presenting the results of students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire is to determine whether there are any statistically significant

differences between male and female teachers' attitudes towards written feedback or not. For this purpose, a *t*-test was conducted. The tables below display the results:

Table 3

Mean and standard deviation of students in terms of students' attitudes towards WF.

Group Statistics					
	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
t	male	100	51.2500	9.43920	.94392
	female	100	50.4300	10.58802	1.05880

According to table 3 above, male students reported higher than females with a mean of 51.25. For further analysis, the table below indicates whether any statistically significant difference existed between male and female students in terms of the attitudes of teachers. For this purpose, an independent samples *t*-test (2-tailed) was used.

Table 4

Students' independent samples t-test results for gender differences concerning Statistically significant differences.

Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
total	Equal variances assumed	4.511	.035	.578	198	.564
	Equal variances not assumed			.578	195.444	.564

According to table 4 above, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of male students ($M= 51.25$, $SD= 9.43$) and female students ($M= 50.43$, $SD= 10.58$), $t(198) = .578$). As mentioned previously, 200 Iraqi high-school students participated in the survey. 100 were male and 100 were female. They were chosen based on Quota sampling. Then, the data was entered into SPSS for analysis. At the end, each item of the student questionnaire was converted

into a chart, as indicated below. Moreover, most of the student questionnaire items were similar in design and form for the purpose of taking notes, comparing both teachers' and students' points of view and comparing their reactions toward each item.

4.4.2 Item-based descriptive statistics for the students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback

The aim of presenting the items of students' attitudes toward teacher written feedback questionnaire is to introduce the highest and the lowest rate of each item of the questionnaire.

Figure 17 aims to show students point of views regarding the benefit from teachers' written feedback on my papers (daily assignments and tests) generally.

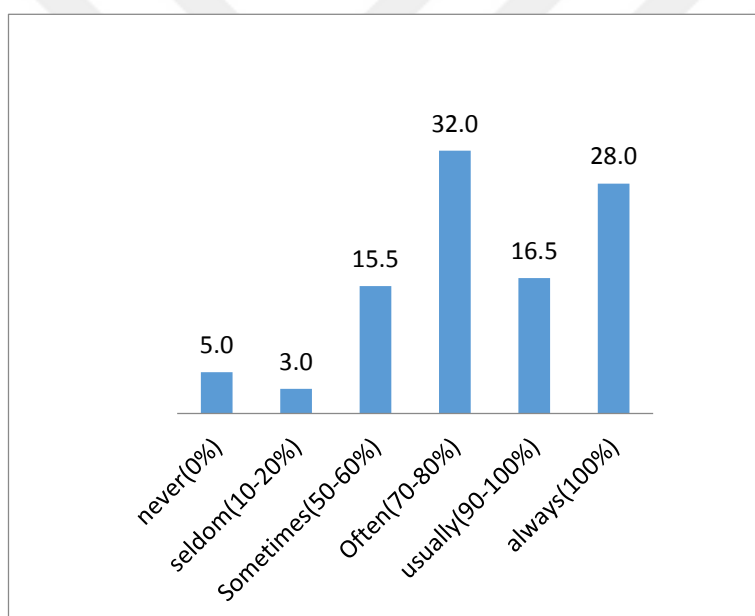


Figure 17 Generally, I benefit from my teachers' written feedback on my papers (daily assignments and tests).

Figure 17 demonstrates that 28% of the participants feel that they always benefit from teachers' written feedback (WF), whereas 16.5% feel that they usually benefit. 32% feel that they often benefit, while 15.5 % feel that they sometimes do. The smallest amount of students (3%) selected “seldom,” while 5% selected “never.” Most of the participants (28%, 16.5%, and 32%) feel that they benefit from their teachers' WF.

The purpose of Figure 18 is to demonstrate how much high-school students understand their teachers' written feedback. English teachers would better explain the meaning of feedback and ensure that students fully understand it to improve students' writing skills and increase their ability. Otherwise, students may repeat their mistakes.

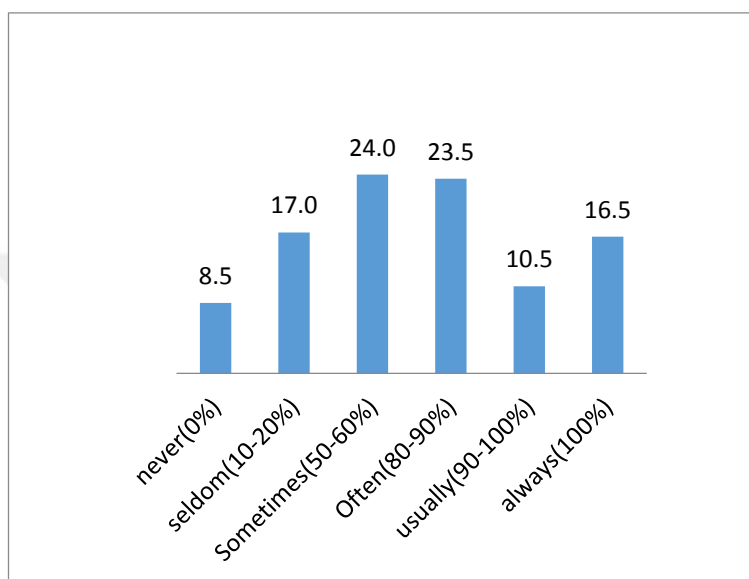


Figure 18 I fully understand the meaning of teachers' WF on my papers.

Figure 18 illustrates that 16.5% of the participants always understand their teachers' WF, 10.5 % usually do, 23.5% often do, and 24% sometimes do. In addition, 17% seldom understand, while 8.5% never understand their teachers' WF. The largest amount of students (48%) fully understand their teachers' written feedback.

The purpose Figure 19 behind this item it to show the attitudes of students toward teachers written feedback. One of the most important elements of good and constructive feedback is that it should be optimistic and positive. The more optimistic the feedback, the more students' abilities and self-confidence increase The WF which I have received is optimistic and positive.

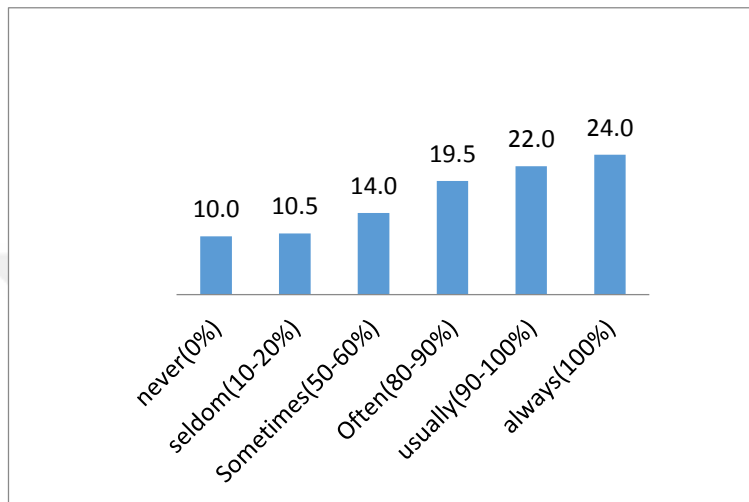


Figure 19 The WF which I have received is optimistic and positive.

As shown in figure 19, the highest percentage of participants (24%) always believe their teachers' feedback to be optimistic and positive, 22% usually feel this way, 19.5% often feel this way, and 14% sometimes feel this way. However, 10.5% selected "seldom," and 10% selected "never." Fortunately, more than half of the participants believed their teachers' written feedback are optimistic and positive.

