



POSTGRADUATE STUDIES – SECOND CYCLE

“The impact of feedback on developing students’ writing skills
– a case study from the elementary school ‘Selami Hallaci’ in Gjilan”

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to: My parents

Acknowledgments

All praise is due to God!

I would like to express my thanks and deepest gratefulness to some people, who helped me to reach my goal: Dr. Veronika Kareva - my mentor, thank you for your effort, advice and help given to me during the writing of this research. A lot of thanks to all of the professors of SEEU and its staff for this wonderful experience, without them I wouldn't be here. And last but the most important ones: my family, friends and my lovable husband, who always supported me during the time of this adventure.

Abstract

This research is focused on the effects of feedback on developing students' writing skills. The main role of it is to present the positive effects that feedback can make on improving students' writing skills, which then is supposed to further lead in facilitating the English language learning in general, developing critical thinking, making the correct evaluation, increasing motivation and collaboration.

Traditional language teaching has undergone a significant transformation with regard to the teaching methodologies. Earlier, the main teaching tools were: the teacher, a blackboard and the book. Teaching, learning, communication and the exchange of information were very limited. The 20th century brought distinct changes in education. Continuous assessment and new learning types changed the whole structure of learning and teaching. Students, as well as teachers, have developed an independent learning process through: online researches, self-reflection, self-observing and self-feedback. One of the most important tools in teaching and learning methodologies is feedback. Feedback brought a drastic change in students' learning, especially in developing their writing skills.

This research was conducted in the elementary school 'Selami Hallaci' in Gjilan. Two classes were examined with a total of 50 students; both genders at the age of fourteen and fifteen years old were included in the research. The investigation lasted for two weeks and the instruments that were used are: Teachers' interview, questionnaire and the writing task (essay).

The aims and objectives of the research are to demonstrate the positive results of the impact of feedback in the schools of Kosovo, more accurately in 'Selami Hallaci' elementary school in Gjilan.

Keywords: feedback, writing, education, learning, evaluation.

Abstrakti

Kjo teze e studimeve postdiplomatike eshte fokusuar mbi ndikimet e fidbekut ne aftesite e te shkruarit. Roli kryesor I ketij hulumtimi eshte qe te shfaq ndikimet pozitive qe fidbeku mund te beje ne aftesite e te shkruarit, e cila gjithashtu konkludon ne lehtesimin e te mesuarit, zhvillimin e mendimit kritik, rritjen e motivimit dhe punes ne grupe.

Mesimdhenia tradicionale ka nje ndryshim te madhe duke u krahasuar me metodat moderne te mesimdhenies. Me pare, mjetet kryesore te mesimdhenies ishin: Mesimdhenesi, nje derrase e zeze dhe libri. Mesimdhenia, mesimnxenia, komunikimi dhe shkembimi i informacioneve ishte shume I limituar. Shekulli 20 solli nje ndryshim te vecante ne edukim. Vlersimi I vazhdueshem I nxenesve dhe llojet e reja te te mesuarit ndryshuan te gjithe strukturen e mesimnxenies dhe mesimdhenies. Nxenesit kane zhvilluar nje proces te pavarur te mesimnxenes permes: hulumtimeve online, reflektimit te vetes (te mesuarit), vete-observimit dhe vete-fidbekut. Nje nga rolet kryesore te metodave te mesimdhenies dhe mesimnxenies eshte fidbeku. Fidbeku solli nje ndryshim drastik ne te mesuarit, e vecanerisht ne aftesite e te shkruarit.

Ky hulumtim u mbajt ne Shkollen Fillore “Selami Hallaci” ne Gjilan. Dy klasa u shqyrtuan me nje total prej 50 nxenes; Te dy gjinite e moshes 14 dhe 15 vjecare jane te perfshira ne hulumtim. Hulumtimi zgjati rreth dy jave dhe instrumentet qe u perdoren jane: Intervista e mesimdhenesve, pyetesori dhe detyra rreth te shkruarit (ese).

Qellimet dhe objektivat e hulumtimit jane qe te demostrojne rezultatet pozitive te ndikimit te fidbekut ne shkollat ne Kosove, me saktesisht ne shkollen fillore “Selami Hallaci” ne Gjilan.

Fjalet kyqe: fidbeku, te shkruarit, edukimi, mesimnxenia, vlersimi.

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Chapter I

1.1 Introduction

The importance of writing has an essential role in our education and community. Producing a comprehensible and clear writing is probably the most difficult part in a language; especially second language learners find this challenge very tremendous. Sometimes, even the native speakers never master this skill, there are people with different academic backgrounds but still do not write correctly in their own language. We as language teachers should initiate doing something regarding to this issue and the best place to fulfill this aim is in our classroom, to our students. We should improve our education system and reinforce our teaching, especially in elementary school because since then students begin their journey towards writing and developing their different language skills. Moreover, writing skills are considered as a display of our academic success and they are required in different life situations, education and job positions. In a word, writing is the essential part of a language. There is a key solution in order to master the skill of writing, and that is: practice! Students should practice their writing skills until they are satisfied with their progress and their success is proved. Practice is the most important thing and sometimes it requires time and effort but it is even easier when students know where they need practice and reinforcement.

When students know where there is a necessary improvement, they feel more motivated to put some more effort, because they get inspired. People in general are afraid of the unknown, but when we know what steps we should take and follow in order to accomplish something, we feel at ease because we have a guide line which we are more motivated to follow. When students already know what they should do, they feel willing and start boosting their learning. With the use of feedback teachers can help students to improve their weak sides and to enforce their strong sides. Feedback shows to students their good and bad skills. This is a good help, because students will have the opportunity to know where their mistakes are, and so, will have the opportunity to correct them and learn more about that specific part of a lesson.

The usage of feedback to students is an important role of teaching and also learning. Feedback is a tool which helps students in their learning in many different ways, such as:

First, facilitating their overall learning, particularly improving students' writing skills, developing their critical thinking, increasing motivation and collaboration, making students reflective on their learning and furthermore helping teachers to give an accurate assessment and improvement towards their teaching techniques based on students' needs.

There are too many benefits from feedback which will be mentioned further in this research. The importance of feedback in classroom will be presented overall in this whole research. Since in public schools of Kosovo feedback is hardly ever used, my findings from the results of the questionnaire, interviews and conclusions will be beneficial for the school where this research was conducted. The results can affect the teachers' staff and why not to reach a change to the whole education system in Kosovo.

The research attempts to reflect the importance and the benefits of feedback in the classroom, particularly in students' writing skills. It includes two sides of the research, the theoretical and practical one. Its results will show how much students are related and familiar with feedback and what do both, students and teachers, think about the usage of feedback in teaching and also learning. We want to raise the awareness of feedback and represent its methods to every student and teacher; therefore they can benefit different opportunities from it. The research is conducted in 'Selami Hallaci' school in Gjilan, with 3 types of instruments: questionnaire, interview and the experiment. The experimental group, qualitative and quantitative methods are used in order to gather the results of this research. It is divided into chapters, the first ones are theoretical: introduction and definition of feedback, the research methodology, including research questions, aims of the research and hypotheses, and afterwards we present practical side, such as: results of the questionnaire, results of the experiment, data analysis, results of the findings, description and analysis of teachers' interview, recommendations and conclusions.

1.2 Definition of writing and feedback

Language skills are divided in productive and receptive. Productive skills include: speaking and writing, whereas receptive skills are: listening and reading. From all these skills, writing is generally approved as a central method of interaction. It is assumed as one of the most difficult parts in a language because of its importance in our life and education. Writing appropriately is not an easy task, both for native and second language learners. As the author Nunan declared:

Until the mid-1970s, writing was a subservient skill, whose function was to support the development of oral language. Then, in the mid-1970 second language teachers discovered 'process' approaches that were becoming popular in the first language classroom. This approach concentrates on the creation of the text, rather than on the end of the product. (Nunan, 1999, p.271)

Thus, with the coming of different approaches, the focus on the writing part became serious and attracted a greater level of interest in teaching writing as a skill. As we know, writing is a mean of communication that people use to express their opinions, ideas and messages. According to Oxford Dictionary, a simple definition of writing would be: 'A method that interprets ones thoughts, feelings and beliefs. In its simple and linguistic form, we can define writing as the use of graphic symbols or reproducing in written form something which has been heard or read' (Oxford Dictionary, 2005, p.940). Since writing is a basic form of expressions, which presents ideas, feelings and thoughts of people, it makes its role essential in a society. Also, Miller claims that even though writing is an expression of a personality, in its basic it is a way of communication between people (Miller, 1989). That is another reason why writing is one of the most important skills and students should be competent to produce a paragraph and even when they try to write in a foreign language, they expose the ability to use its structure and lexical items. Communication takes the basic place in a human being life, and since writing is a basic form of communication, its role in a language and community is very precious and useful.

Raimes said that the content and the organization are not enough while we produce a writing, it also has to include some linguistic tools, such as grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, in order to convey our message accurately. (Raimes, 1994)

Moreover not only syntax can help the developing of writing skills, it requires more than this. In order to facilitate learning students use the strategy of writing. Through writing students understand, remember and summarize what they learn. This leads to another purpose of the importance of writing, which is to present or reveal knowledge to the audience in a specified area.

Students can enhance writing skills in different methods. One of the best methods is through feedback. Feedback is connected to writing skills because of its essential role in learning and teaching process. Feedback helps students to identify actions that need to be taken in order to improve their performance. Besides facilitating learning, both in writing skills and in general, feedback increases motivation and collaboration in the classroom. Feedback increases peer working, both online and in class. This tool is one of the most favorite type of feedback for students, because they feel relieved and less nervous when a peer check their work and corrects them, instead of the teacher. But there are some students that want the teacher to correct them because they feel that the teacher is a better and safer source.

Feedback can be defined as: “The input and means that provides writers with a set of information such as the reader’s needs and expectations and whether students’ writings have met such expectations” (Harmer, 2004, p.108). Oxford Student’s Dictionary defines feedback as: ‘information given by the user to the supplier, maker’ (1998, p.233).

So, feedback means giving specific information about modifying writing, in order to advance it. The usage of feedback helps to maximize our potential towards progression. Not only students can benefit from feedback, also teachers can benefit from it. Through feedback teachers can improve their students’ performance, their teaching and their assessment as well. When students are evaluated in different manners, and when they have enough opportunities to show their skills with different exams, activities, tasks and essays, then teachers can make an accurate assessment and for sure, students will reach a better grade level. The aim of feedback is to help students and ease their learning. It shows them where do they stand in a learning, it reflects their progress and their lack of knowledge; it helps them to improve and to correct mistakes by only directing.

J. C. Richards and Ch. Lockhart (1996) stated in their writing *Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*:

Providing feedback to learners on their performance is another important aspect of teaching. Feedback can be either positive or negative and may serve not only to let learners know how well they have performed but also to increase motivation and build a supportive classroom climate. (p.188)

A feedback can be positive or negative but it always should start with a positive comment. Teachers start with a positive comment and then appear the mistakes, this is a method to motivate students and keep them inspired to improve. This method shows to the students that the teacher and the comments are not all negative, this makes them feel like they didn't do only errors; they also have made some good points in their work. Feedback helps students to grow even by their own self. Students can become independent learners by using self-feedback which offers the opportunity of observing and monitoring themselves. Thus students will be aware of their performance and their up and downs.

