

TIRF Priority Research Grant

Title of proposed project: *The Effect of Written Corrective Feedback on ESL and EFL Learners' Acquisition of Grammatical Forms*

Topic: Written corrective feedback

Applicants:

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Project summary

The proposed study investigates the effects of written corrective feedback (CF) on the acquisition of L2 grammar. It addresses the on-going controversy regarding the effectiveness of written CF (see Truscott 1999 and Ferris 2002). Whereas studies of oral CF have demonstrated consistently that it can assist second language acquisition, studies of written CF have produced mixed results. One difference between oral and written CF studies is that the former have investigated focused CF (i.e. feedback directed at a single structure) whereas the latter have addressed unfocused CF (i.e. feedback directed at a variety of linguistic features). Using a quasi-experimental design, the proposed study compares the effects of two dimensions of written CF; focus (focused vs. unfocused CF) and type (direct CF vs. metalinguistic CF). The target grammatical structure of the study is English articles, selected because this constitutes a persistent problem for learners of English. The effects of the different kinds of feedback are examined in relation to both learners' redrafting of their initial compositions and to their acquisition of the target structure as measured on an error correction test and a free writing task. In order to examine whether any effect for CF is evident across discourse modes, two different types of writing will be studied – narrative and expository writing. Finally, in order to examine whether any effects are related to the context of instruction, the entire study will be carried out in an ESL site and an EFL site.