Figure 20 aims to show the opinions of participants regarding teacher written feedback to improve students' writing skills. As long as students feel that their teachers' feedback supports and support them, their writing skills will improve day after day.

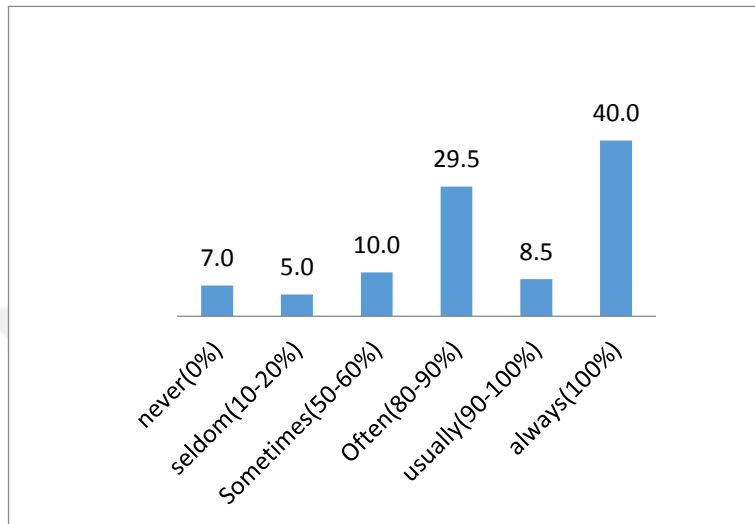


Figure 20 I feel that my teachers' WF on my papers improves my writing skills.

Figure 20 above, shows that the highest percentage of participants (40%) always feel that their teachers' WF improves their writing skills, 8.5 % usually feel this way, 29.5% often feel this way, and 10% sometimes feel this way. Furthermore, 5% chose "seldom," while 7% selected "never." The highest percentage of participants (40%) expressed that their teachers' WF improves their writing skills, and this feeling encourages both students and teachers to take advantage of the WF process.

Figure 21 shows how the use of red pen reflect the viewpoints of students and to what extent using red pens affect them. Previous studies have been conducted determine the effects of different pen colors on students during the WF process. They have suggested that while teachers use red pens to identify errors, they are more critical. Furthermore, some students hoped that their papers are not graded in red (Semke, 1984)

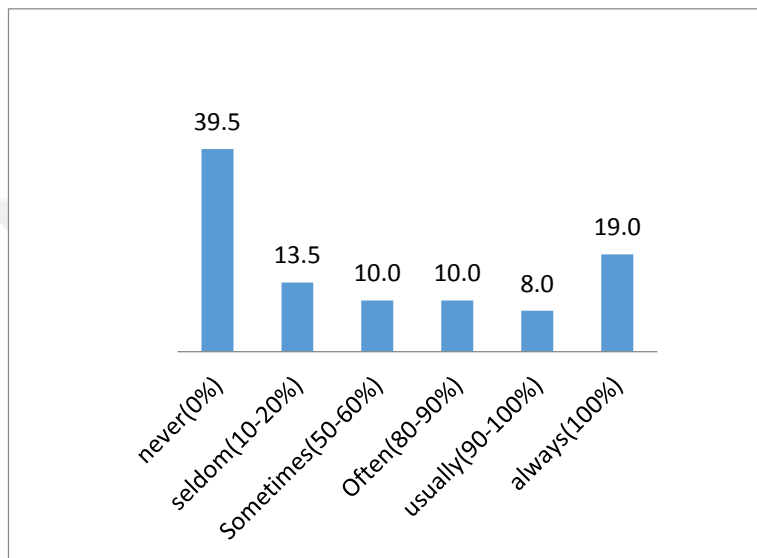


Figure 21 Using red pens to determine and underline my papers as WF worries me.

Figure 21 demonstrates that red pen use always worries 19% of the participants, usually worries 8%, often worries 10%, and sometimes worries 10%. 13.5% selected “seldom,” while 39.5% selected “never.” It seems that red pen use does not evoke negative connotations among the participants, as the largest number of them (39.5%) never worry over this color.

The purpose of Figure 22 is to show the opinions of students on using general written feedback which is done by teachers and how often students understand the meaning of feedback by using some general expressions. Zacharias (2007) has stated that teachers' general WF such as "revise your ideas," "many mistakes," and "study better" does not enable students to understand their specific mistakes. Even praise expressions such as "Great job!" are insufficient.

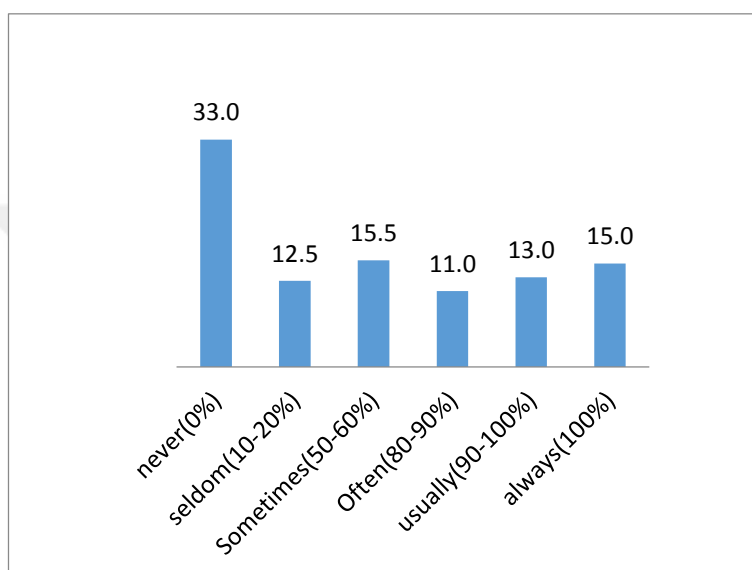


Figure 22 My English-language teacher uses general WF; as a result, I do not know what he/she means, specifically.

The results of Figure 22 reveal that only 15% of the participants always are confused regarding their specific mistakes, 13% usually are, 11% often are, and 15.5% sometimes are. 12.5 % are seldom confused, while 33 never are.

Figure 23 aims to show how often students understand the meaning of codes as written feedback. It is clear that ambiguous codes on students' papers mean nothing if teachers do not clarify their meaning.

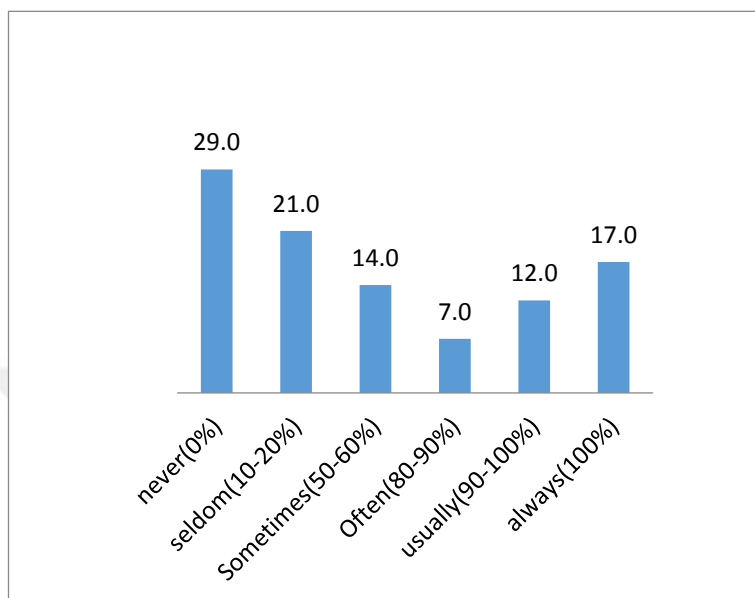


Figure 23 The codes that my English teacher uses as feedback on my assignments are ambiguous and not understandable.