To sum up, the relation of feedback and writing is unavoidable. Feedback identifies moves that need to be taken to raise the success of a performance, it not only that helps students related to their writing skills but also it helps their general learning, by facilitating and encouraging improvement; exposing their mistakes, which motivates them to boost their progress and it makes students familiar with classroom collaboration and why not to help students having a clear reflection on themselves and their performance by using another tool of feedback: self-feedback. When students become independent learner, they no longer are depended by a book or a teacher. They can use the advancement of technology for good and can know their weaknesses and improve them by their own. Students are more willing to work towards their mistakes when they identify the errors by themselves because they feel motivated to achieve more. Even without the presence of the teacher, feedback provides students the opportunity to observe their learning composition and to identify their own errors; all this leads them to independence. Independent learner is another important benefit from feedback which will be mentioned furthermore in this research.

Chapter II

2.1 The role and importance of feedback in classroom

Based on the importance of writing skills when learning a foreign language, students should master this task even it is not easy at all. In order to make students able to use strategies as those of native English speakers, teachers should apply different teaching methods that are related to students needs. As we stated earlier in this research, feedback can help the procedure of developing students' writing skills and also it can help teachers to understand students' needs. When we, the teachers, are familiar with student's needs and know what students need to reinforce, we pay more attention to their weaknesses and bring different appropriate approaches to them, and thus we encourage the class towards success.

The general aim of this research is to present the importance of feedback in learning and teaching, focusing the main aim on the effects of feedback in writing skills. Usually in the schools of Kosovo, traditional teaching methods are still being used and English is not practiced outside the class. Writing tasks are evaluated immediately and sometimes students do not know their mistakes. This is an issue that needs discussion and a new change. This is why this research attempts to make a difference, bring arguments and facts about the importance of feedback and show different ways that it can facilitate learning and also teaching, hoping that the results of this research will affect the curriculum of the schools and more will be done towards this idea.

Teaching a foreign language and assessing students correctly have always been challenging and difficult tasks, but since the traditional teaching methods are drastically changing. Teaching is being developed and more qualitative by providing easier learning to students, by adding modern teaching methodologies for different kinds of learner, and by the opportunity to facilitate learning and assessment. As it is revealed, the language skills (including: reading, writing, speaking and listening) need practice and the best way to know where you need more practice is by using feedback. When students know their mistakes, they find it easier to improve their skills. Fisher & Frey stated that unless teachers check students, it is difficult to know what are they understanding and getting out of the lesson. (Fisher & Frey, 2007) It claims that students should

be checked and observed continuously during the class or outside the school. In these cases we can use repetition or ask a student to summarize, so you will be sure they understand what they are going to do.

Feedback has an important role in learning because it makes students more active, more motivated, independent learners and gives the opportunity to correct their mistakes, enabling them to reach progress and success in language easily. In order to keep making progress in learning, especially, in writing skills, feedback is required to take place in the classroom. The application of feedback in classroom has a great impact in the language learning in general and the writing skills in particular. Written feedback, in the absence of oral one, provides students the opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses, this helps them to improve their learning and be effective writers. As we already said, not only students can benefit from feedback, also teachers can improve their teaching thanks to it. Feedback can help teachers to focus on students' needs. Moreover students can give feedback to the teacher. They can present their likes and dislikes about the teacher's teaching and the class. Teachers should take these comments into consideration and improve their syllabus design and teaching methods. Maybe there are students that like learning through games, quiz, presentation or music, so teachers should think about their learning type and try to design the syllable based on students needs.

Even evaluation becomes more accurate when feedback is used in our class because it gives students more than one opportunity to show their best, they improve themselves and enhance their knowledge. When students boost their knowledge, they get better grades, and this leads into another conclusion: When students get good grades they become more motivated and interested in that subject because of the feeling of appreciation of their work and effort. Then, when the feedback reveals their mistakes, it makes them not only to fight for grades but also for knowledge. As an end, both teachers and students, should be aware of the positive effects of feedback, this is why I am going to explore and reveal its effectiveness furthermore in this paper.

2.2 Types of feedback

Feedback can be oral or written conducted by the teacher, a peer or by yourself. Feedback can be formal or informal. Usually teacher's written feedback is considered as a formal feedback whereas informal feedback can be between peers, teachers or colleagues; it can be conducted in an oral or written manner. Keh classifies three types of feedback: teacher written feedback, Teacher-Student Conferences and peer feedback (1990).

2.3 Teacher Written Feedback

Teacher written feedback can be both, formal and informal. It has an enormous role in modifying students' writing, because it motivates students to keep writing, to rewrite, keep correcting mistakes and create new goals. There always can be some students that do not take feedback into the consideration. That is why teachers should be very careful and inspiring while providing feedback to them and should always keep in mind the audience. Remember to whom you are writing, we need to consider what students want from feedback.

Feedback can vary a lot, in its content and structure. Corrective written feedback can be performed in different ways. Let us have a look on Table 1.0, where we have presented some types of written corrective feedback identified by Ellis (2009):

Types of written corrective feedback	Descriptions
Direct CF	The teacher provides the full correct form of the error.
Indirect CF	The teacher indicates the existence of an error but correction form is not given. The location of the error can be provided when

	the teacher underlines or circles it on the paper or the location of the error remains hidden.
Meta-linguistic Feedback	The teacher provides meta-linguistic clue based on the error (like an acronym or writing codes). For example: WO tells a mistake in Word Order; S – Spelling, etc.
The focus of the feedback	This feedback is distinguished in two sections: 1) Focused feedback - Teacher focuses only on a limited number of language features. 2) Unfocused feedback - Teacher focuses on many or all of the language features.
Electronic Feedback	Teacher provides this feedback via computer. A hyperlink indicates the errors.
Reformulation	This occurs when a native speaker reworks or reformulates the student's text.

Table 1.0: Written Corrective Feedback Types (Ellis, 2009)

The table presents the written corrective feedback in different structure and content; it depends on the situations and student's need. Sometimes it is necessary to give students a hint or just a sign that there is something wrong in their sentence by circling it or underlining. We can just indicate the existence of an error but do not provide correction to them as in the Indirect Form. This would let them to make an effort to search and learn more about that specific lesson that they made a mistake. We can also use an acronym when we want to specify the mistaken word or sentence, like Meta-linguistic Feedback, for example: WO=word order, WW=wrong word,

G=Grammar, etc. We can reveal the location of the error so we help students to have a clue what they should correct or leave it unrevealed, so they have to search by themselves. Another form to give written feedback is to correct student's mistake by providing the full correct form like the Direct Form. The Direct Corrective Feedback exposes the errors of students and also corrects them. This type of feedback is very direct and usually should take place when there is just a small mistake in student's work, for example: missing a letter, a punctuation mark mistake, etc. I would recommend this type mostly for good students who do not usually make that certain mistake or any other big mistakes. The written feedback can have different focuses; it is all depends on what do you want to evaluate. Focus Feedback presents when the focus of the teacher is in a limited number based on what part they want their students to grow. Teachers limit their focus by focusing only on some of the main language features, for example only in content, grammar, spelling, punctuation or structure. In the other hand is the unfocused feedback which presents a general. In this case teachers can focus in too many language features like: ideas, content, vocabulary, structure, spelling, grammar, punctuation marks, etc.

All these kinds of corrective feedback can be done online. Teachers can give Electronic Corrective Feedback through internet; this is a topic that will be discoursed widely later. In the end of the table we have: Reformulation, which occurs when a native speaker reformulates the text of the English Second Language student. This type of feedback should be very careful in use because it can leave the students without advancing by doing the whole work for them.

Hyland in his writing *Providing Productive Feedback*, describes the effect of the written feedback by the teacher:

Clearly teacher response is an essential step in the writing process. Diligent marking provides students with an idea of the criteria by which their work is judged and hopefully offers useful information that will help them avoid similar errors in the future. Students can certainly learn from their mistakes, but this depends on us adopting feedback methods that encourage them to return to their work after it has been assessed. Drafting and revising thereby become indispensable stages in the production of a piece of written work. The improvements in final drafts are often spectacular'. (Hyland, 1990, p. (4) 279-285)

Sometimes, students prefer more teachers' feedback than peers' feedback because they feel that teachers are a safer resource. Hyland K. stated in his writing that: 'Surveys of students' feedback preferences indicate that ESL students value teacher's written feedback and consistently rate it more highly than alternative forms such as peer feedback and oral feedback in writing conferences (2006).

2.4 Teacher – Student Conferences or Oral Feedback

Oral feedback is the type of feedback that occurs more frequent than the other types, because it can happen during different activities in the class or during a task. It is less formal than the written one but it is very effective and powerful and can happen time to time. This kind of feedback would be more formal when we use a conference teacher – student, for example when giving feedback to a portfolio towards a student or a group of them.

Oral feedback is a suggested conference between the teacher and the student because it gives students the opportunity to have a bigger focus and attention from the teacher, also students can ask the teacher for any clarifications about their uncertainties, instructions or questions. Some students prefer this method because they can get as much as possible information from the teacher. This form of feedback is even more suitable according to Zamel.

Both teachers and students tend to be positive about the opportunities for detailed discussion that conferences offer, and research suggests that students typically receive more focused and usable comments than through written feedback. (Zamel, 1985, Volume 19, Issue 1, p.79)

During the oral feedback students have the opportunity to get new ideas or boost the older ones; they get clearer instructions, examples and explanations from the teacher. They can also ask for further information or anything that they want or is unclear to them. Oral feedback, as the written one, is very useful for those who exploit this chance, because it reveals students' strengths and weaknesses as any other kind of feedback. When students know where their mistakes are they feel more motivated and are more willing to correct them.

Imagine that you are in an important exam and the teacher comes to you and tells you that: ‘You got the 1st question wrong, please review it!’, what would you do? Would you feel encouraged to change your answer? We know the answer is probably yes.

2.5 Peer feedback

Another way to improve learning is group working. When students work together they can be inspired from each other and learn a lot more. Brown stated that: ‘Giving students the opportunity to evaluate their peers not only gives them an important sense of responsibility for their fellow students’ progress, but also forces them to concentrate on the skills during their own work’ (*Brown, 1998, p.67*). Peer-feedback enables students to exchange their knowledge, work in groups and help each other. Students are encouraged to have a feedback from their peer before they submit their work to the teacher; sometimes students find it easier to collaborate with their friends than the teacher because of its figure in the classroom. Learning from your classmates and commenting each other’s work is informal, full of fun, not stressful, very inspiring and effective. During peer feedback students exchange their knowledge, help improving one another, but also grow their capacity of learning and are more aware of their mistakes. When students reflect to their peer writing, they also reflect on their work. In the other hand, there are some students that would like to have teacher’s feedback instead of their peer because the teacher’s feedback is more correct and corrective. If the feedback is not given correctly than students cannot benefit from it.

One manner to conduct peer feedback is while students are working on their portfolios or any other writing tasks. We divide them into two columns and ask them to exchange their writing with the person in front of them. Their task is to read their peer work and give feedback to it. Feedback should always be positive and well structured. Also, it should be appreciated from the receiver about the information it contains. In the end, students can discuss what they got out of the feedback. During this activity students help and learn from each other by sharing ideas and opinions. They also develop their critical thinking skills which is another important skill

Furthermore, teachers can use this feedback between their staff. A teacher can observe his/her colleague and provide feedback on their teaching. They can also exchange syllabus designs and see if they can share ideas and opinions about different activities. There is also an opportunity for students to give feedback to their teacher. Teacher can collect feedback from students by asking them different questions and students are willing to talk or write in a piece of paper about things that they want to learn this semester or from this class, what do they think that they can benefit from this course, what are their expectations about this course, what activities would they want to be included in the class, what skills they want to enforce, they can add different opinions about the teaching of the teacher, for example answers could be: I would like to play more games, have activities with/about music, activities related to sports, debates, discussions, writing tasks, listening tasks, speaking activities, etc. A good teacher would consider all of these recommendations and make a better environment for students.