Figure 23 demonstrates that 17% of the participants always believe that the codes used by their teachers as WF are ambiguous and not understandable, 12% usually feel that the codes are this way, and 7% often feel this way. 14% sometimes believe that the codes are ambiguous and not understandable, 21% seldom feel this way, and 29% never feel this way.

The main purpose of Figure 24 is to observe students' perspectives on how regularly their teachers provide written feedback and how much time is given for feedback to improve students' writing skills.

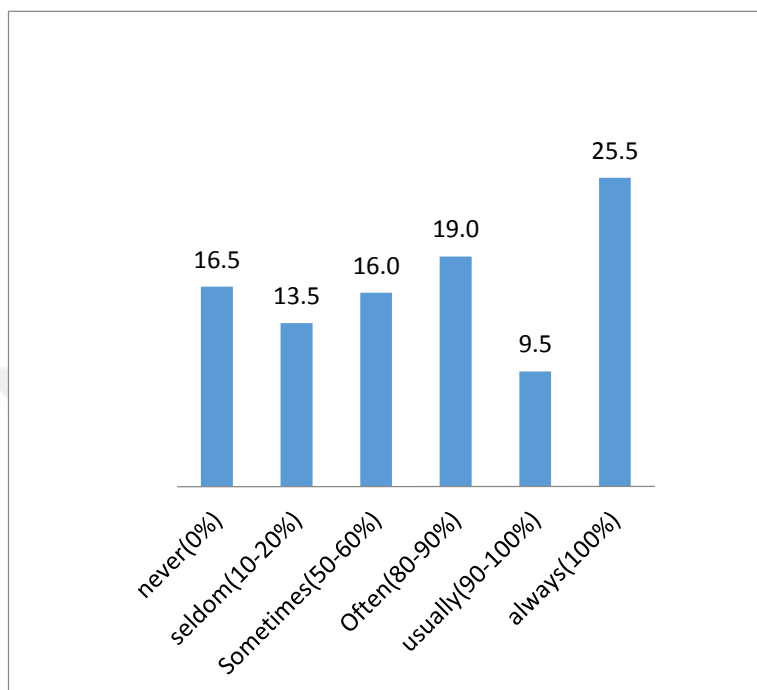


Figure 24 Teachers' written feedback is regularly completed in a time-efficient manner.

Figure 24 indicates that the highest percentage of students (25.5%) always consider that teachers' written feedback is regular and time-efficient, while 9.5% usually that teachers' written feedback is regular and time-efficient, 19% often feel that teachers' written feedback is regular and time-efficient, and 16% sometimes have the same feeling towards time-efficient for giving feedback. Furthermore, 13.5% seldom perceive their teachers' written feedback to be regular and time-efficient, while 16.5% never have this feeling.

Figure 25 aims to show whether students feel that their teachers emphasize grammatical written feedback. In an Iraqi educational system, teachers tend to focus on grammar more than other aspects of English.

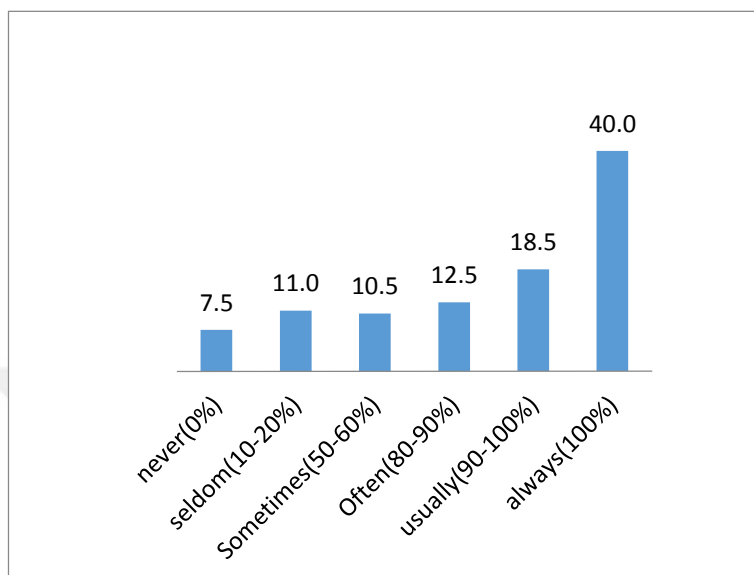


Figure 25 Grammatical WF frequently is emphasized by my English teacher.

Figure 25 stated that the largest amount of participants (40%) always believed that their teachers emphasize grammatical feedback, 18.5% usually feel this way, 12.5% often feel this way, and 10.5% sometimes feel this way. Furthermore, 11% seldom perceive a grammatical focus, while 7.5% never do. It is clear that the participants generally share the standpoint that their teachers emphasize grammatical issue more than other elements of writing skills.

The purpose of Figure 26 is to show the attitudes of students on the use of spelling, punctuation marks and other elements of writing skills by teachers as compared to grammar.

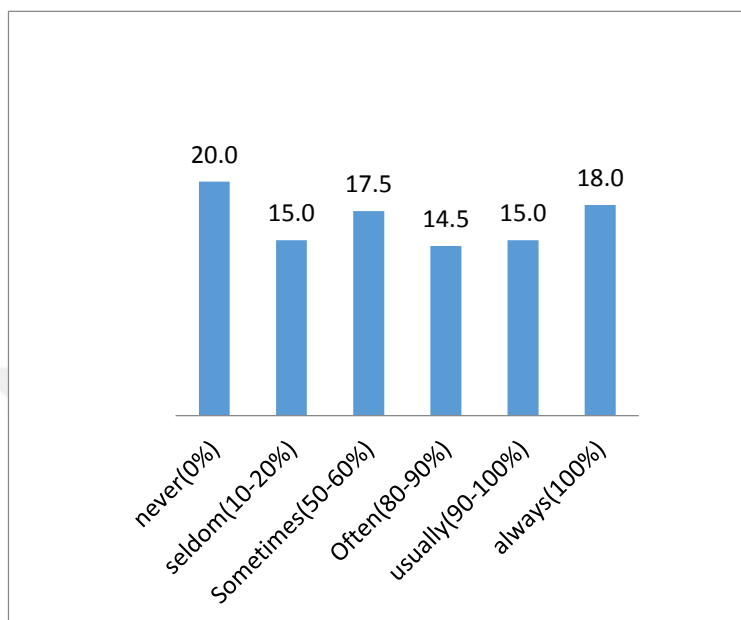


Figure 26 Spelling and punctuation are less frequently used as WF than grammar.

Figure 26 above, demonstrates that 18% of student participants always think that spelling and punctuation are paid less attention than grammatical issues, 15% usually feel this way, 14.5% often feel this way, and 17.5% sometimes feel this way. In addition, 15% of the participants selected “seldom,” while the largest number of participants (20%) selected “never.” Participants generally shared the same perspective, as the largest amount was 20% and the lowest amount was 14.5%.

Figure 27 aims to show the viewpoints of students on the study of composition significantly as a tool for improving students' writing skills. While composition is considered by students to be a tool for improving their writing skills, it demands that they understand all elements of writing procedure. Thus, composition activates their imaginations, deepens their knowledge of grammar, causes them to generate new ideas, demands that they support as well as organize and articulate these ideas, and requires that they revise what has been written (Taha, 2014).

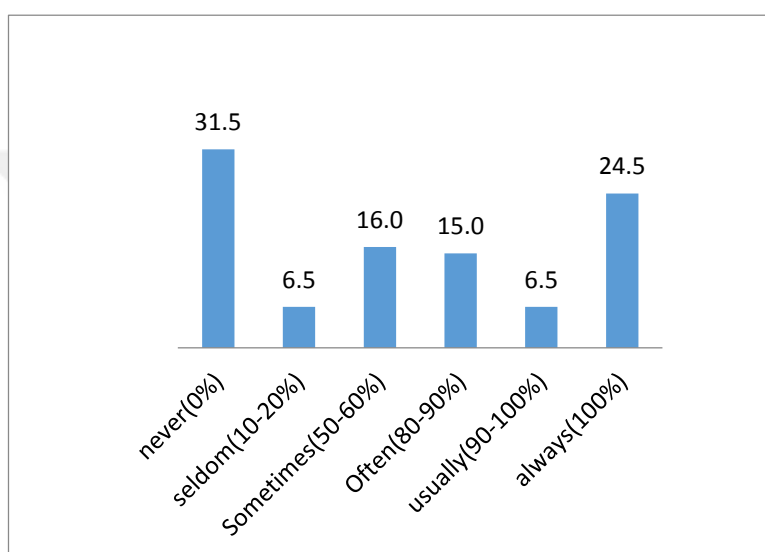


Figure 27 Composition is studied significantly as a tool for improving students' writing skills.

The results of Figure 27 above, demonstrate that 24.5% of the participants always believe that composition is a significant tool for improving their writing skills, 6.5% usually feel this way, 15% often feel this way, and 16% sometimes feel this way. In addition, 6.5% seldom believe that composition plays a significant role in improving their writing skills, while 31.5% never hold this view.

The purpose of Figure 28 is to show the opinions of students on the use of abbreviations taken from their teachers as written feedback on papers. As long as the abbreviations, that are written on papers by teachers are unclear or ambiguous, the mistakes and errors may be repeated.

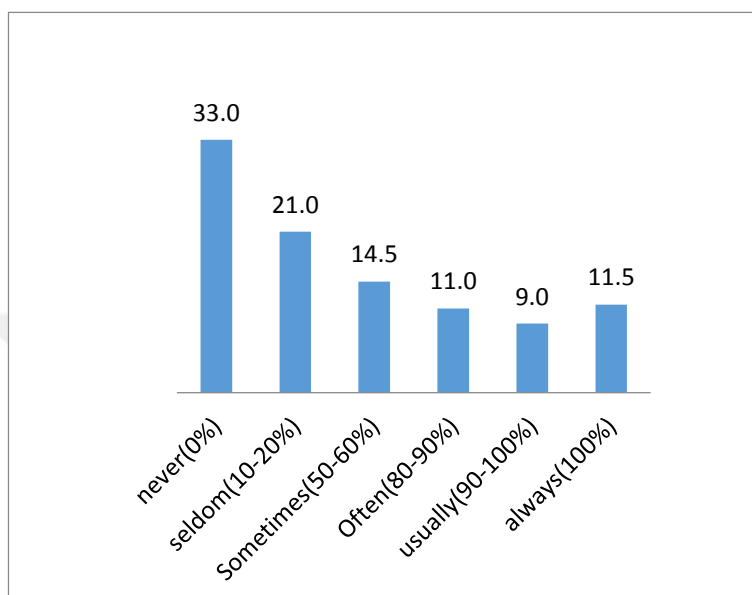


Figure 28 English language teachers' abbreviations that are used as feedback are all unclear.

Figure 28 demonstrates that 11.5% of the participants always suppose their teachers' abbreviations to be unclear, 9% usually feel this way, 11% often feel this way, and 14.5% sometimes feel this way. Furthermore, 21% seldom find their teachers' abbreviations to be unclear, while 33% never feel this way.

Figure 29 aims to demonstrate the viewpoints of students on written feedback on class white board as a tool for correcting daily mistakes. The use of the white board as a tool for giving WF has many advantages, for example allowing more visual learning, more “hands-on” opportunities for students, and increasing attention levels (Follow, 2009). Kavaliauskienė (2009) believes that it is a good practice for teachers to focus on errors without indicating who made them, then to ask students to correct the errors collectively.

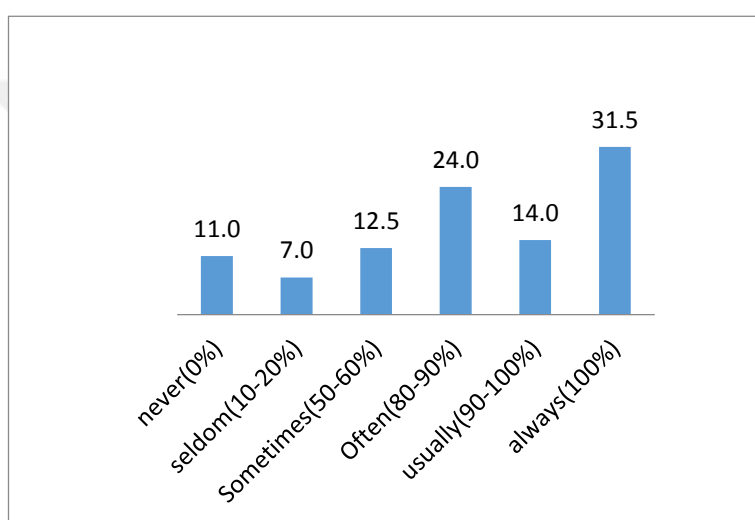


Figure 29 Written feedback on the white board is used as a tool for correcting daily mistakes.

Figure 29 above, demonstrates that the largest number of participants (31.5%) always think that their white boards are useful for error collection, 14% usually think this, 24% often think this, and 12.5% sometimes think this. The lowest amount of participants (7%) find the white board useful, while 11% never find it useful for written feedback.

Figure 30 aims to show the opinions of students of the importance of semantics while teachers deal with students' papers. Paying attention to semantics is a sign of a successful English language teachers. The more teachers deals with semantics as an activity or written feedback, the more students motivated and improve their language skills.

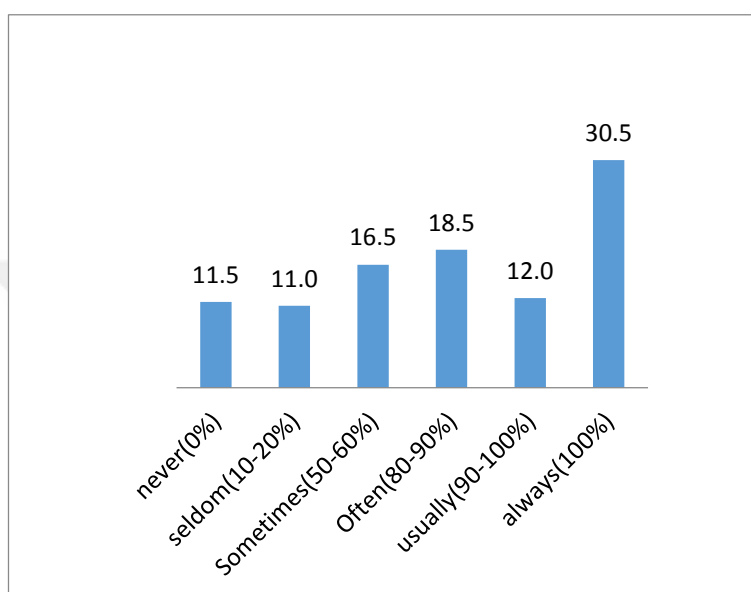


Figure 30 The importance of semantics is emphasized by teachers' WF.