Like any other activity, peer-feedback has its strong parts and its side effects. If feedback is not provided correctly, isn't well-structured or doesn't contain useful comments, it could lead to different conclusions, especially S-S feedback. That is why sometimes Teacher Feedback is seems necessary and cannot be substituted by the Peer Feedback, but both of them are welcomed to take place in the classroom. In the following table are provided the advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback presented by Hyland (2003).

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active learner participation - Authentic communicative context - Non-judgmental environment - Alternative and authentic audience - Writer gains understanding of reader needs - Reduced apprehension about writing - Development of critical reading skills - Reduces teacher's workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tendency to focus on surface forms - Potential for overtly critical comments - Cultural reluctance to criticize and judge - Students unconvinced of comments' value - Weakness of readers' knowledge - Students may not use feedback in revisions

- Students may prefer teacher feedback

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback by Hyland (2003, p.57)

As we mentioned before, if a feedback is not given correctly then it can be useless. Sometimes students can provide negative comments or focus only on the surface failing to get the right points of a writing work. That's why, it is important to know how to give a good feedback and how to benefit from it. We will talk further about how to give an effective feedback in the '*When and how to give feedback*' part, on page 16.

2.6 Self-feedback

Feedback suits with every type of students, even with the introvert type of learners, who like to work and improve alone. This can be possible by using self-feedback. This form of feedback is like self-assessment part where students can identify their mistakes in a writing paper or identify their weak sides in a general learning, by their own opportunity. These students can realize their potential by working individually. They can observe their performance and focus on the low parts. Students that use feedback and reveal their mistakes are more motivated to work with themselves, improve their skills and be independent. When students are independent learners, they do not have teachers as the only source of knowledge. Besides students, teachers can also benefit from feedback. Feedback enables teachers to understand more the students' needs and come up with an accurate assessment and a better teaching methodology. Moreover, teachers can receive feedback from students, colleagues, or themselves in order to improve their teaching. Everyone should know where they are good at and where they need reinforcement.

I enjoy this kind of reflection on teachers because teachers can have an enormous benefit from different types of feedback, especially self-feedback. Teachers should monitor their teaching, their classroom and their students. After every class, teachers should reflect on their teaching by asking questions like: What could be done differently? Was that activity conducted as I

expected? Can that bring better results? How students respond to this specific activity? Are there any better ways to teach this? Are the objectives of this class achieved? What should students be able to do after this lesson? etc. When teachers self-assess their teaching, they are closer to understand student's needs which leads to facilitating students learning and providing effective syllabus design.

2.7 Online feedback

As we all know, technology influenced every field of our life, including education. The access of technology in education has a great impact on facilitating teaching and learning. Nowadays students study online, they get evaluated online, they have online/oral exams, online class, they can learn and encourage their independence by the internet. English language is considered as an international language, and by having this major role in community, it is easier to be learned even through the internet. The influence of English has become so great that you will find an easy access to learn the language online. Too many websites offer free English courses for worldwide students. The author, Han, claimed in his writing *Benefits and barriers of computer assisted language learning and teaching*, that the number of both, students and teachers that use computers and the internet for purposes of teaching or learning, has increased due to the technology advances (Han W.; 2008). The impact of internet makes the procedure of feedback even easier by giving us the option of: Online feedback, which can be conducted by teacher, peers or online quizzes/tests.

The authors of *Teacher's Handbook – Contextualized Language Instructions*, indicate that recent studies have presented that the effect of feedback has been effectively proved to facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary; increase writing through the use of writing assistant software (e-mails and chat-rooms), provide intelligent computer-mediated feedback; enhance student motivation, etc. (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Electronic feedback enables teachers to give comments to students by using comment function in order to show their mistakes. When the teacher provides students with online feedback, students can take their time and make themselves comfortable during the corrective period by focusing in improving their work. Students can receive feedback at their

home, in their computer, using e-mail address. This makes students motivated because it is seemed that learning isn't taking too much effort and they can learn whenever they want and not only in school. They can do all this development while they are anywhere with their laptop, at a bar, library, home, bedroom or school.

Students can collaborate and send online feedback to each other by encouraging themselves to be independent and sociable, enhancing group work and exchanging knowledge.

Moreover students can improve their own learning by working individually. Nowadays the internet provides too many facilities and devices which enable us the access to the source of different information. We can easily find corrective feedback online. Even the Microsoft Word offers a kind of feedback by underlining every misspelled word in the text, and also by providing other examples in order to correct the mistake. Students can become independent by learning the language on their own and by correcting themselves and improving their writing skills. Students can find different activities about listening, speaking, writing or reading in the internet. In this area of technology, it is easier than ever to learn independently, through the internet. These kinds of students do not have teachers as the only source of knowledge; they can increase and develop their knowledge alone. Online quizzes, tasks and tests are a good opportunity to learn online. Those activities provide good feedback by giving you the correct answer and also they provide the explanation for every mistake students make, which enables them to learn from their mistakes and get explanations and more examples. Learning a foreign language requires time and effort, learning only inside the classroom is not enough, students will always need to use internet, online feedback, self-feedback, collaboration, learn at home, and practice English outside the classroom, so they can be successful.

2.8 How and when we should give feedback - what to focus?

We can all benefit from feedback but only if it is a good feedback. What makes a feedback good? A good feedback is one that is clear, positive, well-structured which provides ideas and meaningful comments. The writer should never forget about the purpose of feedback and always remember the audience (the receiver of the feedback). The essential point of teachers via feedback is to motivate students, provide a correct assessment, improve writing skills of students, correct students' mistakes, understand students' needs, and improve their personal teaching. Students can correct errors and improve their weak sides if they respond positively to the teacher's feedback. Providing feedback and the opportunity to correct errors may serve not only to let students know where do they stand and how is their performance going but also to increase motivation and team working, which leads to a supportive atmosphere in the classroom.

It is very important to know when and how to correct students' errors because from teacher's corrections students develop their learning and probably will remember the lesson better. Teachers can give feedback about vocabulary errors, errors of grammar, pronunciation, etc. These kinds of corrections can also be made from other students in the classroom, by feedback, repeating, summarizing or just correcting. Teachers should consider the fact that not all the students are the same that is why some of them prefer a peer to correct their mistake rather than the teacher. Some students prefer a correction from the teacher because they feel that the teacher is a better source of knowledge than classmates.

Jack C. Richards and Charles Lockhart (1996) suggest giving two types of feedback on spoken language: Feedback on content and feedback on form.

Some of the strategies to give feedback on content according to Richards and Lockhart are:

- Acknowledging the correct answer: teacher acknowledges by saying 'good', 'yes' or 'alright'.
- Indicating an incorrect answer: teachers indicate the incorrect answer by saying 'No, that's not quite right' or 'Mmm'.
- Praising: give complements for right answer by saying 'Yes, an excellent answer'.
- Expanding or modifying a student's answer: the teacher can provide more information or rephrasing the answer to an incomplete or vague answer.
- Repeating: teacher can repeat the same answer.
- Summarizing: the teacher can summarize what a student or group of students has answered.
- Criticizing: the teacher can criticize a student's response.

(J. C. Richards and Ch. Lockhart, 1996, p.188)

Some of the strategies to give feedback on form according to Richards and Lockhart are:

- Asking the student to repeat what he or she said.
- Pointing out the error and asking the students to self-correct.
- Commenting on an error and explaining why it is wrong, without having the student repeat the correct form.
- Asking another student to correct the error.
- Using a gesture to indicate that an error has been made.

(J. C. Richards and Ch. Lockhart, 1996, p.188)

We all assume that teachers should correct all the errors made by students but sometimes this is too much because it can discourage students. It can become boring and frustrate the student if the teacher corrects every tiny error, especially if there are too many errors made during spoken language.

Harmer J. confirms in his writing, *How to teach English*: ‘Some pieces of written work are completely full of mistakes, but even in these cases; over-correction can have a very demotivating effect’ (1998). It is indeed important for teachers to use an appropriate correction strategy and find a good time to imply it. Some examples and compliments can be applied in a writing feedback. A useful tip about written feedback is that always start with positive comments. Thus, students feel that there is something that they have done in the right way and immediately feel motivated to work on the ‘negative comments’, where teachers reveal their mistakes.

2.9 Correction symbols

Correction codes are the most important part, in order to achieve advancement in a writing work, through feedback. A code reveals and defines the type of a mistake in a writing paper. The main role of the application of correction codes is to reveal the errors of students, by underlining them and using some symbols in order to focus students’ attention on that certain mistake that they made. When students pay attention to the correction code and make the changes that are required, the process of feedback finishes successfully because students not only corrected the mistake, they learned from their mistakes. They defined it, they searched more about it, they boosted their learning and in the end they corrected it.

The correction symbols help students to focus on their mistakes and to find their errors easily. Each symbol has a meaning, which directs the student towards correction. When students find

the mistakes, based on the correction codes, they feel more motivated to work forward and edit those mistakes. They also learn from their mistakes, because teacher provides the code but doesn't provide the full form of correction, meaning that they have to search and learn more about that specific target and correct it on their own. By this procedure it is obvious that students elaborate, review, learn and fix their deficiency about a specific detail in a lesson,

So, symbols do not tell to students the whole answer. They just show to them that a certain part, a word, a paragraph or a sentence in the writing work should be revised and reviewed. This method helps students by showing to them their weak sides and by enabling to them the opportunity to know their errors and so they can exercise and learn more about a certain lesson, always according to their mistakes. (J. C. Richards and Ch. Lockhart, 1996, p.188)

In 2003, the author Hyland presented some codes, which will be provided on the figure 1, next page.

Symbol	Meaning
S	Incorrect spelling
λ	Something has been left out
W	Wrong word order
[]	Something is not necessary
T	Wrong tense
PM	Meaning is not clear
C	Concord (subject and verb do not agree)
NA	The usage is not appropriate
P	Punctuation is wrong
Wf	Wrong form
S/f	Singular or plural form wrong

Figure 1 – Correction codes (Hyland, 2003, p.181).

As we can see in this figure, correction codes can be different, according to a written mistake. In the beginning of a semester teachers can provide students with a correction codes it could be a unique correction code that is designed by them (teacher or teacher and students), in this way students are familiar with the codes and when they get the written feedback from the teacher, they already know the meaning of each symbol.

Chapter III

3.1 Aims of the research

1. General Objective

To find out whether the use of feedback facilitates learning (a case study from elementary school ‘Selami Hallaci’-Gjilan).

2. Specific Objectives

- a) To find out whether teacher’s feedback improves students’ writing skills.
- b) To find out if feedback raises motivation, critical thinking, team working and helps students to be independent learners.
- c) To find out how teachers can benefit from feedback.

3.2 Research questions:

1. What are the benefits of applying feedback in English classrooms?
2. How can the use of feedback change traditional evaluation, learning and teaching?
3. How does the use of feedback contribute in developing students’ writing skills compared to traditional methods?

4. Can teachers benefit from feedback?

3.3 Hypotheses:

Main hypothesis:

1. Providing proper feedback contributes to developing students' writing skills.

Additional hypotheses:

2. The application of feedback engages students in learning by making them independent learners and being more motivated which also helps them to improve their grades.
3. By using feedback in the classroom, teachers can understand better the students' needs and then design the curriculum, based on them.

3.4 Research methodology

This research was conducted through the experimental, quantitative and qualitative method, as an appropriate way of investigating the hypotheses. The researcher case studies were two classes of 'Selami Hallaci' school, in which we took permission from the director to observe and conduct the program for two weeks. The students that were included in the research are about fourteen years old, seventh grade.

First we organized some activities regarding to ‘How to write an essay?’ in both classes, then we watched a movie called ‘Wonder’ the topic of which was related to bullying. The topic of the movie was related to the topic they had to write the essay. We chose this topic because students should be aware that bullying is a bad behavior with a lot of consequences. With the high level of bullying that is occurring in schools nowadays, we think that students should raise their voice about it and try to stop it.

After the movie we discussed about bullying and gave examples how to fight it. Next time, students had to write an essay in the class with the topic: “The consequences of bullying and why it is important to prevent it?”. Students already were familiar with the topic and had no difficulties on getting ideas.

The first class was 7/5. Students of this class had to write an essay with the topic we mentioned above. The essays were collected and the next class they were brought back with proper feedback. Students of this class had the opportunity to benefit from the feedback. They developed their progress and paid attention to the comments that were given. In the end, students submitted the second draft into evaluation.

The second class was 7/6. This class had the same topic as the first group. The only difference was that this group had no opportunity for feedback. They got graded by the first draft of their essay that they conducted in the class.

In my research I chose two different classes because I want to show the difference on students’ success and the impact of feedback in developing their writing skills. In the elementary school of ‘Selami Hallaci’ in Gjilan, traditional methodologies are still used. Teacher is always in the centre of the classroom and students have just one opportunity to show their best. They have lack of opportunities to do better; they remain without progress and improvement. Main tools that the teacher usually uses in our school are: blackboard, chalk and books.

On the other hand, in the classroom where feedback takes place, students have more opportunities to improve and raise their success. They become the centre of the class because

they are active the whole time, even outside of the classroom. Feedback makes students to collaborate with each other and exchange knowledge. Most importantly, it presents them where their weakness and strengths are. After knowing their level and capacity, students are more willing and inspired to work towards these issues. When feedback is applied, learning becomes more attractive to students by making them independent, collaborative and focus on the main aim: to improve themselves, reach better results and obtain more knowledge.

3.5 Instruments

This research was carried out by both quantitative and qualitative method through:

Teachers' Interview, students' questionnaire and an experiment which was a task (essay), in order to gather as much as possible information, data and statistics to show if the hypotheses are confirmed or not.

Interviews provided information about teachers' preferences related to the use of feedback in the classroom. They enabled us to see what type of feedback do they use and if the use of it contributes to develop students' writing skills.

Questionnaire provided us the same information, but this time from students' perspective. It consisted of questions that examined students' attitudes towards the use of feedback and their perceptions about its influence on development of the writing skills.

Another instrument that is used for this research paper is the task. This is one of the most important tool because it shows a distinct difference of students that use feedback and those who do not. Students had to write an essay with the topic: "The consequences of bullying and why it is important to prevent it?".

We made the experiment through the task of the essay. This task was conducted in two classrooms after explanations and instructions took place. In one class feedback was applied whereas in the other it was not. In the end, we will compare the results and introduce the effects of feedback.

The expectations are that the positive effect that feedback has in developing Kosovar students' writing skills will be proven.

Chapter IV

4.1 Results of questionnaire and data analysis

In this section we will present comments and conclusions based on gathered arguments. Before analyzing the findings of the experiment study we have hypothesized that students writing would have a distinct progress and development if teachers apply feedback in the classroom and give

students the opportunity to improve. Based on the results, we can prove our statement. Results introduce to us the lack of feedback usage in classroom which is ‘a must’ and should take place in lessons of every school subject.

The first question in the questionnaire is: ‘Do you think that teacher’s correction helps you during the process of learning?’, with the answers: a)Yes; b)No; c) I don’t know’ .

In the *Diagram 1* is presented the answer of the students. As you can see almost all the students (94%) think that teacher’s correction helps their learning. 2% of the students said no, and 4% I don’t know. Teacher’s correction can be applied during the lesson while the student is speaking, that is called oral feedback, and also teacher’s correction can be conducted by writing feedback.

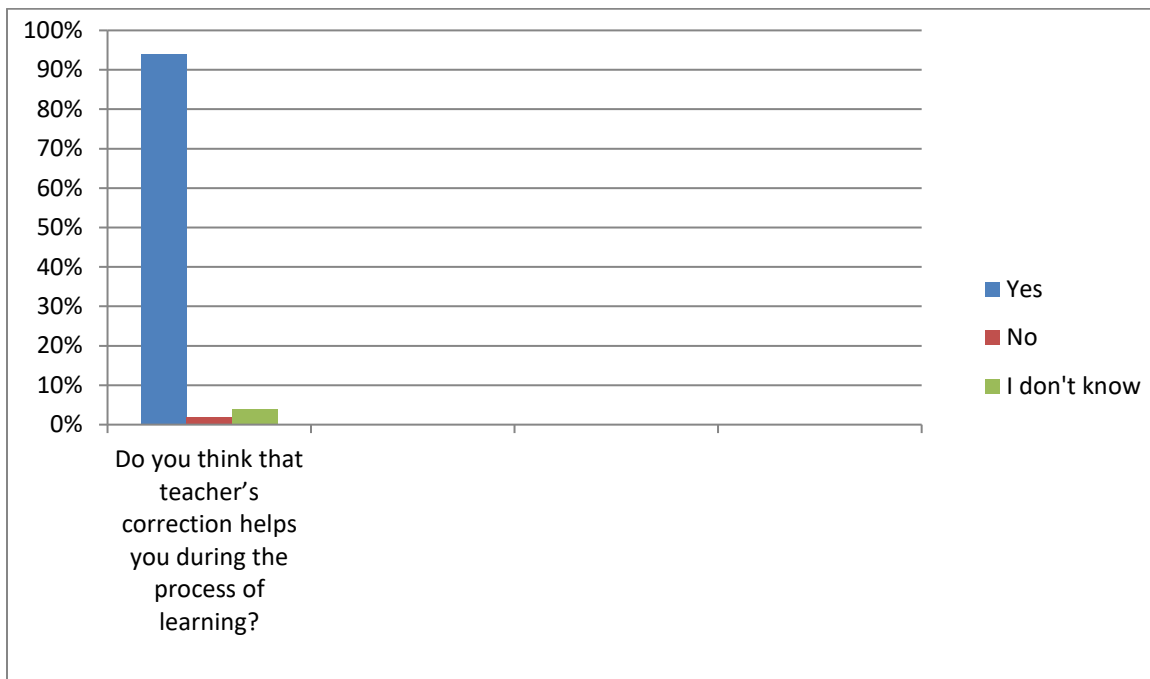


Diagram 1 – Results of answers in question 1

Students deserve to have a special focus from the teacher and their progress need to be observed. Teachers’ corrections are important for students even if they are given orally or in a written form, this is also proven by the answers of the students in question 1, where 94% of the students think that teachers’ corrections help them during the process of learning.

Question number two of the questionnaire is: ‘Which method of the teacher’s correction or comment, do you prefer more?, a) written correction/comment; b) oral correction/comment.’

In the *Diagram 2* are presented the answers of the students:

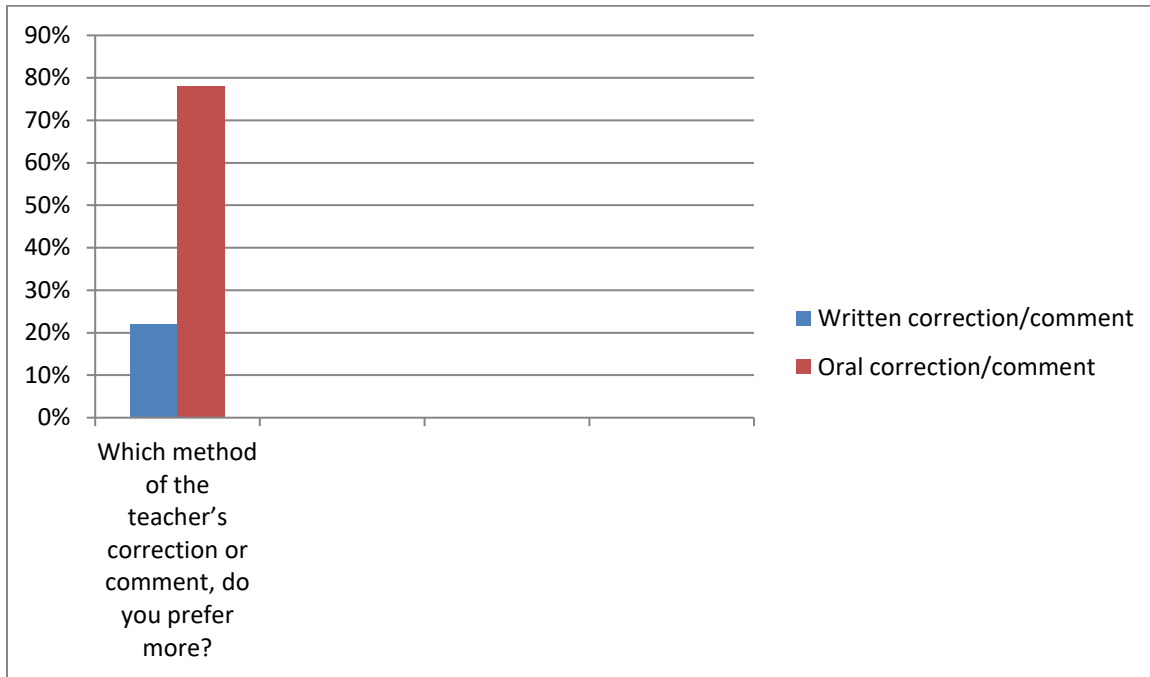


Diagram 2 – Results of answers in question 2

As you can see above in the Diagram 2, students are aware that they can learn more when their teacher corrects them by improving their errors. According to the results, students like oral form of feedback more than the written one (78% oral feedback, 22% written feedback) because oral feedbacks are clear, straightforward and students have the opportunity to ask for more explanations or anything they have unclear related to the given feedback.