Figure 30 demonstrates that the highest percentage of the participants (30.5%) always believe that the importance of "semantics" is emphasized by teachers' WF, 12% usually believe this to be true, 18.5% often feel this way, and 16.5% sometimes hold this view. In addition, the lowest amount of students (11%) seldom feel this way, while 11.5 % never do.

The purpose of Figure 31 is to show students' point of views while teachers give some general feedback on white board in the classes after tests. High-school students benefit from their teachers' feedback on the white board immediately after exams because test materials are still fresh in their minds.

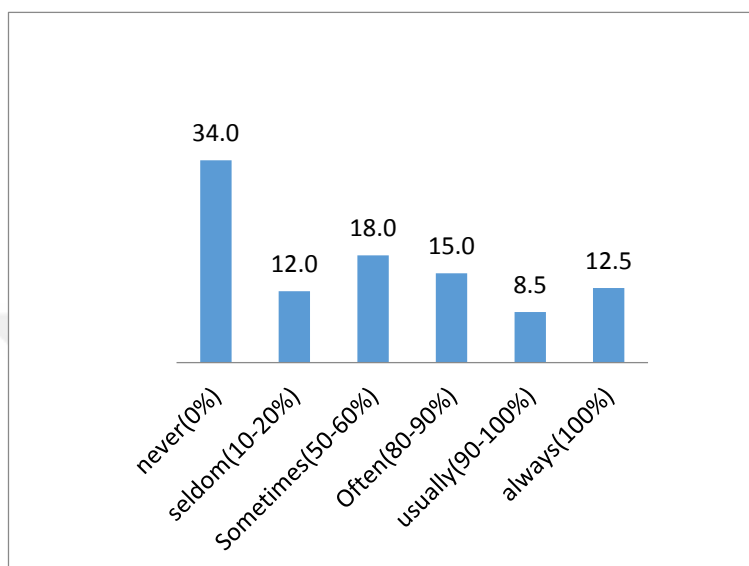


Figure 31 After paper tests, we are given some general feedback on the white board.

Figure 31 demonstrates that 12.5% of the participants always believe that their teachers give some general feedback on the white board after tests, 8.5% usually feel this way, 15% often feel this way, and 18% sometimes feel this way. Moreover, 12% seldom believe that their teachers give feedback on the white board after tests, while 34% never believe this.

4.5 Summary of the Findings

The results of the current chapter revealed that there is a slight difference between the attitudes of both male and female English language teachers concerning teacher written feedback. In addition, it is observed that there are no differences between the attitudes of both male and female high school students concerning teacher written feedback.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1 Presentation

This chapter discusses the results of this study and their implications. It also compares the results with those of other studies mentioned in the literature review of this paper. Firstly, the attitudes of Iraqi high-school ELT toward WF are discussed followed by those of their students. In addition, this chapter addresses whether any statistically significant difference exists between male and female teachers' attitudes towards WF. Finally, the existence of any statistically significant difference between male and female students' attitudes towards WF is addressed.

5.2 Discussion of the First Research Question

The first research question examined the attitudes of Iraqi high-school English language teachers (ELTs) toward the use of WF in improving their students' writing skills. The results indicated that students' responses varied from very high (always agree) to the lowest (never agree). 80.8% of the participants agreed that constructive and positive written feedback on their papers improves their writing skills. The results are broadly consistent with those of Darwish (2016), who found that 75% of teacher participants have the same attitudes towards positive feedback. Similar to the above results, those of Zacharias' (2007) study showed that the majority of English teachers prefer giving students positive feedback to improve their writing skills and increase students' self-confidence.

In addition to those above, similar results were determined by the study of (Garimi, 2005; Ferris, 1999; Hang, 2004; Montgomery and Baker, 2007), which indicated that teachers perceive positive feedback to be an important factor in encouraging students and improving their writing skills.

Furthermore, 80% of teacher participants did not use negative feedback. Most of the teachers and students believed that using negative and pessimistic feedback is detrimental to students' writing skills. (Hyland & Hyland, 2001) argued that too much criticism of students might damage them psychologically.

Nevertheless, different results were obtained by the study of al-Shammary (2011), which was conducted in Saudi Arabia. The researcher found that 82% of participants, support using negative feedback to help students identify weaknesses in their writing, and 67% of teachers think that negative feedback makes students aware of their writing problems on other assignments.

Concerning the use of codes and abbreviations, only 3% of ELT in this study use codes, and approximately 27% use abbreviations. The reasons behind this involves the difficulties which face students in understanding the meaning of them as well as the time-consuming nature of collecting the codes.

5.3 Discussion of the Second Research Question

The purpose of second research question was to determine students' attitudes towards their teachers' written feedback (WF). The study revealed that the majority of the students feel positively towards teachers' feedback, and they believe that positive feedback improves their writing skills. The same results were obtained by the study of Zacharias (2007), who found that most students have positive attitudes toward teacher WF. Similar results were obtained by Al-Shammary (2011) and Darwish (2016). Additionally, the vast majority of the students in this study thought that they benefit from WF, only 56% of the students held this viewpoint Al-Shammary's (2011) study.

The findings of the current study demonstrated that most students feel their teachers' WF to improve their writing skills. Furthermore, more than three quarters of them believed that they generally benefit from teachers' WF, while Zacharias (2007) observed different attitudes in her study. She found that students do not benefit from general feedback, as they are unable to identify their specific mistakes. She also determined that most students think that teachers have higher linguistic competence in English because they have a better grasp of grammar and word choice. In addition, students feel that teachers' WF provides security (Zacharias, 2007).

The students have had different attitudes towards using codes and abbreviations. Most of the students disliked the use of codes and abbreviations. They believed that there is no need for these. At the same time, nearly all teachers did not believe in using codes while dealing with students' papers. A similar problem was observed in the study of Zacharias (2007), which revealed that students had difficulties in reacting with the codes that were written on their papers and they did not facilitate the revising process (Zacharias, 2007).

5.4 Discussion of the Third Research Question

The findings of the third research question demonstrated that no statistically significant difference existed between male and female teachers. The reason for their similar points of view may be that they share the same educational system, geographical area and environment. Furthermore, both male and female teachers have the same educational degree (Bachelor's), which may reflect their close attitudes. Another point is that the teachers have not participated in any course of feedback or writing skills, which might negatively reflect on their ways of teaching writing skills and providing written feedback.

The same result was recorded in the research of Al-Shammary (2011) which was done in Saudi Arabia between male and female teachers and students at secondary schools in Rafha City. This can show us that teachers' attitudes of the current research are similar to the attitudes of Al-Shammary (2011) in terms of teacher written feedback.

5.5 Discussion of the Fourth Research Question

The results of the fourth research question demonstrate that no statistically significant difference existed between male and female students. The reason for this may be that male and female students share the same educational system and geographical as well as environmental conditions.

The same result was observed in the research of the study of Al-Shammary (2011) which was done in Saudi Arabia between male and female teachers and students at secondary schools in Rafha City. His study supports the current study and can show us teachers' attitudes of the current research is similar to the attitudes of Al-Shammary (2011) in terms of teacher written feedback.