The results of question number 3: ‘Do you think you can learn better if you know where you made mistakes in an essay?, a) Yes, b) No, c) I don’t know’, are presented in Diagram 3:

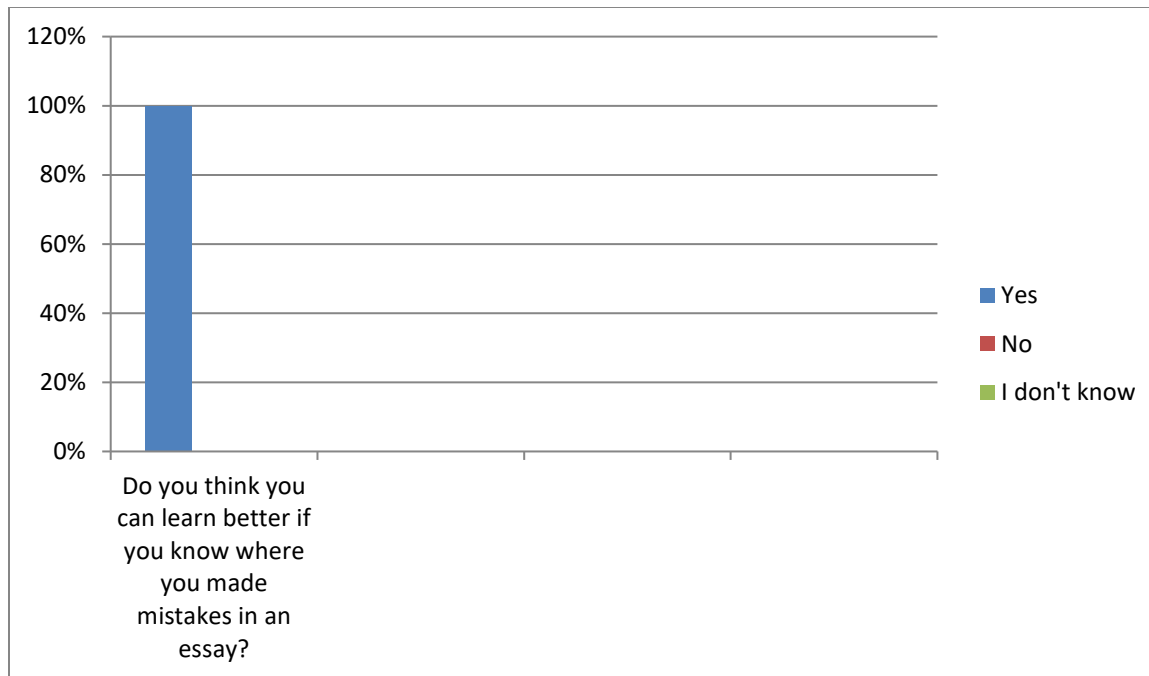


Diagram 3 – Results of answers in question 3

The result of question 3 is really important because there we can see that 100% of the students agree that they would learn more and would improve if they know their mistakes of their work.

As you can see the diagram 3, all of the students, 100%, think that it would be better if they would know where their mistakes are in a writing work. This is an important opportunity for the students in order to learn from their mistakes and make a significant progress in their writing skills. Students would feel motivated and more willing to learn and enhance if they would know where they make mistakes, even if it is not appeared how to correct that mistake, it is enough just to know that something in their writing is wrong, so they can research and learn why and how to fix it.

Question number 4 of the questionnaire: If your teacher would correct or comment your mistakes in an essay, would you feel more motivated to improve your mistakes?, a) Yes, b) No, c) I don't know'. Look below at the diagram number 4 for the results.

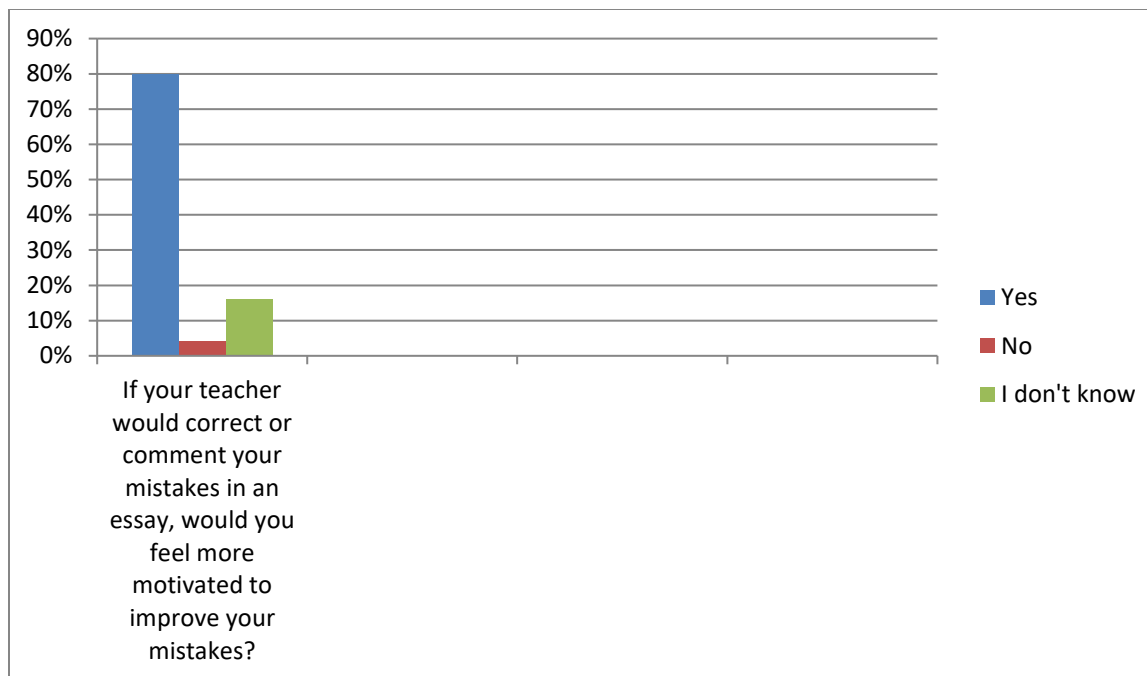


Diagram 4 – Results of answers in question 4

Diagram number 4 argues that 80% of the students would feel more motivated to improve their mistakes if their teacher would tell them their errors. 4% of the students responded in a negative way, as we mentioned earlier in this research, not every student will collaborate with the teacher's feedback, maybe they like to work individually or in pairs/groups, or maybe they always will have a negative attitude towards feedback, but it is impossible not to do at least a slightly progress if they implement it, a good teacher will always find a way how to affect this kind of students. 16 % of the students answered 'I don't know', I believe this answer is given because of the lack of knowledge of feedback in the classroom, so students do not know how it would be if they would implement it, or there is a possibility that a few students are very shy, so they feel uncomfortable if someone reveals their mistakes. Also Brown D., while listing the main manners to motivate students, he suggested the use of feedback as a mean to increase motivation in class. In his writing, *Principles of language learning*, he makes a question to teachers: 'Do students receive sufficient feedback on their performance (from each other or from you)?'; (Brown D., 2000, p.163). Which approves that; teachers should observe their work and can include feedback in their lessons, if they want to motivate their students.

Question 5: Would you like one of your colleagues to comment or correct your essay, before you submit it to your teacher for evaluation?

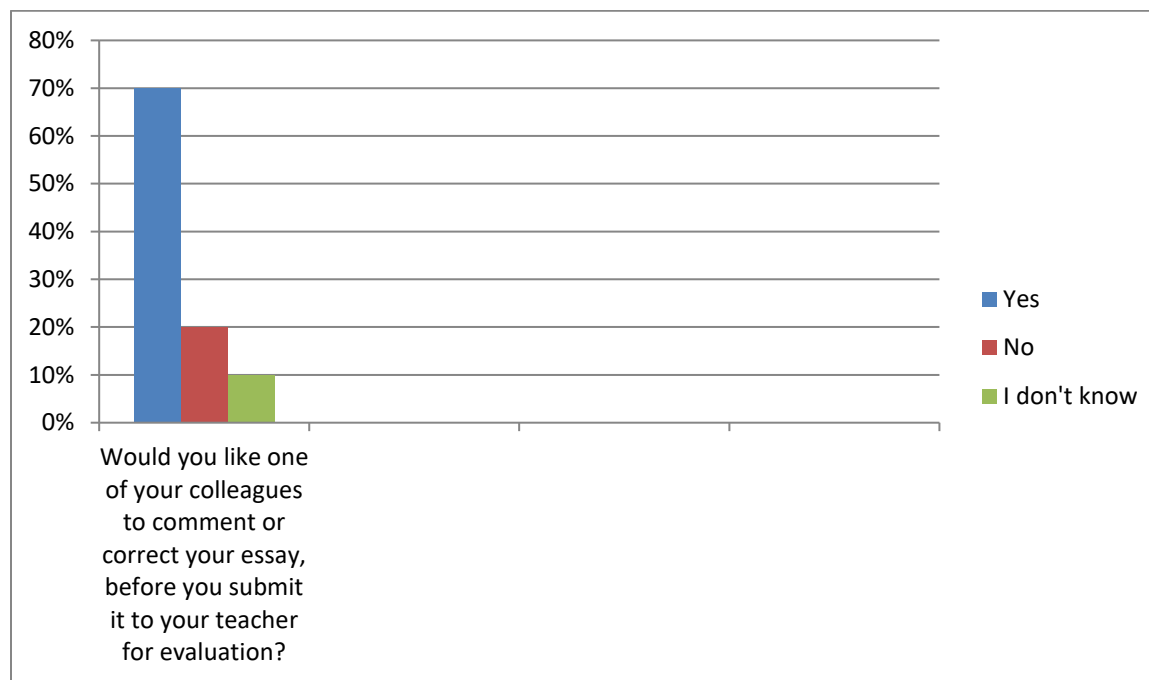


Diagram 5 – Results of answers in question 5

70% of the students answered on option a) yes; 20% on option b) no, and 10% on option c) I don't know.

The result of question 5, prove that the majority of the students want to get a peer feedback before they submit their work to the teacher for evaluation. Group work and working in pairs facilitate learning for students. Learning seems fun and attractive when you are not alone and work with friends, which is a great opportunity to exchange ideas and help each other. Teamwork will increase their motivation and as we know motivation is another important aspect of learning.

Question number 6: Do you think that students should give comments towards teacher's work?, a) yes, b) no, c) I don't know.

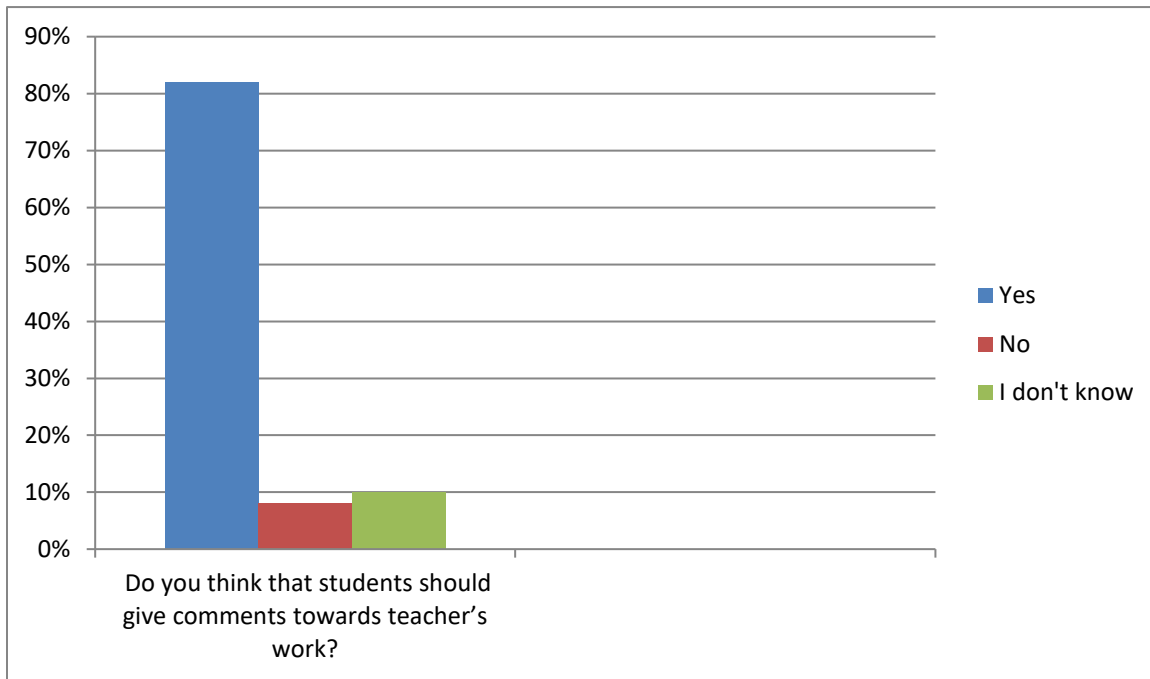


Diagram 6 – Results of answers in question 6

As you can see in diagram 6, most of the students (82%) said yes, 8% said no, and 10% said they don't know.

As we mentioned earlier, feedback can be beneficial for teachers too. It can be applied between teachers and also between students and the teachers. Students should give feedback to teachers, related to their teaching methodology, activities, lessons, explanations, instructions, etc. students can comment and show their needs to the teacher. When students tell their learning preferences, the teacher can easily make a more interesting and attractive class for them. Teachers need to know if their work is in the right track.

Question 7: Do you know what feedback is?

In diagram 7 is shown that 34 % of students answered with yes, they know what feedback is, 66% with said no, which means they do not know what feedback is or its meaning.

Most of the students of the school that the experiment was held are not aware of this tool or its benefits, this is argued by the result of question 7 of the questionnaire, where 66% of the students said that they have no idea what feedback is. 34% said that they knew what it is but maybe they have never used it personally. Most of the schools in Kosovo do not use feedback in class, which is so traditional. Students deserve having opportunities to do better and enhance their progress. Hopefully all the schools will provide feedback soon because it is an elementary tool in a classroom which should not be missed.

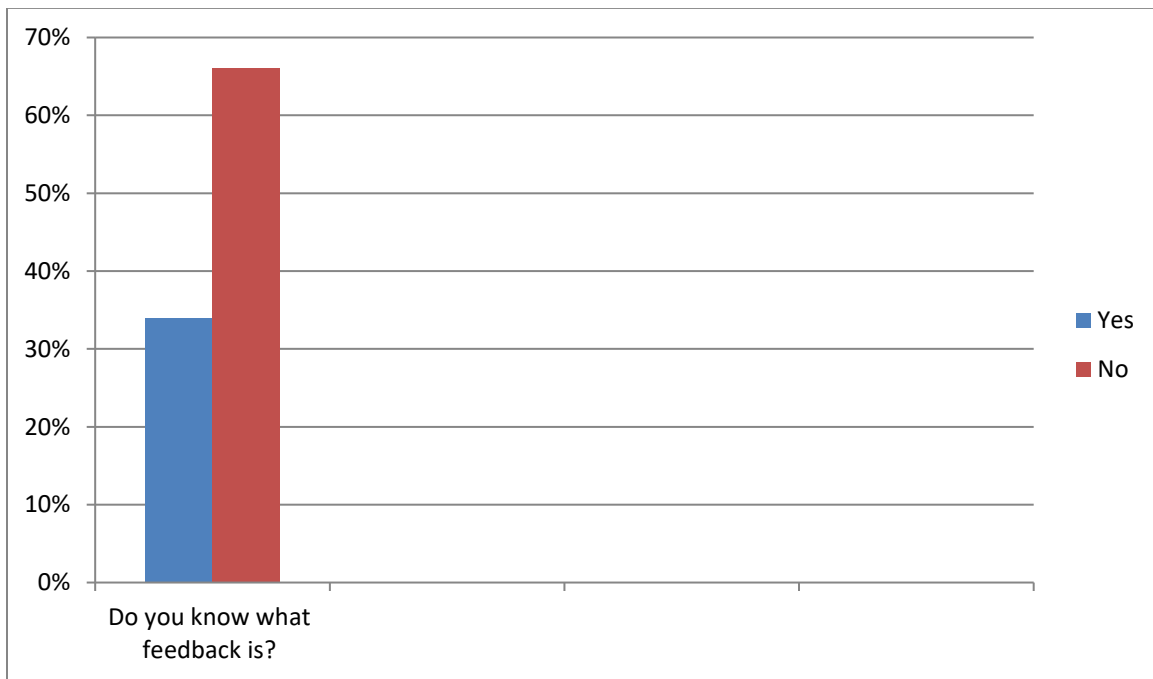


Diagram 7 – Results of answers in question 7

Question 8: Do you think that feedback helps teachers to give an accurate assessment?

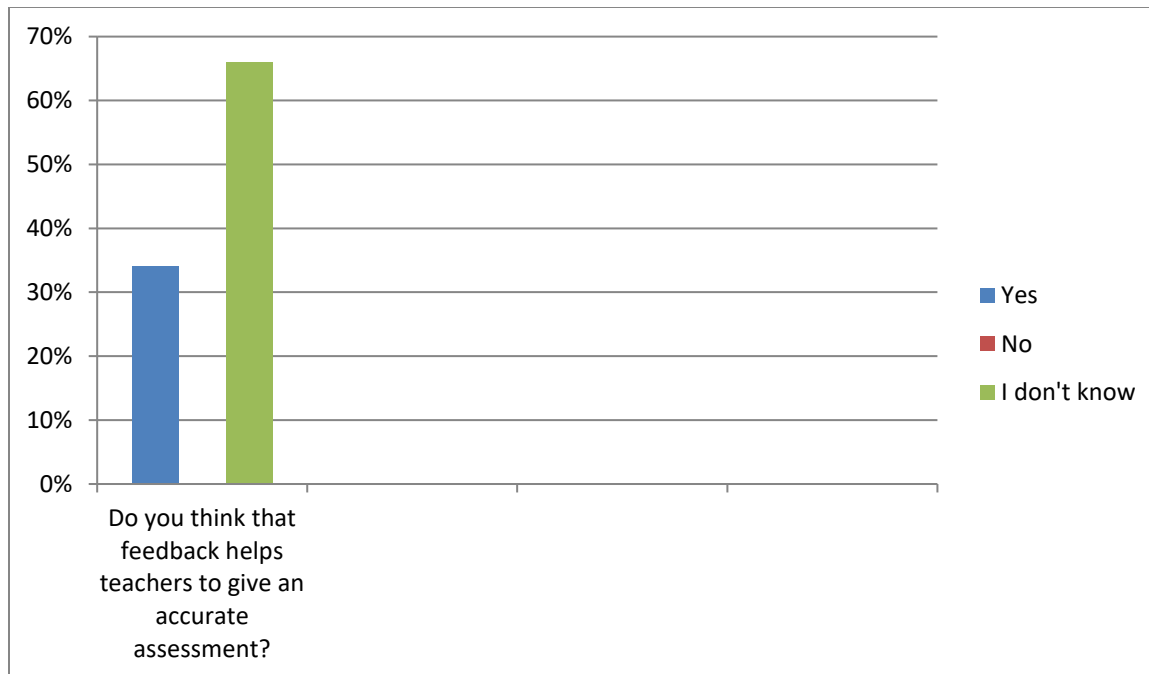


Diagram 8 – Results of answers in question 8

From those that know what feedback is, we got results of the question number 8 ‘Do you think that feedback helps teachers to give an accurate assessment?’ and the answers are: 34% yes, 0% no, 66% said ‘I don’t know’, which reflects their knowledge about feedback.

All the students that knew what feedback is, said that it can help the teacher to give a more accurate evaluation. They are correct because students should not be evaluated only with one single exam and only once in the whole semester. In order to have a good assessment, teachers need to use continuous evaluation and get to know their students better. When the teacher evaluates a student in different aspects and enables him or her to show their best, to improve their weak sides and to develop success, than we can proudly say that we are giving accurate assessment.

4.2 Results of the experiment and data analysis

We had two tests, the pre-test and the post test. In the experimental group, the second results of the essay, the results of the post test which was occurred after the feedback, are more advanced and higher than the first results - the pre-test. In the pre-test most of the students faced the problems with grammar, word order, spelling and vocabulary, then some of them had issues with the structure of the essay, including introduction and closure. And few of the students had problems with the content, ideas and creativity. Whereas in the post-test students did not have problems with structure, introduction, closure, content, or spelling, their most common mistakes remained in grammar but in a smaller amount compared to the first work.

The evaluation of the writing was as following:

The maximum point was 50, including: Content (ideas and creativity) -20 points, Grammar-10 points, Structure – 5 points, Vocabulary – 5 points, Intro – 5 points, Closure – 5 points.

Evaluation rubric/grades:
50-41=5
40-31=4
30-21=3
20-16=2
0-15=1

The second class is evaluated without the opportunity of feedback. Their class result is: 4.13 and so remained. The first class in the first draft had their class result: 4.15%. After they got feedback, they submitted their second draft with improvements, with the result of 4.8%. This means that they increased their success for 15.66% just in one feedback implementation.

Table 3 - Results of pre-test (first draft)

Class: VII/5	Content	Grammar	Structure	Vocabulary	Intro	Closure	Total
1. Student 1	17	7	3	5	5	2	39p.=4
2. Student 2	17	7	3	4	5	2	38p.=4
3. Student 3	20	3	5	2	4	4	38p.=4
4. Student 4	20	7	4	4	3	3	42p.=5
5. Student 5	10	4	2	2	3	2	23p.=3
6. Student 6	10	2	2	2	3	2	21p.=3
7. Student 7	17	4	5	3	3	3	35p.=4
8. Student 8	18	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
9. Student 9	20	5	5	3	5	5	43p.=5
10. Student 10	20	8	5	4	5	3	45p.=5
11. Student 11	15	5	5	3	4	1	33p.=4
12. Student 12	20	3	5	3	4	2	37p.=4
13. Student 13	18	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
14. Student 14	17	7	4	4	4	3	39p.=4
15. Student 15	10	8	4	5	5	3	35p.=4
16. Student 16	18	8	5	5	5	4	45p.=5
17. Student 17	10	5	2	4	3	1	25p.=3
18. Student 18	20	8	5	5	5	5	48p.=5
19. Student 19	20	8	5	5	5	5	48p.=5
20. Student 20	10	2	1	5	3	1	22p.=3
						Class Result	4.15%

Table 4 - Results of post-test (second draft)

Class: VII/5	Content	Grammar	Structure	Vocabulary	Intro	Closure	Total
1. Student 1	20	9	5	5	5	4	48p.=5
2. Student 2	20	8	5	5	5	4	47p.=5
3. Student 3	20	8	5	5	4	4	46p.=5
4. Student 4	20	8	5	5	5	5	48p.=5
5. Student 5	15	8	4	4	5	5	41p.=4
6. Student 6	15	6	4	4	5	5	39p.=4
7. Student 7	20	8	5	4	5	5	47p.=5
8. Student 8	18	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
9. Student 9	20	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
10. Student 10	20	10	5	5	5	5	50p.=5
11. Student 11	18	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
12. Student 12	20	7	5	5	5	3	45p.=5
13. Student 13	18	7	5	5	5	5	45p.=5
14. Student 14	19	8	5	5	5	4	48p.=5
15. Student 15	15	9	5	5	5	5	44p.=5
16. Student 16	18	8	5	5	5	4	45p.=5
17. Student 17	15	7	5	4	4	3	38p.=4
18. Student 18	20	9	5	5	5	5	49p.=5
19. Student 19	15	9	5	5	5	5	44p.=5
20. Student 20	15	7	3	5	4	4	38p.=4
						Class Result	4.8%