5.6 Summary of the Discussion

The findings of this study indicate similarities among teachers' points of view concerning the use of written feedback. Nevertheless, some different viewpoints were also observed, especially in terms of using codes and abbreviations while dealing with students' papers. In addition, among students, different point of views was perceived in terms of how much they benefit from their teachers' general feedback and the use of some general expressions in this feedback.

The results also indicate that both teachers and students strongly agree that encouraging students by providing positive WF always improves students' writing skills. Moreover, the regular and time-efficient delivery of feedback by teachers is significant in enhancing students' writing ability.

The findings also show that the majority of the students prefer the study of composition to improve their writing skills because it has a lot to do with the techniques of writing skills. Also, students want their teachers to prioritize grammar in their WF. On top of everything, the findings demonstrate that in order to improve writing skills, teachers should build the best relationships with students.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of teachers' written feedback (WF) in improving students' English writing skills. As the study was descriptive, a quantitative method of data collection was employed. 100 English-language teachers and 200 high-school students participated in this study. Two different questionnaires were prepared—one for teachers and one for students. The results were presented and discussed, and the viewpoints of teachers and students were compared to demonstrate the effects of WF on students' writing skills.

In terms of teachers' and students' attitudes towards WF, some discrepancies were found to exist. This study also confirmed that teachers' use of constructive and positive feedback affects the improvement of students' writing skills. To enhance the quality of teaching and learning in English writing classes, it was found that daily use of the white board is significant for providing WF.

The study also revealed that both teachers and students strongly agreed that using codes and abbreviations while dealing with students-papers has little educational benefit since the students either do not understand the meaning of the codes and abbreviations or they are unable to apply them practically.

The study also demonstrated the relation between teachers' WF and the desires of students. It was found that the more attention students pay to teachers' WF, the more teachers provide them with constructive, optimistic feedback as a means of motivation and improving writing skills.

6.2 Recommendations

Since Iraqi high-school students still have problems in acquiring English writing skills, most Iraqi English language teachers (ELTs) lack sufficient information about feedback. This is why it is highly recommended that ELTs should become involved in training courses that demonstrate the importance of feedback, discuss how it can be employed practically and explain the effective ways of giving feedback to students. Moreover, it is the responsibility of ministry of education to provide English high-school teachers with books, booklets, articles or educational sites that explain the role of feedback and its effective consequences on students.

In addition to the above suggestions, it is recommended that teachers devote more class time for the development of students' English writing skills, for example ten minutes each lesson for dealing with writing. Since writing skills are neglected practically throughout the Iraqi educational system, the educational authorities should consider writing skills more seriously, as they are a pillar of learning English. To improve students' writing skills, writing composition is also recommended. Using data displays and pictures, providing some guidelines for writing, giving some techniques and clues, and providing essential vocabularies are some ideas that could improving students' writing skills.

6.3 Implications

This study poses several implications for both EFL teachers and students of writing. The results have confirmed that sometimes English language teachers and students have similar attitudes toward written feedback, but they also may differ in their views. In order to enhance students' writing skills, the following implications should be considered.

6.3.1 Implications for EFL teachers

English high-school teachers are encouraged to give general Written feedback (WF) on daily assignments and test-papers because students benefit greatly from this regular feedback. Moreover, teachers should provide positive WF and utilize constructive expressions as a means of motivating students and, thus, improving their writing skills. Moreover, teachers should increase their use of white boards for providing general WF to their classes immediate following tests. They should also

focus on providing content feedback alongside their feedback on form. Additionally, teachers provide more specific WF, as students want their teachers to underline and specify their exact mistakes on papers so that they can treat each mistake separately without any confusion.

6.3.2 Implications for EFL Learners

The findings of the study showed that there are some significant points students should take them into their considerations. Students' preferences of the types of written feedback (WF) should be shed lights on. That's, students may realize which type of WF is better for them. In this case, the effort of English teachers would not be fruitless. Also, the study of composition is another point that can be taken seriously as a means of improving language. Therefore, students certainly are provided by teacher WF to improve their writing skills and correct their mistakes. Also, dealing with semantics is important, especially in the study of stories, compositions, and other written exercises, rather than solely focusing on language-related writing sub-skills such as grammar, syntax, punctuation, etc. Focusing on the meanings of language alongside these elements can enable students to improve their comprehension of English language better.

Another point that should be taken into consideration is that some of high-school students misunderstand or have less courage to tell English teachers about how does written feedback implied on their papers so as to be fruitful for them. This is why the

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Though the research dealt with written feedback in a high-school EFL writing contexts, similar studies could be conducted in other settings and regarding other sub-skills of English. The following may also be considered:

The study concentrated on the attitudes of Iraqi high-school students and teachers towards teacher written feedback in writing classes, it would be worthwhile to investigate the attitudes of Iraq university level students towards teacher written feedback.

As it was mentioned before that Iraq has two different educational systems. The study was carried out in northern Iraq whose English language curriculum is called (Sunrise). Another study would investigate the impact of teacher written feedback of high-school students on southern English language curriculum which is called (Al-Rafidain).

The method that was conducted in the study was quantitative. Another study would deal with the attitudes of teacher written feedback on high-school students with the use of mixed method that might give the same or different result.



REFERENCES

- Amrhein, H. R., & Nassaji, H. (2010). Written corrective feedback: What do students and teachers prefer and why? *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics.*, 13(2), 95–127.
- Ashwell, T. (2000). Patterns of Teacher Response to Student Writing in a Multiple-Draft Composition Classroom: Is Content Feedback Followed by Form Feedback the Best Method? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(3), 227–257. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743\(00\)00027-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(00)00027-8)
- Barkaoui, K. (2007). Revision in Second Language Writing: What Teachers Need to Know. *TESL Canada Journal*, 25(1), 81–92. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ806788&site=ehost-live> [http://www.tesl.ca/Volume 25.html](http://www.tesl.ca/Volume%2025.html)
- Bitchener, J. (2012). Written corrective feedback for L2 development: current knowledge and future research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(4), 855–860. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.62>
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U (2015). Written corrective feedback studies: Approximate replication of Bitchener & Knoch (2010) and Van Beuningen, De Jong & Kuiken (2012). *Language Teaching*, 48(03), 405–414. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444815000130>
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., Williams, D. (2003). Assessment for learning. Putting it into practice Maidenhead, Open University Press.
- Black, P.; Harrison, C.; Lee, C.; Marshall, B. & Wiliam, D. (2003). Assessment for learning: putting it into practice. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Clark, H., & Ouellette, M. (2008). Students' noticing and incorporation of written feedback: A snapshot of ESOL writing instructors' commentary on adult ESOL students' essays. Master's Thesis, University of Texas. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10106/669>
- Coffin, C., Curry, M. J., Goodman, S., Hewings, A., Lillis, T. M., & Swan, J. (2003). *Teaching Academic Writing A toolkit for higher education. Teaching Academic Writing* (pp. 45–72). <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360701494286>