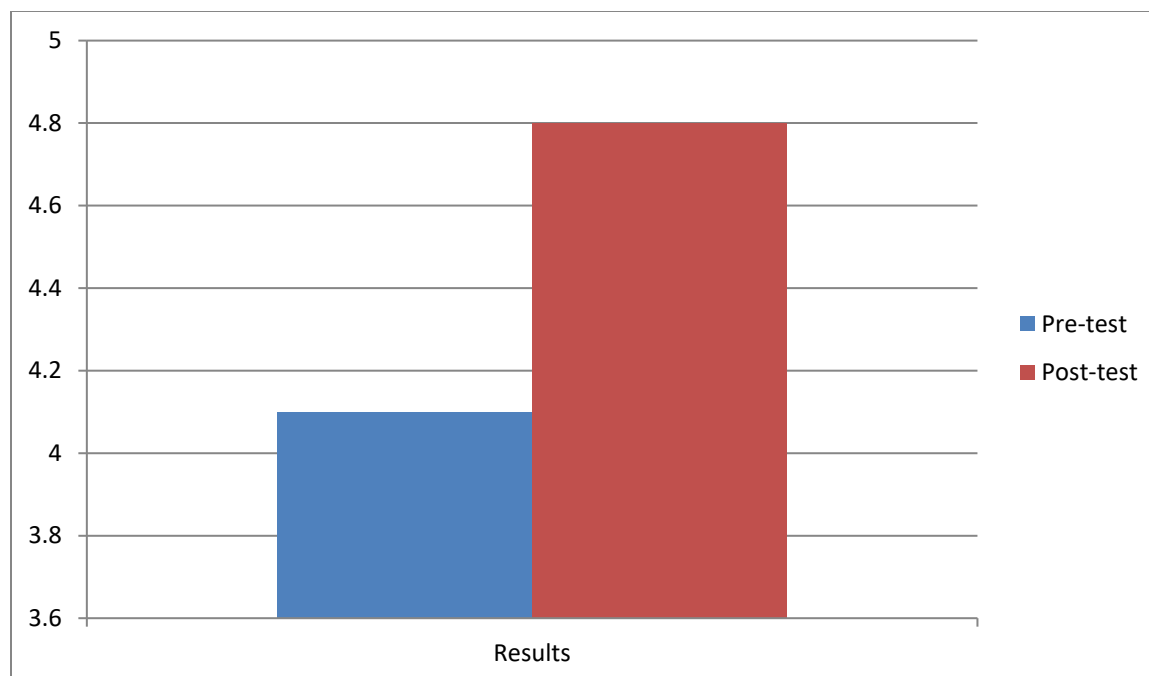


Diagram 9 – Results of pre-test and post-test

To sum up, providing strong arguments and facts we present the results of the questionnaire and the task which show the good impacts of implemented feedback in the classroom. The success in class is raised by 15.66% just from one implication of feedback. Almost every student improved their work and got a better result and a higher grade in the end. So imagine the guaranteed success if teachers would give feedback to students continuously.

We confirmed that feedback is indeed necessary and should be implemented in the classroom in order to develop student's learning and especially writing. Written feedback fits perfectly with writing skills, because students have the opportunity to take their time and distinguish their mistakes then correct them and enhance their progress.

4.3 The description of teachers' interview and data analysis

For this research we interviewed two teachers with teaching experience over 10 years. The interview contains 8 questions.

Question 1: 'What kind of feedback do you think is more effective in improving students' writing?', their answers were:

1st teacher: *In my opinion, the feedbacks that account more for pushing student's success are the written ones. Why? For several reasons. First of all, a written feedback is more detailed, and written down, which means student has a chance to look at it and to go back to it again. This may spur a better performance. Second, a written feedback is less emotional and more rational. In fact it is a rational feedback which really influences student's performance I guess.*

2nd teacher: *I believe it depends on the student. I prefer the written one myself, but some students require a more in depth explanation and suggestions.*

According to teacher's interview we see that feedback has a special place in the class. Teachers agree that both kinds of feedback are effective, they use the appropriate feedback in different situations for each student because there are different types of students in the class and you have to mix the method but as we see the written feedback is slightly more preferable to them because students have the opportunity to go back to it anytime they need, although all the types of feedback are useful and helpful for students. Oral feedback is a good opportunity for students because they are present at the moment of giving feedback and can ask whatever they do not understand and in the other hand written feedback sometimes can be very detailed and helpful, also it is good because it is written down, so students can take their time to understand and follow it.

Question 2: While providing feedback, do you focus on each small detail or you are based on general remark of the student's written mistakes? Their answers were:

1st teacher: *My feedback approaches both: the details and the work in more general terms. From details, the student learns how to be more precise, while from a more general feedback, the student has a chance to figure out the general framework of his/her exercise. In both regards, a good teacher in my opinion has to devote equal dedication.*

2nd teacher: *I like to focus on the details, since they together make the whole of the essay or paper.*

The interviewed teachers know the value of both focuses. It is important that while teachers give feedback, they should pay attention to student's needs. If there are small mistakes teachers have to focus on details and when there are some other difficulties teachers have to look the work as a whole in general and how it is organized.

Question 3: How can you make your written feedback effective in improving students' writing?

1st teacher: *As a teacher, I could ask students to start using the Microsoft office package, i.e. the Word program while they have deliverables. Nowadays Word has a menu called "Review" where one can track changes and add comments. Tracking changes highlights any intervention on the reviewed text. Also the addition of comments is easily distinguished. Student may have a chance to observe all the points that need further improvement. The learning process becomes more efficient in general.*

2nd teacher: *I could give examples and materials that support my suggestions and help them as well. And also urge them to contact me for any small or big obstacle or problem they face when writing.*

In order to give an effective feedback we should give a clear and brief feedback. Teachers tell different ideas how can we make a feedback powerful.

Question 4: Some students do not respond to your written feedback, in this case how could you encourage them to take into account your remark?

1st teacher: *Yes, there are tricky moments when they avoid responding feedback. In those cases, one has to consider other “B” strategies. A way to do that would be to meet student directly and to comment his work in an acceptable way for that person. Therefore, the teacher should be a psychologist as well. Behaving accordingly is a golden skill of an academic.*

2nd teacher: *I would then ask them to meet me in person, and gently explain to them what they must improve.*

In the interview teachers is said that a teacher is also a psychologist which is more than true. A good teacher should always find the way to make a student respond to the feedback. It is important to keep students motivated towards improving and development and sometimes teachers have to work outside the class, meet students in person, individually or continuously talk to them, observe them and know their interests, give them opportunities to do better and succeed.

Question 5: While providing a written feedback, do you focus on the structure or the content?

1st teacher: *I think that form and the content are inseparable; I want to point my prioritization here. For me, the first feedback would relate to the content itself. This will not exclude the fact that a necessary step is the suggestions of the form. One can hardly focus on the content when the form is in a bad shape.*

2nd teacher: *I mostly focus on content since it is more important to me. However, in some cases I do focus on form as well when it is needed.*

Teachers know that content and the structure are two major elements on a writing paper. That is why we have to focus on both of them.

Question 6: According to you, how is feedback important in teaching of writing?

1st teacher: *It is important because without feedback students have no improvements.*

2nd teacher: *By encouraging the students to write a better essay or paper we encourage them to give their best at everything. So I think it is important to give feedback and require improvement in writing from students.*

Teachers and also students are aware of the impact of feedback in learning, especially in the writing skills.

Question 7: Can feedback facilitate evaluation?

1st teacher: *I think feedback is good to provide a chance to the students to follow a path of improved learning. They have to see the “learning” happening. Therefore, it is smart of a teacher to continuously provide feedback, since this feedback looks help them gain confidence, satisfaction, and long term motivation, and basically these are the key drivers of successful evaluation at the end.*

2nd teacher: *Yes, it is easier for me when I have had the time to read the first draft, and then the improved one. It tells me a lot about a student and their commitment to work.*

When teachers assess students continuously, with different tests, activities, task and work, they have a better reflection about students and start to know them better, understand where they are and what they can achieve, this undoubtedly leads to an accurate evaluation. Interviewed teachers agree that feedback helps an accurate evaluation because students have different and many opportunities to be assessed in different ways and show all of their skills.

Question 8: Why do you think that feedback is important for teachers? Can teachers benefit from feedback? How?

1st teacher: *Teachers that provide feedback do not become only technical supports, they become the source of motivation. The benefit is mutual as the teachers can trace their efforts and evaluate themselves at the end, on whether they did a decent job or not.*

2nd teacher: *By giving feedback we are helping the students individually, which is a thing we cannot do in class for every student. We get to know our students better, and not just their exam percentages. Their grades tell us how effective our teaching has been.*

Teachers from the interview said that they can benefit from feedback in different ways because not only students need to be observed continuously! Teachers also need to observe their work and why not to accept comments and advice from the others, students or other teachers. So they can color their teaching with different ideas and aspects of learning. When teachers get feedback from students, they should consider it because it talks a lot about students' needs and preferences which is a key for an attractive class, because it can help the teacher to build a perfect syllabus design based on what students want and need. Also, Self-feedback gives the opportunity to improve and make progress in your own. Teachers should use this tool every day after lessons, or at least once a week. It enables them to monitor their success in class and see if their teaching methodologies fit perfectly in the class, if their activities are useful, if their objectives are fulfilled, how students are responding to a particular task, should there be more speaking/listening/writing activities, etc. This is a great opportunity to check yourself, the class and your progress.

4.4 Conclusions of Research Questions

General objective of the research was to find out whether the use of feedback facilitates learning which was proven and argued throughout this research. Starting from different authors, professors and critics, feedback is a tool that must be used in the class in order to facilitate general learning. Our specific objective was to know if teacher's feedback improves students' writing skills which is also proved by the questionnaire, opinions of students and teachers who strongly agree that written feedback is perfect to master writing skills and also this kind of feedback is the favorite feedback of the interviewed teachers. Another objective of this research was to find out if feedback raises motivation, team working, and independence. Students' results of the questionnaire prove that they feel more motivated when their teacher corrects them or if their classmates give feedback and exchange ideas. Students can be independent learners by self feedback which is a tool that reflects the progress and the weak sides of their learning. When students know their weaknesses, they are encouraged to improve them and then their achievement is guaranteed. Another aim of the research was if teachers can benefit from feedback. This question has got its answer in teachers' interview and also in the results of question number 7 of the questionnaire where students agree that if students give feedback to teachers, they would improve their teaching methodologies but also understand students' needs, which is the secret key to design an appropriate syllabus and increase success in the class.

The research questions were:

1. What are the benefits of applying feedback in English classrooms?

- The benefits are numerous, starting from:

- It makes students more collaborative;
- Motivates students;
- Makes students independent learners;
- Helps students to observe and reflect on their learning ;
- Facilitates overall learning and students' language skills ;
- Increase students' progress, grades and their class success;

- Gives students the opportunity to do their best;
- Helps teachers to provide appropriate evaluation, syllabus design and teaching methodologies.

2. How can the use of feedback change traditional evaluation, learning and teaching?

- Feedback makes teachers to continuously assess and observe students and also it makes students to be continuously active and focus on developing their progress. In the other hand traditional evaluation, learning and teaching were very limited; they left students passive during the lessons. This means that feedback enables students the opportunity to do better and reach more, contrary from the traditional evaluation, learning and teaching.

3. How does the use of feedback contribute in developing students' writing skills compared to traditional methods?

- Traditional methodologies were simple, sometimes unattractive and very limited, leaving students passive because only the teacher was explaining and doing all of the activities in the class. Teacher was in the centre of the class, students only listened. Students learned only for an exam paper, and for the rest of the semester, once they got graded, they remained passive; whereas, the use of feedback in a modern class motivates students to improve their mistakes and continuously enhance their learning, in the class or at home, by making them independent learners at home, and by putting students in the centre of the classroom and engaging them in different feedback activities and tasks. Furthermore, feedback contributes to continuous assessment.