- Cohen, A. D., & Cavalcanti, M. C. (1990). Feedback on composition: Teacher and student verbal reports. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 155–177). Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524551.015>
- Ellis, R. (2009). A typology of written corrective feedback types. *ELT Journal*, 63(2), 97–107. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccn023>
- Ellis, R., Loewen, S., & Erlam, R. (2006). Implicit and explicit corrective feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(2), 339–368. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfineco.2004.09.006>
- Fathman, A. K., & Whalley, E. (1990). Teacher Response to Student Writing- Focus on Form versus Content. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom* (pp. 178–190). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524551.016>
- Ferris, D. (2007). Preparing teachers to respond to student writing. *Journal Of Second Language Writing*, 16(3), 165-193.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.07.003>
- Ferris, D. R., Pezone, S., Tade, C. R., & Tinti, S. (1997). Teacher commentary on student writing: Descriptions & implications. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 6(2), 155-182. doi:10.1016/S1060-3743(97)90032-1
- Ferris, D., & Roberts, B. (2001). Error feedback in L2 writing classes How explicit does it need to be? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10(3), 161–184.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743\(01\)00039-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(01)00039-X)
- Follow. (2009, July 25). Advantages of Whiteboards. Retrieved June 01, 2017, from <https://www.slideshare.net/hagent/advantages-of-whiteboards-1769103>
- Gibbs, G., & Simpson, C. (2004). Conditions Under Which Assessment Supports Students' Learning. *Learning in Teaching in Higher Education*, 1(1), 3–31.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2010.512631>
- Goldstein, L. (2005). Teacher Written Commentary in Second Language Writing Classrooms. doi:10.3998/mpub.6737

- Grami, G. M. A. (2005). The effect of teachers' written feedback on ESL students' perception: A study in a Saudi ESL university-level context. *Annual Review of Education, Communication and Language Sciences*, 2(1), 10–13.
- Hedgcock, J., & Lefkowitz, N. (1994). Feedback on feedback: Assessing learner receptivity to teacher response in L2 composing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3(2), 141–163. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743\(94\)90012-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(94)90012-4)
- Hagent Follow. (2009, July 25). Advantages of Whiteboards. Retrieved June 01, 2017, from <https://www.slideshare.net/hagent/advantages-of-whiteboards-1769103>
- Hamer, J. (2012). Essential teacher knowledge. *Essential Teacher Knowledge*, 186–187.
- Hamouda, A. (2011). A Study of Students and Teachers' Preferences and Attitudes towards Correction of Classroom Written Errors in Saudi EFL Context. *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 128–141. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n3p128>.
- Hedgcock, J., & Lefkowitz, N. (1994). Feedback on feedback: Assessing learner receptivity to teacher response in L2 composing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3(2), 141–163. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743\(94\)90012-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(94)90012-4)
- Hill, J. and Flynn, K. (2006) Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners. Virginia: ASCD.
- Hiroko Saito, (1994) Teachers' Practices and Students' Preferences for Feedback on Second Language Writing: A Case Study of Adult ESL Learners. IESL CANADA *JOURNAU REVUE TESL DU CANADA*. VOL. 11, NO.2, SPRING
- Hubais, A., & Dumanig, F. P. (2014). Form and Content Feedbacks in Foreign Language Writing: The Case of Omani Learners of English. *Language in India*, 14(11), 3–16. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=99715304&site=ehost-live>

- Hyland, F. (2000). ESL writers and feedback: giving more autonomy to students. *Language Teaching Research*, 4(1), 33–54. <https://doi.org/10.1191/136216800674812889>
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback in Second Language Writing. doi:10.1017/cbo9781139524742
- Hyland, F. (2010). Future directions in feedback on second language writing: overview and research agenda. *International Journal of English Studies*, 10(2), 171–182. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA253305896&v=2.1&u=ia_stu_main&it=r&p=LitRC&sw=w&asid=2b47915116b74f9950afa660f411e52c.
- Lee, I. (2008). Understanding teachers' written feedback practices in Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17(2), 69–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.10.001>
- Hamer, J. (2012). Essential teacher knowledge. *Essential Teacher Knowledge*, 186–187.
- Hamouda, A. (2011). A Study of Students and Teachers' Preferences and Attitudes towards Correction of Classroom Written Errors in Saudi EFL Context. *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 128–141. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n3p128>.
- Hill, J. and Flynn, K. (2006) Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners. Virginia: ASCD.
- <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n3p14>Hyland, K. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching*, 39(2), 83–101.
- Kavaliauskiene, G. (2009). Role of Mother Tongue in Learning English for Specific Purposes. Galina Kavaliauskien. *ESP World*, 8, 1–12. Retrieved from <http://www.esp-world.info>
- Leng, K. T. P. (2014). An Analysis of Written Feedback on ESL Students' Writing. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 123(2000), 389–397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1437>

- Mahfoodh, O. H. a, & Pandian, A. (2011). A Qualitative Case Study of EFL Students' Affective Reactions to and Perceptions of Their Teachers' Written Feedback. *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 14–25.
- McCargar, D. F. (1993). Teacher and student role expectations: Cross-Cultural differences and implications. *The Modern Language Journal*, 77, 192–207. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1993.tb01963.x>
- McDonough, J., Shaw, C., & Hitomi, M. (2013). *Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teachers' Guide. Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline 2015* (Vol. 1). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Merriam-Webster, I. (2010). *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*.
- Montgomery, J. L., & Baker, W. (2007). Teacher-written feedback: Student perceptions, teacher self-assessment, and actual teacher performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(2), 82–99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.04.002>
- Nataq Taha, N. (2014) Difficulties Faced by EFL Students in Writing Composition at the Iraqi Preparatory Schools Instructor
- Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, D., D. J. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol 31(2), pp 199–218).
- Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 199 - 218
- Pinter, A. (2011). *Teaching young language learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Probst, R. (1989). Transactional theory and response to student writing. C. Anson, *Writing and response*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 68–79.
- Razlina, R., & Rohaiza, J. (2014). Exploring teacher written feedback and student revisions on ESL students' writing. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(5), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-19556370>
- Riddell, D. (2003). *Teaching English as a foreign language*. London: Teach Yourself

- Sadler, D. R. (1989). Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science*, 18(2), 119–144. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00117714>
- Saito, H. (1994). Teachers' Practices and Students' Preferences for Feedback on Second Language Writing: A Case Study of Adult ESL Learners. *TESL Canada Journal*, 11(2), 46–70. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v11i2.633>
- Schulz, R. A. (2001). Cultural Differences in Student and Teacher Perceptions concerning the Role of Grammar Instruction and Corrective Feedback: USA: Colombia. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(2), 244–258. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1192885>
- Semke, H. D. (1984). Effects of the Red Pen. *Foreign Language Annals*, 17(3), 195–202. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1984.tb01727.x>
- Shamsudin, S., & Karim, H. R. (2013). Implementation of Focus on Form: Teachers' and Students' Conceptions. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 1265–1274. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.186>
- Sheppard, K. (1992). Two Feedback Types: Do They Make A Difference? *RELC Journal*, 23(1), 103–110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003368829202300107>
- Srichanyachon, N. (2012). Teacher Written Feedback for L2 Learners' Writing Development. *Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts*, 12(1), 7–17.
- Al-Shammari, S. R. (2011). *Students towards Teachers' Feedback on the Writings of Secondary School Students in Rafha City, Saudi Arabia* (Master's thesis, Saudi Arabia - King Saud University, 2011) (pp. 1-97). Rafha.
- Thorsteinsen, L. (2010). An Interview Study of The Usage of Written Feedback in English Education. The students' and the teachers' points of view. (Master's Thesis). Mälardalens University
- Truscott, J. (2007). The effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(4), 255–272. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.06.003>