4. Can teachers benefit from feedback?

- As we mentioned above, teachers can improve their teaching methodologies through feedback if it is used correctly. Teachers can get a feedback from a colleague, a student or themselves. Teachers can get feedback from students and prepare a proper syllabus design including appropriate teaching and attractive activities that fit with students' needs and also it can help them to give an accurate assessment.

4.5 Conclusions of the Hypothesis

Main hypothesis of the research has been proven because of the experiment results where we can see that students raised their success by 15.66% just with one implementation of feedback. This hypothesis is also supported by responses in the teachers' interview and other critics that are cited in the research.

The additional hypotheses were:

1. The application of feedback engages students in learning by making them independent learners and more motivated to focus on their studying and helps them to improve their grades.

- Students can be independent learners by the use of self-feedback. They become more motivated when they know the existence of their written mistakes and then are encouraged to correct them. In the experimental group in this study were students that had the opportunity to receive a written feedback from the teacher. After the given feedback, in the second draft student's success and grade raised for 15.66%.

2. By using feedback in the classroom, teachers can understand the students' needs better and then they can easily design the curriculum based on them.

- This is more than true because when teachers are familiar to their students and understand their needs, know their mistakes. They can develop a syllabus that helps students to fulfill their needs. When teachers receive the student's work after the implemented comments from the feedback, teachers can prove that the effect of feedback is indeed effective and useful, it means that students understood the comments and were motivated to correct and improve their mistakes in general.

Chapter V

Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Recommendations

After this research we learned different things that can be recommended. We witnessed the usage of feedback in ‘Selami Hallaci’ Elementary School in Gjilan, Kosovo. Since the usage of feedback is in a low level we recommend that teachers and students should be aware of its benefits and opportunities, and should start using it in daily basis. The aim of the teachers should be to make students improve their writing skills and develop their learning through feedback. Students should be aware of the opportunities that feedback gives to them and take it as a serious manner towards advancing. Based on this idea we present the following recommendations:

- Teachers should include the feedback in their teaching as an essential tool in the class.
- Teachers should find a manner to engage all the students in the process of feedback and make them to collaborate with the teacher’s feedback, even those who do not respond positively to it.
- Teachers should make a clear and informative feedback, bearing in mind the needs of the student.
- Teachers should follow the correction codes presented by Hyland (2003), theory which just directs students to improvement by telling them where their mistakes are and letting them to correct their mistakes in their own.
- Teachers can design their own correction codes.
- Teachers must tell the students where their strong and weak sides are.
- Teachers should always start the feedback with positive comments.
- Teachers should be selective in their correction and very specific.

- Teachers should comment the surface and also the content of writing.
- Teachers should use self-feedback to improve their teaching.
- Teachers should observe the progress in the class and fit the syllabus and the feedback with students' needs.
- Teachers should always use feedback before assessing a writing paper.
- Students should take the teacher's feedback seriously.
- Students should focus after the codes and signs of the teachers' written feedback, so they can find their mistakes easier.
- Students should correct their mistakes in their own. This helps them to remember the correction.
- Students should review and research more about their errors, until they understand why they are errors and how should be fixed.
- Students should use self-feedback in order to be independent and learn alone, they have to monitor their progress.
- Students should be collaborative with their classmates and use peer-feedback.
- Students should use technology and the access of internet for good. Their goal should be to become an independent learner.
- Before writing a feedback, think of the receiver. Comment things that are worth it.
- Benefit from feedback in different ways.

5.2 Conclusion

This research focused on the impact of feedback related with the developing of students' writing skills. During the chapters we have presented different ideas and comments from different authors, which gave theories about feedback, its type and its usage. Then, we presented the hypotheses, objectives and questions of the research, followed by the experimental part, results of the questionnaire, results of the teachers' interview and the experiment. Statistics from the questionnaire and the teachers' interview together with the results of the experiment, confirmed the benefits of feedback in general learning and especially in improving writing skills to the students.

The research is divided into chapters, so it is clear to read and comprehend. Chapter one is introduction and provides definitions of feedback and writing. Chapter two presents the role and importance of feedback in the classroom, types of feedback, what to focus during feedback, how to give a good feedback, correction symbols and their importance. Chapter three is about research methodology, research questions, hypotheses, instruments and aims of this research. Chapter four has an important role in this research because it introduces the results and analysis of the questionnaire, experiment and interview. This chapter has strong arguments and gatherings that demonstrate the positive sides of feedback and it supports the hypothesis of the research. Chapter five is a general conclusion, parted in recommendations and conclusion. In the end we present the references and appendixes.

The research was conducted in elementary school (Selami Hallaci) in Gjilan, Kosovo. It lasted for two weeks with the following instruments: questionnaire, experiment - writing task and teachers' interview. The aim of this research was to prove and support the hypothesis that feedback contributes in developing students' writing skills. Based on the findings and the experiment we can undoubtedly agree to argue on the effectiveness and benefits of feedback in enhancing students writing skill because now, it is more than obvious that feedback is an

important technique that helps students in their writing skills and must take place in the classroom.

We hope that this research affected the teachers' staff and students to be more serious about the usage of feedback in and outside of the classroom. Everyone should know that feedback should take place in every modern teaching and learning methodologies. It is proven throughout the research, with statistics and facts, that feedback can help students to boost their writing skills. This means that the hypotheses were confirmed.

We also provided responses for each research question. As we mentioned in our answer of the first research question, the benefits of the usage of feedback in the classroom can be numerous, starting from its effect on team working, motivation and independence. Feedback can increase students' progress, grades and their class success. It helps teachers to offer an appropriate teaching, syllabus design and evaluation. The conclusion of the second research question is very important because it presents about the drastic changes that occurred in education when feedback took place. Feedback made a change in traditional learning, teaching and evaluation. The third research question was about telling how feedback can contribute in developing students' writing skills compared to traditional methods. The conclusion of its response was that traditional teaching was very limited and unattractive for students because as we said, they left students passive in the class, whereas modern methods, including feedback, make students active and not only in the class, but also outside of the classroom. The fourth research question was: 'Can teachers benefit from feedback?', and we claimed throughout the whole of the research that teachers can benefit from feedback as much as students. Teachers can receive feedback and increase their teaching and master their assessment part. They can get feedback by their students, this helps them to understand what students expect to learn from their lessons and what do students want to change or suggest in this aspect. After teachers give different opportunities to students to do their best and allow them to use feedback, then the evaluation part will be more accurate. Teachers can get feedback from their colleagues too. After an observation, a teacher can comment another teacher's teaching. And of course in the end is self-feedback, where teachers can monitor their teaching and try to improve every single detail by designing it and fitting with students' needs.

It is interesting that the results of the questionnaire showed what we expected, the most of the students are not aware of the term of feedback and are not familiar with its usage, but they would like to implement it because they think that teacher's, peer's or self – comments/corrections/feedback would facilitate their learning and also develop their writing skills. They think that knowing the existence of their mistakes motivates and directs them towards correcting, learning and improving. This method motivates them to correct their errors and thus, enhance their writing skills. All of the students that knew the meaning, the purpose and the process of feedback agreed that it can help to boost their learning, and especially their writing skills.

As we mentioned earlier in the chapters, technology changed education in a drastic form and also feedback had some changes. Nowadays feedback can occur online, with internet connection, which is facilitation for both, students and teachers. Teachers can give comments to their students by just an email and also students can exchange feedback with their peers and teachers. Students can even work by themselves. Self-feedback is very important tool when it comes to learning alone. Students can be independent learners through feedback. The access of different resources in the internet is a very easy task recently; students can do online quizzes, tests, explanations, receive feedback and get different books online. There are online exams and courses that give you feedback and explanation after every wrong answer that you have done. Even Microsoft Word has a kind of feedback by suggesting words and underlining the errors within a text. It also provides the corrective form.

To conclude, we hope that this research with its findings makes schools and teachers aware of the importance of feedback and encourages them to implement it in every classroom, in order to provide convenient teaching and proper assessment. Moreover, we hope that feedback will soon be used in every language classroom, in order to help second language learners to develop their writing skills in a new level. Above within chapters, we mentioned that not only students can benefit from feedback, teachers can benefit too. In the end, this research clearly confirmed the main and the additional hypotheses that: Providing proper feedback contributes to developing students' writing skills; The application of feedback engages students in learning by making them independent learners and being more motivated which also helps them to improve their grades; By using feedback in the classroom, teachers can understand better the students' needs

and then design the curriculum, based on them. In a word we confirmed that the impact of feedback on developing students' writing skills has a positive role.

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Appendix

Teachers' Interview

1. What kind of feedback do you think is more effective in improving students' writing??

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2. While providing feedback, do you focus on each small detail or you are based on general remark of the student's written mistakes?

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3. How can you make your written feedback effective in improving students' writing?

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4. Some students do not respond to your written feedback, in this case how could you encourage them to take into account your remark?

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5. While providing a written feedback, do you focus on the structure or the content?

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6. According to you, how is feedback important in teaching of writing?

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7. What do you think, can feedback facilitate evaluation?

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8. Why do you think that feedback is important for teachers? Can teachers benefit from feedback? How?

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.....
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Questionnaire for students (in Albanian language)

Pyetësor

1. A mendoni se korigjimi nga ana e mësimeve ju ndihmon gjatë procesit të të mësuarit?
 - a) Po
 - b) Jo
 - c) Nuk e di

2. Cilën mënyrë të komenteve apo të korigjimit nga ana e mësimeve e preferoni më shumë?
 - a) me shkrim
 - b) me goje

3. A mendoni se është më mirë të dini se ku keni gabuar gjatë shkrimit të një eseje?
 - a) Po

- b) Jo
 - c) Nuk e di
4. Nëqoftëse mesimdhënesi juaj do të jua korigjonte/komentonte gabimet e një eseje, a do të ndiheshit më të motivuar për të përmirësuar gabimet tuaja?
- a) Po
 - b) Jo
 - c) Ndoshta
5. A do të dëshironit që një koleg nga klasa juaj të jua komentoj/korigjoj një ese tuajen, para se ta dorezoni tek mesimdhënësi për vlersim?
- a) Po
 - b) Jo
 - c) Nuk e di
6. A mendoni se është e nevojshme që edhe nxenesit të japin komente ndaj punës së mesimdhënësve?
- a) Po
 - b) Jo
 - c) Nuk e di
7. A e dini c'është fodbeku (feedback)?
- a) Po
 - b) Jo
8. A mendoni se fodbeku ndihmon mesimdhënësit që të japin një vlersim më korrekt?
- a) Po
 - b) Jo
 - c) Nuk e di

Ju faleminderit për mirekuptimin dhe kohën tuaj!

Questionnaire for students (in English language)

1. Do you think that teacher's correction helps you during the process of learning?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) I don't know

2. Which method of the teacher's correction or comment, do you prefer more?
 - a) Written correction/comment
 - b) Oral correction/comment

3. Do you think you can learn better if you know where you made mistakes in an essay?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) I don't know

4. If your teacher would correct or comment your mistakes in an essay, would you feel more motivated to improve your mistakes?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) I don't know

5. Would you like one of your colleagues to comment or correct your essay, before you submit it to your teacher for evaluation?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) I don't know

6. Do you think that students should give comments towards teacher's work?
 - a) Yes

- b) No
- c) I don't know

7. Do you know what feedback is?

- a) Yes
- b) No

8. Do you think that feedback helps teachers to give an accurate assessment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Thank you for your time and consideration!