- Ur, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Van Beuningen, C. (2010). Corrective feedback in L2 writing: Theoretical perspectives, empirical insights, and future directions. *International Journal of English Studies*, 10(2), 1–27.
- Walker, A., & Leary, H. (2009). A Problem Based Learning Meta-Analysis: Differences Across Problem Types, Implementation Types, Disciplines, and Assessment Levels. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, 3(1).
Available at: <https://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1541-5015.1061>
- Zacharias, N. T. (2007). Teacher and Student Attitudes toward Teacher Feedback. *RELC Journal*, 38(1), 38–52.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206076157>
- Zahida, R, Farrah, M & Zaru, N (2014) ‘The Impact of Three Types of Written Feedback on the Motivation and Writing Skill of English Major Students at Hebron University’. *An - Najah Univ. J. Res. (Humanities)*. Vol. 28(5), 2014.
- Zamel, V. (1985). Responding to Student Writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(1), 79.
doi:10.2307/3586773
- Zellermayer, M. (1989). The study of teachers’ written feedback to students’ writing: changes in theoretical considerations and the expansion of research contexts. *Instructional Science*, 18(2), 145–165.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00117715>
- Zhan, L. (2016). Written teacher feedback: Student perceptions, teacher perceptions, and actual teacher performance. *English Language Teaching*, 9(8), 73.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n8p73>

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1**Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire**

1. Generally, I give written feedback on students' papers (daily assignments and tests).

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

2. I give students' written feedback regularly in its time.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

3. I prevent myself from negative and pessimistic written feedback.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

4. I feel that my written feedback on students' papers, improve their writing skills.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

5. I use specific written feedback on every assignment.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

6. I focus on grammatical written feedback more than other elements of writing.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

7. To improve students' writing skills, written feedback on "Composition" means a lot to me.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

8. I use daily written feedback on white board while students take part in some class written activities.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

9. After the test, I give students some general feedback on the white board.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

10. The importance of "semantic" is focused on while giving written feedback.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

11. I write some constructive written feedback on student's papers as "excellent", "very good", "great job", "well done",etc.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

12. My giving written feedback depends on students' paying attention to it.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

13. I have read a (book, newspaper, magazine, booklet.... etc) on feedback generally and written feedback specifically.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

14. I use red pen while giving written feedback.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

15. I use "Abbreviations" on the assignments rather than detail written feedback as a kind of time economize.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

16. I use codes as a written feedback on the assignments after giving them the meaning of codes.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

APPENDIX 2

Students' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire

- | No. | Items |
|------------|--|
| 1. | 1. Generally, I get benefit from my teachers' written feedback on my papers (daily assignments and tests).

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 2. | I fully understand and know the meaning of teachers' written feedback on my papers.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 3. | The written feedback which I have been taken is optimistic and positive.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 4. | I feel that my teachers' written feedback on my papers, improve my writing skills.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 5. | My English language teacher uses general written feedback; as a result, I do not know he/ she means me specifically or also the other students.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 6. | Teachers' written feedback is regularly done in its time.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 7. | Grammatical written feedback is focused on a lot by my English teacher.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐ |
| 8. | Written feedback in spelling and punctuation marks are paid attention less than grammatical mistakes.

 |

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

9. Composition (Unit task) is studied significantly as a tool for improving students' writing skills.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

10. The importance of "Semantic" is focused on throughout providing teachers' written feedback.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

11. After the paper tests we are given some general feedback on the white board.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

12. Written feedback on white board is used as a tool for correcting daily mistakes.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

13. Using red pens to determine and underline my papers as a written feedback worries me.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

14. English language teachers' abbreviations that are used as feedback are all unclear.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

15. The codes that my English teacher uses as a feedback on the assignments are ambiguous and not understandable.

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never ☐

APPENDIX 3

Students' Attitudes Toward Teacher Written Feedback Questionnaire (Kurdish translated)

1. به‌شیوه‌یه‌کی گشتی، من سوود له فیدبایکی مامۆستاکهم وەرئەگرم لەسەر کاغەز(ئەڕکی ماله‌وه‌بێت یان تاقیکردنەوه).

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

2. به‌ته‌واوی له فیدبایکی مامۆستام تێدەگەم و دەزانم مانای چیه‌ له‌سەر کاغەز.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

3. ئەو فیدبایکی که من وەری دەگرم له مامۆستاکهم، فیدبایکی گەشبین و ئەرێیییه.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

4. ئەو فیدبایکی که من وەری دەگرم له مامۆستاکهم، فیدبایکی گەشبین و ئەرێیییه.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

5. هەست دەکەم فیدبایکی مامۆستاکهم لەسەر کاغەز، تواناو لیها‌تووییم له‌ بواری نووسین با‌ش‌تر ده‌کات.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

6. مامۆستای زمانی ئینگلیزی‌مان به‌شیوه‌یه‌کی گشتی فیدباک ئەدات به‌ قوتابیان، وه‌ له‌ئەنجامی ئەمه‌، من نازانم مامۆستاکهم مە‌به‌ستی منه‌ یا‌ هاو‌پۆله‌کانم.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

7. فیدبایکی مامۆستام له‌ کاتی خۆی به‌ رێکی ئەنجام ده‌دریت.

☐ هەمیشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆرجار ☐ هەندێ جار ☐ بەکەمی ☐ هەرگیز

8. فیدباک له‌ لایه‌نی نووسین له‌ریزمانی ئینگلیزی زیاتر جه‌ختی ده‌کریته‌ سه‌ر.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

9. فېدباك ئەلايەنى نووسىن ئەداشتە ۋ خالىيەندى كەمتر جەختى دەكرىتە سەر بەبەرورد ئەگەل رېزماندا.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

10. دارشتن بە گرنگىيەۋە دەخوئىرئىت ۋەك ئامرازىك بۇ بەھىز كەردنى تواناي نووسىنى قوتابيان.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

11. گرنگى واتاسازى جەختى دەكرىتە سەر ئە ماۋى پېدانى فېدباكى نووسىن.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

12. دۋاي ئەۋەدى كاغەزى تاقىكەردنەۋەمان پېدراۋە، ھەندى فېدباكى گشتىمان پېدەدرەئىت ئەسەر تەختە سېپى پۇل.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

13. فېدباكى سەر تەختە سېپى پۇل بەكار دەھىنرئىت ۋەك ئامرازىك بۇ راست كەردنەۋەدى ھەئەى رۇژانەى قوتابيان.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

14. بەكار ھىنانى قەئەمى سوور بۇ دىيارىكەردن ۋ ھىل بە ژىرداھىنانى كاغەزى قوتابيان، نىگەرەنم دەكات.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

15. ئەۋ كورت كراۋانەى كە مامۇستاي زمانى ئىنگىلىزى ۋەكو فېدباك بەكارى دەھىنئىت ئارۋون.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

16. ئەۋ كۇدانەى كە مامۇستا بەكارى دەھىنئىت ئەسەر ئەركى مائەۋە ۋون نىنە ۋ تىيان ناگەين.

☐ ھەمىشە ☐ عادەتەن ☐ زۆر جار ☐ ھەندى جار ☐ بەكەمى ☐ ھەرگىز

VITAE

Name& Surname: Fatih Jamal Ahmad Galaly.
Born: Iraq- Erbil, 1974.
University Graduation: At Salahaddin University,
College of Arts,
English Language and Literature Department in (1997).
Language skills: Arabic, English.
Experience: I have been teaching English language since (2004) at
High-schools.



ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Adı Soyadı: Fatih Jamal Ahmad Galaly.

Doğum: Irak - Erbil, 1974.

Üniversitesi Mezuniyet: Salahaddin Üniversitesi'nde,

Sanat Fakültesi,

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü (1997).

Dil becerileri: Arapça ve İngilizce Tecrübe: Liselerde (2004 yılından beri) İngilizce dili eğitimi alıyorum.